A Comparative Study of E-democracy Practices in Australia and in South Korea

Kang, Hye-Jung

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ABSTRACT

It is arguable that the invention of ICTs has renovated contemporary democracy. ICTs characterized by timelessness, spacelessness, and cost effectiveness have largely changed the way of providing, storing, processing, and communicating information. ICTs have been expected to make up for the deficits of representative democracy which can be defined as: a lack of legitimacy of political institutions, a lack of political interest by the public, and a decline in public participation. The use of ICTs to improve the contemporary political system is called e-democracy. However, the way that ICTs have been applied in politics (e-democracy practice) has been affected by the socio-political contexts of their particular environment. This study explores how e-democracy practices vary in different national contexts, and how different e-democracy practices have originated.

This study compares e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea. It is based on a multi-case study of e-democracy practices including three Australian cases (GetInvolved, Future Melbourne Wiki, and GetUp!) and three South Korean cases (Epeople, Seoul Metropolitan Government Online, and the 2008 Candlelight Protest against US Beef Imports). It uses multiple methods of data collection: documentation, website analysis, interviews, and participant observation, and applies a ‘social construction of technology’ approach as a research framework that allows a holistic comparison of e-democracy practices between Australia and South Korea. Three dimensions of social construction of technology - interpretive flexibility, relevant social groups, and technological frame - are used to compare six e-democracy practices. E-democracy practices in the two countries are also compared on the three categories: high levels of participatory e-government practices, local levels of participatory e-government practices, and e-civil participation practices.

This study identifies several similarities and differences of e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea; it also discusses the factors that shape different e-democracy practices in the two countries. The analysis of the two cases showed similarities in high levels of participatory e-government practices (GetInvolved and Epeople), and in the strong leadership of the relevant government (the Queensland State Government for GetInvolved, and the South Korean National Government for Epeople). However, GetInvolved was an online consultation to receive feedback from citizens on public issues, while Epeople was an e-decision making tool to enable citizens to participate in a range of decision-making processes. Also, GetInvolved online consultation aimed to improve the relationship between the Queensland State Government and Queensland citizens, while Epeople e-decision making focused on increasing a climate of constructive discussion. These
differences of e-democracy practices in the two countries were influenced by the existing political environment: the long-term practice of public consultation in Australia formulated the form of online citizen participation; while the limited citizen participation in policy-making processes in South Korea meant that ICTs were actively employed to increase the opportunity for citizens to participate online.

The analysis of the two local levels of participatory e-government practices (the Future Melbourne Wiki and the Chunmansangsang OASIS of SMG Online) showed that both cases were developed by strong management (or leadership) from local governments (the Melbourne City Council, and the SMG) in response to policies of higher level governments (the Victorian State Government, and the Roh Government). However, the Future Melbourne Wiki was an online consultation, but OASIS was a collaborative e-decision making tool. Also, the Melbourne City Council was responsible for finalizing the Future Melbourne Plan, but both the SMG and Seoul citizens were responsible for making final policies or decisions on what public business to conduct. In addition, the Melbourne community was invited to participate in the online consultation, but Seoul residents were able to participate in all aspects of decision-making process including deciding issues to be discussed. These differences between the two countries in e-democracy practices at local levels were influenced by complex interactions between the pre-existing political conditions for engaging citizen participation, the existing political directions for using ICTs, demographic features in each society, and by the popularity of using ICTs in each society: the well-routinized form of public consultation in Australia, and the median age (28) in Melbourne City influenced the Melbourne City Council to build an online consultation wiki; the existing form of e-government and popular use of ICTs by Seoul residents led the SMG to use a collaborative e-decision making.

The comparison of the two e-civil participation practices (GetUp!, and the 2008 candlelight protest against US beef imports) showed that both cases changed the position of citizens in the political arena, from information consumer to information finder (and information producer). Also, these cases did not reduce political activities in the election period, but expanded the political activities to everyday issues, everyday life. However, GetUp! maintained the traditional structure of political participation, including the governance structure of a civil society organization and of organizing citizen participation and conventional modes of political actions such as petitions, off-line rallies and planning advertisement in the mainstream press. By contrast, the 2008 candlelight protest against US beef imports introduced a new structure of political participation such as the swarm - a voluntary horizontal mobilization of networked individuals, and the simultaneous public action using online and offline worlds. In addition, GetUp! was seen to convert existing political participation from offline
into online, but the 2008 candlelight protest was largely enacted by groups which had previously been politically apathetic (teenagers and housewives). These differences between the two e-civil participation practices in Australia and in South Korea evolved from the existing environment of civil society, coupled with the impact of ICTs: the long-term experience of governance structure in Australian civil society and the expensive cost of access to internet led to online citizen participation based on conventional practice; the fast uptake of ICTs in South Korean civil society encouraged the introduction of new forms of citizen participation.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Chapter 1
Introduction

1.1 Research Background

The invention and rapid development of Information and Communication Technologies (hereafter called ICTs) in the 1990s has attracted considerable attention in theoretical and practical debates on politics and democracy (Clift, 2002, 2004 a; Chen, 2002; Bishop & Anderson, 2004; Ward, Lusoli & Gibson, 2007). ICTs have challenged existing theories in politics and democracy, and have provided various alternatives to resolve the perceived deficits of contemporary democracy and political structure. The challenges raised the question of how ICTs can address political deficits (Clift, 2004 a; Chadwick, 2006). Contemporary politics are defined by the disconnection between political representatives and the people, and the decline of citizens’ political interest. The political expectation for the use of ICTs is to engage political interest and participation of the public, and reinforce the relationship between political authorities and citizens (Cho, 2009). For this reason, studies on the impact of ICTs in the political arena have focused on measuring online citizens’ engagement, exploring the online public sphere, and assessing the potential of ICTs to achieve deliberative democracy, analysing small and policy-linked online discussions, and exploring interactions among citizens, and between citizens and political authorities. Empirical studies on ICTs’ impact in the political arena have increased since the late 1990s. They have given rise to the term ‘e-politics’ - ‘e-democracy’, which broadly defined means using ICTs to improve democratic processes.

A new issue in the study of e-democracy emerged in the 2000s: the importance of socio-political context in shaping e-democracy practices. This new issue probably begins with Castells’ claim (2000) that the American model of using ICTs in politics has not been followed by other countries. This is because the shaping of the e-democracy model in each country has mainly been decided by the socio-political contexts. Castells suggests that the development of models of online politics need to be understood in terms of the political, cultural, and social dimensions of the outcomes. This view is supported by research (2003) by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (hereafter called OECD) which emphasizes the importance of socio-demographic forces in shaping various e-democracy practices in different countries. In addition, Clift’s (2004b) empirical study of various e-democracy practices in a range of countries found that both ICTs and the socio-political contexts are important in shaping e-democracy practices. Clift also suggested that future studies of e-democracy and e-government should focus more on regional and cultural specialization, and
comparative investigations on best practices. This scholarship on direction of e-democracy studies has already become popular and has strengthened the regional cultural influence in shaping different characteristics of e-democracy practice (Gibson et al., 2005, 2008; Yun & Chang, 2007). However, these existing studies which focused on describing practices of e-democracy in each country have not analysed and compared the specific socio-political contexts that shape various e-democracy practices in different countries. The current studies on e-democracy have not discussed deeply the socio-political context, so they have limited value for standardizing and generalizing significant factors which shape e-democracy practices.

Compared with those earlier studies, the research reported in this thesis extends from the focus on ICTs to include social-political contexts (Gibson, et al., 2005; Bowery, 2007). This study compares e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea, and analyses the factors that shaped the differences in the two countries. The different e-democracy practices combine these dimensions political, social, cultural and technological dimensions, which are all interacting within each society. This study provides important strategies for shaping national e-democracy practices, and the findings will be used to make suggestions for other countries that are shaping their own e-democracy practices.

1.2 Aims of Research

The study uses a comparative e-democracy case study methodology to enable the comparison of e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea. It particularly focuses on comparing participatory e-government practices in both countries, and e-civil participation practices in both countries. The aims of the study are:

1. To investigate the current comparative practices of e-democracy in Australia and in South Korea,
2. To identify the differences in practice of e-democracy in Australia and in South Korea,
3. To explore the factors that shape different practices of e-democracy in the two countries.

To achieve these objectives, this study purposely investigates four major research questions, together with supplementary research questions. The research questions focus on the importance of ICTs in the political arena, and the cross-country comparison of e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea.
1. How do ICTs affect contemporary democracy?
   1.1. Do ICTs rehabilitate traditional political power?
   1.2. Do ICTs enhance the participation and influence of citizens in the decision-making process?

2. What is e-democracy in Australia, and in South Korea?
   2.1. How does Australia use ICTs to improve political quality?
      2.1.1. How do governments in Australia use ICTs to engage citizens’ participation in policy-making processes?
      2.1.2. How do Australian people use ICTs to discuss public issues, and to take political actions?
   2.2. How does South Korea use ICTs for developing democratic environment in politics?
      2.2.1. How do South Korean governments use ICTs to reduce political weaknesses?
      2.2.2. How do Korean people use ICTs to discuss public issues, and to take political actions?

3. What are the similarities and differences of e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea?

4. What has shaped the specialized national practices of e-democracy in Australia and in South Korea?

1.3 Significance of Study

While early research on e-democracy and e-government focused on establishing a conceptual framework to underpin within-country practices of internet politics, recent research has moved beyond this. Now researchers also investigate national use of ICTs in the public and political arena to compare e-democracy practices around the world. This new research approach on e-democracy has emerged from the variety of e-democracy practices around the world. In many countries, websites are the most common means to engage citizens’ participation, but in some countries, like Philippines, digital gadgets such as mobile phones are used to influence public input in decision-making processes (Chadwick, 2006). Many countries - like Scotland, Canada, the USA and the UK - practiced e-democracy mainly as government initiatives (Clift, 2004b). However, some countries such as the USA employ ICTs to organize citizen-centric political groups, and to increase citizens’ voluntary participation in politics (Chadwick, 2006). Other countries, like Australia, employ the online world to provide political information and services (Gibson et al., 2008). Yet other countries, exemplified by
South Korea, use the internet to engage citizens’ participation in decision-making process (Yun, 2008).

Research (Clift, 2004b; Gibson et al., 2005, 2008; Yun & Chang, 2007) and world organizations including United Nations (hereafter called UN) and the OECD have suggested that future research should cover both meaningful participation of citizens and effective participatory governance. They have also recommended considering regional and cultural specialization in each country for a deep understanding of the various e-democracy practices, their different backgrounds and the setting standards that influence e-democracy practices. However, as pointed at in Section 1.1, the new direction of e-democracy studies has not yet strongly investigated the influence of socio-political contexts in shaping e-democracy practices.

This study analyses a variety of e-democracy practices in different countries, but particularly focuses on e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea. Both countries have well-developed e-democracy practices, including e-government and e-civil participation. According to the UN (2008, 2010) and the OECD (2003), Australia and South Korea are leading countries in e-government and e-participation in the world. Table 1-1 shows that Australia and South Korea took eighth and first place respectively in the 2010 survey of e-government development in all countries. The survey focused on the delivery and transaction of essential public services online\(^1\), and explored how the relationships between the government and citizens had been changed (UN, 2010, p. 44). The results of the 2010 UN e-government survey support claims that both Australian and South Korean governments have provided good information on government and public services on live, and have actively interacted with citizens by the use of ICTs, while many countries employed ICTs only to provide information on government and politics, which is regarded as the first stage of e-government development.

Table 1-1 and Table 1-2 show that South Korea and Australia are in first and second place respectively as e-participation practice countries. The UN defined e-participation as the potential to reduce barriers to public participation in policy-making process. E-participation was assessed in the same way in 2008 and 2010. Both surveys used three categories: e-information, e-consultation, and e-decision making. Both surveys also assessed the level and trend of online public engagement in government process. In the 2008 e-participation survey (see Table 1-2), South Korea and Australia ranked number two and number five respectively. In 2010, both improved their position, and then ranked first and

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\(^1\) The 2008 UN e-government survey broadly evaluated the e-government readiness of each country so that the 2008 index comprised the web measure, the ICT infrastructure, and the human capital. However, the 2010 UN e-government survey focused on questions of the interaction between government and citizens, or service transactions online.
This means that Australia and South Korea have used ICTs effectively to engage public participation in the political arena. The UN’s *People Matter: Civic Engagement in Public Governance* (2009) sets out the range of public engagement activities considered in country rankings like that below. E-participation involves a range of different activities that move beyond governments using the internet to inform citizens, to consultation with citizens, to involving citizens in government decision-making ensuring their concerns are heard, to collaborating with citizens and civil society to find solutions and design policies, to delegating decision-making power to citizens and empowering them to decide government initiatives (UN, 2009a, p.108).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>e-government development rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>e-participation rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Korea</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Republic of Korea</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
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<td>Japan</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
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<td>United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
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<td>Canada</td>
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<td>Spain</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Estonia</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>9</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Chapter 1 Introduction

Table 1-2. Top 10 E-participation Countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>e-participation rank</th>
<th>e-participation rank</th>
<th>Changes +(-)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Korea</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>New Zealand</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
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<td>11</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Australia and South Korea are exceptional cases in demonstrating an advanced stage of e-government and e-participation in regions that generally have low levels of e-government and e-participation development. Figure 1-1 explains the average of e-government development in five regions in 2010: the world average of e-government development is 0.4406; the best region of e-government development is Europe followed by Americas; the worst region of e-government development is Africa. Figure 1-1 shows that Asia and Oceania are underdeveloped regions in both e-government and e-participation; Asia was slightly above the world average of e-government development, but Oceania was below the world average of e-government.

Figure 1-1. Regional Average of E-government Development 2010

Figures 1-2 and 1-3 indicate the geographic distribution of the best performing countries in e-participation and show that, in 2008 and in 2010, the Asian and Oceania regions were under-represented. More than half of the best performing countries on e-participation belong to the European region. By comparison, only 6% of the best e-participation countries belong to the Oceania region. Despite the poor performance of their neighbours in both e-government and e-participation practices, Australia and South Korea are placed in the top five in the world in that category. Interestingly, this disparity in the Asia and Oceania regions was not evident in other regions.

**Figure 1-2. E-participation Index: Top 35 Countries**


**Figure 1-3. Geographic Distribution of the Best Performing Countries in E-participation**

In comparing the national trends of e-democracy, the UN E-Government Survey found that Australia and South Korea are quite different in their e-democracy practices. First, both countries varied in their scores for e-participation websites. According to the results of the UN (2010) e-government survey, Australia scored the highest on providing information online including policies, link services, and an updated calendar of events to let citizens know of future events, and to engage and participate in the event if they wish. By contrast, South Korea scored highest on interacting with citizens, and taking into account citizen’s views in decision-making processes (UN, 2010, pp.87-88). This means Australia and South Korea have used ICTs differently to engage public participation in government and political processes; Australia has applied ICTs mainly to provide information such as policies, political missions and upcoming events in order to enable citizens to participate in political processes, but South Korea has used ICTs more to facilitate political interaction between governments and citizens.

Second, research on e-democracy practices differs in the two countries. The Australian research on e-democracy has focused on the responsibility of governments to engage citizens’ participation in political arena, but have not emphasized as much the citizen-focused e-democracy practices. This is because of the early adoption of ICTs in all levels of governments and political institutions since the late 1990s. However, in Australian civil society, the influence of ICTs has only recently emerged with the establishment in 2005 of GetUp! (Gibson et al., 2008; Vromen, 2007, 2008a, 2008b). By comparison, both research and practices in South Korea have emphasized the use of ICTs to engage citizens’ active participation in the whole political decision-making process from agenda setting to making final decisions. The influence of ICTs in South Korean civil society has become a very important research issue; both e-democracy and e-civil participation practices have grown to be a new form of civil society engagement in South Korea since NGOKOREA affected both campaigns and the results of the general election in 2000 and proved their effectiveness (Yun & Chang, 2007).

In addition, in comparing the e-democracy practices, it is found that Australia and South Korea are significantly different in their political systems. Australia has a Westminster Parliamentary system and the Prime Minister is selected by elected Parliamentarians from the winning political party. Australia also has a Federation of states as its government system: Under Australian Federalism there are three tiers of government - National, State and Local -, and these three government tiers have different government powers in an attempt to prevent political disputes among them. On the other hand, South Korea has a Presidential system and the President is directly elected by citizens. The South Korean President is a real head of executive government and executive government at national level has extensive political power. Since the middle of 1990s, when the Local Autonomy Act was published,
local governments obtained self-governing power in many fields, but local governments still depend on finance from national governments. The different political systems between the two countries are related to the shaping of the diverse e-democracy practices in the two countries.

Table 1-3. Comparison of Political System in Australia and in South Korea

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political System</th>
<th>Australia</th>
<th>South Korea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Similarity</td>
<td>Included in the group of full-democracy countries (EIU, 2010)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences</td>
<td>● Parliamentary political system and Federalism</td>
<td>● Presidential political system and Centralized government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Prime Minister selected by elected parliamentarians of the party forming government</td>
<td>● The President elected by nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● Three tiers of governments (Commonwealth, State and Local), and distinctive political power between Commonwealth and State governments</td>
<td>● Strong political power of national government</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In sum, Australia and South Korea are leading e-democracy countries in their regions and in the world. Both countries are unique examples of developing e-democracy in a way that their regional neighbours have not. As well, both countries have practiced e-democracy in a different way. Australia has strengths in e-information, and focuses on e-government practices, whereas South Korea is more developed in e-decision-making, and focuses on e-civil participation practices. Australia and South Korea differ not only the e-democracy practices, but also political systems which are closely related the different shape of e-democracy practices between the two countries. These findings on e-democracy practices and research in Australia and in South Korea suggest it is worth conducting a comparative study on e-democracy practices in the two countries.
1.4 Research Methodology

Case study methodology is used to obtain an intensive and comprehensive understanding of the current phenomena involved in the real-life context, experiences and perspectives of e-democracy practices. The case study methodology was chosen to obtain an intensive and comprehensive understanding of the current phenomena of e-democracy practices, as it gives real-life contexts, experiences and perspectives. The six case studies of e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea focus on government websites, and on citizen-initiative examples; they have been chosen to provide a comprehensive analysis and comparison of a variety of e-democracy practices. The multiple case-study based on qualitative approaches provides an understanding of the socio-political phenomena in each country, and allows a comparison of diverse socio-political contexts that shape e-democracy practices in each country.

The six research cases for this study are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The type of cases</th>
<th>Australia</th>
<th>South Korea</th>
</tr>
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</table>

These particular research cases have been carefully chosen for the research design and the research aims. They are selected not in the sense that they are typical, but because they succeeded at increasing the political interest of the public, engaging politically apathetic groups back into politics, and

2 This study has two research focuses (government and civil society) to understand and compare e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea. To successfully compare e-democracy practices between the two countries, this study needs to define these two terms: participatory e-government and e-civil participation. For government-initiative e-democracy, the term e-government is used in common. But this study focuses on engaging participation of citizens in government decision (policy)-making processes, so this study adds ‘participatory’ on the term of existing e-government to define government-initiative e-democracy. For citizen-initiative e-democracy, this study creates the new term ‘e-civil participation’; this term focuses on using ICTs to enable citizens to participate widely and voluntarily in political decision-making processes.
integrating into people’s everyday lives political activities for making public policy.

Four research cases from the total of six cases, were government-initiative e-democracy practices: GetInvolved and FutureMelbourne Wiki of Australia, and Epeople and SMG (Seoul Metropolitan Government, hereafter called SMG) Online of South Korea. GetInvolved was established by the Queensland State Government; Future Melbourne Wiki was created by the Melbourne City Council; Epeople was built by the Ministry of Public Administration and Security (MOPAS) and managed by the Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission (ACRC); and SMG Online was managed by the Seoul City Government. The last 2 research cases, GetUp! and the 2008 candlelight protest against US beef imports, were citizen-initiative e-democracy practices: GetUp! was the most famous online-based grassroot advocacy group in Australia; and the 2008 candlelight protest against US beef imports was the biggest event both in online and in offline worlds in South Korea in 2008.

Multiple methods of data collection were used; they included documentation reviewing, refereed journal literature, website analysis, interviews, and participant observation. These were used to obtain a holistic view of the current practice of e-democracy in Australia and in South Korea in order to answer all Research Questions: Question 1, ‘How do ICTs affect the contemporary democracy?’, Question 2, ‘What is e-democracy in Australia and in South Korea?’; Question 3, ‘What are the similarities and differences of e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea?’; Question 4, ‘What has shaped the specialized national practices of e-democracy in Australia and in South Korea?’.

Documentation that was reviewed includes definitions of e-democracy and e-government; reports on domestic e-government policy; annual reports from both government institutions and online advocacy organization in each country; media reports; international surveys and their recommendations for best practice; and academic literature. Refereed journal literature were reviewed to understand the origin of e-democracy practice and research, to understand international standards and trends of e-democracy research and practices, to investigate e-government and e-democracy practices in various countries, and to learn best-practice examples of e-democracy and e-government. Documentation was an important data collection method for all research cases. Especially, documentation was a major data collection method for the 2008 candlelight protest against US beef imports, because the case of the 2008 candlelight was completed when the researcher was seeking the case study data in 2009 and it was impossible to collect data through interviews and observation, and whilst internet analysis was conducted to explore remaining threads from the protests many of the key websites active during the protests were no longer available.
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The website analysis focused on direct participation spaces for citizens, such as online consultations, online forums, and online suggestions. That is, it paid less attention to indirect spaces for engaging public participation such as introduction, policy publication, and events. This is because the purpose of this analysis of websites is to examine and compare the presence of online participation. The website analysis was used for all participatory e-government practices (GetInvolved, Future Melbourne Wiki, Epeople and SMG Online) to analyse how governments engage citizens to participate in the policy-making process and how citizens voice their opinions and attempt to influence governments through online participation spaces. But, for e-civil participation practices, the website analysis was used only for GetUp! to explore how citizens gather their voices and take political actions through the website of GetUp!.

Interviews were indispensable methods to develop a full understanding of the conceptual aspects of e-democracy in each country, and of the implications of conceptual aspects for each e-government practice. Interviews were used to collect data on all participatory e-government practices (GetInvolved, Future Melbourne Wiki, Epeople and SMG Online). Interviews were conducted with 2 or 3 public servants at those government departments and agencies which were responsible for community engagement, or for community participation in online discussions, or for online decision-making.

Participant observation is an unobtrusive method to gain understanding without interrupting discussions, and is also a method for cross-checking the data, to compensate for any possible gap between the ideal and the reality. Data was collected by participant observation at three offline events organized by GetUp!.
Table 1-4. Multi-methods of Data Collection for Each Research Case

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Cases</th>
<th>Documentation analysis</th>
<th>Website analysis</th>
<th>Interviews</th>
<th>Participant Observation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GetInvolved</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM wiki</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getup!</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epeople</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMG Online</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 2008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candlelight</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.5 Outcomes of the Study

This study compares e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea, and identifies similarities and differences between the two countries’ e-democracy practices categorized by the two forms of e-democracy practices (participatory e-government, including two different levels of participatory e-government, and e-civil participation). In particular, it can be seen that differences between e-democracy practices in the two countries are not determined either by technology or by socio-political contexts, but by the complex relationship between the development of technology, the pre-existing political environment, the political goals of using ICTs and the development, and importance of civil society in their respective countries. These research outcomes offer several guides for e-democracy researchers and practitioners.

For e-democracy researchers, this study makes a theoretical contribution, particularly the adoption of social construction of technology, in the study of e-democracy (and e-government). In general, the theoretical focus in studying e-democracy was on defining the relationship between technology and socio-political changes: two determinisms (technological determinism and social determinism) have been long-running antagonists. But this ‘one-versus-the-other’ perspective of theoretical approaches in e-democracy did not fully investigate the diverse meanings of e-democracy and the range of factors and their complex interactions in shaping e-democracy practices. Recently, the importance of both technology and socio-political elements in e-democracy theoretical approaches have been recognized, but e-democracy research has not yet been investigated through the lens of social construction of
technology. To go beyond the current theoretical challenges of e-democracy research, this study applied social construction of technology to identify the complex relations between technology and socio-political elements in a particular environment.

Specifically, this study employed three key terms - interpretive flexibility, relevant social groups, and technological frame from the social construction of technology theory developed in studying technological innovation - to analyse and compare e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea. By the application of these three terms from Wiebe Bijker’s theory of the social construction of technology (Bijker, 1995) it is hoped an account can be offered of how the various forms of e-democracy in the two countries come to take the form they do, and an explanation developed that shows how the different practices result from the flexible understanding of the technologies and from the socio-political contexts. Interpretive flexibility is a methodological direction to understand the social processes that construct new socio-political artefacts. With the construction of new artefacts there is often a period where there is a proliferation of competing technological frames. There is a coagulation of particular relevant social groups with the technology, each of which interprets and gives meaning to the technology in different ways, forms ways of interacting with each other and with the artefact, to create competing or different technological frames. The relevant social groups are the groups which influence or are influenced to stabilize technologies to take the forms they do in a particular society. Technological frame is a theoretical concept to understand the development of relevant social groups and how various actors come to build up their interaction with the technology and with each other (Bijker, 1995, pp.122-127). To understand how a technological frame builds up around an artefact it is necessary to understand the linking of all kinds of ecological factors (technical and material factors, social and political factors, organizational and business factors, and the interaction between/among factors) and their influence on whether or not a relevant social group attributing a particular set of meanings to an artefact comes into being. As the relevant social groups and the technological frame they are associated with encounter these wider forces in the social environment one may become dominant, or temporary or permanent closure may occur with one of the competing frames winning out over others. Alternatively there may be divergence as each relevant social group applies their particular way of reading the artefact and solving the problems that arise for them, transforming the technology as they actively work it into their lives and goals. The relationship between the three key terms, interpretive flexibility, relevant social groups and technological frame are shown in figure 1-4. The application of social construction of technology and its three key concepts produced significant outcomes; this theoretical approach which extends semiotics from understanding symbols and meanings to understanding socio-technical ensembles, the meanings
artefacts take on for relevant social groups and how the particular form of the technological frame comes to take the shape and meanings it does provides a new theoretical approach in e-democracy research and a tool-box of theoretical concepts to explore existing e-democracy practices. So this study provides a useful theoretical approach for e-democracy scholars to effectively explore various e-democracy practices and to fruitfully investigate them.

Figure 1-4. Diagram Showing Relations between Key Concepts from the SCOT

For e-democracy practitioners (including all kinds of political institutions, civil organizations, and individual activists) in the two countries (Australia and South Korea) selected for this study, and for other countries, this study encourages greater experimentation to help them find the best form of e-democracy, and to help develop existing e-democracy practices. This study can also provide significant lessons for potential e-democracy practitioners (for example, in developing countries) to help them to find a suitable forms of e-democracy in their particular environment.

1.6 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis comprises 10 chapters. Chapter 1 presents an introduction to the comparison of e-democracy practices in Australia and South Korea; it covers the background of the study, the research aims and questions, the significance of the study, and an overview of the research methods, of the
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outcomes of the study, and of the structure of the thesis.

Chapter 2 reviews a range of theoretical and empirical literature on democracy and e-democracy. This focuses on academic literature, on each country’s publications, and on international publications on e-democracy standards and practices. This chapter also covers major debates on e-democracy and on political participation. Then, this chapter sets up the research framework, the social construction of technology, and reviews three key concepts of social construction of technology - interpretive flexibility, relevant social groups and technological framework. Chapter 2 concludes with a discussion of the implications of the literature for this thesis.

Chapter 3 provides an overview of the political backgrounds of Australia and South Korea. The overview includes political thought and culture, the political system, and the role of civil society, in each country. The overview concludes with a comparison of the socio-political backgrounds of the two countries.

Chapter 4 details the methodological approach used in this study. It gives rationales for the use of qualitative methodology and multiple case studies to compare e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea. It also presents the research methods: document review, website analysis, interviews, and observation.

Chapter 5 presents the developments of e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea. This chapter begins to review the strategies, plans, and actual developments of e-democracy practices at all levels of government. In addition, the chapter examines the use of ICTs in civil society in each country. Chapter 5 concludes with a comparison of e-democracy developments in Australia and in South Korea.

Chapter 6 introduces and briefly describes the six research cases. Each case is described sequentially, and includes the motivations for the development of each e-democracy practice, the major players leading each practice, the features of each case, and the achievements of each e-democracy practice.

Chapter 7 analyses and discusses the key findings from the cross-country comparison of state and national level of participatory e-government practices - GetInvolved and Epeople - in accordance with the three key dimensions of social construction of technology. The discussion of findings includes the influence of socio-political backgrounds, the activities of relevant social groups, the power of
technology, and the interaction between all of them. Chapter 7 concludes with the comparison between the two participatory e-government practices of higher levels governments in Australia and in South Korea.

Chapter 8 analyses and discusses the key findings on two local levels of participatory e-government practices - Future Melbourne Wiki and SMG Online - in accordance with three key dimensions of social construction of technology. Chapter 8 uses the same analysis and discussion sequence as Chapter 7. Chapter 8 concludes with the similarities and differences between the two local levels of participatory e-government practices in Australia and in South Korea.

Chapter 9 focuses on e-civil participation practices and again analyses and discusses the key findings from Australia and South Korea. It also uses three dimensions of social construction of technology to discuss each e-civil participation practice, and to compare e-civil participation practices in Australia and in South Korea.

Chapter 10 summarises and integrates the principal findings of the study in response to the research questions. It also discusses the theoretical and practical implications of the study, and concludes with directions for future research.
Chapter 2

Literature Review on Democracy and on E-democracy

The principle of democracy, ‘rule by the people’, has been an important idea of political systems until now (Held, 1996; Lee, 2004; Swift, 2006). This principle of democracy has implicated to every political systems as a notion of political participation of citizens. However, the notion of political participation has been debated in democracy literature for a long time, because the terms of ‘rule’ and ‘the people’ have not had the same sense over time. In the modern century of democracy, ‘the people’ broadly means popular and ‘rule’ generally means popular rule. This modern concept of democracy is enacted in many countries and is known as representative democracy. A representative democratic system allows people to participate in political decision-making processes, but in only electing political representatives (who decide national political tasks on behalf of the public) through elections.

Due to the limited political participation of citizens, representative political system has been criticized to make many political problems (Arendt, 1965; Barber, 1984; Wolff, 1988; Swift, 2006; Birch, 2007). To solve problems made by the limited political participation, the need of wider and deeper political participation of citizens has been urged. A question arises here: how can political participation be increased? Each time that new communication technologies have been introduced, enthusiasm for expanding political participation has increased. Particularly, the invention of ICTs in the 1990s increased expectation of a much more fruitful future for democracy than provided by traditional print and broadcast media. This is because ICTs provide interactive communications among users that previous technologies have not had (Boncheck, 1997, pp.73-75). As a result, and in spite of the short history of the political use of ICTs, ICTs are heavily employed to improve democracy, and this trend is intensifying (Chadwick, 2006, p.20). In addition, the concept of e-democracy is closely connected to the ideal of democracy and the e-democracy research has aimed to find how ICTs and democracy are interacted. Therefore, this review of the literatures on democracy and on e-democracy is essential to enable full understanding of the political impact of ICTs and the idea of e-democracy.

This chapter reviews literature on the theoretical context and debates on democracy as well as on e-democracy. The chapter defines the nature of democracy, and extends to theoretical debates on contemporary democracy. The chapter then focuses on e-democracy literature, including discussions on technology diffusion and socio-political changes, the definitions, debates, effects and practices of e-democracy, and theoretical dimensions of the impact of ICTs on political participation. Next, this chapter designs a research framework for this study. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the implications of the literature for the study.
2.1 Context of Democracy

The term democracy has roots from the Ancient Greek word *kratos*, meaning ‘power’ or ‘rule’. That is, democracy means ‘rule by the demos’, where ‘the demos’ stands for ‘the people’ or ‘the many’ (Held, 1996; Lee, 2004; Swift, 2006; Birch, 2007). This classic definition of democracy from Ancient Greek is still the basic concept of democracy. However, in-depth meaning of classic democracy raises two questions: how to define ‘the people’ and how to define ‘the rule’. Does ‘the people’ mean all adults including not only men, but also women and people of all races, or only these men who possess enough property? Does ‘the rule’ mean the activity of reaching authoritative decisions such as laws and regulations, or is it limited to electing representatives? The answers to these questions have changed as political values and ideas have changed over time.

In Ancient Greek, neither ‘the people’ nor ‘the rule’ had the same sense as they do now. The term ‘people’ in classic democracy means only adult men who were well-educated and who possessed property; popular ‘rule’ advocated the interests of adult men only (Birch, 2007). The fundamental belief of classic democracy is to doubt the political capability of the general public (Birch, 2007). The Greek philosopher Plato (429-347 B.C.E) believed that individuals were born with different souls and conditions. So different individuals naturally take very different social classes and duties in life. In his view, the general public were not able to rule their political interests wisely (Andelman, 2012, p.1; Jones, 1953). Social elitists such as Pareto (1848-1923), Mosca (1857-1941) and Michels (1876-1936), also proclaim the classic notion of democracy: that all societies have two classes of people: a class that rules, and a class that is ruled. The resources and necessities for rule are unequally distributed, and the dominant minority has political power to control the subordinate majority. In their view, democracy is a simple idea that political power is in hands of elites or privileged minorities (Heywood, 2004, p.230). This view of democracy provides the suffrage and political participation only to privileged individuals, and it entitles these individuals to protect their property against government power. Therefore, the right to political participation is deeply reliant on property ownership.

The limited sense of political participation in classical democracy has improved and expanded to mean all people, and equal rule. Bentham (1748-1832), a British philosopher in the eighteenth century, insists on the importance of individual rights. He advocates universal suffrage and believes that the public suffrage enables to achieve ‘the greatest happiness of the greatest number’ (Cutler, 1999, p.323; Heywood, 2004, p.229). He claims that the universal suffrage can be realized when the political interests of each individual are estimated equally, and individuals have a will to ask their own political
interests. More radical theorists of democracy in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, Rousseau (1712-1778) and Mill (1806-1873), regard political participation as a good in itself and as a useful mechanism to represent the political interests of community (Roberts, 2004, p.323). Rousseau views democracy as the most important means through which humans can achieve freedom or autonomy, and the tool for protecting community and collective interests (Roberts, 2004, pp.323-325). He insists that citizens are free only when they participate directly and continuously to shape the life of their community. Rousseau’s logic of democracy emphasizes the relationship between individual freedom or autonomy and the entity of community. He also claims that government should be accept community demands, and decide policies for the general will (Pateman, 1970). In the same way, Mill believes that political participation enables an increase in social affinity among individuals, and promotes a sense of social solidarity (Heywood, 2004, p.230; Roberts, 2004, pp.323-324). In this reading, democracy can be seen as an egalitarian force standing in opposition to any form of privilege or hierarchy.

Democracy in the 20th century has broadly signified ‘the people’ as the popular and ‘the rule’ as popular rule: ‘the people’ means every adult regardless of education, of property, and of gender, or of disability, and ‘the rule’ includes not only electing representatives but also making political decisions. This sense of democracy has focused on the ownership of the people in the rule making (Dahl, 1994, p.26). The U.S. political scientist and pluralist, Dahl (1915- ) insists to expand the participation of the people in political arena (Krous, 1982). He claims that popular rule can be achieved only when a democratic decision-making process is practiced: representatives are elected by the people; government respects and provides a feedback to public opinions (Dahl, 2000, pp.48-50). Representatives also allow a range of groups that influence to maintain society, such as government agencies, state-own banks and investors, to contribute to the political process (Dahl, 1994, p.32). All these groups cannot have equal power and interests in politics, but each of them can access to government, and government shows the willingness to consider the opinions pressing from various groups (Dahl, 1994, p.32). He believes that this democratic decision-making process prevents to have permanent political power for elites and engages the participation of the public in the political arena (Dahl, 2000, pp.46-48). This view of democracy can be seen that more participation of citizens leads to better democratic values.

Conversely, there is a concept contrary to these concepts of the people as the popular and of the rule as the popular rule in political process. This concept doubts the capability of the public as the decision maker: the public are not intelligent enough to make political decisions, so the participation by the
unwise public cannot lead to develop the society (Heywood, 2004, p.231). A well-known Spanish political scientist, Ortega (1885-1955) agrees to the ancient perspective of democracy that the public rule should be decided by the intellectual elites. He divides the two classes in a society: leaders and followers, and leaders are educated, wise, and intellectual minorities whilst followers are the public majority. So, decisions made by leadership of qualified elites are the best result to develop a society (Maldonado-Denis, 1961, pp.679-680). Practically, Ortega believes that the political threats in European countries at the time of the early 20th century were caused by rising culture of mass society and needs the stand up of qualified minorities or elites to solve that (Maldonado-Denis, 1961, pp.683-686). This perspective believes that the popular rule decided by the public participation is likely to reduce the authority of representative, and tends towards the notion of representative democracy which is demonstrated in the next section.

In sum, democracy as a political theory and ideal has been debated for a long time. These arguments about democracy have revolved around two issues: the specifics of ‘the people’ and the specifics of ‘the rule’. Abraham Lincoln clearly articulated an important idea of democracy when he addressed his political desire for ‘government of the people, by the people and for the people’ in Gettysburg at the time of the American Civil War (Brettschneider, 2006, p.269). At the same time, Lincoln’s idea of democracy raised two debated concepts of democracy: government by the people, and government for the people. The first, government by the people, is based on the idea that the public has a right to participate in government. This follows the classical concept of democracy and is firmly rooted in the idea of public participation in terms of direct democracy, or as it is sometimes referred to, as participatory democracy. The second, government for the people, is that a government advocates the benefits for the public. As the government consists of professional politicians who are elected by the public, so that government is responsible for making decisions on behalf of the public. The final decision should support the benefits of the public (Brettschneider, 2006, p.269). This can be referred to as representative democracy, and may be the most common political system in contemporary times.

In this section, the study looks at the long-term debates on democracy. This literature on democracy teaches the two major players in political arena: government and citizens, and the arguments on the importance of political participation. The knowledge discussed in the section is essential to build up the theoretical debates on e-democracy, because key factors of democracy theories are still important in e-democracy practices and also make arguments on e-democracy research. How this theoretical literature on democracy is related to the e-democracy is presented in the following several sections. The next section demonstrates the benefits and faults of the contemporary political system to
understand the origins of theoretical debates on e-democracy.

2.2 Virtue and Deficits of Contemporary Democracy

The principle of representative democracy has been enacted in many countries that aim to reach the ideal of democracy. In modern society, the boundary of the state has expanded, and the population in most countries has significantly grown. Those conditions have not properly met the classic arrangement of democracy. The expansion of the boundary of the state and the growth of the population have limited the physical space for citizens to engage directly in political decision-making process (Pitkin, 2004, p.338). Together, the expansion of the state boundary and the growth of the population mean that it takes a long time to gather citizens’ demands and to make public decisions; it has also been impossible to give equal opportunities for all citizens to participate in the public decision-making process (Snellen, 2001, pp.45-46). These circumstances justify representative democracy as the best democratic arrangement that is able to adequately represent the classical principle of democracy, and provide an adequate political system in modern times (Birch, 2007).

The core principle of representative democracy is to create and maintain checks and balances between citizens and their political representatives. Representative democracy has two basic principles to keep harmonious the relationship between citizens and their representatives. One principle is that citizens have the right of sovereignty. Citizens vote for their representatives who make decisions on behalf of the public; citizens also monitor the political activities of representatives, particularly whether or not they make fair regulations, and govern in the public interest (Swift, 2006, pp.189-191). The other principle was about the rights and responsibilities of representatives. Representatives have legitimacy to decide and implement public policies. As representatives are elected by the majority of the citizens, they are regarded as people who have sufficient ability to deal with complex issues - which are quite difficult to decide by ordinary citizens - and to make efficient public policies for citizens (Swift, 2006, pp.187-189). In so doing, the core principle of representative democracy provides benefits for both the political rights of citizens, and for the political responsibility of representatives.

However, the core principle of representative democracy has revealed practical limitations. The major limitations are connected to the indirect form of democracy, and restrictive political participation (Lee, 2004, p.18). The representative democratic political system allows citizens only limited political participation by giving their vote to elect their representatives. The elected representatives are the
main body performing political and public activities. Accordingly, representative democracy has focused on political activities of elected representatives, which efficiently make political decisions and legitimately govern the whole range of rules (Pitkin, 2004, p.340). This restricted political participation in representative democracy has, in practice, produced a lack of communication between governments and citizens (Chadwick, 2006 p.85). This lack of communication between political actors has reduced political efficiencies: government have rarely shown the will to collect public opinions in decision-making processes; citizens do not expect the government to make public decisions for citizens (Kim & Yun, 1999, p.89; Lee, 2004, p.18). Because of this situation, Birch (2007) criticizes that representative democracy might not fully achieve the fundamental of democracy, defined as government by the people, although representative democracy may successfully make a form of government for the people, and might be the only practicable form of democracy in the modern age.

Three limitations of representative democracy have been identified by researchers. The first deficit of representative democracy is a lack of qualifications of political representatives (Cho, 2009, p.95). Representatives have not always prioritized public service for citizens, but have often made policies that increased their own benefit to themselves. This is because a small number of people, political elites, make political or public policies. So, public policies in representative democracy have inevitably reflected the interest of political elites (Barber, 1984; Lee, 2004; Cook, 2004; Yoon, 2008). These one-way political decisions by a small number of political representatives can gradually exclude the demands of citizens in the decision-making process. The more citizens are alienated from governmental arrangements, the more citizens complain about ineffective political decisions. As a countermove to governments, citizens have been putting a veto on participating in politics, and political apathy has increased (Yoon, 2008).

This first deficit of political representatives has reduced the political interest of public in politics, and it can define a lack of political interest by the public. Citizens expect that elected representatives will fairly consider what the public want, and make political decisions according to public interest. However, contrary to expectations of citizens, political representatives have not sufficiently considered public requests; instead, political representatives often decide policies by making deals with powerful groups (Cooray, 2000; Tommasoli, 2005, pp.4-5). Thus, representative democracy is likely to be a political process where the interests of proactive and powerful groups are strongly reflected in final decisions, rather than one where popular demands have influenced public policies. Arendt (1965), one of the most famous democracy theorists, points to this degeneration of
representative government: ‘Representative government has in fact become oligarchic government’ (p. 273), in the sense that ‘Representatives are not admitted to the public realm, and once more the business of government has become the privilege of the few’ (p. 240). This deficit of representative democracy has often appeared as undemocratic conditions such as the corruption of political elites and illegal fundraising for political activities (Yun & Chang, 2007). For this reason, many scholars (Elster, 1986; Cooray, 2000; Cook, 2004; Yoon, 2008) criticize the representative democracy as the failure for advocating the public interests.

These two deficits of representatives - a lack of qualification of political representatives, and a lack of political interest by the public - have reduced public participation in politics. According to the nature of representative democracy, political delegates hold their authority and political power from the election. The authority of political delegates can be legitimized only if citizens are continually interested in, and participate in, politics (Wolff, 1998, pp.27-28 & 31). However, citizens have largely turned off participating in elections to decide their representatives, because representatives are not reflecting the demands and thoughts of citizens in the decision-making processes, so citizens are not trusting in their representatives (Tommasoli, 2005, pp.6-15). Their distrust in the government leads citizens to give up participating in politics. Such a disconnection between representatives and citizens has reduced not only voting rates, but also party membership, and other mainstream political activities. Also the public efficiency of political participation has not reached the satisfaction level that citizens expect (Tommasoli, 2005, pp.15-19).

On the surface, the decline in voting rates is definitely a political problem around the world in terms of the lack of political participation by the public. According to the IDEA report (2002), worldwide average turnout has dropped from 73% in the mid-1980s to 64% in the mid-1990s; voting rates in all regions (including Oceania, Asia, North America, Central and South America, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Middle East and Africa) have fallen. This world result of voting rates is generally reflected across countries. For instance, the voting rate in South Korea dropped about ten percent points between the 1987 Presidential election (89.2%) and the 1997 election (80.7%) (Kang, 2008, p. 120). The US has also shown seriously low voting rates: It dropped from 60% in the 1984 Presidential election to 49% in 1996 (US DCESA, 1991; Castells, 2004, p. 410). Some countries, such as Australia, have compulsory voting systems to hold a stable level of voting rates; but they have experienced the reduction of citizens’ interest in politics (Lundell, 2012, pp.226-229). The political scientist Jaensch describes the political disengagement of Australians: “the main component of Australian political culture has long been a combination of apathy towards politics, and a scepticism, even a cynicism,
towards its institutions and political actors” (cited in Backhouse, 2007 p. 107). In this reading, the demands of citizens have not properly influenced the decision-making process, even under the compulsory voting system. Citizens have lost their passion for understanding politics, their interest in current public issues, and their willingness to participate in politics. This decline in citizens’ political participation has produced a more serious problem in politics: increased political apathy of the public.

The three deficits - a lack of qualifications for the public delegation, a lack of political interest by the public, and a lack of public participation - have directly attacked both the legitimacy and the efficiency of representative democracy as the dominant political system in contemporary times (Lee, 2004, p.73). At the same time, the demands of citizens to interact with political elites in decision-making have increased considerably by the growth of popular referenda, recall, and co-production of policies in the late 20th century (Kang, 2009, p.9). As Barber (1984) claims, the diminution of political participation is the worst problem of current representative democracy. He believes that political participation is the most important factor in the success or failure of democratic practices, and political participation is the most important theme to recover the rule by the people.

So, what is political participation and how can political participation be increased? Political participation as an alternative way to minimize the deficits of representative democracy does not mean just registering a vote or simply engaging in decision-making processes. Participation is defined (Barber, 1984, p.228; Lee, 2004; p.78) as a political process, requiring that citizens have more interest in public policies, have a deeper understanding of public issues, and finally participate in politics day-by-day. Each time that a new communication technology has been used as a political tool, there has been an expectation of increased real political participation by the public (Smith, 1986; Stamm et al., 1997). In particular, the political application of ICTs in 1990s looked like they would provide a fruitful future, with more political participation than ever before. This was due to the properties of ICTs such as the huge volume of information, the high speed of information sharing and communication, the decentralized control over content, and the interactivity (Gibson & Ward, 2000, pp. 10-11). Those properties of ICTs have been rapidly applied in political arena, and this trend has been intense in many countries. However, at the same time, the political impact of ICTs has produced the contradictory outcomes of fruitful future that using ICTs can increase political participation (Chadwick, 2006, pp.84). Therefore, the following section considers the impact of ICTs in politics in terms of e-democracy.
2.3 Literature on E-democracy

2.3.1 Overview of Technology Diffusion and Socio-political Changes

Communication technologies have been crucial in developing and changing contemporary society. In particular, ICTs have totally changed social and political life. From the social perspective, ICTs have expanded the boundaries of citizens’ social life from one limited to offline society to one that includes the online environment. In politics, the development of ICTs has reversed some limitations of representative democracy systems. The relationship between ICTs and democracy has increased a hopeful expectation that ICTs, particularly the internet, could not only escalate the level of democracy in a specific country, but also expand democratization over the world (Chadwick, 2006). The socio-political changes have been facilitated by the extra-ordinary benefits of ICTs: in particular, their capacity to store huge amounts of information, and their ability to allow communicating in real time. However, the development of ICTs has raised a question of how ICTs interact with social and political circumstances. Long-running debates have sought to define the relation between technologies and socio-political changes (Feenber, 1999, cited in Chadwick, 2006, p.18).

The debates begin with a focus on the influence of technologies in socio-politics, named technological determinism (Chadwick, 2006, p. 18). The foundation of technological determinism is that society is changed by technological developments. Technology is a primary motor of social and political changes. There are two brands of technological determinism: pessimism, and optimism. Pessimistic technical determinism claims that the development of technologies does not change the socio-political class but produces the new form of social divide and hierarchy. Also, the impact of ICTs is not different from the socio-political impact of previous technologies (Chadwick, 2006; Knight et al., 2007). By contrast, the optimistic perspective of technological determinism suggests that the development of technologies could solve social and political problems. The optimistic view has strongly expected that the benefits of ICTs - including wider, broader, and more open communication forms than traditional print and mass media - promote fundamental change to all social and political activities (Chadwick, 2006; Knights et al., 2007), and lead to a more fruitful democratic society, and so directly develops positively the political system. Specifically, this optimistic perspective of technical determinism predicts that ICTs would directly minimize the limitations of contemporary democratic systems - such as political apathy, the tyranny of the majority, and political corruption (Shultz, 1985; Dahl, 1989; Kedzie, 1997; Kim & Park, 2005, pp.15-16; Ko & Song, 2007). Regardless of the positive and negative impacts of ICTs in politics, technological determinism commonly
suggests that technology has its own property, and the inherent property of technology is beyond the
domain of socio-political intervention.

The second perspective of relations between technology and socio-politics is *social determinism*
(Chadwick, 2006, p. 18) or sometimes *social shaping of technology* (Knights *et al.*, 2007, p.41).
Social determinism begins as a counter to the perspective of technological determinism. Social
determinism argues that technologies are not distinctive or new, and do not have socio-political logic
in themselves at all (Ellul, 1964). The key point of social determinism is that technology is merely one
of the elements that affects social and political changes: the adoption (and the use) of technology is
decided by the socio-political context (Robinson & Webster, 1986; Kim & Park, 2005, pp.16-17). This
perspective does not deny the importance of technologies in socio-political changes; however, social
forces have decided to shape the technological change. However, once a technology is developed, not
all technologies are able to be changed by social forces; only selected technologies can be so
influenced (Chadwick, 2006; Knight *et al.*, 2007). Such a social determinism less considers the
political influence of ICTs. Arterton (1994) argues that the success of e-democracy practices is
decided by the political competence and the level of civil society, rather than by technology itself. The
development and diffusion of ICTs have not produced a total decentralization of socio-politics, but
have influenced the diverse shape of socio-politics according to a range of social and economic

The third perspective goes beyond both technological determinism and social determinism, but draws
on elements of both; it is called *social construction of technology* (Bijker *et al.*, 1989, p. 26; Knight *
et al.*, 2007, p. 43), or *political technologies in political context* (Chadwick, 2006, p. 19). This
perspective supports neither that technology simply determines society, nor that society entirely
decides technological change. This is because such a black and white conflict between technical and
social determinism does not take account of both the nature of technologies and social complexity
(Chadwick, 2006, p.20; Ko, 2006, pp.38-51). Instead, the third perspective is that a technology has
socio-political properties, and society and political processes cannot be represented without
technological instruments (Rosenau, 2000). The close relationship between technology and socio-
politics has importantly influenced e-democracy research. Mumford (1967) and Winner (1977) claim
that the development and influence of technologies cannot be demonstrated by only one perspective,
but are shaped by socio-political issues such as which group has the strongest will to use technologies,
what the purpose of using the technologies is, or how the social and political actors use technologies.
Castells (2000) believes that the socio-political outcomes depend on a complex pattern of interaction
between technological change and various social factors, such as individual creativity, the process of technology development, and social application of technological innovation. Chadwick (2006) also claims that the impact of ICTs in political arena is decided by the influence of technologies, as well as by the socio-political contexts. These arguments highlight that, first, ICTs are not simple instruments to be employed, but processes to be developed. Second, ICTs are not able to independently determine outcomes, but are able to outcome results by interacting with the socio-political context (purposeful social influence).

Above all, three approaches of technology diffusion and the socio-political changes are discussed. The discussion helps to understand various perspectives of the relationship between the technological and socio-political developments, and to decide the suitable perspective that can be applied for this study. The third perspective seeks to explain how social contexts including culture, social arrangements, and public (or political) organizations influence technological change, and how and why specific technologies emerge and are adopted at particular times and in particular areas. This social construction of technology might not deal with all events and circumstances reliant on technological innovation, but it understands ICTs as political tools and provides an understanding of the importance of both technology variables and socio-political variables in an existing political context. For this reason, the perspective of social construction of technology has become important in e-democracy research as a new approach to evaluate the complex interrelationship between technology and socio-politics. It is for these reasons that the perspective of social construction of technology has been chosen as appropriate to the aims of this study, so this study applied social construction of technology for the research framework to compare cross-country practices on e-democracy in Australia and in South Korea.

2.3.2 Changes of E-democracy Meaning

The term e-democracy emerged in 1950s but it was more related to the concept we know today as e-government which improves the efficiency of administration and employees new communication technologies in the centre of political institutions and governments. In 1990s, e-democracy was evolved as an important term in politics, and has become the focus for leaders of a new age of politics and civic engagement; the emergence of internet in 1990s was expected to promote the ideology of information freedom and to achieve the political independence of cyberspace (Vedel, 2006). In this sense, e-democracy in the 1990s was understood as a focus on the internet as a political platform
which can reduce existing political deficits, increase political participation of the public, and improve
the relationship between political representatives and citizens (Kim, 2006). One of the e-democracy
proponents, Negroponte (1995), in his book Being Digital, argues that the internet could remove
barriers between traditional haves and have-nots because of its openness and equalizing capacity.
Rheingold (1993, 2000) believes that the internet had the potential to revive the Athenian democratic
ideal of deliberation and participation through its interactive and multidirectional nature. On the other
hand, there was a negative opinion that ICTs do not change the existing social phenomenon. Norris
(1998, 2001) argues that the internet cannot improve the social divide, but will reinforce social
hierarchies in cyberspace. Thus, the discussion of e-democracy at this stage tended to be theoretical
and concerns whether the internet would improve democracy or not.

Since 2000s, when the internet has become a common tool around the world, e-democracy has not
been a theoretical concept, but becomes a practical term. The impact of ICTs in political arena has
been practiced until now and the discussion of e-democracy has been diverged by the different
focuses on the ideal of democracy, by regional and cultural specialization and by the specific (or
various) parts of present political systems (Jaeger, 2003; Vedel, 2006). One of the most famous issues
on e-democracy practices and studies is the government-led e-democracy (Coleman and Norris, 2004).
This form of e-democracy is generally called e-government. E-government had a different meaning
from e-democracy: e-democracy focuses to increase political participation of citizens in all political
arenas (Chadwick, 2006); e-government focused to improve the effectiveness of administrative costs
and of online delivery of government services until the early 2000s (Griffiths, 2002; UN, 2003). Soon
thereafter however, e-government has added the engagement of citizens as a key democratic feature of
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and of online delivery of government services until the early 2000s (Griffiths, 2002; UN, 2003). Soon
thereafter however, e-government has added the engagement of citizens as a key democratic feature of
e-government practices and shared democratic ideas in its fundamental concept, recognizing the
necessity of citizen engagement in governments to solve the untrust of the public to governments, to
counter government corruption, and to monitor that the public gets good public value from
government services (Chung, 2007; OECD, 2003; UN, 2004). Thus e-government evolved new aims
to improve the trust between citizens and governments, the transparency of policy-making processes
and the accountability of governments by engaging citizens deciding public policies and monitoring
public business. The necessity of adding a democratic feature, which involves citizens to take part in
decision-making processes, may be first seen as an e-government requirement in the report of an
international organization in the OECD report of 2003, ‘Promise and Problems of E-democracy’. According to this and other OECD reports, governments should engage citizens to play an important part in political decision-making process. Also, governments should be a leader to achieve an effective engagement of public. Clift (2004b) also emphasizes the proactive role of governments to engage and
enhance citizens’ participation in decision-making processes. The OECD concepts have been embraced by many countries to guide to their own e-government strategies: for instance, Australia’s principles for online citizen engagement was based on the notion of OECD on e-government (AGIMO, 2007a).

The recent meaning of e-government has been more focused on citizens and policy-making processes than previous meanings of e-government. The recent notion of e-government is raised by the development of Web 2.0 technologies and seeks to engage more participation of citizens and to apply democratic principles such as collaboration, cohesive connection and integration in decision-making processes (Centento et al., 2005; OECD, 2009; UN, 2010, 2012). This notion of e-government has been expanded to many countries and has been successfully practiced in several countries such as public wikis in Australia, Canada and New Zealand and collaborative e-decision making in South Korea. Above all, the meaning of e-government has been converging with conceptualizations of e-democracy, moving away from ICT for online passive communication of government information and even the more active transaction of what is still government controlled business. E-government activities of engaging the active participation of citizens in decision-making processes is often described as e-democracy.

The other famous issue on e-democracy practices and studies is citizen-initiative e-democracy. The citizen-initiative e-democracy is common called bottom-up e-democracy (OECD, 2003, pp.29-30; Yun & Chang, 2007). The citizen-initiative e-democracy has a continuous focus that increase citizens’ voluntary and systematic participation in political decision-making processes. The increase of citizens political participation in the citizen-initiative e-democracy means not only to increase citizens’ participation in election and public consultation, but also to share information, to mobilize public for taking political actions, to empower citizens in political arena (Griffiths, 2004, 2005). This notion of citizen-initiative e-democracy begins with the belief that ICTs are very easy and effective tools for citizens to find public information and to make networks with other ICT users (Shapiro, 1999). The benefits of ICTs further mobilize citizens to gather their opinions, to show their voices and to influence their needs both in agenda-setting and in decision-making processes (Poster, 1998). This notion of citizen-initiative e-democracy has built online-based socio-political groups and movements, and, by the development of Web 2.0 technologies in recent time, it has created many more diverse forms of political activities such as social-networking, blogging, Wikipedia, indi-media, and online activism (Chadwick, 2006; Chang, 2007; Griffiths, 2004, 2005; Petrik, 2009). The creation of new forms of citizen-initiative e-democracy practices allow citizens to take political influence without
intervention from existing political and media gatekeepers (Griffithes, 2004). Thus, the meaning of citizen-initiative e-democracy has continued to increase political participation of citizens, and this meaning expands the orbit of citizens’ political participation and diversifies the form of citizen-initiative political activities.

The meaning of citizen-initiative e-democracy often overlaps the concept of e-participation and e-engagement. All terms are included in the meaning of e-democracy, but the concept of citizen-initiative e-democracy is distinguished from the concept of e-participation and e-engagement: e-participation and e-engagement are closely related to government-initiative e-democracy practices since the UN included an e-participation index as a part of the e-government context in 2003 (Oh, 2011, p.4). As one example for reflecting the close relation of e-participation and e-engagement to the government-initiative, the Government of Western Australia clarifies e-engagement as “engagement of citizens’ online participation in ‘government’ decision-making” (“e-Engagement Guidelines”, 2008). On the other hand, the concept of citizen-initiative e-democracy has focused on political activities of pure citizens (or non-government-related groups or citizens acting externally from governments to influence governments) using ICTs (Chadwick, 2006, p.85). Thus, the concepts of citizen-initiative e-democracy and of e-participation (e-engagement) are possibly distinguished by the dependence on governments.

The discussion in the section let us know that a term ‘e-democracy’ was born in 1950s, but this term has been dynamically used since 1990s. Also, from the discussion, the concept of e-democracy has been changed from a theoretic-focused concept to be given practical meaning, and the research issues on e-democracy tend to be divided by a variety of foci of e-democracy concepts and practices. In addition, the tracing of the birth of many similar terms in e-democracy research and practice provide a clear meaning of each term and of the relationships between them. All these discussions help to set the two categories (participatory e-government and e-civil participation) of e-democracy practices in order to effectively compare e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea.

2.3.3 Various Ways to Define E-democracy

A clear definition of e-democracy is not readily available, since computer-mediated communication technologies are connected to all aspects of politics and government; however, e-democracy has come to be the term used to represent the use of ICTs in the political arena. The potential impact of ICTs in politics has been to reduce the problems of representative democracy and to reach the nature of
democracy, or government by the public (Kim, 2006). However, e-democracy has been poorly defined. Due to the short history of political use of ICTs, most e-democracy researchers agree that it would be premature to define a general concept of e-democracy, or to determine a common model; the political uses of ICTs are still evolving and it is difficult to anticipate fully how they will affect existing political institutions. In addition, many e-democracy projects have been concerned with only specific parts of present political systems so that it is quite difficult to draw up a general framework of e-democracy (Jaeger, 2003; Vedel, 2006). For these reasons, many terms have been used to describe the political impacts of ICTs such as tele-democracy, modern democracy, mosaic democracy, cyber democracy, virtual democracy, and digital democracy (Yang & Kim, 2002). Each term not only contributes to the e-democracy concept, but also brings a different focus to the nature of e-democracy. Therefore the three different ways to define e-democracy - the terminological description, the normative definition, and the phase models - are reviewed.

The first way to define e-democracy is the terminological description of what e-democracy is; this is regarded as the simplest definition of e-democracy. The best definition for this way is probably the one by Coleman and Norris (2005, pp. 6-8): ‘the use of ICTs to facilitate democratic activities’; Coleman and Norris define democracy according to the Webster dictionary as ‘a government in which supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation.’

The second way to define e-democracy is to seek a normative concept of how to practice e-democracy. This has been the most common way to define e-democracy. International organizations define e-democracy in this way, to provide a practical guide to effectively use ICTs in political arenas. The United Nations (UN) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) have attached importance to the value of e-democracy. These international organizations have encouraged the development of ICTs to provide opportunities for citizens to access governments and for governments to show the willingness that governments hear and consider the public voices (OECD, 2003). Koichiro Matsuura (2003), the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), who is quite outstanding in promoting e-democracy, has emphasized citizens’ involvement in the public policy-making process, and defines the purpose of e-democracy as follows:

[The aim of e-democracy] is to strengthen public trust in government and to improve relations between the government and its citizens through increased transparency and accountability of
government representatives, as well as to provide new possibilities for citizen involvement, owing to its capacity to link citizens with their representatives unbounded by time or space constraints. It means that citizens take an active part in the policy-making process. They are no longer seen as passive, but as pro-active with the possibility of proposing policy options and shaping the policy dialogue (cited in Amoretti, 2007, pp. 337-8).

The definition by international organizations is related to the principles of democracy and pays attention to the activities of governments and political institutions in order to use ICTs for increasing citizens’ participation, and so improving democratic systems.

While definitions by international organizations focus on the activities of political institutions, the following definitions by the U.K Hansard Society (2003) and by Clift (2004b) expand the boundaries of ‘democratic activities’ from political institutions to the people, and define e-democracy as focusing on engaging political participation and communicating (interacting) between political participants. The key project team on e-democracy in the UK, The UK Hansard Society (2003), provide two fundamental principles of e-democracy: political equality, which means all citizens should have equal opportunities to influence decision makers; and popular control, which refers to citizens’ control of whole-of-government activities in terms of transparency, accountability, and responsiveness. The UK Hansard Society suggests “the concept of e-democracy is associated with efforts to broaden political participation by enabling citizens to connect with one another and with their representatives via new information and communication technologies” (cited in Chadwick, 2006, p. 84). This definition points to the linkages among people as well as the connection between citizens and governments.

Clift (2004b), a well-known online democracy strategist, focuses on the differing roles of various democratic actors such as government, political parties, media, civil organizations and citizens, and then defines e-democracy as “the use of information and communication technologies and strategies by democratic sectors, which include democratic actors, within the political process to help sustain and adapt representative democratic governance.” He particularly emphasizes citizens as one of the most important political actors in efforts to address public challenges by using new communication technologies. This definition points to enhancing citizens’ participation in the present representative democracies.

In their Submission to the Inquiry into Electronic Democracy in Australia, Chen, Robert and Gibson
(2002) criticize substantial limitations of existing e-democracy definitions and emphasize the potential of ICTs to change both the nature of participation, and the social and political contexts of existing political practices. They describe e-democracy as follows:

E-democracy fundamentally entails a loss of control over democratic participation by government through the potential for greater participation by the public, and the formation of new types of political organization. Acceptance of the mutability of the participatory process is an essential element in “riding the wave” of change and development of democratic participation over the coming decades (Chen et al., 2002, p. 9).

This view of e-democracy highlights both ICTs and social characteristics. Chen et al. argue that technology should be an important factor in building e-democracy, and that e-democracy can be applied in social and political setting in various ways. More importantly, e-democracy would be best when technology and institutional and social characteristics are all interlocking with each other.

Recently, the definition of e-democracy focuses on applying the newest technologies (Web 2.0) to develop existing e-democracy environment. Petrik (2010) insists that Web 2.0 technologies facilitate both governmental and non-governmental actors to participate in collaborative policy-making processes. He claims that Web 2.0 can produce vast scale of information, communicate between decision-makers and citizens actively, and increase the influence of citizens in policy-making processes, so these benefits of Web 2.0 technologies are able to increase the quality of policy-making processes and to validate the final decisions. He calls this e-democracy using Web 2.0 technologies as “Deliberative-Collaborative e-Democracy” (Petrik, 2010, p.19). Petrik insists that the notion of Deliberative-collaborative e-democracy aims to involve all citizens in the entire policy-making processes, to improve the quality of policy-making processes by continual deliberation and collaboration, and to create policies for the entire public (Petrik, 2010, p.20). This view of e-democracy highlights both the newest technologies and the power distribution of citizens in decision-making processes.

The third way for making e-democracy definitions is different from the previous two ways. The third way points out how ICTs act in contemporary democracy, and how ICTs affect existing factors to make a new relationship in the e-democracy environment, rather than to state what e-democracy

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3 They mentioned that most e-democracy definitions focus on the use of ICTs to enrich democratic process, but that, practically, e-democracy remains limited in form and in scope (p. 7).
should be. In other words, the third way investigates the political impact of ICTs in democracy models, and calls for making e-democracy models that can be applied to any cases. Dahlberg (2001b) is the representative scholar of e-democracy flow models. He states that e-democracy can be related to classical models of democracy, and has categorized three camps of e-democracy:

1. **Cyber-libertarianism** which follows a liberal individualism approach and emphasizes the internet’s freedom for sharing information;
2. **Communitarian camp** which stresses the value of communal spirit and claims the internet’s interactive function for building community;
3. **Deliberative democracy** which emphasizes deliberation and discussion between citizens. Dahlberg found that Usenet groups and online forum activities could be classified as examples of deliberative democracy. They build mutual cyber communities and involved rational-critical discussion.

Dahlberg claims that e-democracy practice necessarily starts with **Cyber-liberalism** and moves toward **Deliberative democracy**, which is the completion stage of e-democracy.

Using methods similar to these of Dahlberg, Kim (2006) classifies e-democracy into four categories to evaluate the South Korean e-democracy environment, and to provide a guide for developing e-democracy practices in South Korea: **E-democracy in Organization**, **Information Provision Model of e-democracy**, **Interactive Model of e-democracy**, and **Pluralistic Model of e-democracy**. He evaluates all four e-democracy models in relation to supply and demand factors. E-democracy in Organization focuses strongly on the supply factor to practice e-democracy; Pluralistic model of e-democracy is heavily based on the demand factor. Information Provision Model of e-democracy and Interactive Model of e-democracy keep moderate relations between supply and demand factors. Kim argues that e-democracy practices have evolved from **E-democracy in Organization to Pluralistic Model of e-democracy**. It means that political institution-centric e-democracy has naturally changed to the citizen-centric model due to the democratic characteristics of ICTs. Making schemes for categorizing e-democracy concepts have been systematized in recent times as a new e-democracy study field. However, the endeavour to make a phase model that applies to every e-democracy condition has not yet been completed because of various internal and external influences including culture, and social and economic developments that shape e-democracy.

While various means for understanding e-democracy exist, the common theme in all of them
identifies ICTs as an instrument to improve democratic practices. The normative definitions emphasize ICTs as an important tool for improving the weak points of current representative democracy. From the perspective of world organizations, ICTs are unique tools to strengthen and improve public administrations. This is considered to be a principal indicator of the quality of democracy, and thus to achieve higher standards of living and greater economic and social empowerment for millions of citizens throughout the world. From the academic perspectives, ICTs are identified as an important tool to enhance citizens’ political participation, and to improve the relationship between representatives and the public. Also, the phase models of e-democracy describe how ICTs work in different phases, and aid the search for an ideal definition and ideal forms of e-democracy. All definitions discussed in the section are useful to understand the common theme of e-democracy and the theme supports the definition of e-democracy decided for this study. As a result of analysing various means of e-democracy, this thesis defines e-democracy as using information and communication technologies (ICTs) to enhance democratic structures and processes, particularly to engage political participation, and to increase the political influence of the public in decision-making processes.

2.3.4 E-democracy as Facilitating Political Participation

How do ICTs enhance democratic structure and processes? ICTs have been regarded as the best instrument to improve the deficits of contemporary democracy and to achieve the ideal of participatory democracy. As mentioned in Section 2.2, contemporary democracy reveals three deficiencies of political legitimacy and efficiency: a lack of qualifications of representatives, a lack of political interest by the public, and a lack of public participation. These three deficiencies of representative democracy are seen to be caused by limited political participation of citizens. To resolve these democratic deficiencies, ‘participation’ has become an important democratic notion for achieving the ideals of democracy theory, and ICTs are viewed by many as able to inject this element of the democratic ideal, ‘participation’, into contemporary democracy (Lee, 2004; Yoon, 2008). In this sense, e-democracy can be named as the new form of participatory democracy.

E-democracy interpreted as facilitating political participation may be split into two forms. The one form of online political participation can be initiated by government, and the other one can be originated by citizens (Williamson, 2007; Yun & Chang 2007). For the government committed to e-democracy, political participation has not simply meant registration to vote, but deep understanding of
public issues by citizens and engaging of the public throughout the whole government decision-making process, including suggesting agendas, discussing agendas, making final decisions, and implementing decisions (Barber, 1984; Overdevest, 2000; Lee, 2004; Swift, 2006; Williamson, 2007; Yoon, 2008). The innovation of ICTs has provided useful elements to facilitate citizens’ political participation. The commitment to engage citizens’ participation in government online has been called ‘e-government’, which improves both efficiency of administration (such as providing useful information to citizens by government and political institutions via the internet, and providing better government services through online channels) and relationship between political representatives and citizens (Clift, 2002, 2004b; Chen, 2002; Bishop & Anderson, 2004; Ward, Lusoli & Gibson, 2007).

From the terminological connotation of government, the study of e-government has emphasized how ICTs can be applied to society in ways that build good governance. Relations between technology and socio-political factors have been broadly studied by the OECD. The OECD report (2003) emphasizes that e-government is more focused on the ‘government’ than ‘e’ (p.1) and demonstrates the different levels of e-government between developing and developed countries caused by gaps in democratic development. The report has suggested that developing countries should follow practices that have been established in developed countries, because developed countries have systemized e-government well in ways that enhance democratic processes.

The second form of political participation has also focused on increasing ownership by citizens of the decision-making process through informal procedures such as referenda, social activities, and community action groups (Williamson, 2007; Yun & Chang, 2007). ICTs have empowered citizens themselves to make a new form of society (Williamson, 2009, p.308). Castells (2000) has indicated the emergence of ‘Network Society’ as one important feature of ICTs in political arena. He proposes that ICTs may create new deliberative mechanisms, and mobilize issue-based groups such as environmentalist and other social movements. His propositions have been supported practically by examples of ICTs’ influence on making network society. Such examples include the Whole Earth ‘Lectronic Link (WELL), which is the first successful online community, and the Minnesota E-democracy, which is the most successful example of using ICTs to make a networked society (Chadwick, 2006, pp.98-91). In these examples, ICTs have been a major tool in making a network society and in practicing internet politics. More importantly, ICT users have been a major factor in socio-political development to achieve interactive communication among all political participants through the use of ICTs. Citizens are the basis of democratic growth and strengthening the polity, and ICTs are a vital instrument for making a healthy democracy (Castells, 2000; Chadwick, 2006; Williamson, 2007).
Commitments by both government and citizen to use ICTs in the political arena have aimed to ultimately achieve deliberative participation in political decision-making processes. Deliberation focuses on discussing citizens’ ideas about socio-political issues, and gathering common opinions about what the government should do, or should not to do (Barber, 1984; Habermas, 1996). Habermas (1996) claims that deliberative democracy can be achieved by voluntary and deep discussion in the ‘public sphere’ (Habermas, 1996; Noveck, 2004; Fairfield, 2008). ‘Public sphere’ means a space for gathering the public together, exchanging reasoned discourse on a large scale, and discussing and deciding political issues among diverse individuals and representatives of the public. Discussion participants revise their own understanding of their individual self-interests, as well as their understanding of the public interest, with both going together. Revision of ideas and opinions leads citizens to make more rational choices, and helps discussion participants to reach mutual agreements. Deliberative agreements enable political representatives to pursue the interests (and demands) of the public, and to negotiate final agreements which can be enacted into public regulation (Pitkin, 2004; Lee, 2004; Cho, 2009). In this process, ICTs have provided a borderless public sphere online that allows participation by everybody, and enables deep discussion of the issue because of the openness, interaction, and decentralization of ICTs. The openness of ICTs is expected to increase the number of citizens’ participating. The interaction and decentralization of ICTs enable deliberative discussion among participants, and allows a wide range of opinions to be negotiated. Also, the decentralization of ICTs enables public demands to be sent to representatives. Therefore, deliberative participation in the public sphere supported by ICTs has produced a more robust political culture, and a healthier democracy (Habermas, 1996; Noveck, 2004).

Of course, such a deliberative democracy has been criticized because deliberation is focused too much on participating in the discussion, rather than in the whole process of decision-making. The first criticism of deliberation comes from Noveck (2004). She argues some limitations of deliberation:

Deliberation measures the quality of democracy on the basis of the procedural uniformity and equality of inputs; deliberation requires an agenda for orderly discussion; deliberation either debates problems on an abstract level before the implementation of the solution, or discusses the solution after it has already been decided upon; deliberation is focused on opinion formation and the general will; deliberation is focused on self-expression (pp.38-39).

Because of these limitations, deliberative democracy fails to acknowledge the importance of connecting diverse skills and diverse viewpoints on public policies.
To reduce the limitations of deliberation, she suggests inspiring the concept of collaboration in e-democracy practices (Noveck, 2004). The reason she emphasizes collaboration in e-democracy is that collaboration has a greater capacity to achieve the ideal of democracy: collaboration shifts the focus to the effectiveness of decision-making and outputs; collaboration requires breaking down a problem into component parts that can be parcelled out and assigned to members of the public and officials; collaboration occurs throughout the decision-making process. Collaboration also creates many opportunities and outlets for engagement, and these will strengthen a culture of participation, and improve the quality of decision-making in government itself; collaboration means a political participation from beginning to end (Noveck, 2004). Because of these features, collaboration (but not deliberation) is able to closely link to the characteristics of ICTs. Hence, the collaborative perspective of e-democracy emphasizes improving political participation of the public online in all aspects of the decision-making processes, including information gathering; information evaluation and measurement; and also in the development of specific solutions for implementation.

Another criticism of deliberation is known as ‘monitory democracy’ (Kean, 2009). The term monitory democracy is first used in John Kean’s latest book, The life and death of Democracy; however, the concept of monitory democracy originated from Schudson’s idea of monitorial citizenship around 1945. Monitory democracy aims to scrutinize (or monitor) political power, and to superimpose direct democratic themes on representative democracy. Democracy has not meant simply political power-taking of elected governments by electoral, parliamentary, or constitutional means, but it has stretched down into the roots of everyday life so that the rule of representation, political accountability and public participation are applied to a much wider range of settings than either deliberation (which focuses on participating in discussion to collect public interest) or collaboration (which allows wider participation than deliberation).

Monitory democracy engages the primary level of inputs from citizens, although some outputs are produced by governmental organizations, and citizens continually enforce public standards to prevent corruption and improper behaviour by political representatives in decision-making processes. In addition, monitory democracy strengthens the diversity and influence of citizens’ voices and choices in political decisions. So, political decisions are made by active interaction between governments and citizens (Kean, 2009). In this sense, monitory democracy takes root within the fundamental democracy fields of government and civil society. These features of monitory democracy are closely related to the benefits of ICTs. The innovation of ICTs enfranchises many more people to scrutinise political power in various ways such as electronic surveys, online focus groups, deliberative internet
polling, e-petitions, and audience and customer mobile voting. Therefore, monitory democratic rules, supported by ICTs, can break the grip of elite political power (one of the deficits of representative democracy).

The two new notions of participatory democracy - collaboration, and monitory democracy - highlight the limitations of deliberation, which focuses on political participation in the discussion. However, the concept of deliberation still dominates the e-democracy literature and practice. In contrast, these two new notions have not deeply penetrated the literature on e-democracy. Nevertheless, all three notions commonly emphasize the increase of political participation of citizens in policy-making processes and the improvement of the public’s position in the political arena. This point has been importantly researched by many e-democracy scholars (Castells, 2000; Williamson, 2007, 2010; Yun & Chang, 2007). The elements of collaboration and monitoring, along with deliberation, have been employed in e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea, but each of their elements has been differently applied for the e-democracy practices in the two countries. How the three notions of participatory democracy have been implemented in Australian and South Korean e-democracy practices is analysed in Chapter 7, Chapter 8 and Chapter 9.

2.3.5 World Practices of E-democracy as Political Participation

The meaning of e-democracy and the focus of e-democracy scholarship has changed over the past decade or two as practice has changed and as some earlier threads have failed to mobilize as much support. Nonetheless, E-democracy quickly came to be associated with using the new technologies to enhance democratic practice. One of the e-democracy practices to revitalize the notion of democracy may be the association with e-voting. Australian e-government resource centre website divides its archive on e-democracy into 3 sections: e-voting, e-campaigning and webcasting, with a separate category for community and citizen engagement and participation (“E-Gov”, n.d). In the circumstance of Australia, which has compulsory voting, this meant more than applying the new technologies to voting or even to improving voter turnout. However, in some countries like the UK and Australia where mechanisms for ensuring the trustworthiness of voting by paper ballots were well entrenched, interest in e-voting was not as strong as interest in e-participation (Griffiths, 2002). Also, the use of the internet by politicians and political parties both in electoral campaigning and to communicate with their constituents between elections continues to be of interest, but until very recently was not the prime area of impetus in e-democracy in many countries (Gibson and Cantijoch, 2011; Gibson &
The most promising area of e-democracy practice is associated with the increase of online political participation. E-democracy as participatory democracy can, as discussed above, be divided by the attempts from government and from citizens. E-democracy as political participation is practiced by citizens first in the mid-1990s then by government in the late 1990s (Chadwick, 2006, p.91). However, the sustainable practice of e-democracy as part of the routine of governing required considerable government-initiative. Government-initiative e-democracy aims to inform government information to citizens and to understand citizens’ opinions in-depth and purposely to recover relationships with citizens. For this aim, the government-centred e-democracy approaches regard government as the main leader in providing political information and establishing public online space to facilitate civil discussions and debates about public problems or issues (Dutton & Peltu, 2007). The government-initiative e-democracy as first practiced in the US in the late 1990s was a form of e-rulemaking (Shulman et al., 2003). The practice of the US federal government’s e-rulemaking is a form of e-consultation and the most important issue in the practice is the allowance of all parts of civil society such as interest groups, social movements and individual citizens to make comments on governments rules (Yun & Chang, 2007).

This early form of government-initiative e-democracy has been diversely developed and expanded to many other countries such as e-petition in Scotland, e-consulting Canadian in Canada and GovGab in the US (Clift, 2004a; UN, 2008, p.64). These various practices have demonstrated the effectiveness of informing information of public issues to citizens, of engaging citizens in online consultations and the possibility of improving the relationship between governments and citizens (Anderson & Bishop, 2005; Kim, 2007; Kim, 2009; Walsh, 2007). However, these practices have not allowed the participation of citizens in the whole process of decision-making and this limited allowance for citizen participation in decision-making in government-initiative e-democracy has not achieved a full interactive relation between governments and citizens. In order to solve the deficits of existing government-initiative e-democracy practices, the new form of e-democracy has focused on making ‘citizen-centred’ practices (OECD, 2009, p.26). Particularly, the new government-initiative e-democracy has aimed to engage citizens to participate in the whole process of policy-making and to improve government transparency and accountability (UN, 2008, p.58). The new government-initiative e-democracy has emphasized open and interactive online services for citizens to influence and decide policies, priorities and the design of government service. This kind of government-initiative e-democracy for citizens is being practiced in many countries as exemplified by the French

Recently, government-initiative e-democracy has been developed further with the development of technologies (such as Web 2.0 technologies and smart phones) and the common use of ICTs all around society. The newest trend of government-initiative e-democracy practices aims to achieve true partnership with citizens in decision-making processes (OECD, 2009; Petrik, 2010). The employment of Web 2.0 technologies in government-initiative e-democracy has been a very recent form of participatory e-government practices, so there has not yet been many examples; representative examples include the Participation NZ Wiki and the UK’s FixMyStreet.com (Australian Government, 2010, pp.13-15; OECD, 2009, pp.73-74). Thus, government-initiative e-democracy practices are developing the decision-making position of citizens in policy-making processes along a continuum of power-sharing from the allowance of getting citizen voices involved in decision-making by participation of citizens by facilitating citizen input to the information and debate informing the decision-making, to active collaboration with citizens to decide public policies. With this development, it might be said, the government-initiative e-democracy practices go beyond opening online deliberation channels allowing citizen participation in the drafting stage of policy legislation.

Different to the practical development of government-initiative e-democracy, citizen-initiative e-democracy practices have varied radically and have had diverse frames. The initial practice of citizen-initiative e-democracy presented in the mid-1990s and were already addressed in the previous section, the well-known examples are possibly the Whole Earth ‘Lectronic Link (WELL) and E-democracy in Minnesota (Rheingold, 1993; Chadwick, 2006, p.91 & 98). These two initial practices of citizen-initiative e-democracy developed their characters to move from being non-political community networks to become political movements and were based in the local area. The significance of the above two practices, which are the politicalization of non-political citizen networks and locality-based online mobilization, have continued as one form of current citizen-initiative e-democracy practices, but many other forms of citizen-based e-democracy have been created.

One of the impacts of ICT in shaping citizen-initiative e-democracy is the way of doing activities in traditional NGOs. The traditional (or existing) civil movement groups have rapidly employed ICTs to effectively take their activities such as informing members of news, organizing supporters and
activities, raising funds and many other purposes (Chadwick, 2006, p.118). Many traditional interest groups and NGOs including environmental defence groups (eg. Greenpeace), socio-political development groups (eg. NGO KOREA), youth-groups (eg. Inspire Foundation in Australia) and health-based advocacy groups (eg. the Sickle Cell Disease Association of America) have used ICTs to improve the effectiveness of their activities (Brainard & Siplon, 2002; Yun & Chang, 2007; Vromen, 2008). The use of ICTs in these groups have affected and transformed communication with group members, their relationships to other groups, and how decisions are made on their action targets: government, political parties, mainstream media, or citizens (Chadwick, 2006, p. 118).

Another ICT impact in civil society is the establishment of online-based NGOs. The online-based NGOs use ICTs (particularly internet) as the foundation of their activities: staff and supporters share information, and organize actions and other activities via online. But, they do not ignore the offline world: they often use the offline world to show their power in attempts to influence decision-making (Chadwick, 2007, p.284). The representative examples in this form of citizen-initiative e-democracy practices are MoveOn in the US (Chadwick, 2007), GetUp! in Australia, which is one of the research cases in e-civil participation considered in this thesis (Vromen, 2008b; Coombs, 2009), and NOSAMO in South Korea (Chang, 2007). All examples were established online by a small number of people and expanded their action ground to offline worlds. All of them succeed in gathering their supporters both domestically and internationally and are effective at engaging young generations in politics. For instance, MoveOn has around 700,000 international supporters (Chadwick, 2007, p.284), and NOSANO engaged many young supporters (Chang, 2006 p.61). Also, all examples do not depend on the funds of governments but received donations through online efforts (Chadwick, 2006; Chang, 2007; Coombs, 2009). All these cases actively engage their supporters and members to consider any changes of organizational rules and to decide political actions, and, in particular, NOSAMO decides all its organizational rules through online voting (Chang, 2006, p.62).

The other ICT impact in shaping citizen-based e-democracy practices is possibly called an “informational guerrilla movement” (Castells, 2004, p.82). The alliance of groups and networked-individuals use ICTs to mobilize their efforts to press what they want. The informational guerrilla movement participants have no significant relations with each other or with the movement in their everyday lives, but they have developed pervasive power both within a society and abroad in a short time around specific socio-political issues and events with a short time-frame. Such networked movements have occurred around events such as the WTO meetings, and their impact may be more powerful than the above forms of citizen-initiative e-democracy practices. The well-known practice is
the Zapatista in Mexico (Martinez-Torres, 2001). The Zapatista movement originated with local issues but it became a mobilizer of global concern in a very short time through the internet. The Zapatista established online discussions to share information and ideas and to discuss related issues. These online activities provided opportunities to people, who were interested in the Zapatista movement and concerned about the undemocratic situation in Mexico, to participate in a horizontal-network of socio-political movements (Martinez-Torres, 2001, pp. 352-353). Castells defines the Zapatista as “the first informational guerrilla movement” (Castells, 2004, p.82). Since the practice of the Zapatista, many informational guerrilla movements have developed and have taken a variety of forms such as smart mobs (mobile phones-based temporary street-movements), website attack by citizens, and indi-media creation and distribution networks. The 2008 candlelight protest against the US beef imports in South Korea, which is one of the research cases in this thesis and is analysed in Chapter 9, is possibly a representative example of a developed informational guerrilla movement.

There is now an extensive body of case study literature on e-democracy as political participation discussed above. This literature is being drawn on to produce better practice guides such as the OECD’s Focus on Citizens: Public Engagement for Better Policy and Services (2009), Peter Chen’s Electronic Engagement: A Guide for Public Sector Managers (2007), and the Australian Government’s Engage: getting on with Government 2.0: report of the Government 2.0 taskforce (2010). In relatively recent research, studies on e-democracy as political participation are being used to demonstrate the importance of context. For instance, Edelmann and Parycek (2011) analyse the various forms of e-participation practices such as Wikipedia, online protest movements, the US online campaigns and government-initiative e-participation practices in the UK (eg. Your Freedom and Spending Challenge) and conclude that a technology is an important factor to succeed in practicing collaborative e-participation, but individual, socio-political and other contexts are as much important as the functions of technology in the shaping and leading of successful e-participation practices. In addition, Griffiths and Park (2011) are doing research on the cross-country comparison of young generations’ political engagement and use of social media in Australia and in South Korea. According to the results of a pilot study, they found that socio-political differences between the two countries influence the different online political engagements of young people. From the discussion on e-democracy case studies and practices, the study found that the e-democracy practices have been changing and developing differently in each country. The context-dependency of e-democracy practices provide the research framework for this study to effectively compare e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea.
2.4 Five Debates and Models of Political Participation in E-democracy Studies

The literature on E-democracy has focused on how to develop contemporary democracy through the use of ICTs. Adopting best practice in building e-democracy is supposed to increase political participation. A major trend in e-democracy literature is the discussion of how socio-political factors interact with ICTs to achieve both a high quality and a high quantity of political participation. Political actors, socio-political contexts, and ICT users have been introduced as important shapers of the form of political participation in online worlds (Clift, 2004b). In this sense, the theoretical debates on e-democracy have focused on finding answers to questions of how online political processes can be employed to strengthen social foundations including citizenship, interest groups, social movements, political parties and institutions, and interactions among political participants (Chadwick, 2006, pp. 83-84; Yun & Chang, 2007, p. 83).

The literature on the impact of ICTs on political participation can be divided into five theoretical debates according to which social effects result from the use of new communication technologies: 1) Mobilization vs Reinforcement, 2) Intermediary Group Reinforcers vs Populists, 3) Supplier Orientation vs Demander Orientation, 4) Digital Divide Convergence vs Stratification, and 5) Social Capital: Increase or Decrease (Cho, 2009, pp. 119-121).

2.4.1 Mobilization versus Reinforcement

The notions of Mobilization and Reinforcement are defined by Norris (2001) in her investigation into how ICTs affected political participation. The Mobilization model focuses on the impact of technology itself, and hypothesizes that the positive features of ICTs would facilitate an increase in the number of people who participate in public discussions and politics (Norris, 2001). This model presupposes that every society includes people who are not satisfied with their social system and want to make their society better; whether they take action, mobilize, and form effective social movements is determined by the quality of resource mobilization and cost capability (Yim, 1999; Lee, 2004). Important characteristics of the internet such as low costs, swift information dissemination, and multi-way interactions, are seen in the mobilization model as valuable tools to lower the costs of mobilization so that social discontent is more likely to be translated into effective political activities (Negroponte, 1995; Dertouzos, 1997). If the presupposes of the model link to these advantages of ICTs, ICTs are seen to lead more people to become interested in public issues and to take effective actions, thereby increasing equality by working against the concentration of power amongst existing
political elites.

On the other hand, the Reinforcement model focuses more on the socio-economic contexts of internet users rather than on the functionality of the technology itself. This model assumes that the internet expands social inequality. Resnick (1998) predicts that during election periods, major political parties in the offline world would dominate online space, because the major political parties have better resources than minor parties. This can be because the internet continues or reinforces the gap between the haves and the have-nots. Norris (2001, pp.77-86) examines how political environment has been changed by the use of ICTs and found that the socio-economic gap, which shapes access to power and wealth in the offline political environment, re-produced and amplified in the online environment, thus making worse the relationship between the haves and the have-nots. This is because people who have better resources such as time, wealth, and education are more interested than others in politics in offline worlds, and enthusiastically intend to look for political information and to participate in political forums. ICTs promote political participation primarily to existing political participants instead of enlarging political participation to a broader public (Norris, 2001, pp. 96-99). For this relationship between social contexts and technology, reinforcement assumes that the inequality of political resources in the offline world will be reflected online.

Regardless of the strong arguments between the Mobilization and the Reinforcement models, both reveal themselves as opposite sides of the same ‘determinist’ coin: on the one side, technological determinism, on the other side social determinism. This limits our understanding of the actual conditions of internet politics. Both models make assumptions about whether technological factors or social factors are the prime drivers. Neither considers how the diverse features of the internet interact with the real, everyday political use patterns of internet users, and take the outcome of this to be an empirical matter to be investigated. Mobilization model tends to not enough consider the patterns of the internet user in politics. On the other hand, reinforcement model very focuses on pre-existing socio-economic situations of political participants; it has been of limited value in investigating the political features of ICTs and the complexities of their use by online citizens.

2.4.2 Intermediary Group Reinforcers versus Populists

Intermediary Group Reinforce and Populist models have hotly debated the influence of the internet in developing existing political circumstance (Davide, 1999; Bimber, 1998). The main issue between
them is whether the internet leads political intermediary groups to have more power in the political arena, or whether the internet empowers individuals to participate in decision-making processes.

The Intermediary Group Reinforce model believe that the appearance of the internet reinforces the capacity of existing intermediary groups to gather public support. Davis (1999), who believes that ICTs act as an instrument to reinforce the power of intermediary groups, claims that interest groups enliven and step-up their political activities and power by moving into cyberspace, where they continue to dominate political performance in the digital age. The development of ICTs provides better chances to get political information to the public, but this does not make for better political quality, nor does it lead (by itself) to more political participation by the public. Particularly, political parties have intensified as an intermediary group in online political environments to mobilize citizens as voters, thus improving the legitimacy of representative democracy (Cho, 2009, pp. 127-130). Consequently, the Intermediary Group Reinforce model argues that ICTs are likely to enhance the existing representative democratic structure and the power of existing power blocs.

By contrast, the Populist model is that the influence of individual citizens’ power in politics is enhanced by the use of ICTs. ICTs create new forms of communication space, so that citizens can communicate with government directly. The direct relationship between citizens and governments encourages not only political interest by the public, and citizens’ ability to be politically active, but also increase the political influence of the public in the decision-making process. In that case, the role and power of intermediary groups in political arenas would be naturally reduced. Grossman (1995) and Bimber (1998) uphold the Populist approach, and believe that citizens will be better able to communicate directly with political authorities through the use of ICTs. This enhanced ability makes citizens more likely to participate in political processes, and this greater participation increases citizens’ political influence in decision-making process. Rheingold (1991) sees the internet as ‘a great equalizer’ (p.6), and believes that the internet would change the power balance between citizens and political elites. From the Populist perspective, ICTs enlarge the ways to access political resources, and to decentralize political communication and behaviour.

These two models are both variants of technological determinism, and they both view ICTs as moving politics in an inevitable direction; both view the technologies as the primary cause of the new political patterns. But they see the technological trajectory as either positive or negative. The Intermediary Group Reinforce model sees the new technologies as having negative impacts on the distribution of power, or positive impacts if your point of view is in favour of the status quo. The Populist model also
focus on the impacts of the technologies, and attribute an autonomous force to them to change patterns of human relations, taking an optimistic technological viewpoint that sees such changes as positive. The argument here is about the impacts of the technologies. The Intermediary Group Reinforce model represent the existing intermediary groups (such as political parties and media) as benefitting from ICTs by increasing their influence in political decision-making processes. The Populist model claim that ICTs will encourages the direct political participation of citizens in political decision-making processes.

2.4.3 Supplier Orientation versus Demander Orientation

Supplier Orientation and Demander Orientation models produce different perspectives on the question of whether online political processes will be a tool for political suppliers, or a tool for political consumers (Yun & Chang, 2007). The two models differ in selection of the player who leads the agenda-setting in political decision-making processes (Norris, 2001, pp. 98-111; Kim & Yun, 2005, pp. 21-33)

The Supplier Orientation model proposes that governments should lead citizens to participate politically online. The responsibility for engaging participation of citizens in online discussion and in online decision-making processes (such as providing political information, and setting political agenda) belongs with governments (OECD, 2003; Clift, 2004a, 2004b; Chadwick, 2006; Dutton & Peltu, 2007). On the other hand, citizens are allowed to participate in only limited forms provided by governments (INVOLVE, 2005, p. 20). The active leadership of governments to use ICTs institutionalizes the political process in a stable manner. The strength of this dimension lies in its ability to improve political responsibility and efficiency, which in turn can increase citizens’ trust in government.

On the other hand, the Demander Orientation model privileges citizens’ voluntary and systematic participation in online decision-making processes. This is because ICTs are more “humanized” communication instruments than any previous media, and the power of connecting information is in the hands of citizens (Chadwick, 2006). ICTs enable online users to speedily redistribute information, to directly communicate with each other, and to maintain networked societies (Boncheck, 1997, pp.73-75). The citizen’s familiarity with ICTs enables them to engage in agenda setting, and to influence the decision-making process generally (Shapiro, 1999; Poster, 1998, cited in Yun & Chang,
2007, p. 86). Schmidtke (1998) explains the reasons why ICTs can facilitate citizens’ political participation:

[ICTs] reduce costs for collective actors; reduce individuals’ costs for engagement and participation; reduce intra-organisational hierarchy and intensify the actors’ sense of involvement; facilitate the formation of collective identity; is effective in suggesting the strength and prospects of a collective actor (Schmidtke, 1998, pp. 69-70).

Hague and Uhm (2003) also believe the potential of the internet to “facilitate the exercise of collective power from the grass-roots” (p.197) and enhance to mobilize political support. They expected that citizen initiative groups with using ICTs can become significant changing the real political environment. The political process, in this model, is strengthened by the increased active participation of citizens.

Both the Supplier Orientation and the Demander Orientation are also versions of technological determinism. They see the increased involvement of ICTs in democratic political practices coming from the processes of supply on the one hand, or from the processes of demand on the other. These two models are not mutually exclusive, but can operate in tandem; however, the outcomes are predicted to be different for each model.

2.4.4 Digital Divide Convergence versus Stratification

Digital Divide Convergence and Stratification are models used to investigate two different characteristics of shaping online political power. These two models may help answer questions about which people or social classes do actively participate in internet politics, and about how online participation behaviours differ between active internet participants and passive internet users. Norris (2001, p.98) states that online political power is easily gripped by people who have more political resources through online, and who are actively involved in politics through ICTs.

The Digital Divide Convergence model sees that internet usage is not decided predominantly by the characteristics of specific groups of people, but expands across society progressively, drawing in more and more groups. At the early stage of using ICTs, only small groups of people have the benefit of using new communication technologies, because of the expense of using new technologies (Davis,
However, when it reaches the diffused stage, ICTs spread around society, and become the most popular media. This is because of the reduced cost of using ICTs in the diffused state. The low cost of using ICTs during the diffused state promptly increases the number of users. In addition, the low cost of using ICTs distributes resources of political information, and triggers minor social and political groups to actively participate in political decision-making processes (Davis, 1999). Through this expansion process, ICTs will not only be the most common media in the millennium era, as TV was in earlier decades, but will also reduce the digital divide between socio-economic ‘haves’ and ‘have nots’.

In contrast, the Stratification model proposes that existing socio-economic ‘haves’ will be the early adopters of new communication technologies. People with existing political power have better ability to access new ICTs, so they maintain a better chance than other social classes to be informed political resources. Accordingly, the strata of existing higher socio-economic ‘haves’ will retain political power in the information age. Applying this to international society, socio-economically developed countries are better able to develop an e-democracy framework and practices than less-developed countries. Norris (2001) empirically finds that well-educated and high-income people, young people, and males intend, more than others, to actively use the new communication technologies. In addition, Stratification focuses on the political behaviour of individuals to understand how they use new communication technologies for political purposes. Online political participation is strongly related to the pattern of political participation offline, and also to individual interest in existing communication media. People who are active political participants offline are more involved in online politics, and people who are positively interested in using mass media have easily transferred their interest to using new media (Cho, 2009, pp. 140-141). In this way, Stratification has a similar standpoint to Reinforcement.

These two models are variants of technological and social determinism. The Digital Divide Convergence model privileges the technological perspective of ICTs, and views ICTs optimistically, as instruments of democratic equalization. The Stratification model is a version of social determinism; it privileges socio-economic factors, and sees them as determining outcomes in different socio-economic strata.
2.4.5 Social Capital: Increase or Decrease?

Social Capital in internet politics has been a useful model to investigate the quality of citizens’ political participation online. The term ‘social capital’ in politics defines the process how individuals engage the political participation in the name of the public to facilitate future social exchange (Best & Krueger, 2006, p.395). Social Capital focuses on political participation through the activities of cyber communities, but assumes that cyber communities are based on individual networks of social solidarity (Putnam, 2000). The influence of ICTs in making networks to increased or decreased social capital is argued.

The Social Capital Increase perspective proposes that ICTs help citizens to be involved in cyber communities, and this online involvement creates social relationship between cyber community members. Such social involvements of citizens through cyber communities increase reciprocity and trust among individual online participants, and effectively create a horizontal network among cyber community members (Putnam, 2000, pp.290-291). Through the correlation between the ICTs and social involvement, political participation of citizens can be increased and, furthermore, a civil society can be promoted. Rheingold (2000) suggests that a cyber community is a socially related community which is formed online, but which continually interacts with offline society. He defines a cyber community as a social group, which came from online users; members of this cyber community have become emotionally linked to make a social network, and also to have deep discussions of public issues of interest to them. Accordingly, the network in a cyber community is essential to engage political participation of the public, and is an important point to understand the structure of social relationships among members in an online world.

Putnam (1995, 2000) defines ‘social capital’ as a structure of social relationship - ‘trust’, ‘norms’, and ‘network’ of individuals - that enables citizens to act together to improve social benefits (1995, p. 66). He analyses how a network, norms, and trust have collaboratively improved public satisfaction in cyber communities, and suggests that the network, horizontal and web-like nature of networks enlarge civil participation, and improve collaboration at the community level (Putnam, 2000, pp. 290-291). He suggests that one important norm is of general reciprocity between individuals within-networks, without expectation of compensation from others. This norm in internet politics reinforces the democratization of decision-making, equalization, and responsibility among online individual networks, as well as promoting social integration (Seo & Park, 2001, p. 12). Trust is the outcome of collaborative work between individuals in the networks as they strive to achieve their common goals.
Being online reinforces trust within networks through horizontal sharing and discussion of common goods, because the internet opens information equally to individuals. The collective opinions from a cluster of individual online networks push governments to hear a broad range of opinions of the public, and to accept their demands in decision-making (Cho, 2009, p. 156).

By contrast, the Social Capital Decrease perspective suggests that political discussion in cyber communities is usually discourse of low quality. Many online discussions are based on participants’ emotions rather than on issue-focused deep discussion. Davis (1999) shows a weak point of online political participation which is that internet users tend to look only at what they like (Gibson & Ward, 2000). Such a pattern of participation by online users hinders the activation of positive political communications, and this self-filtering by internet users limits the possibility of getting full information. Also, Davis worries that active online discussion does not have a strong positive relationship to the political decisions. Active discussions exist only online, and rarely reflect final decisions. Therefore, the perspective of Social Capital Decrease is that cyber communities cannot effectively increase political participation of the public in offline worlds.

These two perspectives of Social Capital are variants of technological and social determinism. Social Capital Increase sees development of cyber communities using ICTs as increasing equal and horizontal online social networks, and as enforcing democratic decision-making and discussion, and as achieving social integration. Social Capital Decrease represents another variant of social determinism; it focuses on how social interests shape interest consumption so that pre-existing like-minded in individuals gather together and what they release off from opposing views. Social Capital Decrease claims that ICTs use strengthens individual preferences such as by increasing self-filtering in finding information, and promoting emotion-based discussions (rather than rational discussions).

These critiques tend to see each of these model pairs as dichotomies, where the reality is either one or the other. It would be better to see each model pair as a continuum where each model pair describes opposite poles of the continuum. In trying to decide which of the models is best, what is being lost is that each involves a prior commitment either to technological or social determinism, or to individualist or collective ideologies concerning social and political power. Rather than trying to settle conflicts between model pairs, it would be more fruitful to broaden such theoretical commitments to treat each of the pairs as a dimension, a continuum which could pose questions for the researcher and would be a matter for empirical investigation.
2.5 Conceptual Framework: Social Construction of Technology

The previous sections found that the core theme in e-democracy literature is participatory democracy that increases citizens’ political participation in decision-making processes. It also discussed how ICTs can influence political participation through the five pair-debates. So, the theoretical debates in e-democracy have tended to be one versus another, and to diverge in separate direction. However, some scholars (Clift 2004b; Chadwick, 2006) insist that e-democracy in a particular country (or society) is practiced by a complex relationship between the five pair-debates, and, so, research in e-democracy focuses on identifying inter-relationships between various theoretical debates (Stanley & Ware, 2004 and Norris, 2005 cited in Kang, 2009 p. 19). According to such arguments, the concepts in e-democracy literature are not independent from each other, and different outcomes can be produced depending on the many different socio-political settings and different use of ICTs in political arenas. This reinforces the arguments made above to approach research into e-democracy not through a priori commitments to one or other poles in these five theory debates, but through an empirically focused lens such as the social construction of technology; in other words, investigate political technologies in their political contexts and treat the five pair-debates as sensitizing dimensions or continua that can guide this empirical investigation of Participatory E-government and E-civil Participation practices in Australia and in South Korea.

2.5.1 Three Key Terms in the Social Construction of Technology

The three theories for understanding the relations between technology and socio-political change were overviewed in Section 2.3.1: technological determinism, social determinism, and social construction of technology. The following sections then explored e-democracy debates, and demonstrated the extent to which these have been shaped by technological determinism and social determinism. From that, we learnt that the dominance of these two opposing views of technological change has hampered understanding of the complex relationship between the new ICTs and the empirical practices of e-democracy. Neither technological nor social determinism does justice to the complexity of e-democracy in practice, or to the skill and creativity involved in negotiating how to work with the new ICTs to produce new democratic practices.

It is argued that the social construction of technology provides a new approach for exploring e-democracy practices empirically in different countries without blocking the way for a rich and insightful account of e-democracy in practice that avoids the polarizing a priori commitments of
technological or social determinism. Social construction of technology seeks to understand the complex relationship between technologies and socio-political factors in developing specific technologies in a particular society. The main argument in the social construction of technology is that technologies cannot be developed separately from socio-political contexts, but may be interpreted by various groups of people (such as technology designers, manufacturers, technology users, and non-users) who are relevant to the development of technologies (Knight et al., 2007). Bijker developed the social construction of technology approach through his studies of bicycles, bakelite and bulbs (Bijker, 1995), but in none of these cases was he merely interested in an isolated artefact; social construction of technology theory developed precisely to elucidate the complexity of how people in the relevant social groups develop interactivity with each other, with the technology, in and through the technology and the enactments of the meanings it comes to have for them, thus developing specific technological frames. Whilst social semiotics is a theoretical approach often applied to the study of e-democracy (eg. Janack, 2006; Backhouse 2008; Poell, 2009) an approach with its roots in the study of texts and rhetoric, this study experiments with a new framework for e-democracy research, the social construction of technology. This is a valid experiment given the success of this theory in guiding deep empirical investigations analysing complex socio-technical ensembles to provide accounts that explain how existing practices and phenomenon come to take the form they do. E-democracy has been a global trend for developing political systems and has been practiced in ways that make it in various forms around the worlds. Both Australia and South Korea have already leaned toward the global trend of e-democracy and actively practiced e-democracy, but in each country e-democracy takes a different shape. The cross-country comparison of e-democracy between the two countries is purposefully made to seek an exposition and explanation for these differences in existing or previous e-democracy practices in each country. For this, with cross-country comparative studies of e-democracy in their infancy, experimenting with the use of social construction of technology as a research framework for this comparative study on e-democracy it was hoped would be worthwhile.

By adopting social construction of technology as a research framework, it is hoped that this thesis can open the ‘black box’ of ICT implementation in politics, so as to address the relationship between technology and socio-political change in all its messiness (Law, 2007), and to explore how each influences the other and is reshaped as they become embedded in, and constitutive of, the e-democracy practices in each country. In this thesis, these are treated as empirical matters to be investigated by the researcher: what socio-political and technological configurations are important to practices of e-democracy, how do these configurations become entwined and entangled together, and with what effects. The lessons from work on social construction of technology require an
understanding of three key concepts emphasized by Bijker (1987, 1992, 1995). These three concepts are: *interpretive flexibility, relevant social groups, and technological frame* (1992, pp. 75-76) and it is to their development in social construction of technology that we now turn.

**Interpretive Flexibility**

Interpretive Flexibility is a methodological direction to solve problems involved in explaining technical artefacts. It is based on the idea that the nature of artefacts does not provide a determinant outcome, but is variously interpreted (Pinch & Bijker, 1987). In other words, technical artefacts are culturally constructed and interpreted. The concept of interpretive flexibility demonstrates how different groups attribute different meanings to technological artefacts, and how the artefacts become differently designed as a consequence. Social construction of technology theorists are building on the recognition by the historian of science Thomas Kuhn that scientific facts come to count as reality which involves a process where social political and institutional factors influence the outcome. In other words scientific knowledge is socially constructed. That is, scientific knowledge claims they become hard and obdurate, after a period where different paradigms proliferate and compete with each other, and the facts and their meaning are malleable (Pinch & Bijker, 1987; Bijker 1995).

Bijker tells the story of the development of the bicycle. He shows that the success of the low-wheeled safety bicycle over the high-wheeled Ordinary (penny farthing) does not depend on the superiority of the technical design, and cannot be explained by the characteristics of artefacts alone. The high-wheeled Ordinary is a good example to explain Interpretive Flexibility. To non-users, the high-wheeled Ordinary was considered hard to mount and to dismount, and risky to ride. It could be described as an unsafe bicycle (Bijker, 1995, p. 74). At the same time, the users of the Ordinary, mostly upper-class young men, were very interested in riding the high-wheeled Ordinary, to show off their athleticism, get some highly skilled physical exercise, and to make a good impression to their lady friends. It could be named the Macho bicycle (Bijker, 1995, p. 75). Here, the high-wheeled Ordinary is one artefact, but it comprises two different meanings. These different meanings of the Ordinary provided different directions for bicycle development. The unsafe bicycle influenced a range of new designs to solve safety problems such as moving the saddle backward, reversing the position of small and large wheels, and making the large front wheel smaller to avoid accidents that pitched the rider over the handlebars. On the other hand, the macho bicycle developed higher and higher front wheels to increase its speed (Bijker, 1995, pp. 76-77). What the bicycle was, the form and meaning of the artefact, was contested; these differences demonstrate the “interpretive flexibility” of artefacts.
The stage where various meanings of an artefact compete can result in a process of closure, where one meaning of the artefact gains obduracy and becomes taken-for-granted; a single meaning and form of an artefact is stabilized (Bijker, 1995, pp. 77-86). In the bicycle case, macho bicycle used to be the dominant bicycle. The alternative low wheeled safety bicycles came to appeal to racing riders after the addition of the air-tire. This innovation was developed to solve the vibration problem experienced by safety conscious riders; but the air-tire became a significant step to win over the racing fraternity to the safety bicycle (Bijker, 1995). In stabilization, interpretive flexibility is reduced. Interpretive Flexibility is key to the social process that makes possible the construction of new socio-technical assemblages.

**Relevant Social Groups**

Relevant Social Groups is a key concept to understand the inter-relations between socio-political and technological change (Bijker, 1992). To account for technological development, the social construction of technology model looks not to the intrinsic properties of artefacts, but to the meanings the artefacts acquire for particular social groups; Bijker calls these groups ‘relevant social groups’. These relevant social groups are important because technologies become successful or useful through gradual processes of interaction between relevant social groups that stabilize a particular interpretation or meaning for an artefact. Through such processes, interpretive flexibility decreases and closure occurs (Bijker, 1995). Relevant social groups can be identified as the various actor categories, including direct users of technology, and the engineers whose expertise develops the technology. The relevant social groups are all the groups who are involved in negotiating the use of a technology and its meaning, including what success would mean for the technology. It is all the social groups that both influence other groups and also are influenced by the other groups; this includes groups who are impacted, but who may lack the power to have their interpretations of the artefact acted on in the processes of stabilization and closure. It should also be remembered that not all relevant social groups pre-exist the technology; it can be the case that relevant social groups are themselves co-constructed along with the artefact and its meanings (Bijker, 1995).

Bijker (1995) identifies two rules applicable to Relevant Social Groups: “roll a snowball” and “follow the actors” (p. 46). “Rolling a snowball” is a method to identify and delineate relevant actors involved in designing, using, interpreting, and valuing new technologies. The relevant actors are identified by
listing all social groups mentioned in relation to the new technologies (Bijker, 1995, p. 46). Through
the ‘roll a snowball’ approach, a list of relevant social groups is generated. Then, the researcher can
“follow the actors” to describe in detail the ‘relevant social groups’ and the meanings they give to the
technology. The relevant social groups are further identified by searching for other relevant social
groups that they interact with, or that are impacted by their activities (Bijker, 1995, p. 46).

Bijker (1995) characterized the ‘relevant social groups’ in the development of the High Wheeler
Ordinary bicycle. The ‘relevant social group’ in the development of the Ordinary was a group of
people who saw the Ordinary as a sport machine. At the time that the Ordinary was the most common
interpretation of a bicycle, the Ordinary was being used to ride on the road, at speed, and - given the
potholed roads of the time - its riders were at constant risk of being catapulted over the handlebars
(Bijker, 1995, pp. 32-37). The high-wheeled Ordinary was a luxury at that time, and needed both
strength and agility to mount it (Bijker, 1995, p. 37). At the time of the high-wheeled Ordinary, the
‘relevant social group’ that could be traced as interpreting the artefact as a successful daredevil
machine was clearly young, athletic, well-to-do men belonging to the upper and upper-middle classes.
This meaning of the bicycle was dominant at the time of the high-wheeled Ordinary; it led to
continuing development of the high-wheeled Ordinary focused on speeding, and leading to higher and
higher front wheels. This process led to other social groups being excluded.

However, ‘relevant social groups’ can be changed by the processes that occur between and within
‘relevant social groups’. The boundaries of social groups can be clearly distinguished at one time, but
they can also become indistinct; new groups may be introduced, and old groups can merge into new
ones. For instance, the development of the low-wheeled Ordinary, and then the safety Ordinary (a
design close to the modern bicycle design with lower wheels of similar size) can be attributed to the
consolidation of a different ‘relevant social group’: the more sedate, perhaps older, gentlemanly riders,
and women riders, who interpreted the bicycle through a contrasting set of meanings. Under the
influence of this ‘relevant social group’, new designs of Ordinary were developed by requirements of
less physical prowess in mounting, less risk of accident in riding, and less bone-jarring from vibration
whilst enjoying the country air (Bijker, 1995). The development of tricycles - which can be seen as a
step on the way to the safety Ordinary - engaged ladies in riding, because of easier mounting and safer
riding, thereby expanding the ‘relevant social group’ of safety-conscious riders by bringing women
into it (Bijker, 1995, pp. 54-60). The addition of the air-tyre to solve the problem of bone-shaking
(that was a problem only in the context of the safety-conscious riders) would eventually change the
meaning of the safety Ordinary for the macho riders because of the higher speed attained (Bijker,
1995). After becoming dominant, the high-wheeled Ordinary was superseded by the safety Ordinary, which was eventually interpreted as a success, by the ‘relevant social group’ which included the athletic young men of the upper and upper-middle classes.

Technological Frame

Technological Frame is a theoretical concept used to effectively link interpretations of technical artefacts, the relevant social groups, and the interactions within and among relevant social groups (Bijker, 1995). Technological Frame is the overarching structure that links these together into a social world of shared meanings, definitions of problems, techniques for solving problems, ways of learning and innovating, and favoured modes of acting and interacting. The technological frame both excludes some things, and provides ‘favoured pathways’ of positive structures for the interactions among the actors of relevant social groups in the social development of artefacts or technology (Bijker, 1995). The technological frame is not decided by an individual’s characteristics, nor by the characteristics of an institution; it is located between actors and is built up through interpretations and interactions with artefacts (Bijker, 1995). The existing technological frame guides the interactions of relevant social groups without being determining (Bijker, 1995).

For instance, to continue the story above, the ‘technological frame’ which links together the athletic riders and the high-wheeled Ordinary *Macho bicycle* includes all the elements that influence the actions of relevant social groups and interpretations of artefacts. This means the ‘goals’ - thrills and spills; ‘key problems’ - speed; commonly used ‘problem solving strategies’ - increasing size of front wheel, and using light weight materials; ‘requirements to be met by problem solutions’ - speed, and demonstration of manliness; ‘current theories’ - relationship between effort and ratio of pedal diameter to diameter of front wheel; ‘tacit knowledge’ - how to stay upright; design; and manufacturing methods - these shifted from the cart and wagon industry to those developed in the sewing machine industry; design criteria - riders able to impress women; and users’ practices - organized racing clubs and event organization such as long-distance races between towns (Bijker, 1995, p.123). These elements together constitute the technological frame: they will be the technological frame of relevant social groups like the macho riders, but they will also be applicable to all relevant social groups, including (as Bijker points out) ‘consumers, managers, journalists, politicians’ (Bijker, 1995, pp. 124). In addition, artefacts themselves should be included in the categorisation of elements constituting the technological frame. This is because the interactions in and between the relevant social groups are controlled not only by cognitive and social factors, but also by
the artefact itself (Bijker, 1995, p. 124). In the development of the Ordinary, the running machine - a kind of wooden hobby horse propelled in a remarkably similar way to the new wooden bicycles without pedals seen being ridden today by very young children - was an important feature of the technological frame of the Ordinary developers. When an artefact is stabilized, criteria emerge for what it means for an artefact to work. So, these criteria also form part of the technological frame (Bijker, 1995, p. 124).

Section 2.5 designs a conceptual framework for this study, and explains social construction of technology. Social construction of technology comprises three key concepts: interpretive flexibility, relevant social groups, and technological frame. These three terms are linked to each other, and work together; this goes beyond the simplifications of either ‘technological determinism’ or ‘social determinism’. The researcher aims to grasp the complexity in the development of new socio-political-technical worlds. How social construction of technology and its three key concepts are operationalized so they can be used to analyse Participatory E-government and E-civil Participation practices in Australia and in South Korea will be taken up in Chapters 7, 8 and 9.

2.6 Chapter Conclusion

This Chapter presents the theoretical literature on democracy and e-democracy. First, the chapter reviews this literature on democracy. Democracy is a political theory and ideal, and has been debated for a long time. The major debates about democracy have evolved around two issues: the specifics of ‘the people’ and the specifics of ‘the rule’. The extent and meaning of the two issues have been affected by changes in the political values and ideas over time (Heywood, 2004). In the 20th century, representative democracy has been a dominant political system due to the expansion of the boundary of the nation and the growth of the population. In representative democracy, the rights of legislating and executing policy devolve to representatives that the citizens elect. However, representative democratic systems have produced three main political problems: a lack of qualifications of representatives; a lack of political interest by the public; and a lack of public participation (Cho, 2009, p. 95). These problems have been created by the representative-centric political system, which of course provided only limited political participation to the public. The long-term representative democracy practices have continually reduced the public’s enthusiasm to politically participate in politics.

The invention of ICTs is expected to reduce the political limitations of representative democratic
system, and to make a better political environment. This occurs not only because of the benefits of ICTs - such as timelessness, spacelessness, and cost effectiveness - but also because of the higher potential of ICTs to enable citizens to be independent participants in political activities and discussion. However, the relationship between democratic factors and ICTs has been arguable. The initial arguments begin with technological determinism. Technological determinism focuses on the potential influence of technology in politics. By contrast, social determinism provides an opposing perspective to technological determinism, by focusing on the social context of ICTs in political arenas. Recently, social construction of technology has emphasized the importance of both technology and social facts. This perspective proposes that socio-political change in an information society would occur by close interaction between technology and social contexts.

Because of various perspectives of the influence of new communication technologies in socio-political contexts, e-democracy has been debated and variously defined. However, a common theme of these e-democracy definitions is that ICTs are important instruments for developing democratic political processes. The many advantages of ICTs in the political arena help to engage citizens’ proactive political participation. This proactive participation increases political interest, and improves the current political problem of disconnection between citizens and representatives. These positive impacts of ICTs in politics are expected to achieve participatory democracy, which aims to increase citizens’ political participation in the decision-making process, and to improve the political efficiency of the public. The best-known form of participatory democracy is deliberative participation in decision-making processes. ICTs help to engage the broader participation of citizens in online discussion. This increases public participation, brings better discussion, and the continuous interaction among participants leads to reasoned and collective outcomes. Such deliberative participation has been recently criticized, because of the limited participation in online discussion. Alternatively, collaborative participation and monitory democracy are introduced to broaden the scope of political participation: collaborative participation includes participation in the entire political decision-making process; monitory democracy stretches political participation by continually enforcing checks on the performance of political representatives. The various forms of e-democracy focused on increasing political participation of citizens have practiced all around the world.

The potential of ICTs to improve contemporary democracy focuses on how it can increase political participation in decision-making processes. But, this potential of ICTs in political arena has raised the question of how ICTs and political context interact to increase political participation: whether political participation by the use of ICTs reinforces legitimacy and authority of political representations and
existing political powers, or whether it strengthens the political power of the public. This flexible relationship between ICTs and political participation has led to five ‘pair models’: Mobilization and Reinforcement; Intermediary Group Reinforcers and Populism; Demander Orientation and Supplier Orientation; Digital Divide Convergence and Stratification; and Social Capital: Increase and Decrease. All five of these paired debates are related to the outcomes of ICTs in socio-political processes: Mobilization privileges technological determinism, but Reinforcement privileges social determinism; Intermediary Group Reinforcers and Populism are both aspects of technological determinism, but they differ on which actors can be most influenced; Demander Orientation and Supplier Orientation are also variants of technological determinism, but see different development of ICTs in democratic and political processes; Digital Divide Convergence is based on technological determinism, but Stratification is based on social determinism; Social Capital Increase privileges technological determinism, but Social Capital Decrease aspects social determinism.

These debatable models seem to develop separately; however, they all exist in the complex relationship between technologies and socio-political processes, and in the practice of Participatory E-government and E-civil Participation. This strongly suggests that social construction of technology is a worthwhile research framework for this study. Social construction of technology comprises three important concepts: interpretive flexibility, relevant social groups, and technological frame. Interpretive Flexibility is the methodological direction to find how various social groups attribute various meanings to a technology. Relevant Social Groups are the important actors that develop a technology in the socio-political context. Technological Frame is a theoretical concept to explain the interaction within and between relevant social groups, so as to understand the development of a technology in its socio-political context. These three concepts are used to analyse six e-democracy cases in Chapter 7, Chapter 8, and Chapter 9. But first, the following chapter presents socio-political backgrounds in Australia and in South Korea to underpin the comparative analysis of e-democracy practices.
Chapter 3
Cross-country Comparison of Political Systems in Australia and in South Korea

This chapter compares the political ideas and systems in Australia and in South Korea. The comparison of political systems produces useful knowledge about policies that countries have initiated to address political problems, and how effective those solutions have been. Also, comparing political institutions and practices among countries can provide an understanding of political and economic development. Furthermore, comparison can suggest explanations of why some countries are stable democracies but others are not, and why some countries have prime ministers instead of presidents. In relation to the study of internet politics, cross-country comparisons can provide answers to questions of why some countries use certain forms of technology and others use others, and of why different countries practice different shapes of e-democracy. But before proceeding to such an analysis it is important to gain a basic understanding of the political system of Australia and South Korea. This chapter aims to compare the political systems of Australia and South Korea to explore the socio-political characteristics that may have significantly affected e-democracy development in the two countries.

The chapter begins with a description of the Australian political system. This includes the political ideology and development of the political system, and of civil society. The chapter then addresses South Korea’s political system including the history of authoritarian regime, the current political system, and the development both of democratization and of civil society. Lastly, the chapter discusses the similarities and differences between the political systems of Australia and South Korea.

3.1 Australian Political System

3.1.1 Australian Liberal Democracy

The Australian liberal-democratic political system originates in Western political systems. Western political systems share common ideas and practices of liberal-democracy traditions with three common features: the structure of institutions, the political processes, and an understanding of liberal and democratic orientations. Parkin (2006) says the combination of these typify a liberal democracy. Liberal democracies are designed on and operated by two different sets of ideas: the Democratic idea, and the Liberal idea (Parkin, 2006, p. 3). The democratic idea develops the notion of government
accountability. The logic of the democratic idea is that governments should be elected by a majority of the public in a free vote; then the elected governments should speak for the wishes of the majority of citizens, and of the community interest. Government accountability requires the free election by a majority of citizens, and the adequate provision of services to the community. In other words, government accountability to the broad community is accomplished when political parties compete for majority support from the electorate. On this criterion, Australia has been at the forefront of accomplishing the democratic idea. For instance, Australia is the first country to extend voting rights to all adults, and Australian adult women are the second in the world to achieve voting rights. As well, compulsory voting in Commonwealth and State elections is an early achievement, and other political innovations, such as the secret ballot, are accomplished earlier in Australia than in other countries. In addition, Parkin (2006) says that Australia has effectively protected the collective interests of less advantaged citizens through the trade union movement and the establishment of the Labor Party.

In contrast to the democratic notion, the liberal idea (or liberalism) promotes limiting the scope and capacity of government in order to prevent deterioration of the representative elements of democracy (Parkin, 2006). Instead, the liberal idea protects political and economic rights of individuals. The rights of individuals in liberalism are based on the mechanisms for economic production and distribution; these include the ownership of private property, the accumulation of private wealth, and the use of the voluntary market flow for production and exchange (Parkin, 2006, p.7). These liberal concepts are incorporated in the written Constitution of Australia which was enacted in 1901. The written Constitution spells out the legitimate boundary of government activity consistent with the defence of civil society, and the protection of individual rights against unreasonable intervention by government. In addition, the Australian Constitution is based on two liberal political models for Australia: the British political system, and the US Constitution. The liberal feature of government in Australian Constitution is federalism; liberalism is the philosophical justification for this dispersion of government authority, a limitation of the scope for coherent government intervention, and the protection of individual rights and freedom. Parkin (2006) says that these specifications of liberalism in Australia have successfully achieved power divisions between the different tiers of governments, and the power balance between the Senate and the House of Representatives, and a check on the constitutionality of government action by judicial review. These features of Australian political systems are fully explored in Section 3.1.2 and in Section 3.1.3.

Liberal democracy is well-incorporated in the Australian political system. In this, it has adapted forms of liberal democracy used in Western Europe and the UK (responsible government), and applied the
USA experience (federalism). Indeed, the Australian political system has developed by interaction with the international environment. For instance, the Industrial Revolution introduced trade unionism, which insists on the importance of collective identity and freedom to associate, rather than the freedom of individuals, as a new way to develop liberalism. The related, and then new, political ideals of trade unionism, socialism and social democracy, influenced the rapid development of labour movements in Australia. The development of labour movements provided important momentum for the establishment of the Australian Labor Party. New political ideas, including social reform and the achievement of social justice, have been prominent political ideas of the Australian Labor Party (Maddox, 2005, p. 248; Fenna, 2006, pp. 32-37). The birth of the Labor Party in Australia moderated the dominant political power of Liberalism, which represented the interests of business classes including graziers, farmers, retailers and importers, and was guided by free-trade and freedom of individuals (Economou, 2006, pp. 227-230).

The birth of the Labor Party inspired non-labour groups to coalesce so as to effectively promote their interests and to influence the Parliament. Non-labour groups initially represented farmers and aimed to improve the agricultural sector; their voice was the Country Party. At that time, the political legitimacy of the Country Party representation was to oppose the Labor Party, which had political power during the early decades of the 20th century, and took the ‘balance of power’ in the House of Representatives (Maddox, 2005, pp. 278-281; Woodward, 2006, pp. 245-253). However, the non-Labor groups in the Country Party were not always united in their interests, so they had fairly loose organizational links to the Parliament (Maddox, 2005, pp. 289-294). A strong non-Labour political representation was needed to exercise effective opposition to Labor, and to be a credible representative of non-Labour interests and values. A new non-Labor Party, named the ‘Liberal Party’, emerged with a commitment to individual freedom and rights, and to economic expansion and prosperity. These elements of individualism, free enterprise, and self-motivation distinguished the Liberal Party from the Country Party; the concentration of strong leadership of the Liberal Party also distinguished it from the Country Party. The coalition between Liberal and Country parties developed soon after the emergence of the Liberal Party to maximize the value of ‘consensual conservatism’ in opposition to the Labor Party (Maddox, 2005, p. 248, pp. 278-279, p. 297). In addition, the coalition has solidified the two-party political system in contest for parliamentary seats (against Labor Party) (Maddox, 2005, pp. 250-252). In the same way, the Australian Labor Party’s power has balanced that of the coalition between Liberal and National Parties.

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4 The Country Party changed its name to the National Country Party in 1975, and, in 1982, changed it again to the National Party. Since the Liberal Party was formed, the National Party has been in Coalition with the Liberal Party (Maddox, 2005).
Despite variations in the basic political ideology of the major Australian political parties, the market mechanism is dominant, and pervades the Australian economic, social, educational and political framework and infrastructure (Fenna, 2006). The strengths and weaknesses of market mechanisms in the Australian socio-political context have varied with the interaction between the international environment and which political party has political power. For instance, during international economic crises such as the Great Depression in the 1930s, and the worrisome levels of inflation in the mid-1970s, governments intervened in market activities (Fenna, 2006, p.38). Influenced by world circumstances, the power of Labor Party in the 1980s saw an expanded welfare state and increasingly progressive taxation (Fenna, 2006, p.39). Despite these fluctuations, the market mechanism has been a long-term and dominant part of the Australian socio-political framework. Australian liberal democracy has continued to evolve over much of the 20th century (Fenna, 2006).

As a result of the long-term practice of Australian liberal-democracy, Australia has developed a worldwide reputation as one of the oldest and most stable liberal-democratic countries in the world (Denemark et al., 2007; EUI, 2010). According to a recent index of democracy, Australia ranks sixth among those countries that are categorized as ‘full democracies’ in the world (EIU, 2010, p. 3). Australia also ranks fifth among the twenty-nine countries categorized as having high levels of political trust and satisfaction, and is one of the few democratic countries where trust in governments has not declined since 1988 (Denemark et al., 2007, p. 85).

3.1.2 Australian Parliamentary Political System

Liberal-democracy has been come out of Australian political system, including the structure of the government, the exercise of political power, and the management of public policy. These three elements are enshrined in *The Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia*. An important theme for the national government in the written Constitution of Australia is how to shape the Australian political system according to the two ideas of liberalism and democracy. From the British Parliamentary system, the Australian Constitution retains the notion of ‘responsible government’ (Parkin & Summers, 2006, pp. 46-47).
In the British Parliamentary system, the sense of ‘responsible government’ originates in the relationship between legislature and executive. In that system, the Parliament plays the role of the legislature. The Parliament consists of elected politicians who represent designated local areas. The most important role of the Parliament is to make laws, and to supervise government performance - particularly the raising of taxes and the expenditure of government revenue - while protecting the interests and rights of citizens. The executive’s role in the system is to decide the programs and policies of the government, and is legitimized by laws which have been passed by the Parliament. In the British system, the legislature and the executive are not separate from each other. This is because the executive is formed from members of the Parliament. In Britain, the elected house of Parliament is called the House of Commons; there is also an unelected House of Lords. The political party who has the majority of seats in the House of Commons organizes the government, and its leader becomes the Prime Minister. In this Parliamentary system, the Prime Minister is not directly elected by the people, but is chosen by the MPs of the majority party in the Parliament, and can be dismissed by a Parliamentary vote. The Prime Minister, who is the leader of the government, selects Ministers of Departments from the members of Parliament to form the executive. So, both the Prime Minister and the members of the executive are drawn from the members of Parliament. In this way, the relations between the legislature and the executive in the British political system are strongly linked. Without the support of a majority in the House of Commons, the executive would be unable to implement the programs and policies of the government. At the same time, government performance - including executive activities - is supervised by the legislature. In this sense, the political executive is responsible to the Parliament, which has political authority on behalf of citizens through the election. Therefore the legitimacy of government is grounded in popular consent (Simms, 1999; Parkin & Summers, 2006).
The Australian political system has adopted the British notion of responsible government. According to the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution, the Australian Parliament is composed of representatives of the people through democratic elections (Maddox, 2005, p. 168; Summers, 2006, p. 68). The representative roles in the Australian Parliament have two distinct elements: the Senate (the Upper House) and the House of Representatives (the Lower House). The two Houses differ in the ways their members are elected and in their political role. The Senate is elected on state-wide electorates with an equal number (currently twelve) of senators coming from each of the six states, and two from each of the two territories; this gives a current total of 76 senators (Summers, 2006, p. 70). The equal number of senators regardless of state size protects the interests of the less-populous states. Differently from the Senate, the House of Representatives has 150 members, and each of them represents one separate electoral division. So the important role of the House of Representative is to represent the interests of each individual electorate. Despite differences in how Senators and House members are elected, all should speak on behalf of the rights and interests of the public. Therefore, the Australian Parliament is an institution that represents the ‘power of the people’ in action (Maddox, 2005; Summers, 2006).

Representatives in the Australian Parliament (both Senators and Members) play a very important role in legislation. The Parliament makes a law to protect the rights of citizens. However, at the same time, the legislature is also the site of government in the Australian political context. This is because the executive of the Australian government is formed by the party winning the most seats in the House of
Chapter 3 Cross-country Comparison of Political System

Representatives. The Australian people vote to choose the members of both Houses of the Parliament; then the leader of the most powerful party in the House of Representatives leads the government. The Ministers who head the Departments are drawn from the House of Representatives and the Senate. Australian Prime Ministers, the head of government and chosen by an election in the House of Representatives, are not directly elected by popular vote. Australian Prime Ministers can also lose office by a Parliamentary vote (Maddox, 2005; Parkin & Summers, 2006; Summers, 2006). In executive power (see Figure 3-1 previous page), the Governor-General is appointed by the Queen, and vests executive power on behalf of the Queen. However, executive power is usually in the hands of the Prime Minister and his or her Ministers, and the Governor-General acts on Ministerial advice; but executive power reverts to the Governor-General when Parliament breaks down, and the reinforcement of the Governor-General saw the Governor-General ‘sack’ the Whitlam Government in 1975 (“Governor-General’s Role”, 2010). For both these roles of Australian representatives - forming the government, and making laws - the government naturally depends on Parliament. The separation between the legislature and the executive that exists in the US and in South Korea does not exist in the Australian Parliamentary system (Maddox, 2005; Parkin & Summers, 2006; Summers, 2006).

In the legislative process, the government is supervised by the Parliament. Bills are usually initiated in the House of Representatives. In other words, the executive of the government recommends to the House of Representative Bills to be enacted into Law. The Senate reviews Bills to examine their efficiency and reliability (Maddox, 2005, pp.182-183; Parkin & Summers, 2006, p.55). It is widely agreed that the revision of Bills by the Senate has produced many fruitful amendments. The safeguard role of the Senate in the legislative process can also prevent the abuse of political power by the executive of the government (Maddox, 2005, p.181). However, the Senate role as a safeguard in the legislative process often introduces disadvantages, such as that the Senate delays passing the legislation (Maddox, 2005, p.185).

While the Parliament checks government expenditure and performance, the government has financial power to carry out the business of government in the people’s name. The two Houses of Parliamentary focus on checking the financial power of the government. The House of Representatives is responsible for supervising the actual spending of government money. The Senate also scrutinizes the expenditure of government, as well as the annual budget bill. In addition, the government’s actual expenditure is reviewed by the Department of Treasury; these review results are then reported to the Treasurer and the Prime Minister. Along with supervising government expenditure, Parliament is responsible for checking the administrative efficiency and the general integrity of government
performance. Although in recent years the scrutiny of administration and the general performance of government have been carried out by extra-parliamentary bodies such as the Administrative Appeals Tribunal, and the Office of the Ombudsman, many responsibilities of supervising the government performance are still in the hands of the Parliament (Maddox, 2005, pp. 173-174, p. 181). This supervising (and being monitored) and opening process of Parliament provides transparency of government power and performance to the voters.

So, responsible government in Australia provides transparent and accountable performance of the government to the people through the Parliament. In other words, the chain of responsibility for political accountability to the electorate is that the government is responsible to the Parliament, and the Parliament to the voters (Summers, 2006, p. 68). In this way, responsible government is created in this Parliament-centric political system.

Two-party System

The Parliament consists of elected politicians, most of whom are the members of political parties. Political parties in the Parliament system constitute the Parliamentary leadership, supply government policies, establish the loyal opposition, and organize Parliamentary business. For that, political parties are in the centre of the Parliamentary political system (Maddox, 2005). Australian Parliamentary system follows the above operation logic: the Australian Parliament is composed of elected politicians who belong to political parties; the party that holds the majority of seats in the House of Representatives creates the government, and remains the government party until the next election. The Australian Parliament has, for a long-time, been dominated by two political parties: the Labor Party, and the Liberal Party (in coalition with the National Party formerly the Country Party); these two sides have always debated with vigorous force up to now.

As well, there have been many minor political parties such as the Australian Independence Party, the Communist Party of Australia, the Democratic Labor Party, the Australian Democrats, the Greens, and the Family First Party. None of these has become a major party in Australian politics, but Australia cannot dismiss minor parties from the two-party dominant system. This is because minor parties are important to institutionally object to some aspects of public affairs conducted by the major parties, and provide a strategic power balance in the decision-making processes (Maddox, 2005).
3.1.3 Australian Federalism

To achieve Australians’ wishes to maintain both national unity and local autonomy, the Australian Constitution adopted some aspects of the US government system. In particular, Australia borrowed Federalism from the US system (Parkin & Summers, 2006, pp. 46-47). Federalism divides government power between different tiers of government to solve the political problem of how to combine previously separate self-governing entities to form a new common national government. In the United States of America, Federalism integrated 13 American colonies to the new single nation in 1787. The existing state governments retained their identity and their authority in governing regional issues. The new government of the nation, on the other hand, had the power to make and execute laws that are issues for the whole nation such as defence, foreign relations, immigration and currency. This US federalism clearly identifies different responsibilities of different tiers, but prevents the easy power shift between existing self-governing entities and a common national government. The power balance in federalism has kept the two principles: the notion of a single nation, and the principle of political power and rights of states (Summers, 2006, p. 50).

In the Australian context, the unitary government of Britain was not suitable for integrating the politics, societies and economies of the Australian colonies in the 1890s. The existing colonies had no desire to give up either their existence or their autonomy. However, the colonies needed to create a single nation bringing economic advantages such as removing barriers to the movements of goods and people across state borders, and creating a large single Australian common market. As the best solution of existing problems at the time, Australia learned from 100 years of experience of US federalism which integrated the independent self-governing colonies with a common national government. Australia has taken three specific mechanisms from US federalism to keep the balance of political power.

The first of these three mechanisms is the power division between the national government and the state governments specified in the Australian Constitution, which also guarantees the authority and autonomy of two tiers of government. The Commonwealth government, which is officially called the Australian National Government, is responsible for national issues such as naval and military defence, currency, immigration and emigration, diplomatic affairs, tax, old age pension, unemployment benefits, national health scheme (Medicare), and so on (Parkin & Summers, 2006, p.52). On the other hand, State governments are largely responsible for making laws related to their regional issues. The states retain most of the residual power in public services and regulations experienced by citizens.
every day: public schools, roads, parks, recreational facilities, public housing, public hospitals, regulation of private housing construction, the regulation of retail trades, environmental protection, and so on (Parkin & Summers, 2006, p. 52). These independent administration authorities between the two tiers of government are guaranteed and maintain their responsibilities separated. Additionally, local government is a third tier of the Australian federalism, but this is not constitutionally protected and is generally regarded as weak. The Australian local governments are established and defined their political power by the state levels of government (Brown, 2002).

The second application of political power balance which Australia adapted from US federalism is the creation of the Senate. Originally, the Australian Senate was seen as a guardian of states’ rights; each state has an equal representation in the Senate (Parkin & Summers, 2006; Summers, 2006, p. 79). As explained in Section on Responsible Government, the Australian states are equally represented in the Senate; the total 76 seats in the Senate are composed of the equal number of seats from states (12 seats from each six states and 2 seats from each two territories). For instance, Tasmania which has about 507,000 population has 12 seats in the Senate, and New South Wales with 7,238,800 population also has 12 Senators. In this sense, a vote cast for a Senator in Tasmania has about ten times the value of a similar vote cast in New South Wales. This voting system for the Senate is ‘the State-related’ system of representation rather than ‘population related’ (Parkin & Summers, 2006, p. 52). For this feature, some complain that the Senate is an undemocratic feature in a liberal-democratic political system (Maddox, 2005; Parkin & Summers, 2006). The other view is that the Senate maintains the horizontal power balance among the states by protecting the rights of less-populous states. This role of the Senate as a power balancer is evidenced in the legislative process. The Senate is a powerful second legislative chamber. It balances the legislative power of the House of Representatives through the review of Bills that the House has initiated. Summers (2006, pp.87-89) says that, in the Australian Federal Parliamentary political system, the Senate provides the ultimate political power balance as a permanent check on the government.

The third application of political power balance that Australia adapted from US federalism is judicial review by the High Court. In general, an independent judiciary is an essential feature of all liberal-democratic government systems to keep the power balance between the executive and the legislature, and to protect against untrammeled government power. However, the judicial review by the High Court is very important feature to keep political power balance in Australian Federalism. This is because High Court determines the meaning of the Constitution to moderate the situation where there is a quarrel on the interpretation of the Australian Common law between the Commonwealth and the
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States (Patapan, 2006, pp. 160-161; Parkin & Summers, 2006, p.53). The Arbitrator of the High Court provides the two different tiers of government with protection for each of their fundamental rights as political entities. Through the adoption of three applications, Australia has achieved the goal of a federalism which is to promote pluralist democracy as a means to moderate majoritarianism and reformist zeal (Parkin et al., 2006).

3.1.4 Australian Civil Society

Australia has long engaged citizens in political participation. There are many ways to engage citizens in political participation, but Not-for-Profit Organizations5 (hereafter called NPOs) is the most common form used by Australians (Dalton & Lyons, 2005, p. 8). A Productivity Commission report (2010, p.53) states that there were around 600,000 NPOs in Australia. This number is higher than the number of Australian NPOs in 1995-6 (A Productivity Commission, 2010, p.58). Also, around 65% of Australian adults are members of at least one NPO according to Ryan’s research in 2006. This percentage is much higher than that of Australians who belong to a political party. Also, NPO members are nearly three times more likely to participate in political activities than non-members are (Dalton & Lyon, 2007, p. 9). Although not every NPO attempts to directly influence government decision-making processes, NPOs have been an indispensable factor in Australian society and politics (Maddison & Hamilton, 2007). This is because Australian NPOs have performed as extra-parliamentary representative bodies. Australian NPOs provide services such as education, cultural and recreational activities, health and social services, and sectoral supports to marginalized and disadvantaged groups. In addition, Australian NPOs contribute to public debate and the democratic process (Phillips, 2006; Maddison & Hamilton, 2007). The contribution of Australian NPOs in the democratic process includes facilitating wider community understanding of policies, transmitting public opinion to governments, and also taking political actions to promote public policy commitments. These activities of Australian NPOs in the socio-political context successfully demonstrate the important theme in liberal democracy of ‘the power of free and equal citizens’ or ‘a collective body’ (Rawls, 2002, p. 40 cited in Phillips, 2006, p. 61).

The popularity of Australian NPOs has developed over a long-time. The beginning point of Australian

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5 There are many terms to indicate the third sector in the Australian context; Phillips (2006) identifies Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Not-for-profits, Charitable Organizations, Voluntary Organizations, Community-based Organizations, and Community Sector Organizations. In this study, the term NPOs (Not-for-profit Organizations) covers the third sector of both Australia and South Korea, because a Not-for-profit entity has all advocacy, service, and political action focuses to take advantages of the common interests of particular groups, and to have influence in policy making.
NPOs as extra-parliamentary bodies would be said to the time of the Industrial Revolution (Lyon, 1998). Although there had already existed religion-based associations since the start of the Britain colony, the Industrial Revolution inspired various associations, particularly among labourers and business people, to protect their rights and positions in the market and in society. The growth of the working populations led also to recreation and other leisure associations such as sporting associations. The Great Depression encouraged the growth of professional and trade associations, and the growth of the middle-class led to organize service clubs of businessmen such as Rotary. The social, class-based form of Australian NPOs had continued until the middle of the 20th century. This social class-focused elements of Australian NPOs transformed to include the broad social areas in the 1950s and 1960s. Since then, Australian NPOs have expanded the range of their activities to protect the rights of marginalized people, and to promote wider public services. They have aimed to eradicate poverty in Australia through providing benefits of health and social services to minorities (Lyon, 1998).

Australian NPOs dramatically expanded their range of activities during the 1970s and 1980s. Lyons (1998) says that the Commonwealth Government at that time was influenced by ideas from a combination of second-wave feminism, the community-development movement, and various rights movements. These encouraged the formation of new citizen-based not-for-profit organizations to provide a wider range of social services. Also, the ethnic composition of the Australian population changed remarkably at that time due to extensive immigration from Asia and Europe. The ethnic communities within Australia organized a vast array of NPOs to preserve their culture and to protect their rights and welfare. At the same time, Aboriginal Australians were developing NPOs to ensure legal rights and other services (Lyon, 1998). Through these periods, Australian NPOs became the most popular organizations for citizens to join as a mechanism for protecting their rights. Citizens aired their demands through participating or joining NPOs, and made their voices heard in decision-making processes.

In spite of the popularity of NPOs in Australian democracy, recent debates have questioned their legitimacy, particularly as public advocacy groups. The first criticism is that NPOs are deficient in advocating public interests as extra-parliamentary representatives in decision-making processes. This is because the Australian government has continually ignored NPOs since the late 1990s (Phillips, 2006, p. 61). For instance, since 1998, around 62 public enquiries were submitted by NPOs in order to engage the attention of the House of Representatives. But most of these enquiries despite being established by Parliament failed to be paid attention by the Australian government, and more than half of these enquiries failed to be replied from the government (Phillips, 2006). This power-decline of
Australian NPOs diminished one fundamental of making good policies; that is, the need to maintain a healthy and diverse input through a spread of NPOs that represent people’s lives and experiences. As well, the government is increasingly being called on to provide feedback to the NPO’s input.

The second criticism of NPOs is that their financial dependence on governments has caused them to lose respect. Some NPOs are seriously dependent on governments for their financial support. For instance, the World Wide Fund for Nature Australia (hereafter called WWF Australia) had a close relationship with the government in the 1990s, and enjoyed around a total of $20 million support from the government between 1998 and 1999 (Maddison & Hamilton, 2007, p. 87). The close relationship between WWF Australia and the government resulted in reduced financial support for other environmental groups. Environment statements made by WWF Australia were generally favourable to the government (Maddison & Hamilton, 2007, pp. 86-89).

Despite these criticisms of the functions of Australian NPOs, Australian NPOs have been an important political body in Australian socio-political context: Australian NPOs still have a strong influence in making policies in the area of welfare, disabilities, community safety and community health (Maddison & Hamilton, 2007); about 87% of Australian NPOs receive only public donations and remain independent from government (Phillips, 2006, p. 63). Moreover, they provide significant resources in various socio-public issues, and assist the development of appropriate policies and programs (Maddison & Hamilton, 2007). In particular, Australian NPOs have generally been a good influence in the production of good policy; this has resulted from the interaction between their range of perspectives which are based on knowledge of people’s lives and experiences, and their advice to help governments deliver good services and policies based on their provision of such services sometimes under contracts with government (Maddision & Hamilton, 2007, p.79). In this sense, the NPOs contribution and value in developing Australian democracy has been acknowledged by governments, and their effectiveness is said to highlight the benefits of robust, effective and open democracy. This collective political influence of Australian NPOs in developing democracy confirms Putnam’s argument that a strong associational culture underpins effective democratic governance (Dalton & Lyon, 2005, p.9; Maddison & Hamilton, 2007).
3.2 South Korean Politics

3.2.1 History of South Korean Authoritarian Regimes

Until the early 20th century, Korea was a united and independent country. At that time, political thought had mainstreamed Confucianism, which began in the middle century, Chosun Dynasty (1392-1897). Confucianism provided a rationale for rule by political bureaucracy and administrative elites. From 1910 to 1945, Korea was colonized by Japan. The experience of being a Japanese colony moulded a political cultural template of militaristic authoritarianism, and cultivated resistance for the restoration of national identity (Kim, 2001). During the colonial time, Korea established the temporary Korean Government and Constitution; this was the source of the Korean Constitution after the Korean War. The strong notion of nation-state sovereignty originated in the written Constitution of South Korea in 1953 after the three-year Korean War. At that time, the written Constitution proclaimed South Korea as a democratic nation for the public, rather than for Empire. The Constitution provides essential concepts of democracy to develop the South Korean political system. However, political practice has not always fully carried out the intent of the written Constitution. This is mainly because of environmental factors, which include colonial customs in Korean society, and the endless war with North Korea. Particularly, the experience of the Korean War was used to justify, over three decades, the authoritarian regime as the leading government system in the 20th century. It was also used to justify economic development by dictatorial control. Both Korean War and authoritarian regime had a long-lasting effect, even affecting democratic political culture and decision-making processes in the early 1990s.

Authoritarian Regime in 1960s and 1970s

South Korean political culture was classified as ‘Authoritarianism’ until the 1980s. This political culture originated from the social and political values of the Japanese colony in the early 20th century. The militaristic bureaucratic regime was initially formed during the Japanese colonial occupation, but the actual adoption of the authoritarian regime by the Korean Government began soon after the cessation of hostilities of the Korean War; it lasted until 1987. The experience of War between North and South Koreas from 1950 to 1953 left many problems to be solved in South Korean society. Since the war is pausing, the North has been the most feared enemy, and South Korea needed to build strong

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6 For more information on Confucianism in middle-century Korea, Chosun Dynasty, refer to Korean Politics (1999) written by John Kie-chang Oh.
social and political unity against communism from the North. Eliminating ideological threats from communism and the Left in South Korean society were seen to be the most important issues (Cotton, 1989, p.249; Han, 1987, p.364). At the same time, South Korea needed economic development to recover from the ruins of war, as well as to outdo the North in finance. In this circumstance, the government claimed justification for unprecedentedly strong power as the best way to prevent further disasters in the Korean peninsula (Han, 1987, pp. 364-365). The unprecedented strong government power formed an authoritarian regime. Cotton (1992) says that the South Korean Authoritarian Regime practiced dictatorship and military-based government. The South Korean Authoritarian Regime had four phases: military regime 1961-1963; quasi-competitive political system 1963-1972; dictatorial system 1972-1979; and disputed quasi-dictatorial system 1980-1987 (Cotton, 1992, p. 512).

Right after pausing the Korean War, the South Korean government was inept at dealing with the industrialization strategy, and with the political and ideological threat from the North. This circumstance facilitated Park Jung-Hee, who was a Major-General in the army, and his fellow officers to successfully make a coup d'état in 1961. Soon after the success of the coup d'état, Park Jung-Hee amended the written Constitution to justify his political power: he changed the political system to a presidential system. The presidential political system provided dominant power to President Park, but weakened the power to the National Assembly. The amended political system also changed the election methods to a direct election for the President, and for political representatives. The President could also be re-elected. These amendments appeared to provide a legitimate government as representatives of the public. At the first election, after the Constitution amendment, Park Jung-Hee officially became the democratic President of Korea. An interesting feature of Park’s regime in 1960s was that he did not force authoritarianism, but allowed democratic circumstances in all parts of South Korean politics and society. The authoritarianism in 1960s allowed a free press, and had electoral competition and electoral cooperation among political parties which was more significant than existed in the 1970s. President Park also introduced a new strategy for economic development focused on export-oriented industry; this strategy was spectacularly successful in developing the Korean economy throughout the 1960s (Cotton, 1992). This was the first step toward practical industrialization in South Korea.

The gentle atmosphere of the early authoritarian regime dramatically changed in the 1970s, when the South Korean authoritarian regime reached its peak. President Park announced his new national policy named ‘Yushin’, which defined the Revitalizing Reform and practiced very strong dictatorial regime (Oh, 1999). This dictatorial regime was introduced when Park Jung-Hee amended the
Constitution again in 1969 to allow the third-time election of the President. This amendment of the Constitution allowed Park Jung-Hee to have another victory in the 1973 election. The victory appeared to legitimate Park’s political power, and that of his government, as democratically achieved. However, his third victory meant that he occupied the office of President for as long as he wished, and he was able to nominate his allies to one-third of the seats at the National Assembly. This very much weakened the function of the National Assembly as the political power balancer. The president also used emergency presidential decrees to force the Revitalizing Social Reform (Cotton, 1992, p. 517). In this way, democracy retreated. The right to freedom of expression was limited by the military-based government, and only one political preference - right-wing, conservative political ideology - existed in South Korea. Progressive parties tried to force out the Park’s regime several times, but the left-wing or progressive political ideology did not succeed due to the undemocratic political culture that had developed, and because of their insufficient political power (Cotton, 1992).

Contrary to the political situation, industrialization was achieved and economic development increased under the dictatorship. Korean industrialization, which began with the political power of President Park, hugely developed in 1970s. The government focused on a heavy industrialization program, and developed strategic connections to big business companies. The Park government provided huge benefits and resources to the major enterprises in order to achieve successful industrialization. President Park frequently awarded prizes to the leaders of these major enterprises that exceeded export goals. The authoritarian regime of President Park led South Korean industrialization, and had unprecedented success in economic growth domestically; it also achieved financial and political self-reliance in the Asian region (Oh, 1999, pp. 60-66). However, the economic growth supported by the big enterprises raised complaints from the working classes. Park’s economic policies and practices focused only on developing business and industries, but ignored the development of working conditions and of protecting the rights of labour. So the social and economic gaps between employers and employees inevitably increased. Instead of reducing the gap between different social classes, President Park often allowed big business actors to control the conditions and rights of labour in 1970s. Such government performances and policies stimulated the anger of workers, and led to informal political activities such as street demonstrations and physical protests against government. At that time, as labour had insufficient political power, and as a democratic environment had not yet developed in South Korea, labour only expressed their demands outside of political institutions. Nevertheless, labour movements became large, and were definitely troublesome for President Park and his government. To deal with the containment of labour’s power and demands, the Park government (and also industrialization enterprises) had to pay a high monetary price - for
example, with a strong police force (Oh, 1999). The Yushin regime of Park Jung-Hee ended with his death in 1979.

**Authoritarian Regime in 1980s**

In the 1980s, South Korea was again controlled by a military leader named Chun Doo-Hwan. While Korean society was unstable due to the assassination of Park Jung-Hee, Chun Doo-Hwan came to political power through a *coup d’état* in 1979 (in the same way as the former President) and through the amendment of the Constitution. President Chun amended the method of Presidential elections: he adopted an indirect election for the President, and pledged to a 7-year one-term presidency. Due to the growth of civil society initiated by the growing labour movement during 1970s, another military-based authoritarian government was not acceptable to the South Korean public. However, regardless of the public demands, Chun Doo-Hwan and his government believed that strong military force provided legitimacy to his authoritarian regime, and the public followed their strong force. The Chun government did not tolerate progressive perspectives of the opposition political parties, and nor did it allow free expression to any of South Korea’s press. President Chun also played up the threat from the North as an effective way to reinforce the legitimacy of his government (Gleystee Jr & Romberg, 1987, pp.1038-1043; Oh, 1999).

Despite suppression by the Chun government, various civil organizations such as student groups, trade unions and religious organizations waged intense struggles against Chun’s authoritarian regime in the 1980s (Kim, 1997). The first action of the democratic movement occurred immediately after Mr Chun came to political power. A big street demonstration happened in Gwang-ju province in 1980 to insist on the invalidity of President Chun and his government. The Gwang-ju demonstration was mobilized by students but, eventually, it engaged huge citizen participation. The Chun government used violent military force to put down the demonstration. So the Chun government was stained with blood from the outset. After the Gwang-ju democratization movement, there was continuous political and social confrontation between the Chun government and civil organizations; that conflict intensified throughout the 1980s (Oh, 1999, pp. 80-83).

The intense conflict between the Chun government and civil organizations led to the downfall of the Chun government in 1987. The volatile atmosphere of democratization during the 1980s was typified by a torture-homicide incident. A newspaper reported that a university student died at the hands of the police during an interrogation. This rallied university students to the streets. Several other homicides
by police of demonstration participants motivated many more students and citizens to participate in more street demonstrations, and to raise protests all around the nation. The military force was unable to stop this outpouring of citizen anger in 1987, and the Chun government faced a political crisis (Oh, 1999, pp. 91-93). In this atmosphere, an amendment to the Constitution was suggested by the leader of the ruling party and passed by the National Assembly to moderate public anger, and the Chun government peacefully turned over political power to the next government. The core of the suggested amendment was the re-introduction of a direct general vote for the Presidential election, and a five-year single-term presidency. This suggestion by the ruling party leader was accepted by the National Assembly, and the Constitution was amended. The year after the national protest, the Chun government was terminated, and the next, President Roh Taw-Woo, took the office by direct general election (Kim, 1997; Oh, 1999).

Just as the former authoritarian government performed poorly on socio-political control but well on economic development, so the Chun government had also achieved extraordinary economic growth. For instance, in the 1980s South Korea was the seventh-largest trading partner of the US, and in 1986 the economy grew by 12.5% (Gleysteen Jr & Romberg, 1987, p. 1045). From this economic growth in the 1980s, South Korea became visible on the world stage (Oh, 1999). However, behind the economic growth, a significant problem remained. The deep connection between big businesses and politicians lasted through from the Park government to the Chun government, but the connection between big enterprises and political elites in Chun's government was more serious than ever (Gleysteen Jr & Romberg, 1987, p. 1046). President Chun’s economic strategies relied heavily on large-scale enterprises, with less focus on strengthening small and medium-sized firms. The unbalanced growth between big and small or medium-sized business increased (Gleysteen Jr & Romberg, 1987, p.1047). The connection between big business actors and politicians caused serious political corruption in the form of political donations. This economic growth during the authoritarian regime of Chun had potentially harmed the development of democracy, so Chun’s authoritarian regime is called the ‘dark age of democracy’ in South Korea (Oh, 1999).

3.2.2 The Development of South Korea Democratization

The massive civil street protests in 1987 transferred political power from military-based authoritarianism to political democracy, including re-implementing direct election for the President, and for members of the National Assembly (Koo, 2002). However, the South Korean government was
still dominated by a military-experienced president, and it is said that there was an ‘invisible military power’ in the government until the early 1990s. After the political transition period of the early 1990s, South Korea Presidents have been elected through democratic means including free, fair and periodic elections. The 1993 election of the President was the first civilian election in three decades: President Kim Young-Sam, who won the 1993 Presidential election, represented a genuine civilian political leader (Park, 2009, pp. 555-556).

President Kim Young-Sam took an oath to reform both political institutions and economic structure, to move toward better political democratization, and to restore an ‘untainted relationship’ between politics and business. This was because the three decade experiences of the authoritarian governments had created a strong desire for political morality and for a separation between politics and business. President Kim successfully performed the three meaningful political and economic reforms. Firstly, President Kim appointed three women to the Cabinet of the new government; this was the first time in South Korean political history that women were Cabinet members (Oh, 1999, p. 132).

Secondly, President Kim established the Board of Audits and Inspections to check the revenue and expenditure of government agencies. He also disclosed the total assets of his extended family to honour his pledge as a civilian president. His anti-corruption legislation was soon passed by the National Assembly, and snowballed into a ‘moral imperative’ for all politicians and government officials. The promulgation of the Political Fund Law, during the tenure of President Kim, was also an important step in the political power transition toward a democratic country, as it made the flow of political contributions transparent and corruption-free (Oh, 1999, pp. 138-145).

Thirdly, President Kim proclaimed that the Local Autonomy Act was a landmark in the evolution of democratic politics in South Korea. Local self-governance had been a constitutional goal for the last four decades, but it was never effectively practiced. The Act strives for both democracy and efficiency in local autonomous administration. So as to achieve balanced development of local areas, and to reach democratic development of South Korea by prescribing matters concerning type, organization and operation of local governments, and the basic relations between the state and local governments (Oh, 1999, pp. 152-154). According to the Act, local governments were first created by a direct election in 1995. These elections gave birth to the very first full-scale decentralization to the local level (Oh, 1999, pp. 154-161). The Act also provides for the autonomy of local government by financial self-reliance. Local governments collect local taxes, rents, and fees for the use of public facilities; these income sources are used to manage various specified functions including local health.
system, local industry development, local facility management, and support of the education system (Oh, 1999, pp. 146-163). The Act has effectively and remarkably freed local governments from what was the powerful central government system. In spite of the achievement of autonomy by local governments, the practices of local government authorities were still penetrated by the central government (Oh, 1999). In particular, local governments were still financially dependent to varying degrees on the central government, because while the revenue of local governments was limited, it needed to cover all expenditure for local development. Nevertheless, South Korean local governments did achieve political autonomy.

The democratic development begun by President Kim Young-Sam has continued to develop. One of the notable developments of Korean democracy was the political power change in the Presidential election in 1997. The election as President of former opposition leader, Kim Dae-Jung, signified a power transfer from a conservative to a progressive regime (Lee, 2001, pp. 160-161; Park, 2009, pp. 555-556) and this transfer continued to the following President (Roh Moo-Hyun). Despite the very short history of democratic transition, South Korea exemplifies a successful case of democratic consolidation. Also, in 2010, South Korea was recognized by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) as being in the group of full-democracy countries (EIU, 2010).

3.2.3 South Korean Presidential Political System

The Presidential political system centralizes political power in a single individual: the President. There are several requirements for achieving a Presidential system. Lijphart (1992 & 1999) emphasizes three points of a Presidential political system: a President is the head of government, and serves the public interest for a fixed term unless there is a ‘unusual and exceptional process of impeachment’; a President is popularly elected, directly by the voters; and a Presidential system provides an effective one-person executive, rather than a collegial executive (Lijphart, 1992, pp. 2-3, 1999, p. 17). Sartori (1994) also specifies three points of a Presidential system: the President, who is the head of state, should 1) be elected by the population, 2) not be discharged from his or her tenure by a parliamentary vote, and 3) be a head or director of the government. Brunner (1996, p. 91) specifically stresses that the President has the concentration of all executive power, but is not politically responsible to the parliament (Siaroff, 2003, p. 289).

South Korea has followed the Presidential political system according to the three conditions. Firstly,
the President of South Korea is directly elected by the nation. By their votes, citizens select both the
President and the National Assembly members. Secondly, the South Korean President has a fixed-year
tenure, except in the unusual and exceptional process of impeachment. The Presidential term is
currently for a single five-year term. The single five-year term of Presidency is particularly important
in the Constitution, to prevent a recurrence of political dictatorship. The direct election and single
five-year term of the President were fully and consistently implemented soon after the national
democratization protest of 1987. Thirdly, the President of South Korea is the real head of the
executive government. The President appoints Ministers to form the government, and the President
has authority to decide public policies at national level. To do this, the President of South Korea has
strong political powers in matters such as appointments, chairing of cabinet meetings, legislative veto,
foreign policy, and government formation (Siaroff, 2003). For example, the President exercises the
power of veto to bills from the National Assembly. The President is immune from prosecution during
his or her tenure, unless the president creates a domestic insurrection or is successfully charged with
treason. In addition, the President does not have legal responsibility for performance during the period
of Presidency. These Presidency prerogatives allow the President to maintain dominant political
authority, and to carry out the everyday tasks of the head of state (Lee, 2001).

To counter excessive concentration of political power in the President, the South Korean political
system explicitly attempts to separate the legislature of the National Assembly from the executive
functions of the President, as does the US political system (Parkin et al., 2006, p. 48). The South
Korean National Assembly, which consists of elected politicians, has dominant political power as the
legislative body. At the same time the National Assembly checks the President and the government’s
performance. Particularly, the National Assembly contributes strongly to the appointment of Ministers,
because the President can not appoint Ministers without the consent of the National Assembly.
However, political parties have not played a central role in South Korean political history. This is
because the South Korean political parties were established on weak ground. The political parties
were established outside of the National Assembly, they did not have strong political ideals or self-
identities and none of them advocated for labour rights. Under the military dictatorship of thirty years,
ruling parties were no more than election organizations or propaganda machines, and opposing parties
functioned merely as protest organizations. Neither the ruling nor the opposing parties influenced the

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7 The withdrawal of a President due to impeachment has not yet occurred. However, an impeachment trial application by the
National Assembly was commenced in 2004 to withdraw President Roh Moo-Hyun, but the application for impeachment
was not passed to the High Court for review; this is a required final step.

8 A political party that represents labour rights, the Democratic Labour Party, is based on the Korean Confederation of Trade
Unions; it was established in 2000, but the party did not take any seats in the National Assembly until 2004. Information is
major policy decisions of the government; as well, they were not the source of Cabinet members. In spite of democratization, the role of political parties has not yet been sufficiently developed (Lee, 2001, pp. 154-156). Nevertheless, political parties have gained their own role in South Korean political environment, and the National Assembly has become an important political institution in establishing a stable democratic country.

### 3.2.4 The Development of South Korean Civil Society

Civil society movements had existed in South Korea during the period of Japanese colonization. At that time, citizen-based movements often developed with the aim of regaining the rights of national sovereignty. Since the pause of the Korean War, a number of Not-for-profit Organizations (NPOs) - such as labour unions, professional organizations, non-profit organizations and others - have increased, but most of them were able to play only a very limited role under the tight control of the authoritarian regimes (Koo, 2000; Kim 2006; Lee, 2006). Despite the tight control of the government in the 1970s and 1980s, some NPOs, especially labour unions and student groups, were aggressively against the authoritarian regime and, as a result, they were largely responsible for its demise. Such activities of NPOs during the 1970s and 1980s are still continuing: NPOs have resisted government authority and policies; NPOs are usually established by gathering minor communities; and NPOs are financially independent from the government and from upper-class groups (Koo, 2002; Lee, 2006).

The circumstances of civil society have greatly improved since the national democratization movement. The civil society environment has shifted twice. The first shift occurred with the election of a genuine civilian President in 1993. NPOs have shaped themselves as the third sector in decision-making. They have turned their attention to various issues such as social justice, environment, education, and so on, and many new NPOs have been established. The existing organizations have become independent from government control, and have influenced the decision-making process (Lee, 2001, p. 170). The second shift happened when political power was democratically taken by the opposition leader in 1997. The new President in 1997 encouraged establishment of new NPOs and their action in various areas including functions of meeting citizen needs and allowing them to pursue their interests positively together in addition to advocacy with government and negative resistance actions against governments. The number of NPOs has increased a lot: for instance, the number of NPOs in 1999 was over 4,000 (Cho, 2003, p.2), and 49.4% of total number of NPOs were established in 1990s (Kim, 2006, p.19). These circumstances for NPO development have
strengthened their power and influence throughout South Korea. As a result, the political influence of NPOs has hugely increased in the political decision-making process (Koo, 2002; Kim, 2006).

As a result of these circumstances and this significant growth in civil society, NPOs have rapidly developed to fill many functions, including advocating for the social interests of minorities and marginalized groups, and directly advocating public demands on behalf of citizens in the decision-making processes of government (Kim, 2006). Although NPOs have not fully developed their roles and influence to the same extent as NPOs in Western countries, South Korean civil society is rapidly catching up and there has been huge growth since the 1990s (Kim, 2006, p.19). The aggressive disposition of NPOs has also been much reduced, and NPOs have increased their use of peaceful participation to advocate the interests of the public in all kinds of political fields such as economic justice, press freedom, educational reform, fair elections, and so on (Koo, 2002; Lee, 2006).

3.3 Comparison of Socio-Political Context between Australia and South Korea

This chapter has explored the Australian and South Korean political systems. There have been many more differences than similarities. The one similarity between them is that both now emphasize and have valued being a democratic country, and have achieved recognition as ‘full democracy countries’ (EIU, 2010).

As well, both countries have tried to fully reach the ideal of liberal-democracy, but their paths toward that political ideal have differed. The differences originated in the very first environment to shape each country’s political system. Australia had long developed the liberal-democratic idea in its political system. The development of Australian liberal-democratic ideal began in 19th century efforts to build an Australian political system that was independent of its past as a British colony. Australian political ideas were stipulated in the written Constitution in 1901, and formed the Australian political system as both Federal and Parliamentary (Parkin, 2006). Differently from Australia, the united Korean political ideal began to regain its political identity or sovereignty during the Japanese colonial period, and published a preliminary written Constitution to insist on an independent country of Korea. The preliminary written Constitution was the origin of the written Constitution of South Korea in 1953. That written Constitution stipulated that South Korea should be a liberal-democracy country. However, the ideal of the written Constitution was not practiced for a long time due to the President-centric Authoritarian political regime, influenced by the experience of the Korean War (Han, 1987).
The different initial conditions between the political systems of Australia and South Korea have resulted in distinctive applications of liberal-democracy ideas. In Australia, the ideal of liberal-democracy is strong throughout the nation. Australia has firmly established the democratic ideas of government accountability, of preventing political deterioration, and of the benefits of democratic political participation by citizens in decision-making processes. Also, Australia has generally employed market mechanisms sustainably in Australia. Although the emphasis on market mechanisms has fluctuated, it has been a common feature of Australian liberal-democracy (Maddox, 2005; Fenna, 2006; Parkin, 2006). In comparison, the experience of the Korean War pushed South Korea’s political systems to stabilize in a different way. Soon after the War, all political and economic development focused on achieving self-reliance against the continuing enemy in the North. This environment pushed the authoritarian regime to achieve self-reliance. The South Korean authoritarian regime did achieve huge economic development and self-reliance in the world. However, this regime forcibly controlled the rights of citizens and held back political democratization, and produced many political and economic problems such as political corruption (Oh, 1999). Those problems led to the mobilization of national movements for achieving a democratic society. Political transition was successful because of action by the citizen movements. Since the successful political transition to democracy in 1987, South Korea has begun to widely apply the ideas of liberal democracy such as accountability and transparency of government performances and of political decision-making processes (Park, 2009).

The differences between the political and government systems of the two countries are clear. The Australian political system is a Parliamentary system. Parliament is constituted by elected politicians. Citizens elect politicians to the Parliament, so that Parliament represents the rights of citizens. The Australian government is formed by the Parliament. The leader of the government, the Prime Minister, is a member of a political party and is drawn from the dominant political party. For this reason, the Parliament acts both the executive and the legislature. In other words, the separation between legislature and executive does not exist in the Australian Parliamentary system. Australian political parties are central in the Parliamentary system. Particularly, the two-party system - the Labor party and the Coalition of Liberal and National parties - has dominated the Australian Parliament for a long time (Maddox, 2005; Summer, 2006). In comparison, the South Korean political system is a Presidential system. The President of South Korea is the head of the government and has strong political authority. The President is directly elected by popular vote every five years, but he or she is allowed to take the office for only one term. Citizens also have a direct vote for members of the National Assembly, who are usually members of political parties. The major role of the National
Assembly is to represent the rights of citizens, and to make laws for the public. Also, the National Assembly checks the President's strong power, so as to prevent abuse of political power by the President. Therefore, the South Korean political system separates the legislative and executive functions to, respectively, the National Assembly, and a separately elected President. However, Lee (2001) asserts that political parties have not yet developed sufficiently in the South Korean Presidential system.

The structure of Australia’s government system is Federalism. Federalism aims to maintain both one nation unity and local authorities. The Australian Federation specifies the power division between three tiers of government; Commonwealth Government, State governments and Local governments. Particularly, the Constitution clearly specifies the power division between the national government and the state governments. The Commonwealth Government is responsible for issues at the national level such as defence, currency, immigration and emigration, diplomatic affairs, and national welfare benefits schemes. The State governments are independent of federal laws and regulations, and retain ‘residual powers’ in providing the public services that citizens experience every day. The relations between Commonwealth and States governments have generally been well-maintained, although there are often disputes, and there is some duplication of functions (Maddox, 2005; Galligan et al., 2007).

Unlike Australia, the South Korean government system used to have a strong national government-centric political system. Most policies were decided by the national governments of South Korea, and local governments were attached to the central governments. During the first democratic government, self-governance for local governments was introduced in the South Korean government system. Now representatives at local governments are directly elected by local residents, and local governments collect local taxes to manage the development of their local area. The self-governance of local governments has been successful so far, although local governments are partly dependent on financial support from the central government (Oh, 1999).

As well as having different forms of political systems, Australia and South Korea also differ in the way that civil society has developed. In Australia, political participation of citizens has been a part of political decision-making process for a long time. The most common form of Australian political participation is being a member of a NPO. This is because Australian NPOs have effectively acted as extra-Parliamentary representatives. Australian NPOs provide social services to disadvantaged groups, contribute to public debates on social or political issues, and have influenced collective demands in policy making. These performances of Australian NPOs have been consolidated through long-term practices. As a result, NPOs are now very important players in the development of Australian social
and political policies (Phillips, 2006; Dalton & Lyon, 2007). In contrast with Australia, South Korea had an environment unfavourable to developing healthy civil society during the three decades of authoritarian regime. The authoritarian governments allowed citizens to participate in only limited political activities, such as elections. Because of the strong control by the authoritarian governments, political participation was not democratically practiced; so it was aggressively expressed. The political transition from authoritarianism to democratic government was successful because of strong public pressure and resistance to authoritarianism. This resistant aspect of South Korean NPOs has remained to date, although it is now much reduced (Lee, 2006).

The socio-political contexts in each country have distinctive implications for e-government and e-civil participation practices, and also have had a huge impact on how ICTs have developed. Therefore, the following chapters of the study focus on the relationship between socio-political contexts and e-democracy practices in each country. For the first step in exploring the relation between socio-political contexts and e-democracy practices, the following chapter presents the research methodology and methods. The research methodology chapter shows the importance of research cases, and provides an outline of how the remainder of this thesis is organized.
Chapter 4
Research Methodology

This chapter explains and justifies the research methodology, methods and research cases adopted to address the research questions. The research is based on a qualitative methodology, and uses a multiple case-study approach with diverse methods for data collection: documentation, website analysis, interviews, and participant observation. The chapter begins with a justification of qualitative research, and of the case study approach, and explains how the six research cases were chosen. This is followed by justification of multiple methods for data collection and for analysing the comparative study of e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea. This chapter also discusses the limitations of data collection.

4.1 Research Methodology

Research methodology seeks to explain the rationale behind the selected research design, and the specific methods chosen. The main purpose of this discussion of research methodology is to explain how the research will be accomplished, what kind of knowledge will be produced, what information will be collected, and how it will be collected (Berg, 2004, p. 307).

Due to the short history of the study of ICTs in the political arena, there is a lack of scholarly analysis of the political impact of ICTs. Accordingly, it is difficult to find a standard methodology for studying how ICTs affect democracy (Song, 2004). The academic study of ICTs in politics research so far has applied a range of research methodologies: quantitative methodology, mixed methodology, and qualitative methodology. Quantitative methodology, in principle, emphasizes the measurement and analysis of relationships between variables, and focuses on judgements regarding which are the most suitable measures (Danzin & Lincoln, 2003). Some research on the study of ICTs in the political arena (Kedzie, 1997; Norris, 2001, Scheufele & Nisbet, 2002; Best & Wade, 2005) uses quantitative methodology that generates statistical data to explore the relationship between the popularization of ICTs and democracy. The academic research on the political impact of ICTs using quantitative methodology is generally aimed at examining the functionality of ICTs in politics through analysing website content, and through exploring the effectiveness of e-government and e-governance. For instance, O’Toole (2007) analysed 658 Australian local government websites, and also used existing survey research to examine which local government websites develop better both administrative and democratic functions. For examining the effectiveness of e-government, Riccucci and Holzer (2008)
analysed government websites of 81 cities in the world using five criteria\(^9\) of digital governance. From their analysis, they expanded their criteria for evaluating municipal websites; then each of the measures was coded for each of the five components. All 81 city-government websites were evaluated by the coded criteria, and the weaknesses and strengths of each website were compared. They found that the website contents are one of the important measurements to evaluate the effectiveness of e-governance practices, and to compare digital governance practices in large municipalities worldwide. Quantitative methodology is mostly being used in research on the political impact of ICTs to evaluate effectiveness of websites. However, this methodology has limitations when investigating the qualitative value of ICTs in public decision-making processes, and of understanding social phenomena such as features that shape e-government and e-democracy practices.

Mixed methodology, which applies both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, is also used in e-democracy and e-government studies. In scholarly research on ICTs in the political arena, mixed methodology focuses not only on the function of ICTs (mainly websites), but also on the socio-political effects. For this use, mixed methodology is regarded as the best methodology to analyse e-democracy and e-government practices, as it enables assessment of both the effectiveness of ICTs, and the qualitative value of ICTs in politics. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) believe that mixed methodology is useful to discover the new phenomenon which has not been demonstrated in the literature exemplified by e-government and e-democracy and to appropriate for the new field of study such as the impact of ICTs in socio-political arena. Researchers using mixed methods to examine internet politics claim that it is superior to ‘quantitative only’ research because internet politics is a social phenomena; these are best explored in ways that provide social contextual information that can help interpret the quantitative measures of the effectiveness of e-democracy practices. Pratchett, Wingfield and Polat (2006) used mixed methodology to examine government websites and to assess their potential to deliver democracy. They surveyed the website contents of local governments in England and Wales, and then used in-depth interviews with people who are responsible for e-democracy practices at local governments. Through this mixed methodology, they found that government websites are effective in government policy-making process, and they were also able to understand how conceptions of the nature of e-government have implication for e-democracy practices. Barnes and Vidgen (2007) also used a mixed methodology to identify both the advantages

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\(^9\) The five criteria of digital governance include: security and privacy; usability; content of websites; the type of online services; and citizens’ participation. Riccucci and Holzer recognized that these five criteria are helpful to explore the delivery of public online services and digital democracy. Refer to Riccucci, N and Holzer, M. (2009). *How Effective is Digital Governance Worldwide?* The 4th International Conference on e-government, Melbourne.
Chapter 4 Research Methodology

of using the UK Inland Revenue system, and also the challenges of developing the system. They used both a survey of the UK Inland Revenue website to evaluate website usability of e-government, and a qualitative method to analyse online forums and to develop detailed insights into users of the online taxation system. They commented on how important the qualitative data was to ascertain the in-depth perceptions of quality of the online taxation system. Nevertheless, these examples show that mixed methodology in the study of political impact of ICTs takes quantitative methodology as the central methodology, with qualitative methodology as a supplement to reduce the weakness of quantitative data. For such a relationship between quantitative and qualitative approaches in e-government and e-democracy studies, mixed methodology is still limited when it comes to deeply understanding the political impact of ICTs.

The last kind of methodology used to study e-politics is qualitative methodology. Qualitative methodology is concerned with the nature of phenomena and is used to find answers to questions such as how a social experience is created and given meaning. It can provide an “in-depth and detailed description of situations, events, interactions and interpreted understanding of the social world by learning about people’s experiences, perspectives and histories” (Snape & Spencer, 2003, p. 22). Qualitative researchers especially focus on understanding a particular phenomenon that is diverse, flexible and complex in its natural setting. This is because “the aim of qualitative research is to describe the variation in a phenomenon, situation or perspective” (Kumar, 2005, p. 14), including “the meaning, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things” (Berg, 2004, p. 3). In addition, qualitative research methodology is valuable for “making sense of complex situations and shifting phenomena” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003, pp.29-31); it is concerned with understanding in detail a ‘phenomenon within people’s social world’, and is particularly valuable for studying ‘innovative and novel situations’ where variables are poorly identified or poorly understood (Richie & Lewis, 2003; Richard & Morse, 2007). Qualitative methodology is believed to be especially useful in understanding discrete social phenomena and also in comparing diverse social phenomena. A group of researchers (Barber, 2000; Banerjee, 2003; Rodan, 2003; George, 2005; Shie, 2006) have expounded the importance of national context-related factors in discussing the political impact of ICTs. Practically, Miller and Slater (2000) explored the assimilation of the internet in a particular place (Trinidad) using a qualitative methodology (ethnography). They claim that qualitative methodology can allow rich understanding of the diverse universes of social and technical possibilities, and that this is important because of the complexities of the new media and their practices of adoption. However, e-democracy studies based on qualitative methodology have not easily searched. This may be because most existing studies in the political arena have focused on the
effectiveness of new technology applications. In addition, it is not simple or easy to discover the impact of socio-political mechanisms on the adoption of technology in developing a democratic political system (Lim, 2006). Nevertheless, it is found that the use of qualitative methodology is increasing in e-politics studies, to describe the use of ICTs in specific political context or to compare the political impact of ICTs in different countries.

Choosing among the three types of methodology, this study uses a qualitative methodology since the research questions are concerned with complex issues of e-democracy practices within the particular contexts of Australia and South Korea. Qualitative research provides researchers with the opportunity to observe and uncover the complexities in the concept and practices of e-democracy, and to understand the diverse perspectives and experiences that affect e-democracy issues; it investigates these entities in their natural settings. Qualitative research has already been used to describe how diverse contexts of e-democracy globally have shaped understanding and practices across the world. This study uses a qualitative methodology so that it can focus on in-depth explanation and exploration of situations, phenomena, problems and perspectives, and to construct theoretical and practical frameworks for understanding e-democracy grounded in such rich depictions of its practice.

This study is based on case study methodology. The case study is from the qualitative methodology traditions, and it draws on and can be distinguished from other qualitative methodologies such as biography, phenomenology, grounded theory, and ethnography (Creswell 1998, 2008). A case study aims to conduct ‘a detailed investigation’ of organizations or groups to understand and explain complex phenomena embedded in an organizational or social context (Tharenou, Donohue & Cooper, 2007, pp. 76-78). The case study is an appropriate research strategy to find answers to ‘how’ and ‘why’ research questions, and to investigate real-life context contemporary events which cannot be controlled by researchers, and cannot be manipulated (Yin, 2003, pp. 1-2). The case study approach provides the opportunity for the researcher to understand the research phenomenon within its context (Lewis, 2003, p. 76).

One of the characteristics of the qualitative research literature on e-government and e-democracy is its focus on individual case studies. For example, Kang (2007) examined the website of Seoul City Assembly to research how Seoul City Assembly engaged citizens’ participation online. He found the information provided through the website of Seoul City Assembly was very effective, but the interaction between politicians and residents was not yet to the satisfaction of the public. To improve the current dissatisfaction with e-participation, he suggested the need to improve citizen-friendly
aspects of the political system. Ma (2007) explored the internet’s ability to articulate collective identity, and to influence political mobilization, by a case study of Yumkun.com, an electronic political community in Hong Kong. Ma found strong potentiality of the internet to provoke social change, and to express political opinions; Ma also provided suggestions to improve the challenges that were then facing Yumkun.com, such as a poor collective identity, and dependence on mainstream media to provide political information on current issues. In a case study which was similar to Ma’s, Flew and Wilson (2008) investigated the Youdecide 2007 project, initiated to facilitate online news reporting on the 2007 Australian election, and evaluated how much the internet promoted citizens participation in Australian politics. They found that the Youdecide 2007 project made a significant contribution to engaging citizens’ political participation, but they also revealed limitations of the project, such as the preference for immediate news and opinions, and the reconcentration of existing political participation because Youdecide 2007 was an election-focused site. Because of this limitation of case study research, they suggested that future researchers should consider sustained participatory use of the internet for future research into practices in e-democracy. Research reported above helps us to understand the adoption of ICTs in various current socio-political environments, but a single case study is less useful for analysing the influence of socio-political environments in shaping e-politics practices in specific backgrounds.

So this study used a multiple and comparative case-study approach in order to obtain intensive understandings of Australian and South Korean e-democracy practices. The methodology literature has suggested that the use of a set of multiple case studies has advantages when different events have occurred, and when the events have some comparative factors (Yin, 2003). Some e-democracy research shows the strength of a multiple case-study approach, including cross-country comparisons. The multiple case studies of cross-country comparisons have shown the similarities and the differences of e-democracy practice. For instance, Dunleavy and his colleagues (2006) compared the e-government strategy in organizations of taxation, social security, and immigration among seven countries including the UK, the USA, Canada, Netherland, Australia, New Zealand, and Japan; they presented the similarities and differences of e-government practices, and the important challenges for political reform in the digital era. Importantly, they found that the characteristics of organizations in each country, and external factors such as the 9/11 terror, have influenced the way new technologies are used in each country. Chadwick (2006) also investigated a number of cases around the world from Santa Monica to Estonia. He found that in all cases, ICTs effectively intensified citizens’ influence in the socio-political arena, but that the forms of e-democracy differed in all countries. He concluded that the highly diverse and plural forms of e-democracy across the world are affected by the wide
variety of socio-political setting in each country and the use of different forms of technology. In another study, Coleman and Norris (2005) with 35 practitioners, policy makers, and commentators from 13 diverse countries explored definitions of e-democracy in order to develop agendas for better e-democracy. Coleman and Norris argued that definitions of e-democracy differ across political cultures, and that countries were likely to learn from one to another in taking further steps in e-democracy. The evidence from multiple cases, therefore, is more compelling, and produces a more robust study (Herriott & Firestone, 1983) than a single case-study can. As well as the empirical benefits of the comparative approach generally, the comparative approach using multiple case-studies has advantages in specifying the links between conditions of ICTs and different socio-political contexts, such as those in Australia and in South Korea. These benefits suggest that case-study research is appropriate for this study; it enables a focus on the details of current e-democracy trends and practices, and a full exploration of their interaction with their local and national contexts. This allows the study to focus also on finding answers to the question of how ICTs are affecting Australian politics and South Korean politics respectively, and why the e-democracy practices in each country are different from each other.

In summary, this study is based on qualitative methodology - a multiple case-study - to explore the conceptualization and practices of e-democracy in Australia and in South Korea. In particular, the study uses a multiple case-study, and is based on a cross-country comparative approach to understand the interaction between ICTs, politics, and the national contexts in Australia and in South Korea. A thorough description of the similarities and differences in the two countries is expected to answer the question of how differences in democratic structures influence the political values embedded in e-democracy practice and, in turn, how the political values are impacted by ICTs.

4.2 Research Cases

In the case study approach, the research case must be carefully selected, because the research case has to meet the qualification that each case can predict either similar results or contrasting results (Yin, 2003). Especially in a study of multiple-cases, the rationale for the selection of cases must be carefully explained, and four to six cases can be designed to pursue two different patterns of theoretical replication (Yin, 2003). The six cases for this research are shown in Table 4-1.
Table 4-1. Research Cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The type of cases</th>
<th>Australia</th>
<th>South Korea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participatory E-government</td>
<td>• GetInvolved (<a href="http://www.getinvolved.qld.gov.au">http://www.getinvolved.qld.gov.au</a>)</td>
<td>• Epeople (<a href="http://www.epeople.go.kr">http://www.epeople.go.kr</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Future Melbourne Wiki (<a href="http://www.futuremelbourne.com.au">http://www.futuremelbourne.com.au</a>)</td>
<td>• SMG Online (<a href="http://www.seoul.go.kr">http://www.seoul.go.kr</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-civil Participation</td>
<td>• GetUp! (<a href="http://www.getup.org.au">http://www.getup.org.au</a>)</td>
<td>• The 2008 Candlelight Protest against U.S Beef Imports</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The criteria for choosing the cases to be used in this study are divided into two categories: Participatory e-government, and E-civil participation. These two categories for choosing research cases focused on the role of democratic actors, including governments, political parties, media, citizens and so on; this is derived from the Clift research (2004b) because the political procedure and policy-making are decided by the democratic actors. In addition, two of the many democratic actors - government and citizen - have been emphasized to make a cross-country comparison of e-democracy in Australia and in South Korea. In each country, governments have initiated and built the infrastructure, conceptual frameworks, and the practices of e-politics. The governments - including National, State, and Local governments, even in the parliament political system in Australia - have more actively employed new communication technologies to interact with citizens than political parties or new media. At the same time, civil society (including individuals and civil organizations) has quickly applied ICTs to their political activities, to enhance their positions in the political arena.

The selection of the research cases in this study is based on the international level of e-democracy and e-government development. As mentioned in Chapter 1, both Australia and South Korea are leading countries of e-government and e-democracy in the world. Since both of these countries have planned and strategically practiced e-government and e-democracy, both have continually been included in the top 10 of rankings of e-government and e-democracy in developed countries. For example, in 2010, South Korea and Australia ranked 1st and 2nd respectively in the UN e-participation survey (UN, 2010). The governments of the two countries have also been enthusiastic proponents of using ICTs in the
political arena to engage citizens’ political participation. Nevertheless, the practices of e-democracy in
the two countries are quite different. Australia has enthusiastically developed government-centric (or
political representative-centric) e-democracy practices. Australia has only recently shifted its focus
from government-centric e-democracy practices to citizen-based e-democracy practices (Gibson et al.,
2008; Vromen, 2008b). On the other hand, South Korea has highly developed both e-government and
bottom-up e-democracy practices. Compared with Australia, citizen-based e-democracy practices
have been important in South Korea since 2000, and have proved its effectiveness at election time,
and also between elections (Chung, 2007; Kang, 2007).

Six cases in the current study share certain characteristics. The selected cases are well known in their
countries for their high profile and their relative success in influencing public opinions and demands.
All six challenge previous conceptions of what it means to be a citizen, and created new ways for
living politics. In other words, all the chosen cases have succeeded at increasing political interest in
public policies among citizens, engaging many who were previously considered politically apathetic,
and integrating political activity and public policy into people’s everyday lives. All the chosen
research cases are representative cases, not in the sense that they are typical, but because they are
examples of effective practice and show digital public power in each country.

The six cases were chosen so that their e-democracy practices, whether Australia or South Korea,
could be investigated and compared by following two steps. First, documentation on international and
national e-democracy and e-government standards were reviewed and examples of best practices were
identified. The researcher reviewed international reports, including e-government surveys and studies
of the best e-democracy or e-government practices. As well, national academic and administrative
documents from each country were reviewed, to identify potential candidates for the case studies.
Then the researcher looked at many websites aimed at promoting interaction between government and
the public, and (or) at promoting citizens’ participation in decision-making processes. As a result of
the interactive processes of reviewing documentation and looking at websites and other relevant
information, the six cases for this study were selected.

4.3 Research Methods

This section on research methods describes how data was collected and analysed in the six e-
democracy cases. It explains the rationale for the data collection methods chosen, including the types,
the approaches, and the procedures for data collection. This is followed by an explanation of qualitative data analysis for each of the data collection methods used.

### 4.3.1 Data Collection

Data collection in qualitative research typically refers to the methods of participating in the setting: directly observing, in-depth interviewing, and analysing documents (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 97). For research using a case study approach, it is necessary to obtain the “widest array of data collection as the researcher attempts to build an in-depth picture of the case” (Creswell, 1998, p. 123). Sources of evidence commonly used in a case study consist of “documentation, archival records, interviews, indirect observations, participant observation and physical artifacts” (Yin, 2003, p. 85).

Data collection methods for this study were selected based on the nature of the knowledge sought, and the research questions. The knowledge of this study seeks to construct consists of international trends and related standards of e-democracy, perspectives and experiences of e-democracy at different levels of government; perspectives and practices of citizen-based e-democracy; and the diverse socio-political contexts for shaping the forms of e-democracy. This knowledge can be accessed by qualitative research strategies involving a number of data collection methods. Some of the knowledge, derived from international trends and various e-democracy practices across the world, can be accessed by documentary research, while the knowledge involved in the phenomenon of Australian and South Korean e-democracy practices can be obtained by website analysis, interview, and observation.

The comparative research on e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea was explored and analysed through these four methods of data collection: documentary research, website analysis, interview, and direct observation. These methods were used to obtain a holistic view of the current e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea in order to answer the research questions about the two countries’ e-democracy circumstances. Also, these methods were used to ensure the reliability and validity of information, and to compensate for the weaknesses of each method by the strengths of the others. Documents are an important source for understanding setting of data and for analysing contents (Marshall & Rossman, 2006), particularly when situations or events cannot be investigated by observation and interviews (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p. 35). Website analysis is a comparatively new method of data collection in internet politics. A website can provide a powerful insight into how political institutions or citizens are using the internet to promote democracy. Websites are considered a
useful source of information, particularly for exploring the currency and completeness of their information on e-democracy and e-government practices (Riccucci & Holzer, 2008). Interviews and observations are the main methods widely used in qualitative research, which is concerned not only with facts or events, but also with “the ways that people construct, interpret and give meaning” to the experiences (Gerson & Horowitz, 2002, p. 199). Interviews were used in this study to develop a full understanding of e-democracy concepts and practices from individual perspectives. Observation provides an understanding of the real circumstances of e-democracy practices through the description of behaviours, actions, and the full range of communication and interactions (Labuschagne, 2003). Each of the data collection methods covered in this study is explained in detail below.

**Documentation**

This study is based on data collected from documentation such as international surveys and best practices, e-democracy or e-government definitions, e-government policy documents from each country, annual reports from the institutions of each government and of an online advocacy organization, media reports, and academic literature. Specifically, the revised UN E-government Surveys of 2008 and of 2010, and the 2003 and 2005 OECD E-government reports were major sources of information on e-democracy and e-government practice. Other information was derived from regional documentation of situations and practices such as the South Korean Annual White Paper, and reports of the Australian NOIE (the National Office for the Information Economy in Australia, hereafter called NOIE) or AGIMO (the Australian Government Information Management Office, hereafter called AGIMO). Especially, documentation was the main method used to investigate the “e-civil participation” research cases. The annual reports of GetUp! were an important source for exploring GetUp!. The ‘on-and-off” Korean news reports such as Kyoungyang Newspaper and Ohmynews were useful to analyse the 2008 Candlelight Protest against the US Beef Imports in order to compare with GetUp!. Yun and Chang’s (2008) paper analysing the political and social dimensions shaping bottom-up e-democracy practices in Korea was especially helpful. Many academic studies (Chung, 2007; Kang, 2007; Gibson et al., 2008; Vromen 2008a; Coombs, 2009) supplemented the above.

Documentation provided information essential for defining fundamental concepts, and for identifying guidelines already in use; together these enable identification of international trends and initiatives. This documentary information was also used to explore more specific issues about the conditions within each country, and to understand why the two countries have different perspectives (practices,
preferences or inclinations) on the use of ICTs in politics. In particular, a review of relevant documentation helped to generate issues or themes of e-democracy for further exploration. In addition, reviewing the above-mentioned documentary sources raised issues and suggested questions appropriate for interviews.

**Website Analysis**

The website is a unique medium for providing services, sharing information, and communicating among people and between elected representatives and citizens. The website analysis provided a powerful insight into how political institutions or citizens are using the internet to promote democracy. For five of the six research cases (in Australia GetInvolved, FM wiki, and GetUp!; and in South Korea Epeople and SMG Online), the researcher was able to use website analysis, because the five have their own current sites both to engage citizens’ participation, to discuss public issues continually and to inform extensive achieves to website visitors. However, one - the 2008 Candlelight Protest against US Beef Imports - did not have a log-in website; rather it was more ephemeral, and worked together with several blogs, portals, and online broadcasting sites. So for the 2008 Candlelight Protest against US Beef Imports, the researcher collected information using a diverse range of documents including any online traces available.

Website analysis mainly uses content analysis to identify and categorize the information content, and also to analyse the organization of the site and the kinds of participants (Pratchett, Wingfield, & Polat, 2006). The website analysis for this study focused on how online participants communicated or discussed issues, and what roles online participants played in the participation spaces, rather than how citizens were engaged to participate in the online space. The website analysis centred on relevant information from consultation or discussion topics, but excluded general information that served as the foundation for citizen participation such as governments’ general policy statements and e-mail alerts. This is because in the 2008 UN e-government survey (UN, 2008, pp. 61-62), Australia and South Korea were in the first and second rank of e-information assessment. In other words, the two countries had achieved the first steps of e-democracy (which is defined as providing information online), and were looking toward e-consultation and e-decision making, which are defined by the OECD (2003) and the UN (2008) as the next levels of e-democracy and e-government. Also, the two countries have considering developing the next phases of e-democracy which are e-consultation and e-decision making.
The website analysis was conducted during the first half of 2009. This 6-month period of website analysis was used on the one hand to inform development of the interview questions, and on the other hand, it provided a reasonably long period to analyse online participation spaces. The six months was considered adequate as it allowed the researcher to follow the procedure of consultation and decision-making. During the website analysis period, the researcher logged on to each website approximately every second week, and explored the changes in each participation space including new discussion issues, new postings, new campaigns, and the progress of discussion in the current online-discussion issues and campaigns. While conducting the website analysis, the researcher also contacted potential interviewees and developed interview issues and questions.

The website analysis recorded both the quantity and quality of the online participation process. The quantity measures of online participation include a count of suggested ideas, and of discussion or forum topics; a record of postings including direct postings to each issue; postings that commented on a previous posting; and of final policies provided on the website. The researcher analysed the discussion or communication contents, noting the quality of interaction, and comparing posts to the websites’ own standards and statements. Through the website analysis, the study sought to explore all of the features of each of the research cases, to compare various operations for engaging citizens’ participation in decision-making process, and to investigate the challenges and achievements of online citizen participation. In particular, the website analysis proceeded by comparing cases in the same category. This was especially helpful when it came to analysing the four participatory e-government cases, which revealed interesting similarities and differences.

**Interviews**

The interview is an essential method of qualitative research, because it allows access to multiple views of events and social phenomena (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003; Trochim, 2006). This study used semi-structured interviews to gain a comprehensive understanding of the perspectives and experiences of government officers and public servants involved in the current practices of government-centric e-democracy. The semi-structured interviews were initially conducted with prepared topic guides and interview questions developed from the conceptual framework and research questions. Material elicited during the interviews was then used to answer the research questions on the criteria required for understanding both participatory e-government themes and practices regarding achievement and improvement. It was also used to explore a more particular issue about how each government uses ICTs to solve political or administrative problems which that country is facing. In the interview, the
researcher told interviewees about the topics, issues and questions, and interviewees then freely expressed their opinions on them. In doing so, each interviewee provided elaborated and comprehensive details on participatory e-government practices for their own case. Also, most of the interviewees were familiar with the topics ahead of time, and had seriously thought about the future challenges for better e-participation. Importantly, during the interview, the researcher raised comparative issues on participatory e-government practices between the two countries. This was of great significance for creating new comparative knowledge during the interviews.

The study used ‘purposive sampling’ to select interviewees. In this method, a particular sample is selected deliberately on the basis of analytical or theoretical purposes that link to the research focus or questions being addressed (Ritchie, Lewis & Elam, 2003, p. 107). Purposive sampling was used to select key informants who had extensive knowledge that could provide information and contribute meaningful data about each of the e-government case studies. Key informants for the study were selected by the contact information on the websites of GetInvolved, of Future Melbourne Wiki, of Epeople and of SMG Online. If an individual contact point was provided on the website, the researcher directly contacted them, some by phone and some by e-mail, in order to introduce the contact purpose and get permission to conduct interviews. When only department or division contact information was provided, the researcher sent e-mails including an explanation of the study, and the importance of interview in this research; feedback from the each of them was received within one week. In the feedback, they introduced themselves, including their positions and the major tasks in relation to the website or online discussion management. Through e-mail, the researcher negotiated a time and place to conduct face-to-face interviews.

A total of nine interviewees from national, state and local governments were conducted. All were officers who were responsible for community engagement or participation in internet decision-making processes. The individual interviews with informants in Brisbane, in Melbourne and in Seoul were conducted for approximately 45 minutes, and explored the interviewees’ perceptions and experiences in depth. The researcher raised the issues at the beginning of the interviews, and then allowed the interviewees to freely respond to the questions. Where interviewees agreed, a digital recorder was used to record the interviews. For those interviewees who did not agree to recorded interviews, note-taking was used to remember the interview contents. Both techniques were useful for transcribing and

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10 The information forms for interviewees, consents forms and interview issues were sent to the interviewees to obtain their permission. An information form for interviewees and an informed consent form are provided in Appendices 4-1, 4-2 and 4-3.
keeping data. Recording the interview enabled the researcher to devote full attention to listening to the interviewees, and to ask subsequent questions for in-depth understanding (Legard et al., 2003, p. 166). It also provided the researcher with an opportunity to listen to the tapes on a number of occasions, and gain a thorough understanding of interviewees’ perspectives and experiences. On the other hand, note-taking divided the researcher’s attention between listening and writing, but it saved the researcher time to transcribe the interview contents.

Observation

Participant observation is based on the ethnographic tradition in that it tries to develop an understanding of participants’ lived experience (Esterberg, 2002 p. 85). It can add understanding of the phenomena in its natural context. In this study, participant observation was used as part of an empirical study to gain an understanding of the practices and operations at GetUp!’. The researcher gathered information by participating in offline events organized by GetUp! in the first half of 2009. During that period, GetUp! organized three offline events in Canberra, all of which related to a Human Rights issue. One was a national consultation, another was a public hearing, and the other was a local group discussion, and the researcher participated in all three events. Field notes were taken as an observational record, and the observation occurred with minimal influence on other participants in the events. They were three focuses for observation: offline discussion procedures; cooperation among GetUp! staff, other not-for-profit organizations, and offline local discussion organizers; and relations between online campaigns and offline discussion. Participant observation provided the researcher with a richer understanding of GetUp! operations, and was used as a method for cross-checking the data to compensate for a possible gap between ideal and reality. As GetUp! national leaders had not participated in the interview process, participant observation was used to fill that gap.
Table 4-2. Multi-methods of Data Collection for Each Research Case

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Documentation analysis</th>
<th>Website analysis</th>
<th>Interviews</th>
<th>Observation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GetInvolved</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM wiki</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getup!</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epeople</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMG Online</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 2008 Candlelight Protest</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.2 Data Analysis

As the study is to examine and compare e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea, the six cases were compared for similarities and differences. The cases were also interrogated using questions that had emerged from the literature review, but also keeping an open mind for new questions as they emerged from the data. Three key analytical questions brought to the case studies were: how governments engage public in decision-making processes; how citizens constitute themselves in setting public agendas online; and what role is played by socio-political contexts. Each of the studies from Australia and South Korea (total of six) was constructed by reviewing the documentation, the website, the interviews, and (where appropriate) the participant observations.

Qualitative analysis used in this study consists of content analysis and descriptive empirical analysis. In order to understand particular phenomena, ideas and attitudes, content analysis was applied to textual materials including print media and writings, broadcast media and recordings, and live situations (Krippendorff, 1989). Descriptive empirical analysis was used to describe socio-political backgrounds of the six research cases, in order to understand the influence of national backgrounds on e-democracy practices. In this study, the combination of content analysis and descriptive empirical analysis of the documents and websites was used to discover the specificities of each e-democracy practice. This analysis of documents and websites was coupled with analysis of interviews and observation, and to further supplement the analysis of interviews and observation.

The data from interviews and participant observation was qualitatively analysed using non-statistical
processes. The literature provides a number of methods for analysing interviews. In general, data analysis includes the following processes: organizing and preparing the data; generalizing categories and themes; coding the data; interpreting and developing thematic analysis; and presenting the research results (Creswell, 2008, p. 206; Ritchie, Spencer & O’Connor, 2003, p. 261; Schmidt, 2004, pp. 253-257; Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 98). Data analysis for this study followed these six processes. The researcher transcribed the data derived from the interviews, reviewed the interview scripts and notes, coded the data according to theoretical themes and interview questions, analysed and interpreted the data on the basis of the core concept of e-democracy (that is, increasing political participation), and then summarized and presented the research findings. Data from the participant observations, which is mainly field notes, were reviewed and analysed following the same processes that were used to analyse the interview scripts. The analysis of interviews and observation involved developing the detailed framework for this study.

4.4 Limitations of Data Collection

While the researcher conducted a number of face-to-face interviews, there were some limitations. Generally, people who were identified and invited to interviews participated. However, one interviewee was not able to participate in the interview due to last minute timing problems. This interviewee was considered important for the study as the interviewee’s work was directly related to engaging citizens in online participation. The interviewee did eventually participate, but the interview had to be conducted by e-mail.

One other limitation affected two of the cases in this study. The interview with a group of directors from GetUp! was not successful. They rejected an invitation to participate in the interview for this study, and individuals who are director members of GetUp! did not reply to the researcher’s interview requests, sent through e-mail and through social networking services. As well, the 2008 Candlelight Protest against US Beef Imports concluded in autumn 2008, and at the time the researcher conducted field-work, it was hard to find participants. Therefore, instead of conducting interviews with a number of people in relation to these e-civil participation practices, documents were mainly used to analyse citizen-based e-democracy cases. As both of these e-civil participation cases are well-known and have high profiles in their respective countries, there are numerous academic and non-academic research papers and other secondary sources available, such as media reports and media interviews which were conducted with directors as well as with members of the e-civil participation organization. For GetUp!,
participant observation was used to substitute for the interview.

4.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter outlines the research design and methodological framework for this study. It justifies the use of a multiple case-study methodology, and the research methods for the data collection and analysis. The cross-country comparative case study approach is selected as appropriate for developing an in-depth understanding of contemporary e-democracy phenomena. Qualitative data has been collected using multiple sources: documents, websites, interviews, and participant observation. Finally, qualitative data analysis has been discussed to examine how the data was analysed. The following chapters present the findings and the discussions.
Chapter 5
Cross-country Comparison on E-democracy Context in Australia and in South Korea

This chapter explores and compares the adoption of ICTs in government and in civil society in Australia and in South Korea. The invention of ICTs is expected to reduce the deficits of contemporary democracy in every society (Negroponte, 1995; Toffler, 1981). As a first step to improve democratic government system, governments adopted ICTs to improve the internal operations of public administration in the early 1990s; this administrative use of ICTs was expected to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of government working processes. It was widely believed that ICTs would bring benefits and would reduce red-tape processes, increase co-operation among government agencies, and improve information management (Schedler & Scharf, 2002; Brown, 2005). Such initial expectations of the impact of ICTs in government performance have been shown, with ICTs playing an important role in public administration reform in many countries including Australia and South Korea (Dunleavy & Margetts, 2000; Brown, 2005; NIA, 2008).

Since the middle of the 1990s, one aim of adopting ICTs in government has been to improve policy-making and decision-making processes through better engagement of the public. Online public engagement has been practised differently around the world. This is mainly because of different socio-political contexts in different countries, which have influenced decisions about what type of technologies are needed, and how these technologies are employed to engage public participation; the socio-political context and technologies have interacted with each other to shape the form of online participation and engagement (Chadwick, 2006; Knight et al., 2006). Hence, it is valuable to investigate how the contexts for e-democracy in Australia and South Korea have interacted with the development of ICTs and their use in public and political arenas. A cross-country comparison of e-democracy development in Australia and in South Korea provides a better understanding of how e-democracy practices have been shaped in both participatory e-government, and in e-civil participation.

This chapter focuses on how Australia and South Korea have used ICTs to engage citizens’ participation in public policy-making and in politics. The chapter first traces the relevant contexts that provided the conditions for the development of Australian e-democracy. It reports on the e-government and e-democracy framework at the federal level; the e-government strategies at the state and local levels; on the practical directions of participatory e-governments in the three tiers of government in Australia; and on the use of ICTs in Australian civil society. The chapter then
investigates South Korean e-democracy contexts, including the development of a National Informatization framework; the adoption of a national strategy at local levels; and the development of e-civil participation practices. The chapter concludes with a comparison of e-democracy contexts in Australia and in South Korea.

5.1 The Development of E-democracy in the Australian Context

Australia is one of the early leading countries in the use of ICTs in all parts of society and in politics in order to improve contemporary political conditions. The use of ICTs for political improvements was initiated by the Commonwealth Government in the 1990s in a project called e-government (NOIE, 2002). This aimed to provide appropriate information and services to the public, and to reform administrative and policy-making processes of the Australian government (NOIE, 2002). The development of e-government policies and practices in Australia has been facilitated by co-operation between the federal government and state governments, which are the top two tiers in the Australian government system (“how Australia”, 2003). The Australian Government developed the e-government framework to provide future directions for the adoption of ICTs in the “whole-of-government”. The e-government practices at the federal level, such as the establishment of a national portal, and of online services at the national level, were developed with the cooperation of state governments. The six state and two territory governments produced policies and action plans, referring to both the e-government framework of the Commonwealth, and to regional characteristics. Unlike the two higher levels of government, local governments tended to depend on the e-government strategies, frameworks and practices of the two higher levels of government - particularly, the State levels - because local governments in Australia had the least capability to build a framework and to practice e-government.

ICTs have also been used in Australian politics by Not-for Profit Organizations (NPOs). Australian NPOs initially used ICTs to provide political information to the public, but soon also used them to mobilize citizens’ participation in online political actions such as online discussion, online petitions, and online fundraising. The use of ICTs by NPOs has engaged the political interest and participation of the public, particularly the participation of young generations (Vromen, 2008; Coombs, 2009). ICTs have effectively helped create new forms of online citizen participation such as online-based NPOs and online journalism.
5.1.1 The Development of E-government Framework and Practices in Commonwealth Government

The strategy to use ICTs in the Australian Government began with a declaration by the Finance Minister in 1994 (AGIMO, 2007b). The initial Australian e-government strategy sought to identify opportunities for the Commonwealth Government to take advantage of ICTs in its political and economic development. The Finance Minister commissioned the Information Technology Review Group to consider the major trends of ICTs in politics and in government administrations, and to provide options for the government on ways of achieving economies of scale and developing ‘whole-of-government approaches in IT’. The Information Technology Review Group delivered the report, ‘Clients First: the challenge for government information technology’ (1995), which recommended the cross-agency development of IT resources. The report also recommended that IT resources could improve interconnection among public agencies, and that providing a coordinated approach to the effective delivery of ICT solutions could lead to the development of seamless departmental boundaries and a better coordination of government services (AGIMO, 2007b). One year later, the Information Policy Advisory Council (hereafter called IPAC) was established by the Minister for Communications, Information, and the Arts. IPAC was a high-level advisory body on online information and communications services and technologies; it “provided advice and recommendations to the Commonwealth Government on the full range of social, technological, and regulatory issues emerging from online services and increasing the use of Australian governments, businesses and community sectors” (AGIMO, 2007b).

In 1997, the National Office of Information Economy (NOIE, a precursor office of AGIMO) was established by then Prime Minister John Howard. NOIE was a government agency, separate from the Department of Communications, Information, and the Arts, and advised by an independent Board. The Board has developed, coordinated and provided broad policy overview in four areas: “establishing the regulatory and infrastructure environment for online activities; facilitating electronic commerce; ensuring consistent federal government position in new fora; and overseeing policies for applying new technology to government administration and information and service provision” (AGIMO, 2007b, “history”). NOIE performed important functions to promote and coordinate the use of ICTs in order to deliver government information, policies, programs and services (NOIE, 2002). The Prime Minister, John Howard, announced in Investing for Growth, an ambitious target that all federal departments and agencies would have all appropriate services online by 2001. In 2000, NOIE released the Government Online Strategy, setting out the plan to reach the Commonwealth’s goal of
Investing for Growth. This strategy outlined the practical steps to be taken by Federal agencies to make the goal of Investing for Growth possible by 2001. The strategy included establishing a Commonwealth-wide intranet, providing online services, reporting government plans and progress, and establishing electronic payment systems (NOIE, 2002). The migration of services to the online environment can be seen as the end of the first stage of e-government.

The second phase of E-government strategy at the Australian federal level was mapped out in Better Services, Better Government (2002). This strategy drove the use of government electronic services for information services and transactions to the more comprehensive and integrated application of ICTs to deliver more “seamless, outcome-focused, transparent and responsive government to the public” (NOIE, 2002, p.1). The strategy had six key objectives (p. 1):

- Achieve greater efficiency and a return on investment;
- Ensure convenient access to government services and information;
- Deliver services that are responsive to the needs of individual Australian households, businesses and civic organizations;
- Integrate related services;
- Build experience, user trust and confidence in the use of new technologies; and
- Enhance closer citizen engagement in policy formulation and processes.

So Better Services, Better Government can be seen to focus on two important sections. The first section relied on the term Better Services, and was the core of the first phase of e-government. But, in the context of strategy, Better Services went beyond the establishment of online services and systems, and aimed to effectively deliver better information, programs, transactions and services to the public by the use of ICTs. The second section, Better Government, emphasized improving administrative processes and taking account of community views in decision-making process (NOIE, 2002). This online mechanism for engaging public participation in government process became one of the main e-government streams at this phase, and offered a good opportunity for federal government departments and agencies to improve their connection with citizens on public issues. This is broadly termed online citizen-engagement, or e-democracy; the government aspect of e-democracy aimed to enable a strengthening of relationship between government and citizens, and to help improve government decision-making process (NOIE, 2002, p. 18). This good opportunity in engaging citizens through online, which Better Government emphasized, was also taken by the state governments (AGIMO,
In 2004, NOIE was split into two offices: the Australian Government Information Management Office (hereafter called AGIMO), and the Office for the Information Economy; e-government development became the responsibility of AGIMO. Responsibility for the economic reforms and business developments of the former NOIE were transferred to the Office for the Information Economy. AGIMO focused on promoting and coordinating the application of ICTs to deliver government information, programs, services and policies, and to facilitate public engagement in the policy-making process (AGIMO, 2007b). AGIMO attempted to practically increase the level of citizens’ participation in public discussion on the development of government policy through the use of ICTs. To do this, AGIMO researched both the existing national and international principles of using ICTs in politics and in governments, and the actual needs for all levels of Australian governments (Nelson, 2007, p. 22). This research on the impact of ICTs in promoting citizen engagement created favourable conditions for experimenting with the democratic decision-making culture in Australia. As a result, in 2004, AGIMO set out *Australia’s Principles for ICT-enabled Citizen Engagement* (2004). This document introduced eight principles for enabling ICTs to mediate citizens’ engagement in government decision-making processes. These principles are:

1. Commitment
2. Community focus
3. Community capability and inclusiveness
4. Mutual respect, confidence, and trust
5. Interactivity and flexibility
6. Responsibility and accountability
7. Security and privacy
8. Evaluation and efficiency

These principles adopted the OECD three-stage model\(^\text{11}\) (2003) for increasing government engagement with citizens by using ICTs. These principles became the “best practice” guide lists for all Australian government agencies that wished to engage citizens’ participation using by ICTs in their

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\(^{11}\) The OCED defines three e-engagement objectives: Information, Consultation and Active Participation. Information is a one-way relation in which government produces and delivers information to citizens, and citizens are passive information receivers. Consultation is a two-way relation in which citizens provide feedback on issues provided by government. Active Participation is a partnership between government and citizens in which citizens actively shape public policy, while government has a responsibility for final outcomes (OECD, 2003).
policy-making processes. These principles are still important as guide lists for all Australian government agencies to improve and upgrade the existing standards and principles of e-government (Nelson, 2007, p. 22). The important point here is that AGIMO, through its strategy, championed e-government practices to all governments (and government agencies) at all levels, and enforced responsibility of all governments to develop citizen engagement in decision-making, and showed how this could be done effectively and efficiently using ICTs. AGIMO became a leading agency in promoting the involvement of Australian government in designing e-government solutions, and became a conduit for the adoption and adaptation of global e-democracy trends, norms and practices. This strategic leadership of the development of ICT use in Australian governments at the federal level achieved for Australia its ranking as one of the e-government world leader countries since 2003 (OECD, 2003; UN, 2005, 2008 & 2010).

Along with e-government policy developments at the federal level, the Commonwealth Government tried to establish national broadband infrastructure in Australia. However, this has been a slow process: Australia has been ranked as low in levels of broadband speed and in cost effectiveness by surveys of both the OECD (2008) and the World Economic Forum (hereafter called WEF, 2009). This is because the partially government-owned telecommunication provider, Telstra, has a long history of dominating Australian telecommunication provision, as well as in providing broadband services during the Howard Government from 1996 to 2007 (Cameron, 2006; Santen, 2009). This partially privatized-monopoly system in Australian communication industry limited the development of a national broadband infrastructure and of active competition in providing internet services effectively (DBCDE, 2009). To develop the high-speed broadband infrastructure throughout Australia, in 2009, the Rudd Government introduced a National Broadband Network initiative (DBCDE, 2009); the following Labor Government (the Gillard Government) has continued this initiative.

An important practice of citizen-focused e-government at the federal level is the Australian National Portal at http://www.australia.gov.au. The portal, launched in 2002, introduced a single window to provide information on government and policies and online services related to government business, to get feedback from citizens about government, and to respond to concerns and demands of citizens on public issues. This portal linked to over 700 federal government websites, and to all state, territory and local government websites, and to associated subsidiary websites (NOIE, 2002; UN, 2005; website analysis 2010). Nevertheless, this Australian portal focused not on promoting interaction between citizens and government for the development of government policies and services but on providing information on all levels of Australian governments, and facilitating government with
business and services. In UN e-government surveys in 2008 and in 2010, this Australian portal scored
the highest on the category e-information\textsuperscript{12} (but not in the category of e-consultation and e-decision-
making); this portal was praised as best practice for providing government information online in 2010
UN E-government Survey (UN, 2008, 2010).

5.1.2 E-government Policy Shaping and Practices in Australian State and Local Governments

The previous section introduced the e-government framework development and practice at the
Australian Commonwealth level. Now, the chapter turns to the policy shaping and practical use of
ICTs in Australian State and Local governments. As mentioned in Chapter 3, Australia is a federal
system, so each state government is a separate important entity, and a part of the government of
Australia. Each state government has its own jurisdiction and is self-governing. The development of
e-government policies and practices differ between each state government: each state government has
independently shaped its own e-government policy and practice, and decided how to adopt the e-
government framework from the federal level (Geisellhart, 2004). Some state governments have
developed a thorough e-government plan including formulating an e-government strategy, a further e-
democracy strategy, and e-government practices. For instance, the Queensland State Government
was the first and the most enthusiastic of the eight state and territory governments to develop the e-
government and e-democracy approach (Chen et al., 2006). The e-government strategy of the
Queensland Government began with the production of the Smart State Strategy in 1998 to improve
and reform Queensland’s economic and government conditions. It then focused on citizen engagement
in government decision-making process, and outlined an e-democracy policy framework in 2002
(Geisellhart, 2004; Adie, 2008). The Victorian State Government was also an early adoption
government in using ICTs to improve its political and government process. Geisellhart (2004) says
that the Victorian State Government introduced the Connecting Victoria statement in 1999 to
“promote new politics” in Victoria. This statement was progressed and a new report was delivered in
2002. This new report includes better vision, advanced strategy and new governance model of using
ICTs in governments throughout Victoria for Victorian people and superseded the previous statement.
This progress report aimed to reform and improve Victorian e-government services for citizens, and to
increase public engagement in the decision-making process (Geisellhart, 2004). On the other hand, the

\textsuperscript{12} The assessment of e-participation in 2008 \textit{UN E-Government Survey} included e-information, e-consultation, and e-
decision making. E-information assesses national websites and portals to determine whether or not governments are
providing political information such as online policy and missions, e-mail alerts, contact listings of online participation
opportunities, and electronic notifications of upcoming events that are the foundation for citizen participation.
Northern Territory has not yet formulated an explicit policy on integrated e-government practice. The Northern Territory government recently\(^\text{13}\) considered an e-government project which mainly focused on building an e-health system.

Some state governments focused on practicing e-government first, and then shaped e-government strategies. For example, in 2002, the Western Australian Government established the Citizen and Civics Unit (CCU) to practically promote active citizenship and public engagement in decision-making processes. Then, in 2004, it built the WA e-government strategy to establish a “roadmap” of the WA government public sector to integrate public services and to improve the opportunity for community participation in decision-making process (Geisellhart, 2004; the WA Government, 2004). The New South Wales Government also initially used the internet to practice citizen engagement in online discussions, and then, in 2006, produced the ICT Strategic Plan (Geisellhart, 2004; the NSW Government, 2006). These activities of state governments in shaping e-government policies and practices have not directly stated that they are adopting the e-government framework from the federal level. However the principles of e-government at state levels, particularly the provision of government information and services, and the promotion of public engagement in government decision-making processes, are very similar to the core themes of the federal e-government framework. Also, AGIMO states that most state and territory governments had partly adopted the e-government framework of Commonwealth Government (AGIMO, 2007b). For these reasons, the directions of shaping e-government policies and online public engagement practices in the Australian state governments can be seen to have been influenced by the Commonwealth Government.

The e-government strategies and practices of some Australian state governments have shown enthusiasm for increasing citizens’ participation in government services and the decision-making process through ICTs. Backhouse (2007) says that the engagement of citizens to participate in the policy-making process has been developed more actively, effectively and efficiently at state level rather than at the federal level and at the local levels. For example, several authors (Chen \textit{et al.}, 2006; Backhouse, 2007) claim that the ‘best practice’ of citizens engagement in online consultation managed by a government was the Queensland Government’s project, GetInvolved\(^\text{14}\). It was launched in 2003 to receive citizens’ feedback on public issues in regional areas, and it is still operating. The

\(^{13}\) The Northern Territory Government began its e-government project around 2004-2005, and it was mainly to facilitate changes such as the distribution of desktop computers to the local community. The researcher could not find any information on any e-government strategy or practices of the Northern Territory Government. The exception was the practice of e-health services as a part of the Northern Territory e-government since 2008. http://www.egov.vic.gov.au/topics-a-z/n/northern-territory-topics-a-z.html

\(^{14}\) GetInvolved is the one of research cases for this study. It is fully described in Chapter 6, and analysed in Chapter 7.
Queensland Government (2005) claims that GetInvolved is a worthwhile online space to engage citizens’ interest in public and regional issues, and to make citizen-focused policies. Another well-known example of online citizen engagement at the state level is Community Builders (http://www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au). It was established by the New South Wales Government as an online community for citizens to discuss local community issues, and to connect specific groups or individuals with peers and public servants who can assist (Backhouse, 2007, p. 114). One other successful practice of online public engagement at the state level is Citizenscape (http://www.citizenscape.wa.gov.au), which was developed by the Western Australian Government to provide informational resources. Importantly, Citizenscape became a portal for accessing consultation processes, and provided key contact points for all listed consultation processes in the State (Chen et al., 2006). These enthusiastic developments of e-government by state governments can be accounted for by the fact that state governments are a well-settled part of the Australian political scene (Parkin & Summers, 2006; Backhouse, 2007).

The adoption of ICTs at the local government level has been affected by the frameworks and strategies on e-government at federal and state governments. Many local governments have tried to implement the internet to improve their services and administrative processes, and to use ICTs to improve the relationship with community, using the internet to practice citizen-focused government (Shackleton et al., 2004). Local governments have provided some excellent examples of ICTs developed for citizen engagement and participation in policy-making processes. These include ‘Your Say Online’ run by the Brisbane City Council in Queensland; real-time broadcasting of meetings of the Wellington Shire Council in Victoria; and an interesting project by Darebin City Council in Victoria (Chen et al., 2006, pp. 102-103; Bailey, 2007). The later was a very successful online engagement of the public in decision-making process using an online consultation forum (or e-consultation - the term used by Langworthy & Brunt 2007) that Darebin City Council ran from 2005 to 2007. It operated to receive feedback from citizens on public issues, and was regarded as a good example of e-consultation at the Australian local level (Chen et al., 2006; Bailey, 2007; Langworthy & Brunt, 2007). These uses of ICTs to engage citizens’ participation in local government decision-making are increasing around Australia.

Despite the endeavour of local governments on e-government, they have not been as successful in implementing online citizen engagement. Most city councils’ online sites provide simple e-mail or online consultations named Have Your Say, but this is usually an online complaints or online...
compliments device\textsuperscript{15}, rather than an online public sphere, or an online feedback tool on public issues. The Darebin online consultation, which was mentioned as the successful public engagement example from 2005 to 2007 in above paragraph, was closed in 2008 and there are currently no future plans to re-open it\textsuperscript{16}. This may be because Australian local governments have no constitutional legitimacy, and are under-funded and reliant on the higher levels of government. The limited jurisdictional and financial authority of local governments has probably been a limitation for managing and maintaining innovative reforms. This Australian situation does not support the general view that smaller units of government are more likely than bigger units of government to adopt e-government (Gronlund, 2002; Philipsborn in Coleman & Norris 2005; Backhouse, 2007).

\subsection*{5.1.3 Australian E-civil Participation}

The use of ICTs in Australian civil society has been steadily increasing since the late 1990s. Civil society use of ICTs began with providing information on public and political issues, and on the political activities of social, economic and political groups, but it soon focused on mobilizing public opinion and organizing political activities (Chen \textit{et al.}, 2006). The common adoption of ICTs in Australian civil society was the transfer of the Australian Not-for-Profit Organizations (hereafter called NPOs) from offline to online. A number of Australian offline NPOs, including Electronic Frontier Australia Inc, Civil Liberties Australia, the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Australian Council of Social Service, transferred their political activities from offline to the internet, and encouraged the public to participate in online activities. This is because they saw both general socio-political benefits and specific benefits to use of online in political arena. One good example of encouraging online participation was the virtual network run by the Australian Council of Social Services (ACOSS). It enabled network users to send individual e-mails to relevant members of Parliament (Chen \textit{et al.}, 2006). Hence, offline Australian NPOs have used ICTs effectively to mobilize and engage political participation by the public. Importantly, the use of ICTs in offline-based Australian NPOs has effectively engaged participation by politically apathetic groups, especially young people. According to Vromen’s (2008a) study on effectiveness of ICTs for increasing political activities of young generations, the most significant example is ActNow. ActNow has been run by an

\textsuperscript{15} To find research cases, the researcher looked through all Australian local council websites (total 721) in August 2008. Around 40 percent of local council websites provided an online participation menu that could be described as Have Your Say. The main function of \textit{Have Your Say} in city councils’ websites was to collect citizens’ complaints, requests and suggestions.

\textsuperscript{16} This information was brought out when the researcher was searching for the research cases. In 2008, the researcher tried to access the Darebin online consultation forum, but it no longer existed. So the researcher sent a manager by the e-mail provided on the consultation website, and received feedback that Darebin e-consultation does not exist anymore, and that the council will not re-open the online consultation.
offline-based Australian NPO, Inspire Foundation, that developed to discuss young people’s health and well-being, and to empower political engagement of young generation, and to enlarge their political activities by incorporating the internet. Transferring to the internet engaged political interest and participation by young people who have been regarded as typically politically apathetic. The internet provided easily accessible information for young people and, significantly, removes the barriers to young people having a say and participating in socio-political activities (Vromen, 2008a). Therefore, ICTs have positively influenced the engagement of young people’s participation in politics.

At the same time, ICTs have facilitated the creation of online-based NPOs in Australia. ICTs have reduced the cost of organizing for NPOs, and for mobilizing political events. The benefits of ICTs such as the timelessness, cost effectiveness, and spacelessness have facilitated online-based NPOs to grow quickly. For instance, the internet-based youth media, Vibewire was established in 2001 to produce media news and information by young people. In 2002, it became a portal for youth culture and political expression. Then it worked as an online journal during the 2004 election, and, in 2005, established an affordable offline space for young people to share ideas and develop projects. So Vibewire had become both a user-generated broadcast media and an online discourse space on political issues (Vromen, 2008a). Another successful case of an online-based NPO is GetUp! which, as one of the research cases for this study, will be fully explored in the following chapter. These online-based NPOs have become a new phenomenon in civil society, as they enable ordinary people to become political activists; they have enhanced participatory citizenship of the public through ICTs (Rodin & Balnaves, 2009; Coombs, 2010).

The introduction of ICTs has also helped to create new forms of media networks to inform and discuss public and political issues. For instance, On Line Opinion (http://www.onlineopinion.com.au) may be the best e-journal example in Australia (Chen et al., 2006; Backhouse, 2007). It was established by the NPO National Forum, and worked with other organizations such as universities and trade unions. It aims to provide a wide range of citizen-oriented information services, and to encourage deliberative discussion on the health system in Queensland. The discussion on the website of On Line Opinion was successfully carried out, so the consensus among discussion participants was submitted to a public enquiry on health to the Queensland Government (Chen et al., 2006; Backhouse, 2007). Another online media case, Crikey (http://www.crikey.com.au), was founded by Stephen Mayne who was a media advisor to the Victorian Government, and is an Australian journalist and local government councillor. Crikey aimed to “discover social and political issues”, to inform those issues to the public, and to more “toward an independent or citizen-centric journalism” (“About Crickey”,
2009). Crikey is not fully citizen-initiative journalism, but it allows citizens to participate in making news accurately, and to comment on news. Crikey claims that its continuous efforts have “increased the attention of citizens in the political issues” (Chen et al., 2006; “About Crikey”, 2009).

There is no doubt that there has been an appreciable effort by Australian civil society to use ICTs to engage citizen participation. However, many critics would argue that these practices have not yet achieved real political influence. This scepticism can be verified by examining Australian e-civil participation practices. For instance, Vromen (2008a) examined e-civil participation practices focusing on young people’s political agencies. She found that the internet is useful to engage young people in politics, as the internet is an essential technology for many young people. Nevertheless, she questioned whether the internet is really a public sphere, and whether internet engagement had any real influence in Australian politics. Rodan and Balnaves (2009) also concluded that grass-roots initiatives to use ICTs are successful in mobilizing members, but have less effect in enhancing participatory citizenship in Australia. Although all three of these researchers doubt the political influence of e-civil participation at the moment, all emphasize the need for e-civil participation practices to progress Australian politics.

5.2 The Impact of ICTs in South Korea

South Korea did not belong to the initial e-government leader countries but has rapidly become one since 2000. The adoption of ICTs for political development began with a national government initiative in the late 1990s. The national government had a strong commitment to achieve its ICT strategy named National Informatization of South Korea. This strategy was in two phases. The first phase focused on formulating an e-government framework including national roadmaps, strategies and policies, and establishing broadband infrastructure by the end of 1990s. Then, as the second phase of e-government, the South Korean government focused on employing ICTs in administrative and government processes. In this second phase, ICTs were used in government processes to deliver government services, to provide information and, importantly, to engage citizens’ participation in government decision-making processes. This use of ICTs improved both the task procedure of government and the comprehensive relationship of government with internal and external public organizations, business partners, and particularly with citizens (Moon, 2001, pp. 2-4). Local governments employed the national framework and practical directions rather than independently conceptualizing the e-government framework and practices. Rather, South Korean local governments
focused on using ICTs practically, to provide government services, to meet demands of local communities, and to find solutions for achieving better local communities (Moon, 2001).

ICTs are also adopted by South Korean civil society. The use of ICTs in South Korean civil society was initiated by offline-based NPOs since the late 1990s. However, the initial use of ICTs by offline-based NPOs promptly changed to create new forms of e-civil participation such as online politician’s fan club, online individual journalism and networked-individual cyber activism. These kinds of online-based e-civil participation have been the most popular forms of political participation by the public, and the most influential means of civil participation in South Korean political arena.

ICTs have had a huge impact on all aspects of society and politics in South Korea, and have been adopted to positively develop both e-government and e-civil participation. As a result, many e-government and e-civil participation practices such as Ohmynews and NOSAMO have been internationally introduced as advanced examples of e-democracy practice (OECD, 2003; Obi, 2008; UN, 2008, 2010). Therefore, the following section shows how South Korean e-democracy has been developed by government and by civil society.

5.2.1. Development E-government Strategy and Practices in South Korea

South Korea began its e-government project in 1994 when President Kim, Young-Sam organized the South Korea Ministry of Information and Communication (hereafter called MIC). MIC was the core department to manage diverse tasks to achieve South Korean Informatization, including building the national information society framework and policies, planning the establishment of information network infrastructure, coordinating mechanisms for protecting information, and developing and supporting the ICT industry, business and relevant manpower training (Shin et al., 2003; MIC & NIA, 2005). In 1995, the South Korean government enacted the Basic Law on Informatization Promotion. According to the law, the Informatization Promotion Plan (first to third: 1996-2006) was published in 1996 and the Korea Informatization Promotion Committee was established by MIC to manage and actualize the Informatization Promotion Plan. The Plan aimed to achieve internal and external collaboration of all government levels in administrative process and in citizen-centric government (MOPAS, 2009). To achieve this goal, the South Korean government focused on establishing broadband infrastructure all around the nation, and on ensuring the administrative informatization of all levels of government departments and agencies in the 1990s (Yang 2002; Shin et al., 2003; Hwang,
2007; Seok & Moon, 2010). The year after the announcement of the Informatization Promotion Plan, the first inter-ministerial Informatization Strategy Council was established to coordinate and integrate various informatization policies and tasks between different government ministries and agencies. The Council aimed to share information among relevant government agencies, to promote cooperation among government departments and agencies, and to provide consistent feedback to the public (Yang, 2002). In addition, broadband infrastructure, which was one of the most important national informatization tasks until the end of the second phase of e-government strategy, was being established all around the nation. It was built by the South Korean government to enable fast and stable e-government. Along with building the infrastructure, computers were distributed to all public institutions including schools, universities, and organizations in South Korea. As a result, the number of internet users reached over ten million in 1999, at the end of the first Informatization Promotion Plan (NIA, 2009). MIC and many government agencies sought a range of ways to develop the next level of the e-government project.

In 1999, CYBER KOREA 21 (1999-2002) was formulated to trigger the expanded use of information technology in government departments and agencies. The CYBER KOREA 21 initiative was a new, broad project to fix laws, policies, funding, organizations and programs needed to practice e-government (SCEG, 2003; NIA, 2009). The Special Committee for E-Government was set up to promote inter-agency collaboration on issues concerning the e-government project. The Committee focused on cooperation and integration among government departments and agencies to improve administrative processes. To accelerate the process of establishing better forms of e-government, relevant policies, law and organizations were re-enacted during 2001. The re-enacted e-government policies facilitated the openness of regulations, policies, and reports produced by governments to the public. Also, the 11 major tasks\(^\text{17}\) for achieving South Korean e-government were announced by the

\(^{17}\) 11 major tasks for achieving South Korean e-government were

1. Sharing information in 5 major government services - resident registration, real estate, vehicle records, etc, and creating a Government for Citizen (G4C) system to establish government-wide service processing system.
2. Establishing a Social Insurance Information Sharing System (SIIS) for health insurance, pension insurance, unemployment insurance, and industrial accident compensation insurance.
3. Building a Home Tax Service System that would enable online filing of tax returns, e-Bill, e-Payment tax consultation and issuance service for tax-related certificates.
4. Establishing a Government e-Procurement System to achieve transparent procurement processes.
5. Building a National Finance Information System (NAFIS) for budget planning and allocation, accounting, settlement of accounts and made financial-related information available via an interagency network.
7. Proceeding with the Local Government Information Network System Project for 21 service areas.
Special Committee to upgrade government-wide services for citizens and private business, to improve the effectiveness of administrations, and to establish an infrastructure for e-government. These tasks were executed at that time, and aimed to establish full-scale online-based e-government services by 2002. Starting from the launch of the national website of e-government (www.egov.go.kr) in 2002, all South Korean governments built websites during 2002 and 2003. The government websites added online consultation and online discussion spheres to receive citizens’ opinions on the policies being decided. In addition, in 2002, the e-Korea Vision 2006 Plan, and, in 2003, the Broadband IT Korea Vision 2007 Plan, were also published to reform all administrations, to improve effectiveness and productivity of processes in industries and governments, and to achieve transparency and accountability of government performance. This was the commencement of participatory e-government (SCEG, 2003; NIA, 2009; Seok & Moon, 2010).

Since 2003, when the Participatory Government achieved political power, participatory e-government became the most important task of the nation. The participatory government plan set an e-government roadmap to achieve the best open e-government in the world, and took on 31 major tasks, which are described in Chapter 7 and attached in Appendix 7-1. This roadmap and tasks transferred all government and administrative processes to the online world, and aimed to achieve horizontal relationships or partnerships with citizens and private businesses in government processes by providing various government services and participation spaces, and to improve the quality of participation in policy-making process by continuous interaction between government and citizens (Song, 2006; Seok & Moon, 2010). In practice, it began with providing simple online consultation boards to allow citizens’ voices, and to get feedback from citizens. This initial online participation was soon reformed to provide diverse online participation spaces that would actively engage citizens’ participation: online suggestions to set the public policy agenda; online forums or online discussions to disclose a specified public issue; online complaints to complain about unreasonable services of public servants; and online surveys to improve the website and existing public regulations (Kim, 2004; Chung, 2007; NIA, 2009). These practices have been the typical form of participatory e-government, and public participation is still the major theme of South Korea’s participatory e-government.

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8 Building a Personnel Policy Support System (PPSS) to manage the hiring, promotion, and compensation of civil servants in a fair and systematic way.
9 Expanding the use and distribution of e-Approval and e-Document between agencies.
10 Expanding the use of e-Signature and the e-Seal System to establish a reliable e-Administration.
11 Constructing a Government-wide integrated computer network in project-specific stages (Since November 2002 the redesign plan for work processes and the strategic plan on information technology has been formulated) (Special Committee for e-Government, 2003, p. 13).
framework and practice (Seok & Moon, 2010).

The developments of participatory e-government projects in South Korean local governments began in 1998, one year after the national government announced the Informatization Promotion Plan for Local Governments in 1997. This Plan was established by MOGAHA (the Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs) and was published every 5 years\(^{18}\) to promote informatization in local governments. In the first plan, national government-centric projects focused on building an administrative informatization system to reduce overlap in administrative processes between national and local governments, and to integrate the individual performances of each government. It included the establishment of informatization systems in administration, human resources, and finance management. At the same time, each local government planned and processed informatization tasks such as distributing PCs, internet training, designing an online village, establishing an infrastructure for U-city (a city fully equipped with networks), and supporting cyber-communities and e-commerce in SMEs (Yang & Yu, 2009). Since the publication of the second Plan in 2002 when the national government planned participatory e-government, local governments have also launched websites and transferred government information, services, and public forums online; this was the start of participatory e-government practices at local levels. These plans and practices of local governments’ e-government improved the effectiveness and efficiencies of government services for local residents and local businesses, and also improved the transparency and accountability of government processes and performances (Song, 2006; Yang & Yu, 2009).

As a result, South Korean e-government has remarkably succeeded not only in increasing administrative effectiveness but also in engaging citizen participation in the decision-making process in all levels of South Korean governments (Song, 2006). Researchers (Song, 2006; Seok & Moon, 2010) say that participatory e-government projects have increased the transparency of government policy-making processes, and of government implementation of public policies. They have increased citizens interest in public policies and political issues. They have also increased citizens’ participation in voicing their opinions on the public issues anytime. Moreover, many participatory e-government practices at all levels of government - such as Epeople, Chuncheon City Government websites, KangnamKu online in Seoul - are internationally praised as e-government examples that successfully engage citizens’ participation in online consultation and in online decision-making processes (ICELE, 2005; GSA Office, 2007; UN, 2008, 2010).

\(^{18}\) The first Plan was announced in 1997, the second was in 2002 and the third in 2007; the third is still in progress (Yang & Yu, 2009).
5.2.2 E-civil Participation Development in South Korea

South Korean civil society has increased its use of ICTs since the late 1990s. First, ICTs rapidly increased the number of new NPOs. Around 4,000 new NPOs were established online from 1997 to 2000. Not all of them are extra-parliamentary organizations to represent the rights and interests of the public, but the huge increase of NPOs in such a short period means the enlargement of civil society generally in South Korea, and the commencement of a major social change in South Korea, which had historically consisted of only two sectors: government, and business (Shin et al., 2005). However, at the first stage of ICT adoption by South Korean civil society, offline-based NPOs initially used ICTs to facilitate political mobilization and activities. Offline-based NPOs used ICTs to provide political information and campaigns, to mobilize citizens’ power, and to influence public demands in the political decision-making process. The effectiveness of using ICTs in offline-based NPOs was maximized during election periods. The best example was the 2000 election campaign by NGO Korea, which was the pioneer South Korean cyber-advocacy group during this national assembly election period. NGO Korea was an offline social and political organization, but it used the internet to provide objective information about candidates and political parties, such as candidates’ profiles, political pledges of each candidate, and the policies of each political party. NGO Korea’s activities on the internet influenced voters in making decisions about political preferences (Yun & Chang, 2008). Particularly, NGO Korea increased the political interest and political engagement and participation by young people, who had been the most politically apathetic group. The internet improved the structure of organizations, allowing a horizontal network among members of NGO Korea, and an equal alliance with other non-government organizations. These internal and external impacts of ICTs in NGO Korea maximized its political influence during the election time (Yun & Chang, 2007; Cho, 2009).

In 2002, offline-based NPO-centric e-civil participation changed to networked-individual participation. This was because the internet became one of the most popular communication tools for South Korean people, and the new space to share common interests, to discuss socio-political issues, and to organize communities (Seo, 2004). The networked-individual has become the common form of e-civil participation since three events from early 2000. How these three events - NOSAMO in 2002, anti-impeachment movement in 2004, and Hwang Woo-suk scandal in 2005 - developed in describing below (Chung, 2007; Kang & Dyson, 2007; Yun & Chang, 2007).

NOSAMO (Roh, Moo-Hyun eul saranghanun saramdulei noim, a fan club for supporting Roh, Moo-Hyun) was organized during the 2002 Presidential election period. NOSAMO was the first online-
based political fan club which supported the politician Roh, Moo-Hyun. NOSAMO began with a simple online political discussion forum by an individual who supported Roh, Moo-Hyun; it soon grew to be an online independent organization during the 2002 president election campaign. The success of NOSAMO was because of Roh’s political vision that battled against political regionalism, particularly, between Kyongsang Province and Jeonla Province, which have been considerably challenged in South Korean political history. This political issue motivated citizens to become members of NOSAMO and to participate in politics. The more important reason for success of NOSAMO was that supporters effectively used ICTs to achieve their purpose (Chang, 2006, p.62).

Supporters established an online community (http://www.nosamo.org) and took political actions through the online community. NOSAMO members performed major organizational and political activities such as discussing the political issues, making rules and electing staff of the organization, and fundraising political money through the online presence. These online-based organizational and political activities effectively reduced the cost of running the organization and of mobilizing activities, and reduced the time needed to form an organization and to decide rules. In addition, NOSAMO used various information communication technologies - including an online board, internet news media, SMS text-messages, and telephone calls - to provide new political information to members, and to engage citizens’ participation in voting on election day. At the same time, NOSAMO also organized offline activities to facilitate their mobilization and to maximize their influence. NOSAMO’s activities engaged the political interest of the young generation, especially college students who had not been involved in political activities, and provided important support for Mr Roh, Moo-Hyun, who became the president of Korea (Chang, 2006, p.63). Importantly, NOSAMO continued to perform as a political NPO after President Roh took office. NOSAMO was the first example in South Korea of a voluntary, networked, individual-based online political group, and suggested the political influence of ICTs during an election (Cho, 2009). Since the success of NOSAMO in South Korea civil society, the internet has been the most popular medium for sending and receiving political and election information (Hankyorea Newspapaer, 04/02/2004); citizen-centric online political campaigns and activities during election period have also become popular (Chang, 2007).

An event in March 2004 changed online political participation in two ways: firstly, political participation is no longer limited to the election period, but extends to non-election time; secondly, the initial focus on general political issues changes to focus on specific single political issues. That event was the Anti-Impeachment Movement in March 2004. The anti-impeachment movement began when the major opposition parties passed a bill to impeach President Roh, Moo-Hyun. This event was
prompted by President Roh’s rejection of the claim by opposition parties requesting the President’s apology for supporting his ruling party as the election for the 17th National Assembly election approached. Impeaching a President was the most important issue at that time and was an unprecedented event in South Korean constitutional history. Many people (75% of population and 45% of netizens) disagreed with the President’s impeachment and blamed the opposition parties (Media Today, 22/03/2004; Donga Ilbo, 22/03/2004). The anti-impeachment movement resulted in a victory by the ruling party in the 17th National Assembly election (taking 152 of the 255 Assembly seats). Because the opposition parties did not win the majority of seats in the National Assembly election - for the first time in South Korean history - they could not strongly insist on the impeachment. In addition, the Constitutional Court ruled that President Roh’s supporting his ruling party was insufficient grounds to impeach his position. At the rule of the Court, this crisis ended.

The distinctively important element of the anti-impeachment movement is the online activities of voluntary anti-impeachment networked-individuals. An internet café, Gukmin eul hyeopbak haji mala (Gukhyeop: Do not threaten the people, café.daum.net/antitanhaek), was created as a centre of the online movement opposed to impeachment. Gukhyeop was neither a civil society organization nor a community. It was an online-based association supported by volunteer networked-individuals who were opposed to the impeachment itself. Gukhyeop carried out two online signature-seeking movements: the first was “for the constitutional court’s prompt nullification of the impeachment”, and the second was “to request provisional disposition for suspension of the rights of the members of the National Assembly”. Around 500,000 people participated in the online anti-impeachment movement. Also, many online cafés for anti-impeachment - approximately 1,200 - were created to gather citizens power. In addition to online cafés, a new form of political participation emerged: there were one-person media such as blogs and instant messengers (Yun & Chang, 2007). Notably, online activities opposed to the impeachment introduced “playful participation”, which is a new aspect of the online political culture, and included satire, parodies, and pungent criticism in the form of flash animation, cartoons, and video images. At the same time, Gukhyeop and other online cafés also organized offline activities, including the candlelight movement near the National Assembly, which drew about 15,000 participants (Yun & Chang, 2007). In all these ways, the anti-impeachment movement was the first of a new type of social movement in South Korea: one that included the alliance of networked-individuals, and playful online participation.

In 2005 and 2006, a scandal developed involving Hwang, Woo-Suk (Yun & Chang, 2007). The scandal involved Hwang’s claim that he had created human embryonic stem cells by cloning.
However, PD Suchop (translation: Pocket Diary), a TV program of Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation (MBC), reported that rumours of Hwang’s violation of research ethics were true. Soon controversies of ethics violation in Hwang’s research expanded to debates about his research forgery. Both the Investigation Committee of Seoul National University, and the Public Prosecutor’s Office began jointly to investigate the truth of stem cell creation; the scandal was ended by the announcement that the stem cell did not exist. This fraud scandal was the “hottest news of the year” at the end of 2005 (Yun & Chang, 2007).

In the process, cyberspace was the most active discourse sphere. Initially, a social mood idolizing Hwang was nurtured in cyberspace. When PD Suchop reported that Professor Hwang had violated research ethics, netizens posted many critical comments attacking the TV program. At that time, the number of members in an online fan club of Hwang “I Love Hwang, Woo-Suk” (http://cafe.daum.net/ilovenews) increased explosively, to reach approximately 120,000 members. On the other hand, suspicions about Hwang’s research also expanded. Both positive and negative voices about Hwang’s research carried out less-than-rational discussions. Yun and Chang (2007) have said that this netizen populism was reminiscent of ‘collective madness’, and was turned around by the unexpected online activities on Sorimadang, the bulletin board of the Biology Research Information Centre (BRIC, http://bric.postech.ac.kr). Sorimadang is a bulletin board where South Korean students in Master and Doctoral programs exchange academic and job information. During the scandal, BRIC members provided scientific materials and photos to promote reasonable discussions about Hwang’s stem cell creation. To promote reasonable discussions, the operators of BRIC monitored online discussion 24 hours a day, took a strong facilitative authority, and employed a membership system in online discussion participation; these actions were useful to limit unfounded criticisms, conjecture-based argument, and politicized postings in Sorimadang (Yun & Chang, 2007). As a result of the focus on scientific material and on rational online discussion, public opinion idolizing Hwang was overturned. These activities of BRIC showed the potential of online discussion for creating “collective intelligence” that could rectify the populism of online citizens through deliberative discussion. Their discussions also inspired a change to the science policies of the South Korean government (Yun & Chang, 2007).

The development of e-civil participation in South Korea has shown the effectiveness and efficiencies of ICTs to mobilize citizens’ political participation and to influence the public in society and in politics. The shift to “networked-individual based e-civil participation” has improved the deliberation culture, expanded the range of political issues, and brought political activities into every-day life. The
research of Chung (2007) and Kang (2007) show the impact of ICTs in South Korean civil society, and also show that the practices of e-civil participation in South Korea increased citizens’ interest in politics, encouraged direct political participation by the public, enabled faster feedback between government and citizens, and fostered transparency and accountability of political processes and institutions.

5.3 Comparative Conclusion on E-democracy Context

This chapter has explored the context of individual e-democracy including the development of e-government framework and practices, and of e-civil participation development in Australia and in South Korea. The cross-country comparison found similarities and differences in e-democracy strategies, development and practices between the two countries. Using e-government development and practices, both countries have applied ICTs to improve every sector of the nation including the economy, politics, and society generally since the late 1990s. In both countries, one of the important reasons to employ ICTs was to improve government relationships with citizens and to reform administration, including providing citizen-centric government services, and engaging citizens’ participation in decision-making processes. All levels of governments were involved in either making e-government frameworks, or practicing e-government, with the goal of achieving better relationships with citizens.

However, Australia and South Korea differed in the way they developed e-government frameworks and practices. In Australia, the three tiers of government played different roles in e-government, and varied in their practice of e-government. The Commonwealth Government planned to establish national broadband infrastructure, but it has been a slow process, because of the partially privatized-monopoly communication system. The Commonwealth Government provided a national framework of e-government. This federal framework would guide e-government development in the two other tiers of government, although the acceptance of Commonwealth e-government framework was decided by each state government. The national portal was managed by the Commonwealth Government, but the portal was completed by cooperation between federal and state governments. The portal focused on providing government information at all levels, and providing citizen-centric government services. On the other hand, local governments employed the e-government framework and policies of federal and state governments, and endeavoured to use ICTs in government processes to improve their administration, and to engage citizens’ participation in decision-making processes.
They depended on the federal and state governments to manage and to continue e-government practices, because local governments had (and have) no constitutional authority, and were (and are) under-funded from the higher levels of governments. Compared to the two other tiers of governments, above and below them, the state governments developed good e-government strategies and practices; however, the development of e-government at state levels differed according to the capability and willingness of each state government. Some state governments, such as Victoria, started with e-government policy development, but some, like NSW, practiced e-government first, and then built policies. Despite the differences at state levels, many state governments focused on using ICTs to engage citizens’ participation in decision-making processes. Online citizen participation has a better record at state levels of governments than at Commonwealth or local levels of governments.

By contrast, the development of e-government in South Korea was strongly managed by the national government, which has always had the major role in forming e-government strategies and practices. The development of e-government in South Korea focused on integration among government agencies, and building broadband infrastructure in 1990s. Then e-government aimed to provide citizen-focused government information and services, and to engage citizens’ participation in decision-making processes (participatory e-government). To successfully practice participatory e-government, all government departments and agencies launched websites and provided government information. Also, all levels of governments aimed to provide online participation spaces for citizen discussion of government policies and public issues. For the development of e-government at local level, national governments had responsibility to make policies, and local governments focused on established fundamentals such as distributing PCs, and providing training in how to use computers and internet to engage citizens to participate in e-government practices.

In both countries, the use of ICTs has increased citizens’ interest in politics, and also increased political participation by the public. ICTs have especially facilitated the political participation of young generations. The increase of political interest and participation has activated civil society in both Australia and South Korea. However, Australia and South Korea have developed e-civil participation in different ways. The use of ICTs in Australian e-civil participation has gradually been increasing since around 2000. ICTs were initially used by offline-based NPOs, but soon enabled the creation of various forms of e-civil participation such as online forums, online news media, and online political advocacy in Australian civil society. The new forms of e-civil participation effectively engaged citizens in politics, but these new forms of participation have not yet achieved participatory citizenship. In contrast to Australian e-civil participation development, South Korean civil society was
hugely developed by the use of ICTs. In the early 2000s, the practices of e-civil participation were taken by offline-based NPOs and increased the political influence of citizens in election time. However, this initial trend of e-civil participation was rapidly changed by three big events: NOSAMO, the Anti-Impeachment Movement, and the Hwang, Woo-Suk Scandal. Volunteer networked-individuals, instead of offline-based NPOs, became major actors in South Korean e-civil participation practice. Also, South Korea’s e-civil participation was organized whenever political or public issues emerged. This e-civil participation increased political interest of, and participation by, the public and, importantly, introduced new concepts of e-civil participation such as smart mobs and collective intelligence.

In conclusion, the differences and similarities of the e-democracy context between Australia and South Korea are valuable in understanding how the adoption of ICTs in government and politics varied, and a consequently shaped, participatory e-government and e-civil participation practices. This evidence breaks the belief that the short history of using ICT in politics and government makes it difficult to conduct a cross-country comparative study on e-democracy (Gibson et al., 2005; Bowery, 2007). On the basis of the comparative e-democracy context between Australia and South Korea, the next chapters analyse e-democracy practices in the two countries through six research cases. The analysis of e-democracy practices in the two countries begins with a description of each of the six research cases used in this study.
Chapter 6
Introduction to the Research Cases

This chapter focuses on describing six research cases examined for this research. The cases are: GetInvolved, Future Melbourne Wiki, GetUp!, Epople, SMG Online and the 2008 Candlelight Protest against US Beef Imports. A description of each case includes the motivations for starting each e-democracy practice, and, for each case, the development of procedures, the key features, the leading major players, and the achievements. This overview introduces the research cases, and gives an insight into e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea.

This chapter begins with the three Australian e-democracy cases. There are two Australian government practices of e-democracy (GetInvolved and Future Melbourne Wiki) and an e-civil participation practice in Australia, GetUp!. The chapter then describes the South Korean cases (Epople, SMG Online, and the 2008 candlelight protest against US beef imports). Both sections follow the same sequence shown in the previous paragraph: motivations, developments, features, major players, and achievements. This chapter concludes with a discussion of all six research cases.

6.1 Descriptions of Australian E-democracy Cases

6.1.1 GetInvolved

Motivations and Developments

GetInvolved is a State Government-led e-democracy practice in Queensland, Australia. It was conceived as part of a political promise (Smart State) by Queensland Premier Peter Beattie in the early 2000s. His political promise had two purposes, and one of them was to bring Queensland the benefits of an improved political environment. That was because, in the late 1990s, calls were made

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19 He was the 36th Queensland Premier, from Jun 1998 to September 2007, and during his time in office, he successfully transformed the branding of Queensland from Australia’s “Sunshine State” to Australia’s “Smart State”.

20 One was to bring Queensland the benefits of a knowledge and information economy. Queensland maintained the brand of “Sunshine State” for a long time, due to the consistent with long historical competencies in agriculture, mining and tourism. But the original branding of Queensland as the Sunshine State needed to be re-imaged and re-branded in the late 1990s. That was because the economic contribution of agriculture and mining had declined since the 1980s, and high technology industries in 1990s has been speeded up all around the world. Particularly, a leading high-tech trade mission to the USA inspired the new Queensland Premier Peter Beattie in 1998 to design the new branding of Queensland as Smart State. The Beattie Government recognized that the development of computer-mediated communication changed the production, distribution, and use of knowledge and information, and that successful of state economies were ever more-reliant on gathering and using information and knowledge (OECD, 1996; Clarke, 2001).
for greater involvement of the Queensland community in government decision-making processes; it was claimed that this would make government better, more accessible, more responsive, and more accountable. The policies of the Queensland State Government at that time were not generally seen as advocating the interests of Queenslanders. Also, Queensland is geographically large, with a dispersed population; it is also ethnically diverse. At that time, the new communication technologies were promptly applied in democracy and political improvements; many countries, especially developed countries, were moving towards participatory and deliberative approaches to politics. Australia also was considering using ICTs in politics and in public administration in order to reduce its political limitations. In particular, the Queensland State Government enthusiastically used ICTs to move toward deliberative approaches before any other Australian state. To solve political problems in Queensland, the Queensland State Government sought new and better mechanisms than the traditional approaches; the offline-based traditional communication methods had limited ability to solve complex issues in providing government programs and services, and in integrating public work with communities (Mort & Roan, 2003; Williams, 2004). The development of the internet provided the Queensland State Government with new options for effectively engaging citizens in decision-making processes (Fitzgerald, 2009).

However, the use of the internet in government policy-making processes was a brave initiative at that time because there were no similar examples in Australia of using the internet as part of the policy-making process. For that reason, the Queensland Government published frameworks to guide the development of e-democracy in Queensland, and researched the experiences of other countries to learn how they had successfully used online options to engage citizens in decision-making processes (Smart State Council, 2006, pp. 12-14). The Queensland Government also established a temporary online consultation by integrating several Queensland government agencies; they tested this over twelve months to minimize practical errors, and to maximize the effectiveness of this, named GetInvolved, for decision-making processes before it opened to the public. As the result of these efforts by the Queensland State Government, the GetInvolved website (http://www.getinvolved.qld.gov.au) was launched at the end of 2003.
Figure 6-1. GetInvolved Website

GetInvolved is a one-stop Queensland government portal, which provides both government information and public engagement in online consultation. GetInvolved provides information about the state government and state politics. There is also information on how to use GetInvolved, and a section on community engagement, with listings of state governments and e-democracy projects. The information about state government and politics includes an overview of how government works, contact information, and recent news and forthcoming events. The information on how to use GetInvolved provides a guide for participating in a decision-making process, and in other government processes. The community engagement section delivers a wide range of information with practical advice for public engagement practitioners. There are also extensive network listings linked to other levels of governments (e.g. federal and local), to other parliaments (e.g. other states), to committees of Queensland Government, to a national e-democracy forum, and to international e-democracy websites (Queensland Government, 2005). The information in GetInvolved is also linked to resources on government performances, public policies, and state politics. This information in GetInvolved provides the public with opportunities to access decision makers.

GetInvolved is enthusiastically adopted by the Queensland government departments and agencies as a
tool to engage citizens’ participation in decision-making processes. The community engagement section of GetInvolved is a form of online consultation, and is named *Have Your Say!*. This online consultation begins with requests of the Queensland government departments and agencies to consult with citizens on Queensland public issues. The Queensland government departments and agencies also decide the form of consultation (e-mail, surveys, or comments) for citizens to provide feedback; e-mail is the most favoured form of feedback for Queensland government departments and agencies. Usually, one consultation topic is maintained on GetInvolved for four weeks. During the online consultation period, the members of the Queensland community freely provide feedback on issues formulated by the government for GetInvolved. When each consultation ends, the relevant government department and agency post on the website a Consultation Report, with a summary of the online consultation results, and an outline of the next processes in the development of the policy (Queensland Government, 2005).

**Major Players**

There were two major players in comprehensively developing the two political aims of the Beattie Government named Smart State Strategy: The Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation\(^{21}\); and the Department of Communities. The Department of Communities has had the major responsibility for developing the participatory e-government practices, GetInvolved. This Department is still managing all functions of GetInvolved, including updating information, events and consultation topics; and designing the webpage. However, in *Have Your Say!*, the collaborative work between the Department of Communities and other government departments and agencies to organize online consultation is essential to the effective operation of online consultations. As seen above in the section on Features in GetInvolved, the topic-relevant government departments and agencies formulate feedback forms, provide topic information and consultation results, and decide the final policies (Smart State Council, 2006). The Department of Communities delivers this information and feedback forms to citizens through online consultation, and passes the result of online consultation to relevant government departments and agencies.

\(^{21}\)The Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation has had responsibility for developing the economic aspects of the strategy, but all Queensland government departments and agencies have cooperated to successfully achieve the Smart State Strategy. In 2005, the Premier established an external advisory body, the Smart State Council, to provide advice about how Queensland could achieve the branding and reality of Queensland as the Smart State. The Smart State Council was chaired by the Premier, and consisted of five Government Ministers, the Queensland Chief Scientist, and representatives from Queensland’s business, academic, not-for-profits, and research communities. The Council provided a forum for Queensland governments, industries, and the community to discuss issues of emerging innovation and skills development that would impact on the development of the Queensland economy. The Council also provided a standard by which to measure the economy of Queensland as it responded to opportunities and challenges (Smart State Network, 2006 website).
Achievements

GetInvolved achieved its target of fostering the practice of e-democracy. In 2005, more than 100,000 people accessed GetInvolved; this figure was significantly higher than the previous year’s figure of about 50,000. Satisfaction rates were high, with 93% of users (both government agencies and community members) indicating their satisfaction with GetInvolved for online consultation in 2005 (Queensland Government, 2005). In addition, GetInvolved was praised as one of the most ambitious e-democracy initiatives in Australia (Chen et al., 2006). The Queensland State Government’s GetInvolved has also achieved international recognition for its comprehensive community engagement policy (Clift, 2002; Chen et al., 2006; AGIMO, 2007a). Furthermore, the cooperation between the Department of Communities and the topic-relevant government departments and agencies increased the capability of Queensland government departments and agencies to undertake online public engagement about their services, and on policy-making (interview summary 2009).

6.1.2 Future Melbourne Wiki

Motivations and Developments

The Future Melbourne wiki (http://www.futuremelbourne.com.au) is the online community that collaboratively decided public policies with citizens of Melbourne. It was organized by the Melbourne City Council. The wiki was established as a place for developing Melbourne Council’s long-term plan to create the future of Melbourne as the best place to live in Australia. One of the most important themes of the Future Melbourne Plan was that it was the collaborative work of all relevant people, particularly of Melbourne city residents, who discussed how to make life in Melbourne better. The City of Melbourne Council established a community reference group and invited various project partners, such as the University of Melbourne, to guide the development of Future Melbourne. Melbourne citizens participated in developing the Future Melbourne Plan through public forums, online discussions, face-to-face meetings, surveys, and exhibitions around the city. To engage better citizen participation, the Melbourne City Council launched the wiki in May 2008.
Figure 6-2. Future Melbourne Wiki

Features

As its name suggests, the Future Melbourne wiki used wiki technology to practice collaborative discussion online; it was an effective process. The Melbourne City Council used a wiki because of the benefits of wiki technology for online collaboration. An online invitation engaged people anywhere in the world to participate, view, comment, discuss, and directly edit the draft plan. The comments in the wiki were revealed to all, and were based on the original draft, so all participants understood the current discussions, and the history of debates. This Future Melbourne wiki operated to engage citizens’ participation in discussing the next decade plan for Future Melbourne for only a month - from May 2008 to June 2008.

The Future Melbourne wiki provided six visions of the city, which were decided by collaboration with various reference groups. The six visions were: a city for people, a creative city, a prosperous city, a knowledge city, an eco-city, and a connected city. Each vision in the wiki provided its own information on each section, and had its own discussion space aimed at encouraging deep discourse with all participants. The Future Melbourne wiki also provided opportunities for everyone, regardless of where they lived (Melbourne, elsewhere in Australia, or anywhere in the world) to make a comment, to write, or to edit from the very first draft of the policy to the very last decision (City of
Melbourne Council, 2008, p. 10; interview summary 2009). This wiki has been claimed to have been a perfect fit for the Future Melbourne project. This was because the wiki enabled online participation unrestricted by time or geographical constraints. In particular, the wiki encouraged participation from people living across the greater Melbourne area, many of whom regularly visited for the central area of Melbourne which was the focus of the Plan. This created a constituency that went beyond the border of the Melbourne City Council voters. The wiki was also useful for people who were ‘time poor’, or who were unable to attend offline meetings due to employment or other commitments. Also, the demographic features of Melbourne were an important reason for using the wiki in government. The median age of residents in Melbourne City was twenty-eight, so online was “first nature” for people in that age group (interview summary 2009).

**Major Players**

The Melbourne City Council has primary responsibility of the Future Melbourne Plan and its wiki. The City Council designed, planned and formulated the long-term plan for Melbourne’s future. To achieve the aim of the plan, the Melbourne City Council set the Plan’s theme as ‘Collaboration’, and it then invited all relevant people to discuss how to make life in Melbourne better. The Melbourne City Council invited a community reference group, and various project partners such as the University of Melbourne, to guide the development of Future Melbourne. The Melbourne City Council also provided various attractive events for many communities in Melbourne to engage participation of citizens in developing the Future Melbourne Plan through public forums, face-to-face meetings, surveys, and exhibitions around the city. Particularly, the Melbourne City Council planned and established the wiki, to directly hear suggestions and demands from all residents and communities in Melbourne City.

**Achievements**

During the wiki consultation period, the Future Melbourne wiki was seen as a big improvement from the common use of online process in government planning and policy making; it was a step forward in the practice of collaborative decision-making. The Future Melbourne wiki was the first practice that enabled citizens to participate in a non-linear process of consultation, to directly edit the written draft of a government policy, and to insert their ideas in each vision (interview summary 2009). Also, the wiki was successful in attracting a wide variety of people from Melbourne, and from around the world, to participate in government decision-making processes, and to create a real partnership between
members of the public, city planners, and council officers. The wiki was regarded as a valuable tool to improve the transparency, efficiency, and effectiveness of policy development, and to engage the public in an inclusive, interactive, and meaningful way through making changes to the actual plan itself (Elliott, 2008). For this improvement, the wiki was seen as capable of shifting policy-making process from government-centric to citizen-centric. In addition, the Future Melbourne project (including the wiki) won the 2009 President’s Award\textsuperscript{22} and the 2008 Victorian Planning Award (Collabforge, 2008).

6.1.3 GetUp!

Motivations and Developments

GetUp! (http://www.getup.gov.au) is an independent, grass-roots, online-based research and advocacy organization. The aim of GetUp! is to build an accountable and progressive Australian Parliament. GetUp! was launched by two young men, Jeremy Heimans and David Madden, to increase citizens’ influence on political decision-making processes in Australia (GetUp! Annual Report, 2006; Vromen, 2008a). The GetUp! founders had learned lessons from the political impact of the US online community, US MoveOn\textsuperscript{23} during the 2004 US presidential election. Activities of MoveOn, during that US election, showed the ability of the internet to speedily mobilize people, and to involve citizens in politics; it helped an unprecedented number of people to take political action, and so changed the political environment. This successful US experience inspired Heimans and Madden to form an online-based socio-political movement in Australia (GetUp! Annual Report, 2006; Coombs, 2009).

The co-founders had learned three key things from the activities of MoveOn: first, how the internet helped unprecedented numbers of people to get involved in the election; second, how people took political action via the internet during the election; and finally, how the interaction between technology and people influenced the current political environment (Coombs, 2009). They considered the implications of these lessons for the Australian political context, particularly for major political issues faced by Australia; their intention was to form a new progressive movement based on social fairness and sustainability. Initially, they focused on adopting ICTs that had been effective in the US

\textsuperscript{22} The President’s Award is bestowed by the Planning Institute of Australia (PIA). The Future Melbourne Plan was presented one of the Awardees at the 2009 PIA’s Annual Congress in Darwin (http://www.futuremelbourne.com.au).

\textsuperscript{23} The MoveOn was the online-based advocacy group in the USA and was a new political phenomenon where ordinary people became activists through the use of the internet in the early of 2000s (Coombs, 2009).
experience to engage ordinary people in political activities, and so created the Australian online community, GetUp! in August 2005 (GetUp! Annual Report 2006; Coombs, 2009).

Figure 6-3. GetUp! Website

GetUp! was established at the same time that John Howard’s government took control of the Senate, and the Senate looked like becoming a mere rubber stamp. GetUp! created online and offline campaigns to prevent this, by inciting members to target Coalition senators. The campaigns were mainly launched with two materials: national TV advertising, and an e-mail campaign with the slogan ‘Now You Answer to Us’ (GetUp! Annual Report, 2006; Coombs, 2009). E-mail campaigns of GetUp! mainly targeted Coalition backbenchers to prevent the passage of ideologically driven conservative legislation. The response from the public was overwhelming, and the inboxes of Coalition senators were flooded by Getup members (Coombs, 2009). This event was a turning point, and demonstrated that Australians were looking for a new way to have a more effective voice and to participate more actively in politics.

Features

The GetUp! website provides information on how to join GetUp!, on the benefits of membership, and on how to participate in political action, as well as information on political and public issues. The site is regularly updated so that it is easy to find the latest and hottest events. In addition, GetUp! provides
information on all its political activities from, those that are no longer active, to its existing campaigns, and also to proposed actions. It gives comprehensive information relating to campaigns including videos, media actions, and media coverage of its activities. Anybody, whether or not they are Getup! members, can access the GetUp! website and be informed about GetUp!, its political and social activities, and read the diverse comments of citizens about its campaigns. The information on the GetUp! website is also connected to various offline activities. GetUp! provides information in the website on existing and future offline activities to encourage citizens and members to participate in offline events. GetUp! members can join home meetings in their local area. Additionally, GetUp! provides information to members through e-mail. GetUp! continually sends e-mails to its members to inform them of news and issues, and also to encourage members to participate in political campaigns.

GetUp! uses the website to initiate and to support political actions. The information provided by GetUp! engages citizens’ participation in online political activities including writing online messages to send to the government and other elected representatives, and online petitions. These online political actions of GetUp! aim to minimize the efforts for citizens in voicing their demands, and to maximize the public influence on the government. In addition, GetUp! uses the website to gather funds to support political actions. Online donation is the newest and easiest way to provide finances for running the organization and its campaigns, and a huge amount of money has been collected annually through the online door (GetUp! Annual report, 2007). But GetUp! also provides an offline method to donate campaign action funds, to accommodate people who may not be able to use an online environment for financial transactions. These two doors target financial support only from members of the public. This is a distinctive difference from many other grass-root organizations that promote e-democracy. GetUp! does not receive funds from government agencies or political institutions, but is sustained purely by the donation of GetUp! members and supporters (GetUp! Annual Report, 2006, 2007; Vromen, 2008; Rodan & Balnaves, 2009). Through donations from the political community, GetUp! is able to be established as a purely grass-roots organization.

Major Players

GetUp! consists of paid staff, volunteers, members (or supporters), and a board. Campaigns of GetUp!...
are carried out by collaboration among all players, but their roles differ. There is a core team of staff in Sydney who conduct research on new campaigns, develop the GetUp! website, prepare news updates through e-mail, and raise awareness of GetUp! campaigns in the media. GetUp! volunteers in the Sydney office assist with a range of tasks such as research, administration, website development, and event coordination. Board members composed of co-founders, experts from community and environment organizations, as well as entrepreneurs and union leaders give advice to the staff about making wise campaigns. GetUp! members participate in work that impacts on the effectiveness of the group such as making a call, sending an e-mail, voting for a petition, and supporting the finances of GetUp!. Members also participate in suggesting campaign issues, although the GetUp! Board, staff, and volunteers decide those campaigns in which to invest time and money (GetUp! website Q&A; Rodan & Balnaves, 2009, p. 180).

Achievements

Getup! has had a huge impact in both Australia and the world. GetUp! is the most well-known and most proactive online social-commentary network in Australia. The number of GetUp! members had notably increased to over 330,000 people by 14 July 2010. Major news media such as The Sydney Morning Herald (7, July, 2008) praised the extensive political impact of Getup!. Recent e-democracy research (Gibson et al., 2008; Vromen, 2008; Coombs, 2009) also indicated that Getup! was the most powerful online grass-roots organization in the Australian political arena. GetUp! was named one of the winners in an annual top-ten global list of online political practitioners. A spokesman from World e-Gov Forum admitted that GetUp! has successfully adapted e-campaigning to bottom-up politics, and has succeeded in bringing new generations into the political process; in so doing, it has become a new political power by developing innovative online initiatives (Macpherson, 2006).
6.2 Description of South Korean E-democracy Cases

6.2.1 Epeople

Motivations and Developments

Epeople (Kookminshinmoongo, http://www.epeople.go.kr) is a South Korean national one-stop civil participation portal, and is the first such portal in the world; it was launched in 2005 to provide integrated information and services, and to encourage citizens to participate in government decision-making processes (Kim, 2007). Epeople gathers the online citizen participation activities of three governmental portals. It provides a single online participation space for citizens to voice their opinions on public policies, and to influence administrative processes (Choo & Cheong, 2007; Lee, 2007). A single civil-participation portal was pledged by the South Korean President when he promised in the early 2000s, to achieve participatory government. Participatory government aimed to increase public satisfaction with government services, and to increase public trust in government policies; it also aimed to improve existing online services and participation (MOGAHA, 2004).

Epeople was planned in 2004 by the Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs (hereafter called MOGAHA). Epeople initially integrated three different civil applications: Internet Shinmoongo of CHEONG-WA-DAE (Internet complaint managed by the Blue House); Kookmin chamyeomadang (Online citizen participation space, simply named as online forum); and the online Ombudsman of Korea (MOGAHA, 2005; Kim, 2007; Yang, 2008; ARCR, 2009). Then several more national departments and organizations decided to participate in this one-stop online civil participation system, and the system gradually expanded to integrate local governments and all public institutions. As a result, Epeople was launched in 2005. After the establishment of Epeople online, the integration process continued, so that by 2008, 43 central government departments and agencies had been integrated, as well as 246 local governments, and 14 public institutions (Kim, 2007; Yang, 2008; ACRA, 2009). When this single-window online civil participation site was first formulated, the

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26 UN named Epeople as a single window to engage citizens’ participation in decision-making process of governments (UN, 2008 p. 65).
27 MOGAHA was the former form of the Ministry of Public Administration and Security (hereafter called MOPAS). When Lee Myung Bak became the President of Korea in 2009, MOGAHA was reorganized and was replaced by MOPAS. MOGAHA was the lead department for planning the 31-task ‘roadmap’ for achieving e-government at national level, and especially focused on three sub-projects of online civil participation (Cheong, 2009). This was the 25th task among the 31-task ‘roadmap’ of national e-government (the 31-task ‘roadmap’ of national e-government is provided in Appendix 7-1).
28 The three online civil applications are: Internet shinmoongo, which used to hear and deal with citizens’ complaints of administrative work; Kookminchamyeonmadang was the online agenda setting and forum space for citizens; and online Ombudsman of Korea, which was a system to protect citizens’ rights from perverse administrative authorities.
responsibility for managing Epeople was transferred to the Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission (hereafter called ACRC), but MOPAS continued to be involved in managing specific content in Epeople.

Figure 6-4. Epeople Website

(Source: Epeople Website. Retrieved 14 July 2011)

Features

Epeople consists of five sections: Civil Petition, Civil Proposal, Policy Discussion, Corruption Reporting, and Administrative Judgement. Discussion channels in Epeople were Civil Petition, Civil Proposal and Policy Discussion.
First, Civil Petition aims to provide feedback and solve all kinds of requests of citizens. Using Civil Petition, citizens request administrative tasks such as consultation on administrative processes, and the release of government information, suggest better policies or administrative improvements, and complain about unreasonable behaviour by public organizations. When citizens post their petition on the website, they select the relevant organization to deal with the petition. Once citizens post their petition on the website, the Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission checks the suggested petitions and forwards applications to organizations that have the ability to deal with them. The organizations designate staff from the division who would follow-up citizen petitions, and to provide the estimated time within which an online response would be posted. When citizens receive the government feedback, their satisfaction with the response of the organization is evaluated online. Each stage of the process of responding to citizen applications is notified to citizens through e-mail or by mobile text message.

The second channel, Civil Proposal, aims to improve administrative systems and management, and to reform current policies. Once citizens submit their proposal on the internet, the General Administrative System Division of MOPAS considers their potential realization, creativeness, and effectiveness, as well as their cost-effectiveness, and then implements the most realistic proposals. After that, each government organization or agency selects the best proposal, and the best proposal provider receives an award. The best proposal would be discussed on Epeople in the Policy

Figure 6-5. Core Services in Epeople


29 What ACRC checked is whether or not suggested petitions overlap with other applications, and whether or not citizens correctly select the relevant organization to get feedback on the suggested petitions.)
Discussion channel.

The third channel, Policy Discussion, is the online participation channel for deliberative democracy; it delivers citizens’ opinions on administrative policies, and the discussion of government policies by participants. Policy Discussion consists of three citizen-participation modes: E-forum, Online Public Hearing, and E-survey. E-forum is the online venue to discuss and to gather various opinions on forum topics that are suggested by citizens or registered by governments. On E-forum, interesting ideas are highlighted on the website in a small pop-up screen that appears when users visit the site. The pop-up screen presents the idea, and the name of the contributor (Lee, 2007; UN, 2008; Yang, 2008). When each forum discussion is finished, the government department or agency that manages the forum issue provides a summary of the discussion, and announces the final decision of government on the topic through the website. Online Public Hearing is to hear opinions of citizens, interest groups, and experts before legislation is finalized. Information on these policies is provided by relevant government agencies, and participants discuss the pros and cons on the internet. E-survey is used for gathering citizens’ opinions on the administrative system, policy reforms, policy operations, and improvements to policy.

Along with the above discourse channels, Epeople has promoted a citizen online community named Citizen Club. Citizen Club is operated by ordinary citizens who are interested in specific fields of government policies including administration, laws, economics, science, and the welfare system. Unlike the discourse channels of Civil Petition, Civil Proposal, and Policy Discussion, Citizen Club is voluntarily organized by ordinary citizens to share their interests and ideas (Choo & Cheong, 2007; Yang, 2008).

**Major Players**

MOGAHA was responsible for launching Epeople, in coalition with several other national government departments and organizations that had participated in a one-stop online civil-participation system since 2004. The system had gradually been integrated, so that by 2008, 43 central-government departments and agencies had joined with 246 local governments, and with 14 public institutions (Kim, 2007; Yang, 2008; ACRC, 2009). When the single-window online civil participation site was first formulated, the responsibility for managing Epeople transferred to ACRC, but MOPAS continued to be involved in managing specific content in Epeople.
ACRC is responsible for managing Epeople in general. The Commission focuses on managing citizen applications and complaints, and on guiding the public to effectively use applications and complaints. The Commission also monitors how well relevant public organizations deal with citizen’s application and complaints, and encourages relevant public organizations to solve citizen’s applications (interview summary 2009). Meanwhile, Epeople is run by a collaboration of various public organizations, public institutes, and local governments. In particular, two of the discourse channels (Civil Proposal, and Policy Discussion) are managed by the strong participation of issue-relevant government departments and agencies.

**Achievements**

As an e-civil participation portal, Epeople has greatly contributed to improve public services. Epeople has enhanced the efficiency of work by numerous agencies through a single channel for filing civil petition services. Figure 6-6 shows that a satisfaction of 45.9% by users of Epeople in 2006 increased to 55.3% satisfaction in 2010. The turnaround period for handling general civil petitions has shortened from 7.8 days in 2006 to 6.1 days in 2010. The handling time for complex civil petitions has also shortened from 14.4 days in 2006 to 9.4 days in 2010. The number of online public consultations about government business, or to influence government policies, has increased substantially. Furthermore, Table 6-1 shows the contribution of Epeople in handling the demands of the public. The number of citizen complaints and civil proposals handled through Epeople has increased considerably since 2007. In 2010, an average of 2,188 complaints and 340 civil proposals were daily solved or dealt with through Epeople.

*Figure 6-6. The Operational Outcomes of Epeople from 2006 to 2010*

Table 6-1. Status of Work handed by Epeople

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Complaints</th>
<th>Civil Proposal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>556,532</td>
<td>40,879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>623,434</td>
<td>57,851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>696,715</td>
<td>84,017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>798,570</td>
<td>124,901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 daily average</td>
<td>2,188</td>
<td>340</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Epeople was ranked as one of the top 10 “Who are Changing the World of Internet and Politics” at the world e-Gov Forum held in France in 2006. It also won the award for the best demonstration stand at the e-Challenges Conference held in Sweden in 2008 (ACRC, 2009). As well, it won the United Nations Public Service Award in 2011 (UN, 2011), so it is praised as one of the best e-government practices in the world.

6.2.2 Seoul Metropolitan Government Online

Motivations and Developments

SMG Online is the online portal for Seoul citizens and other residents. It provides information about the Seoul Metropolitan Government (hereafter called SMG) and the Seoul City, and invites the participation of Seoul residents in policy-making process. Seoul is the capital city of South Korea and, throughout its long history, has been the centre for the social, political, cultural, and economic development of Korea. The SMG is the largest local government in Korea, and has always led in developing new policies at local levels. When the South Korean Government declared its “e-government strategy”, SMG rapidly formulated its digital governance roadmap named “e-Government Development Model of SMG”. According to the review of the roadmap, SMG had developed 190 different administrative systems, and launched 100 web-sites, to provide online services to all residents of Seoul City. However, this large number of websites in the SMG e-government roadmap did not improve the engagement of citizens; this was because these websites were not designed to be citizen-centric. For this reason, the initial SMG e-government practices did not meet the expectations of citizens, or gain their input to improve services throughout citizens’ deliberations on public issues.
To deal with these deficiencies of the initial e-government project, SMG shifted its paradigm for the project to a citizen-centred model.

Figure 6-7. e-Government Development Model of Seoul Metropolitan Government


The new project was completed, and the integrated website of SMG called the Seoul Web Portal was launched in 2003 (http://www.seoul.go.kr, hereafter called SMG Online). SMG Online seeks to go beyond a mere one-stop-window offering citizens an abundance of information and services; service menus were re-aligned to the perspective of citizens, to ease citizen access to the online services, and to increase the convenience of using online services. As well, the various divisions and lower levels of governments and government agencies belonging to SMG were integrated into SMG Online.

Figure 6-8. Seoul Web Portal

(Source: SMG Website. Retrieved 14 March 2011)
In 2006, SMG launched Chunmansangsang OASIS (http://oasis.seoul.go.kr, the Oasis for Ten Million Imaginations, hereafter called OASIS) in another effort to achieve citizen-centric participatory e-government, and to attract citizens’ attention and increase citizen’s participation in the policy-making processes. OASIS aims to enhance creativity and imagination in administration, and to improve the relationship between SMG and Seoul City residents.

Figure 6-9. Chunmansangsang OASIS Website

(Source: OASIS Website. Retrieved 14 March 2011)

Features

SMG Online has six categories: Citizen Participation, Civil Application, Business, Culture & Tourism, City Management, and Seoul PR. Four of the categories - Business, Culture & Tourism, City Management, and Seoul PR - provide overall information on SMG and the City of Seoul. The overall information includes the SMG public policies, business, services, the SMG announcements, the latest news on SMG, and various event schedules. This information can be customized according to individual needs. When individuals log in to SMG Online, they can choose which functions to show on their personalized portal. In addition, SMG provides a high capacity search engine to help citizens to easily access information provided by SMG.

SMG Online provides two important functions to engage citizens’ participation in online discussion: Online Civil Application, and Online Citizen Participation. Online Civil Application aims to provide overall information and advice on how to make a civil complaint on living, traffic, and such
inconveniences through the internet. Online Civil Application provides a one-click service to easily and conveniently apply for civil services. Citizens directly voice their demands for improvements to SMG. Citizens are able to transact their business with Online Civil Application, including making reservations for various public facilities, and applying for business certifications.

Online Citizen Participation is created as an online space to voice citizens’ opinions to SMG, and to decide public policies through collaboration between SMG and citizens (Seoul Metropolitan Government, 2005). The Online Citizens Participation consists of a diverse range of participation spaces including Online Policy Suggestion, Policy Forum, Youth Forum, Hot Issue Forum, E-mail to Mayor, Online Poll Survey, and Freeboard. Each citizen participation space is created with different aims. Online Policy Suggestion provides a chance for the citizens to participate in the agenda-setting process. Citizens can use it to provide ideas for improving or changing existing policies and business; SMG decides which good suggestions to discuss among citizens. Three online forums - Policy Forum, Youth forum, and Hot Issue Forum - are online public places to discuss public issues among citizens. Interestingly, Youth Forum aims to engage teenagers’ participation in discussion and in the policy-making process, and to give them insights into governmental policies from an early age. This Youth Forum was considered a good trial and established a benchmark for best practice, and many other local governments have followed this benchmark of the Youth Forum of SMG. E-mail to Mayor is a pathway that directly communicates between citizens and the SMG Mayor. Online Poll Survey seeks feedback from citizens on the SMG policies, and on public issues. Freeboard is a very open online space to make any kinds of comments.

Among various online participations in SMG Online, Online Policy Forum actively run and search on the participation of citizens in discussion of city policies and public issues (ICELE, 2005). Online Policy Forum allows citizens to participate in the whole online discussion process. The participation of the public begins with the agenda-setting process. The discussion issues are initially suggested mainly by two entities - citizens, and e-government or e-democracy experts - before Online Policy Forum opens. The suggested issues are examined by two groups of people: public servants from SMG who are in charge of managing Online Policy Forum, and public servants from issue-relevant divisions. Together, they decide on one discussion topic for Online Policy Forum every month. When the topic is revealed on Online Policy Forum, the issue-relevant division of SMG provides general information, as well as the importance and benefits of the issue. SMG also reports experts’ opinions of the topic, to highlight to citizens these expert opinions on pros and cons of the topic. Citizens post their opinions, and vote for good ideas of other people during the discussion period. Every month,
when the discussion is finished, SMG offers a small gift to the best opinion provider, which is selected by citizen votes. This reward system encourages active participation, netiquette, and good behaviour online. Also, SMG reports, on the website, every six months on what the final policies are and on how the online discussions are reflected in final policy decisions. These efforts of SMG to connect with the SMG divisions and the cooperation between SMG divisions have effectively improved the decision-making processes, and increased the efficiency of citizens’ participation in SMG online policy-making process (Seoul Metropolitan Government, 2005; Moon, 2008).

Another public online participation arena in SMG Online is OASIS, which adopted the following policy-making steps\(^{30}\): 1) Idea suggestion, 2) Idea discussion and development, 3) Idea evaluation, and 4) Idea realization (Shin, 2009). The decision-making in OASIS begins with citizens posting their ideas about public issues in *Sangsangjean* (Idea suggestion). Citizens have suggested many ideas about how Seoul City could or should be improved. OASIS visitors post their opinions for the suggested ideas. Then SMG public servants review the citizens’ ideas, referring to the number of comments, hits, and the recommendations of a Citizen Committee, *Sang Sang Nuridan*\(^{31}\). Once the review is finalised, SMG public servants decide which discussion topics will be posted and, through an online announcement and a personal message, provide feedback to the idea providers that the idea is selected as discussion topic. The selected ideas are discussed for two weeks in *Sangsangtoron* (Idea discussion and development). After the two-week online discussion, SMG holds a working-level meeting to decide on which ideas are feasible and will be brought to a final policy-adoption meeting. The discussion topic experts and the members of Citizen Committee also discuss the viability of discussion topics.

The feasible ideas, which are selected at the working-level meeting, are discussed at *Shilhyoun meeting* (the offline policy adoption meeting). The adoption meeting is held every two months to finally decide which ideas are feasible to adopt as public policies. The City Mayor chairs the policy adoption meeting, and idea providers, issue experts, issue-relevant public servants and the Citizen Committee members participate in making final decisions. The proceedings of policy adoption meetings are recorded and uploaded to the portal to share with all citizens. All working proceedings of

\(^{30}\) According to the OECD report, the process of policy making is as follows: 1) suggestion, 2) discussion, and 3) a policy-adoption meeting (OECD, 2009). However, SMG defined four steps of policy making in OASIS website, and this study follows the four steps of policy-making of OASIS.

\(^{31}\) A Citizen Committee in OASIS, called ‘*Sang Sang Nuridan*’, consists of Seoul citizens who volunteer to assist in promoting OASIS. The Citizen Committee members provide their personal ideas and comments on suggested ideas, and voluntarily participate in deciding good suggestions and discussions. They are also significant participants in the offline meeting to decide which policies to adopt.
final decisions are also opened on OASIS, to make sure that the final decisions are actually adopted.

### Table 6-2. The Policy Making Steps in OAIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Making Process</th>
<th>Activity places</th>
<th>Major Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Idea Suggestion</td>
<td><em>Sangsangjean</em> (Online idea suggestion)</td>
<td>Citizens suggest public ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idea Discussion and Development</td>
<td><em>Sangsangtoron</em> (Online discussion)</td>
<td>Citizens discuss the selected suggestions and vote for agree or disagree to them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idea Evaluation</td>
<td><em>Shillhyoun meeting</em> (Offline meeting)</td>
<td>The Mayor, discussion topic relevant divisions of SMG, topic experts and citizens discuss and make a final decision together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idea Realization</td>
<td>Working Proceedings (Online notification)</td>
<td>Final decisions are opened (by SMG) the working process to citizens</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Major Players

SMG Online is managed by the Seoul Metropolitan Government, which also has primary responsibility for planning and implementing it. However, other players, such as issue experts and ordinary citizens, are also important in organizing an effective SMG Online. Online Discussion Forum is worked by the cooperation between SMG, issue experts, and online participants. Cooperation by SMG Online management and the issue-relevant divisions engage citizens to participate in online discussions. OASIS enables collaborative work among all participants to make public policies. As well as SMG (both the OASIS management team and the issue-relevant divisions), issue experts are very important in this success as they provide accurate information to engage citizens in deep online discussions. The Citizen Committee is also important in keeping the OASIS online discussion healthy.

### Achievements

According to a 2003 survey by the E-government Research Institute at the National University of Seoul\(^\textsuperscript{32}\), citizens were satisfied with online citizen participation; this public satisfaction continues till

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\(^{32}\) E-government Research Institute at the National University of Seoul conducted a survey of Seoul citizens between September 24 and October 6, 2003, to estimate the satisfaction level of citizens with the Online Policy Forum. A total of 152
now. Furthermore, public trust in SMG public policies has gradually increased since the operation of SMG Online (Moon, 2008; Shin 2009). Specifically, around 35,000 applications are annually being processed through Online Civil Application, and around 11,000 e-mails are annually delivered to the Mayor33. By the end of 2008, a total of 2.9 million citizens had visited OASIS, and 19,395 ideas had been submitted. Of those submitted ideas, 71 were adopted, and 53 of the adopted ideas had been completely implemented by June 2009.

SMG Online was praised as the top ranked E-government Web Portal in a global study of municipal websites by the Rutgers Global E-government Survey (2010). The survey evaluated the e-government performances of cities with 5 criteria - privacy, usability, content, service and citizen participation, and Seoul scored the highest on all criteria. The top rank of e-government performance of SMG was not a one-time achievement but carried-on from achievements recognized in 2003 (“Seoul and Prague”, 2010). Also, the Seoul Online Policy Forum was cited as one of the successful local e-government cases by the International Centre for Local eDemocracy (ICELE). According to the OECD (2009), the collaborative decisions that resulted from the exchange of considerations among citizens, public servants of SMG, and issue experts have significantly improved the transparency and accountability of the SMG decision-making process. In addition, OASIS was one of the winners of 2009 United Nations Public Service Awards in Category 3, which was for Fostering Participation in Policy-Making Decisions through Innovative Mechanisms (UN, 2009b).

6.2.3 The 2008 Candlelight Protest against US Beef Imports

Motivations and Developments

The 2008 candlelight protest against US beef imports was a social and political event in South Korea, and indeed the world. The candlelight protest was caused by the Korea-US Beef Protocol34. The Lee

33 These figures were published on the website of seoul’s e-government in 2007. http://e-seoul.go.kr
34 On 18th April 2008, the Lee Government announced it would allow the import of US beef almost without restriction, for the first time in the world. The important points about the protocol were: 1) Restriction on imports of the US beefs that are 30 months or older was removed; 2) There was a provision that prohibited Korea from stopping the imports even if there

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Satisfaction: on a five-point Likert scale (1 being dissatisfied, and 5 being completely satisfied), the average responses were as follows:
-Citizens’ understanding of participation procedure: 3.0
-Citizens’ perception of the level of democracy in the operation of the Forum: 3.1
-Satisfaction about government officials adopting feedback: 3.0
-Perception of positive aspects in the operation of the forum: 3.0

(Seoul Metropolitan Government, 2005)
Government announced, on 18th April 2008, it would allow the import of US beef without any restriction, for the first time in the world. The decision increased the worries of citizens about consuming beef at restaurants and in markets. A national televised programme, PD’s Notes, aired a special report on Mad Cow Disease on 29th April 2008. The programme put a huge spark under such worries. Citizens learned from the internet about a serious risk of Mad Cow Disease, and started discussing it in cyber space. However, the South Korean Government did not mention anything about Mad Cow Disease, but simply maintained that US beef was safe. The inadequate response of the government motivated people to gather in public places with lit candles in their hands. On 2nd May 2008, the first candlelight rally was held at Cheonggye Square in Seoul, to request re-negotiation of the US beef protocol. From 5th May 2008, the rallies began to expand in size and in locations within Seoul area; this increase was triggered by the participation of diverse online communities. For instance, an online café, Anti Lee Myung-Bak, organized the third rally, in front of the National Assembly Building in Yeodo; on the same day, another online community, MichinCow.net, mobilized the public in Cheonggye Square (Kim et al., 2008). At that stage, the Lee Government tried to settle the situation by using force against the peaceful candlelight protests, and this magnified the anger of citizens. This use of force made on-off protests more vigorous (“Force to dismiss the 2008 candlelight protest”, 2008; Heo, 2008). The candlelight rallies in Seoul area spread all around South Korea as a result of the government’s failure to resolve the situation. The rallies reached their highlight on 10 June 2008 when over 700,000 citizens participated at major cities in South Korea. The whole process of candlelight protests lasted for over 100 days, and spread around the world.

were a case of Mad Cow Disease in the US (Kang, 2009).
### Table 6-3. Development of the 2008 Candlelight Protest against US Beef Imports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Milestone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>PD’s Note airs special reports on Mad Cow Disease.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>The first Candlelight Rally is held in Cheonggye Square – around 10,000 participants, most them are teenagers and young moms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>National Mad Cow Disease Committee is founded with support from nearly 1700 civil organizations and cyber communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Police Commissioner Uh holds a press conference and expresses his intention to crack down on illegal demonstrations, and on organizers of such demonstrations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>President Lee makes public apology statement about the US beef issue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17th Candlelight Rally develops into the first street demonstration and all-night rally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Police arrest street demonstrators for the first time (37 arrested).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Government proclaims the Protocol.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Police use physical force, including water cannon, to suppress demonstrators.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>National Committee for Mad Cow Disease holds 72-hour long national membership training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Candlelight Rally with goal to draw 1 million participants is held throughout the country (organizers estimated the number of participants to be 700,000). Protesters insist on re-negotiation with US.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>The first national discussion is held. President Lee holds special press conference and expresses his sincere regret.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Results of additional negotiations are announced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Resumption of US beef imports is officially published.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Candlelight Rally announces citizens’ victory. Participants include 4 religious organizations, the Democratic Party, and the Korean Confederation of Trade Union. Organizers estimate the number of participants to be 500,000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>The 100th Candlelight Rally is held.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter 6 Introduction to the Research Cases

Features

The 2008 candlelight protests against US beef imports had three features. First, the internet was a very powerful tool in enabling various actions both online and offline. Soon after the announcement of a US-Korea Beef Protocol, information about it was quickly spread by the internet. People began to search for information about the Protocol and on Mad Cow Disease, and visited related websites. Then they shared the information with others by passing information through cyber communities. This systematic spreading of information by ‘netizens’ (online users or online citizens) increased the number of visitors to the President’s personal website (http://cyworld.com/mbtious) to voice their worries and demands. Netizens also posted their opinions on the website of Chung-Wa-Dae (the Blue House, http://www.cwd.go.kr) (Kang, 2009). This use of the online world led to the offline candlelight rallies and continued throughout the candlelight protests.

Second, the offline rallies operated peacefully and voluntarily; they were generally decentralized. Offline rally participants brought candlelight instead of physical tools, and voluntarily gathered together after sunset. There were neither leader group nor rallying words during the offline rallies. This decentralized feature of offline rallies retained the focus on the US beef imports and on its relevant issues, and did not deteriorate into slogans of political propaganda (Lee, 2009; Kang, 2009; Song, 2009).

Third, the offline rallies were linked to the online protests in the initial stages, but became integrated with online protests when the candlelight protests peaked (Kang, 2009). The offline rallies were initiated by the online activities of sharing information and discussion about the Protocol and about Mad Cow Disease. The experiences of offline rallies contributed back to the online candlelight rallies; online communities such as Sealtale (www.sealtale.com) provided a candlelight design icon which could be downloaded and posted in personal blogs, mini websites, and banners to express individual support for the movement (Kim, 2008). This relationship between online and offline world soon become integrated. The offline rally participants brought various ICT gadgets to make video captures, representations of the previous night’s rally, and broadcast them live, or posted them on various internet boards and cyber communities, with a slogan of ‘Viewing Together and Viewing Again’. The User Creative Contents (UCC) broadcasting site, Afreeca (www.afreeca.com), played a major role in broadcasting the demonstrations live. One significant example to show the power of live broadcasting in the 2008 candlelight protest was that one broadcasting speaker in Afreeca asked netizens watching the rally at home to support the rally by visiting Cheong-Wa-Dae website to show their power;
netizens immediately acted and the website was paralysed within a minute ("Evolution of Candlelights", 2008). Also, the live broadcast of police violence as they tried to dismiss the rallies inflamed public rage. As a result, more and more supporters participated in the rally, which spread to every major city within South Korea. As well, in the US and in France, Korean-American and Korean-French housewives also expressed their support by making public statements, and by organizing candlelight protests in these communities demanding re-negotiations ("Candlelight in Overseas", 2008).

**Major Players**

A wide range of South Korean citizens such as teenagers, housewives, college students, and all age groups actively participated in the 2008 candlelight protest (Kim 2008; Kang, 2009). However, the most active participants were teenagers; they were also the main online supporters. Teenagers actively exchanged information and opinion on Mad Cow Disease within internet communities. As shown in Table 6-3, teenagers made up 25% of the Anti Myoung-Bak members. In the Citizens’ Alliance Against Government Policies, teenagers made up 40% of members. On MichinCow.net, teenagers made up 50% of members. These vigorous online activities of teenagers resulted in significant teenage turnouts at the offline rallies. Such high participation rates by teenagers were a major reason why the rally gained recognition as an effective form of engaging citizens.

**Table 6-4. Age Distribution in the Internet Communities that led Candlelight Rallies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Anti MB</th>
<th>Citizens’ Alliance Against Government Policies</th>
<th>MichinCow.net</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opening Date</strong></td>
<td>19 Dec 2007</td>
<td>23 April 2008</td>
<td>28 April 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Members (2008)</strong></td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>16,000</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percentage of Teenagers</strong></td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percentage of 20’s</strong></td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percentage of 30’s-40’s</strong></td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percentage of above 50’s</strong></td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Achievements

The 2008 candlelight protest became a symbol of online-based peaceful demonstration, and was regarded as a successful cooperation between online and offline civil movements. For instance, France 24 (18, Jun, 2008) reported that the candlelight protest against US beef imports in South Korea was a new form of democratic expression that had emerged via the internet; they called it “broadband democracy supported by pure netizens” (meaning internet citizens). The future president of the United Nations Forum, Mr. Jerome Glenn (Lee, 2008), admired the high internet connection, and the sharing and equalization of citizens in changing the political culture in South Korea. He also claimed that the 2008 candlelight protest against US beef imports informed a ‘collective intelligence of internet-connected citizens’. The 2008 candlelight protest can be said to have produced a potential capability for achieving participatory democracy through the internet in South Korea (Shin, 2008).

6.3 Chapter Conclusion

Chapter 6 described the six research cases. Each description included the individual environment at both the start of each e-democracy practice, and as it developed; the main features of each e-democracy case, the major players in organizing each e-democracy practice; and the achievements of each practice. The description begins with three Australian e-democracy practices, and follows with three South Korean e-democracy practices.

The first Australian case is GetInvolved (http://www.getinvolved.qld.gov.au). It is an online consultation site in Australia, which is an initiative of the Queensland State Government. GetInvolved was part of the Smart State strategy planned in the late 1990s, and was initiated to reform and improve government decision-making processes and performances at that time. It was launched in 2003 as a responsibility of the Queensland Department of Communities as a one-stop Queensland government portal to provide both government information and online consultation. GetInvolved aims to improve government accountability through engaging the public in government decision-making processes. An online consultation named Have Your Say! is built into GetInvolved to engage citizens’ participation in the policy-making processes of Queensland governments. To successfully use the online consultation of GetInvolved, all levels of Queensland governments has worked together. Since the establishment of GetInvolved, more and more people have used GetInvolved to receive government information and to voice their opinions and demands in decision-making processes. GetInvolved has
been recognized as a good e-democracy practice both nationally and internationally.

The second Australian research case is Future Melbourne wiki (http://www.futuremelbourne.com.au). It was an online community led by Melbourne City Council in Victoria, Australia. It was a part of the Future Melbourne Plan, which responded to the local planning scheme of the Victorian State Government. The Future Melbourne Plan was initiated in the late 1990s to build a Plan for the future of Melbourne city; the Future Melbourne Plan was initially developed by the collaboration with various organizations such as the Victorian Council of Social Services and the Committee for Melbourne, research partners such as University of Melbourne and RMIT, and a Reference group. Then, in 2008, the City of Melbourne established a wiki to engage the Melbourne community in voicing their opinions of current and future plans for the City of Melbourne, and in directly editing existing policies. The wiki initially operated for one month in 2008 and was very successful in engaging citizens’ participation in expressing their opinions on the future of Melbourne. The Future Melbourne Plan, including the wiki, won the national e-government awards in 2008 and in 2009.

The third Australian research case is GetUp! (http://www.getup.org.au), which is the most famous online-based advocacy organization in Australia. GetUp! aims to make the Australian Parliament more accountable and more progressive. It was launched in 2005 by two young Australian men who had experienced the power of the US MoveOn movement during the 2004 US Presidential election. The GetUp! website has two important functions: providing information, and taking political activities. The website provides a range of information related to online and offline campaigns. GetUp! sends regular e-mails to members to inform them of news and activities. GetUp! also uses the website to engage citizens participation in their online activities such as petitions. Importantly, GetUp! uses the website to gather financial support not from political institutions, but from only citizens (including GetUp! members and supporters). Because of this funding base, GetUp! can be seen as a pure grass-root organization. GetUp! has an organizational structure consisting of staff, volunteers, supporters and a board, and GetUp! campaigns are decided by collaboration among all of these. GetUp! increased the number of members in a short time, and made a huge impact on the Australian political environment. GetUp! has been praised as a successful bottom-up e-democracy practice in Australia.

The first South Korean research case is Epeople (http://www.epeople.go.kr). It is a one-stop civil participation portal at the national level in South Korea. It was initiated by the President in 2003 to improve public satisfaction with government services, and to increase public trust in government policies, as well as to improve existing online performance and services of government. Epeople was
Initially the responsibility of MOGAHA (formerly MOPAS). However, the responsibility for managing Epeople is handed to ACRC, although MOPAS is still involved in citizen participation sections such as Policy Discussion. Topic-relevant government departments and agencies are also involved in managing Discussion channels in Epeople. Epeople reduced the time needed to provide government services and to decide policies; it also improved transparency of decision-making processes, and increased public satisfaction with government performance and policies. Epeople has been recognized as one of the best online government services in the world.

The second South Korean research case is SMG Online (http://www.seoul.go.kr). SMG Online is the Seoul Metropolitan Government’s SMG portal to provide citizen-centric government services and information. It was established in 2003 by integrating many specific websites and online systems of the SMG. SMG Online includes various online participation sections such as Civil Application and Citizen Participation, and an Online Policy Forum, which is one channel of Citizen Participation; the Online Policy Forum is the major channel to engage citizens’ participation in the policy-making processes of SMG. In 2006, SMG added one more online participation section, named OASIS, to SMG Online to collaborate with citizens in deciding public business and policies. OASIS allows citizens to participate in all aspects, from agenda-setting to implementation, of public business and policies. SMG is responsible for managing SMG Online, and other players, such as issue-relevant divisions and experts on each issue, are also important for maintaining online discussions. In particular, OASIS is managed by collaboration of all participants. SMG Online has increased the interest and participation of citizens in public policies and policy-making processes, improved transparency and accountability of SMG performance and policies, and has been recognized as one of the best online decision-making practices in the world.

The third South Korean research case is the 2008 Candlelight Protest against US Beef Imports. The 2008 protest was caused by the Korea-US Beef Protocol, which allowed the import of US beef almost without restriction. The announcement of the Protocol increased the worries of citizens about consuming beef, and a national televised programme, PD’s Notes, sparked the worries of citizens. Through the internet, citizens were informed of the risk of Mad Cow Disease, discussed the protocol and the risk of importing US beef, and then mobilized candlelight movements all around the country and abroad for over 100 days to request the re-negotiation of the Protocol. This protest was initiated by discussions in online communities; these online activities also led to offline candlelight movements. The offline rallies had no rallying words or leader group, but were mobilized peacefully and voluntarily. The online and offline worlds were quickly integrated throughout the event. Teenagers
were the major group to initiate the candlelight protest and to influence the expansion of the rallies. The 2008 Candlelight Protest against US Beef Imports was an online-based peaceful demonstration that symbolized a new form of internet-connected democratic expression.

These six e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea have provided research cases and the basic information to further explore cross-country comparisons of e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea. The information provided in Chapter 5 and this Chapter allows the analysis of the similarities and differences of e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea the following chapters. The next three chapters focus on comparing e-democracy practices in the two countries through a close comparative analysis of the case studies using social construction of technology theory to explore the form e-democracy takes in each of the cases and how it came to take that form.
Chapter 7
Cross-country Comparison of State and National Levels of Participatory E-government Practices in Australia and in South Korea

This chapter analyses higher level government participatory e-government practices in Australia and in South Korea, and compares similarities and differences between them. The common benefits of website-based participatory e-government practices are well recognized in the two countries, but the framework of website-based participatory e-government practices is implemented differently between the higher level government in Australia and in South Korea.

This chapter explores the Queensland State Government’s GetInvolved and the South Korean Government’s Epeople. This Chapter also shows how these higher level government participatory e-government practices are differently imagined and implemented by analysing them through the framework of the social construction of technologies. Briefly, GetInvolved applies online consultation, but Epeople employees e-decision making. The different interpretation between the two cases results from the different interaction among all relevant elements, including social groups, technological frames, and socio-political contexts; the different forms of participatory e-government practices may result from complex relations among these elements, or they may be dominantly influenced by the antecedent tools for practicing participatory e-government. The aim of this chapter is to compare how state and national Levels of participatory e-government practices between Australia and South Korea have been shaped to take different forms.

This chapter first analyses the participatory e-government practice of the Queensland State Government in Australia. It, then, analyses the participatory e-government practice managed by the National Government of South Korea. The Queensland State Government and the South Korean National Government actively used ICTs to improve their administration and their interaction with citizens, and both successfully achieved these aims. Based on the analysis of each case, the chapter concludes by specifying how each of these cases is shaped by and comes to incorporate the specificities of its particular environment.
7.1 The Implementation of Three Dimensions of the Social Construction of Technology in Participatory E-government Practices

This study is based on a theoretical approach to the social construction of technology. In Section 2.3.1, the researcher discussed the technology and social changes: social construction of technology draws together both technology and socio-political context; it goes beyond the limitations of determinist approaches - technological determinism and social determinism. This approach, the researcher suggests, provides a new theoretical approach to explore e-democracy practices, recognizing the importance of both the technology and the socio-political contexts.

This study focuses on how technology and socio-political context interact with each other to formulate the specific forms of e-democracy practices. In Section 2.5, three key terms - relevant social groups, interpretive flexibility, and technological frame - from social construction of technology were explored to apply them for this study. ‘Relevant Social Groups’ are all groups involved in negotiating the meaning of artefacts; they continually influence (or are influenced by) other groups, to make the artefacts succeed or fail. ‘Technological Frame’ is a theoretical concept to undertake the interpretation of the interaction among (and within) relevant social groups; it is not decided by an individual factor but is built through interpretation of artefacts. ‘Interpretive Flexibility’ is the way that an artefact is culturally or socially developed; in other words, it enables understanding of how relevant social groups ascribe various meanings to the artefacts, and how technology is influenced by interaction among (or within) relevant social groups.

This chapter focuses on how these three key terms from the social construction of technology help understand the shaping of participatory e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea. How I apply the three key terms of social construction of technology in analysing each participatory e-government practices is as follows: ‘Relevant social groups’ defines all actors who are involved in organizing participatory e-government practices including politicians, responsible organizations and government agencies who lead and manage each participatory e-government practice, minor players who support each practice, targeted groups who are expected or assumed by the responsible players to participate in participatory e-government practice, and user groups who actually participate in each participatory e-government practice. By defining the relevant social groups practicing participatory e-democracy, this study can explore how these relevant social groups interact to interpret and stabilize a particular form of participatory e-government practice.
‘Technological frame’ enables discovery of all elements that influence the actions of relevant social groups in framing artefacts for practicing participatory e-government, and also enables interpretation of the meaning of online discussions or online consultations for them. It provides answers to questions of what kind of technology is used in each participatory e-government practice, why the particular form of participatory e-government practices is chosen, how the specific technology is used to achieve or influence better engagement of citizen’s participation in decision-making processes, and what other supplements exist to support a particular form of participatory e-government practice.

Finally, ‘interpretive flexibility’ focuses on the various interactions (or influence) between relevant social groups and ICTs for practicing participatory e-government in the process of stabilizing a particular form of participatory e-government. It seeks to answer question of how a participatory e-government practice is processed, what challenges are raised in the process, what solutions are suggested to solve challenges, and how the current practice of participatory e-government becomes the dominant technology.

7.2 Analysis of GetInvolved of the Queensland Government in Australia

Chapter 1 and 4 addressed the choice of GetInvolved for this study. Also Chapter 3 presented the Australian political system: it is a federal system, and the federal government and state governments have different responsibilities. The Federal government is responsible for national issues including currency, taxation, defence, and immigration, but state governments are responsible for issues such as public housing, public schools and hospitals, roads, environmental protection, as well as resource use and business development. So, in Australia, it is the state governments that closely relate to the provision of services that are close to the everyday lives of citizens. Perhaps as suggested in Chapter 5, this strong responsibility of state governments for issues influencing residents’ lives explains why the use of ICTs to actively interact with citizens and practice participatory e-government is more developed in some Australian States than it is at the national level of government. Particularly, the Queensland State Government has emphasized the practice of participatory e-government, and became the first State to successfully practice e-democracy.

The focus in this section is on the Queensland State Government-led online initiative, GetInvolved. GetInvolved is designed and developed as a system for online consultation; it is used to receive feedback on various public policies during specified consultation periods. Online consultation in
Chapter 7 Cross-country Comparison of State and National Levels

GetInvolved is commonly used to consult with citizens about future policies and plans in order to improve proposed or existing policies, such as the Child Care Act review, the Kondalilla National Park protected area management plan, and the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011. To deeply understand how to develop and to practice participatory e-government using GetInvolved online consultation, the example of *South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031* was chosen on the recommendation of interviewees. This example is analysed below by adopting the three key concepts of social construction of technology: relevant social groups, technological frame, and interpretive flexibility.

**The Development of the South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031**

The South East Queensland Regional Plan (hereafter called SEQ regional plan) was initiated by the Queensland State Government in 2003 to design a better future for SEQ, and for the people of SEQ. It is a long-term plan to manage the rapid growth of population, and to protect the life style and environment in South East Queensland regions. This region includes 11 regional councils and city councils including Brisbane City Council, Gold Cost City Council, Lockyer Valley Regional Council, Sunshine Coast Regional Council, and so on (State of Queensland, 2009, p.5). SEQ is the fastest growing metropolitan region in Australia; the population in the region was approximately 2.8 million people in 2006 and is expected to increase to around 4.4 million people by 2031 (State of Queensland, 2009). To deal with this growth and the challenge it creates for the Government and the community, the principles of sustainable development have been appropriated, and were embedded in first Plan, the SEQ Regional Plan 2005-26, created in 2004 (“South East Queensland”, 2010).

In 2007 and 2008, the Queensland Government prepared the draft SEQ Regional Plan 2009-2031. The draft plan further developed the previous plan, giving particular attention to environmental change in the region. Preparing the draft began with a review of the previous plan to determine appropriate action on emerging issues, which include the continuing high population growth, traffic congestion, koala protection, climate change, and employment generation (“South East Queensland”, 2010). The Queensland State Government and 11 relevant local governments cooperated to review the previous plan, and to address the values, challenges, and opportunities of the region. The South East Region Division within the Department of Infrastructure and Planning (now named the Department of Local Government and Planning) had a major responsibility to review the existing plan, and other state agencies (such as the Department of Environment and Resource Management and the Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads) also played a role (State of Queensland, 2009; “South East...
The review of the SEQ Regional Plan 2005-26 solicited citizen input through two forms of consultation programs. The first form aimed to inform the public about the review, to present emerging issues, and to engage public participation in making submissions. The Department of Infrastructure and Planning informed citizens about the review of the existing plan through ‘public information displays’ throughout the region. A total of 14 public information displays were held at shopping centres and other community centres in 11 relevant local regions from December 2008 to May 2009 (State of Queensland, 2009). The second form of citizen consultation aimed to gather views and opinions on the development of the plan. The Department organized 30 stakeholder and community presentations (during the same period as the public information displays) to provide information about the plan and its review, to answer enquiries and to hear from citizens about their concerns and ideas (State of Queensland, 2009). The Department also opened a shopfront in Brisbane, the capital city of Queensland, to showcase the draft regional plan and to provide a continuing opportunity for the public to directly contact departmental officers in order to discuss the draft during the consultation periods (State of Queensland, 2009).

At the same time, the Department of Infrastructure and Planning used online consultation in GetInvolved to receive public feedback from the region about the draft plan. The Department saw online consultation as an effective means to engage more contributions from the public without the spending of much more finance. The Department could not build offline shopfronts in all relevant regions, but wanted to promote maximum public participation in commenting on the draft from all areas of the SEQ region. The use of GetInvolved online consultation was expected to facilitate numerous and diverse views with a better distribution of comment, throughout the region.

GetInvolved Online consultation began with the Department of Infrastructure and Planning requesting the Department of Communities to open the consultation. When the Department of Infrastructure and Planning asked for this online consultation, they specified the type of dialog they wanted, and the consultation duration (from middle of March to the end of April); the Department attached relevant information for display online such as documents of the previous Plan and of future plans, and emerging issues. Then, the Department of Communities negotiated the type of online consultation (e-mail or e-survey or possibly a combination of both) with the Department of Infrastructure and Planning, and eventually opened an e-mail-based online consultation on the SEQ Regional Plan. During the online consultation, e-mails submitted by members of the public were immediately
accepted by both departments. However, after the ending of the online consultation on the SEQ Regional Plan 2009-2031 on 1 May 2009, the Department of Communities handed all e-mail feedback to the Department of Infrastructure and Planning. The Department of Infrastructure and Planning summarized, discussed, and analysed all feedback from both offline and online consultations, decided submission issues, and a final policy was approved by the Minister of the Department of Infrastructure and Planning and the Premier of Queensland.

The Department of Communities sees itself as providing a technological tool (GetInvolved or generally online consultation) to connect between government agencies and citizens when the government needs to consult on public issues with the public. To conduct online consultation on the SEQ Regional Plan, the Department of Infrastructure and Planning decided the design of online consultation and provided relevant information. After the online consultation ended, the Department of Infrastructure and Planning brought all public responses back to go through its internal processes and then published the final policy (GetInvolved manager, July, 30, 2009).

At the end of this process, the Department of Infrastructure and Planning announced the final policy and provided the SEQ Regional Plan 2009-2031 on its website, and linked GetInvolved to the final Plan in July 2009. There was no publicly available analysis of where ideas in the final report came from, or of the extent to which the online consultation or indeed other channels of public consultation influenced the final plan.

**Relevant Social Groups**

From this example of the development of SEQ Regional Plan 2009-2031, it can be seen that there are five relevant social groups: 1) the elected Queensland Government (or the Bligh Government, of which Anna Bligh was Premier at the time), 2) the Department of Communities, 3) the Department of Infrastructure and Planning, 4) 11 local governments, and 5) SEQ residents. The first relevant social group, the elected Queensland Government is responsible for developing, approving and monitoring the Plan; this Government raised the issues, considered the problems and solutions, and approved the final draft. However, the elected Government was not directly involved in online consultation in GetInvolved. The fourth relevant social group, the 11 local governments were also involved in developing SEQ Regional Plan, but they too, as far as I know, were not involved in managing or interacting with the online consultation. Indirectly, they might have supported the process of informing and engaging citizens’ participation in online consultation when the Department of
Infrastructure and Planning teamed up with local councils to conduct public information displays and public meetings throughout the region. For these reasons, these two relevant social groups can be called the Plan Developers, but they stand outside the GetInvolved online consultation.

The second relevant social group, the Department of Communities, is the provider of GetInvolved. The Department is responsible for managing GetInvolved, but this Department does not directly relate to the outcome of the consultation. Instead, the Department supports the development of the Plan by acting as a bridge of connection between the public and the Department of Infrastructure and Planning, through managing the GetInvolved online consultation. The Department of Communities, on behalf of the Department of Infrastructure and Planning, provides information on a dedicated site on GetInvolved, runs the online consultation for its duration (from March to April), and implements the participation format (e-mail). At the end of the consultation, the Department of Communities passed all online public feedback to the Department of Infrastructure and Planning.

The third relevant social group, the Department of Infrastructure and Planning, is the most active GetInvolved user group. The Department has the important responsibility to engage citizens’ participation in online consultation; it managed the whole process of online consultation from agenda setting, to making final decision. In setting the agenda, the Department raised online consultation topics, decided the online consultation timeline, and decided to use an e-mail-based online consultation process. Also, the Department was responsible for providing comprehensive information about the Plan, including the previous plan, emerging issues, and the importance and direction of the new plan. This information was provided to online consultation participants to help them understand consultation issues in minimum time, and to facilitate their participation in the consultation. During the online consultation period, the Department directly received public feedback through e-mail.

After the online consultation ended, the Department of Infrastructure and Planning provided a final decision. It posted a summary of consultation (including both online and offline) results, and then developed a final decision (See Figure 7-1 next page).
Figure 7-1. An Example of the Notice of GetInvolved Online Consultation End

(Source: South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031 online consultation in GetInvolved)

The final decision of the Plan was released not on GetInvolved, but on the website of the Department of Infrastructure and Planning; the consultation reports and the final policy were also included (see Figure 7-2).

Figure 7-2. An Example of Announcement Final Policy and Document


35 The report contains all details of consultation process, consultation participants, and the result of evaluation or survey.
The fifth relevant social group is SEQ residents. The SEQ Regional Plan is focused on the development of 11 South East Queensland regions, so it assumes that SEQ residents are the target user-group participating in developing the Plan. In online consultation of GetInvolved, the relevant social group is specified as SEQ residents who use the internet. There is no doubt that online consultation participants are internet users, but it is not easy to know whether or not online consultation participants are SEQ residents, because e-mail-based online consultation does not require postal addresses of participants. Nevertheless, the above assumption is possible from the aim of the Plan, which considers the development of SEQ region, and this aim is directly related to the life of residents in that region. From the e-mail-based online consultation, it is also difficult to analyse socio-demographic factors of participants, but it is clear that e-mail-based online consultation allowed participants to submit their opinions individually.

By contrast, not all SEQ residents participated in online consultation; according to the public consultation report (2009), more than 90% of submissions were received by offline means. Many SEQ residents actively participated in voicing their opinions through traditional ways such as mail-posting, phone calls, and participating in offline meetings. This is despite the fact that Queensland has one of the highest proportions of internet users among the states in Australia; over 50% of Queensland population already accessed the internet in 2005 (ABS, 2006), and around 60% of farmers in Queensland accessed the internet in 2008 (ABS, 2009b). Also, the SEQ region includes cities which are politically, socially, and economically developed such as Brisbane, Gold Coast, and Sunshine Coast, and much of the population in that region accessed the internet. Instead, this might suggest that SEQ residents had more chance to meet in offline events: the Department of Infrastructure and Planning organized many offline events including public information display and offline public (and stakeholder) meetings through the region from December 2008 to April 2009. Perhaps, the people in the region preferred these face-to-face modes of communications. Another cause of the low rate of e-mail receipts may be that the Department used online consultation for only a short time when the public consultation of the Plan was close to the end.

In summary, for the case of the SEQ Regional Plan development, there are five relevant social groups: the Queensland elected Government; the Department of Communities; the Department of Infrastructure and Planning; 11 local governments; and SEQ residents. All of them had different roles in developing the Plan. The Department of Infrastructure and Planning has the most important responsibility in developing the Plan, and in employing online consultation using GetInvolved. Other departments and local governments supported the Department of Infrastructure and Planning to
successfully make the final policy, and the Department of Communities actively supported engaging the participation of citizens in online consultation by maintaining and developing GetInvolved. Different from other relevant social groups, SEQ residents encompassed both users and non-users of online consultation, and they were separated according to their ease of participation in offline events.

**Technological Frame**

GetInvolved is built around the notion and practice of public consultation. The decision to employ online consultation began with the Beattie Government in the late 1990s to solve political problems (Adie, 2008, p.2; Fitzgerald, 2009, pp.216-218). Political problems were raised from the Bjelke-Petersen Government. The conservative government of Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen held political power, for two decades, from 1968 to 1987, but Premier Bjelke-Petersen resigned his power in 1987 following a series of corruption scandals such as police corruption and unfairness of the electoral laws (Crawford, 2009, pp.7-12). Two years later, in the 1989 election, Wayne Goss became the new Premier of Queensland. The Goss Labor Government was initially overwhelming popular, but the Goss Labor Government lost power back to the conservatives (Rob Borbidge) in 1996 due to declare an unpopular policy agenda such as announcement for a new road which was widely perceived as an attack on Koala habitat in the area (Reddel & Woolcock, 2004, p.76). Winning government back for Labor in 1998, Premier Beattie committed his government to rebuilding public trust in government, and avoiding the loss of public support faced by Wayne Goss. However, Beattie was faced with a challenge: it would take a very long time to hear all Queenslanders’ voices with offline communication such as public meetings, telephone calling, and mail outs, and it was hard to ensure the input of all residents’ opinions in the policy-making process. The challenge was particularly difficult because Queensland is geographically large, and a highly decentralized state in comparison to most Australian states (Fitzgerald, 2009, p.194). Queensland is also an ethnically diverse state: Queensland has the second largest indigenous population in Australia, and the number of non-English-speaking immigrants underwent a huge increase in the 1990s (Fitzgerald, 2009, pp.195-198).

At the same time, Premier Beattie and his government recognized that they faced a serious political challenge, because there was government weakness in its low level of accountability in deciding public policies in health, education, public transportation, and tax. Also, public policies passed by the legislature (that is, by the elected politicians of the Queensland Parliament) were not well implemented by the public services of the Queensland State Government in the 1990s. Their implementation actions often differed from the initial political promises and plans (Reddel &
Woolcock, 2004, p.79). Already rocked by the demise of the Bjelke-Petersen Government, levels of trust and confidence in government and public institutions again significantly decreased during Beattie’s first term. Despite or perhaps because of the decrease of public trust in government, the involvement of Queensland communities in government decision-making processes was increasingly being demanded (Williams, 2004, pp. 637-638).

To achieve both the government demands for increased public trust and the desire of the Queensland community to participate in decision-making processes, the Queensland State Government sought new and better mechanisms to develop policies with satisfaction of more Queenslanders, and to integrate public policy development work with communities in order to reform the social culture, and to complement existing methods for engaging citizens’ participation in policy-making processes (Reddel & Woolcock, 2004, pp. 79-80; Fitzgerald, 2009, pp.216-217). Expanded use of the internet was expected to be a new way to engage citizens’ participation in the decision-making processes of the Queensland State Government, and aimed at ‘improving relationship with citizens’ as the best way to reform the social culture and to complement traditional methods of community engagement in the Queensland environment (Anderson & Bishop, 2005, pp.11-12).

At the time that online consultation emerged as a practice of participatory e-government to achieve both the needs of Queensland State Government and the desire of Queenslanders, the OECD (2001, 2003) reports identified two-way relationships as being at the heart of democratic reform, and encouraged governments to seek the citizen-perspective policy (or plan) making, and to enable citizens to provide feedback on government plans. The OECD model was built into the practices of the Beattie Queensland Government: governments would set consultation agendas, and manage consultation processes, while citizens are invited to contribute their views and opinions on the consultation (OECD, 2003, p. 48). This two-way interaction allows direct communication between government and citizens.

The online consultation in GetInvolved generally provides benefits both for government and citizens. From the government’s perspective, the online consultation provides a chance to deeply understand the opinions and demands of the public, and shows the government’s commitment to listen to community opinions. Also, the online consultation technology allows governments to receive issue-focused feedback from citizens. From the perspective of citizens, online consultation increases community interest in public issues, and provides opportunities for citizens to participate in policy-making process. These two increases of community interest and of participation did help increase...
citizens’ satisfaction with policy-making processes and citizens’ trust in government policies and businesses (Queensland Government, 2005, p.11). One of the Department of Communities interviewees noted:

Online consultation in GetInvolved is a useful communication means for both the Queensland government departments and agencies and the Queensland community: for the Queensland government departments and agencies, online consultation proved the willingness of them to hear public voices when they make new policies or revise existing policies and plans; for the Queensland community, online consultation effectively (and actively) engaged the participation of citizens in policy-making processes and further increased the trust of the community in the Queensland government (GetInvolved manager, July, 30, 2009).

During the public consultation periods for developing the SEQ Regional Plan, the Department of Infrastructure and Planning used online consultation in GetInvolved. If GetInvolved had not been up and running under the auspices of the Department of Communities, it is unlikely that online consultation would have been added to the other channels, which were traditional offline public consultations. GetInvolved provided a consistent interface for public consultation across government agencies and accustomed citizens to where to find both opportunities to participate and information on how to participate.

Although online consultation in the development of SEQ Regional Plan did not change the form of the consultation in a major way, it was regarded as an important communication tool for two major relevant social groups: the Department of Infrastructure and Planning, and SEQ residents. The Department used GetInvolved to support its offline public consultation. The online components of the consultation were integrated into existing means of communication. Moreover, the Department organized many offline events and traditional communication methods during the public consultation period of around five months, but used online consultation for only the last month of the public consultation. At the end of the public consultation, the final consultation report was published online by the Department of Infrastructure and Planning. But the aggregation of issues in the report gave no indication of the strength of support for various issues; it was handled in a very bureaucratic way. For instance, one strategic issue of all 21 issues in the SEQ Regional Plan was Koala conservation, but there was no indication in report of the importance of the issue to citizens, or the practical direction to conserve Koala habitat. In addition, the Plan did not indicate where citizens ideas or opinions on the issue of Koala conservation come from - offline or online.
SEQ residents’ participation in the online consultation was limited to e-mail, and they often just ‘provided’ their opinions through e-mails to the Department of Infrastructure and Planning rather than through going to GetInvolved. As one of the Department of Communities’ interviewees commented below, e-mail-based online consultation excluded discussion among participants in online consultation; it did not provide the conditions to discuss issues among participants. However, it is worth noting that through the offline public meetings, traditional communication methods, and by visiting a shopfront, residents could communicate with the Department and with other participants, so they could discuss and negotiate better ways for the Plan.

However, GetInvolved reveals several challenges. One of challenges is that it has not fully engaged citizens’ participation, because e-mail consultation does not allow discussion between consultation participants (GetInvolved manager, July, 30, 2009).

The choice of consultation limited to e-mail applied in GetInvolved has a vertical top-down relationship between governments and citizens: governments initiate and manage online consultation, but citizens are limited to participate in consultations where the Departments have already established a consultation. These limitations may explain the failure of GetInvolved to engage the participation of more SEQ residents through the online consultation process. Broadly, this trend has continued, and these limitations faced in GetInvolved’s SEQ Regional Plan consultation have caused a slow reduction in the number of citizens’ participating in GetInvolved. As one of the Department of Communities interviewees noted:

The relationship between government and citizens is not equal. The Department of Infrastructure and Planning decides the way of citizen participation and of providing feedback to citizens. Also, the Department is responsible for managing all public consultation and making final decisions. Citizens can send their ideas to the Department through the limited tools which the Department provides. Once citizens provide their opinion, they wait until the final decision is published. For these limitations of current online public engagement in GetInvolved, the number of participants has slowly reduced these days (GetInvolved manager, July, 30, 2009).

In terms of the theoretical framework of this study, the ‘Technological Frame’ in Queensland GetInvolved is online consultation. It began as a political strategy to solve political weaknesses in the late 1990s, when the Queensland Government did not transform their promises into the policies. The
Queensland community wanted to be actively involved in policy-making processes, but the government did not enthusiastically hear public voices; as well, traditional interaction methods could not effectively engage the disparate and decentralized Queensland population in policy-making processes. To improve these limitations, the Queensland Government looked for new interaction methods and, according to global trends at that time, employed the internet in government. The use of online consultation helped increase citizens’ participation in policy-making processes, but, since then, online consultation did not continue to increase the participation of Queensland community. This may be because the current form of e-participation, namely online consultation, allows limited participation of citizens in decision-making processes. The Department of Communities is considering better tools such as Web 2.0 technologies to more widely engage citizens’ participation, and to engage citizens in the whole range of decision-making processes.

**Interpretive Flexibility**

Interpretive Flexibility is the term used to describe different perspectives on what a new socio-technical system is, the form it takes and what it does. The form taken by participatory e-government in Queensland was online consultation. This was only one possible choice as will be shown in the following case from South Korea. This section will explore how this particular choice was shaped by local contingencies.

As mentioned in Chapter 6 and in the Technological Frame Section, the Queensland State Government employed ‘online consultation’ as its preferred form of participatory e-government practice in accordance with the government reform and the global trends in the late 1990s. This purposeful adoption of high technologies for citizen engagement in government processes was expected to overcome the long-term challenges of governing a highly decentralized state, and of promoting social inclusion of its residents from widely diverse ethnicities, including a large number of indigenous people (Fitzgerald, 2009, pp.194-195). In addition, online consultation by the Queensland State Government at that time was expected to show the willingness of the Government to listen to community demands and to take account of public opinions in its final decisions. Enabling citizens to actively participate in decision-making processes solved perceived political problems for the Beattie Government (Mort & Roan, 2003, pp. 21-22; Fitzgerald, 2009, pp.246-248). The aim was to improve the interaction between the Queensland Governments and Queensland community.

Online consultation was a very brave choice in the early 2000s, before the Web 2.0
technologies were developed to engage participation of citizens in political arena. So, the Queensland State Government researched various use of internet by governments from other countries including the UK and the USA, and then employed ‘online consultation’ (GetInvolved manager, July, 30, 2009).

The creation of GetInvolved and its continued use as an online consultation medium has been praised nationally and internationally as the first successful government-based e-democracy practice in Australia (Chen et al., 2006; AGIMO, 2007). Particularly, GetInvolved online consultation was recognized for its engagement of citizens in policy-making processes, and for its contribution to increasing the transparency of policy-making. Citizens also proved satisfied when using it, finding it convenient and easy to use. So, many of the expectations for GetInvolved seem to have been achieved. One of the Department of Communities’ interviewees reflected:

The result of using online consultation, GetInvolved, has been huge. Since GetInvolved online consultation opened, a total of 180 topics were consulted and over 80,000 respondents participated in that. So statistical average, one issue has around 500 respondents. Also the Department of Communities surveyed the satisfaction of GetInvolved online consultation and 80% of respondents were satisfied to use online consultation, because it’s convenient, and it can be accessed any time (GetInvolved manager, July, 30, 2009).

During the GetInvolved online consultation for the SEQ Regional Plan 2009-2031, the Department of Infrastructure and Planning provided thorough information online about the Plan. Also, after the close of the consultation, the Department provided on its website reports on the public consultation and the final Plan. So, providing information to engage public participation was well practiced through GetInvolved. These conveniences, including minimizing the efforts of citizens in searching for consultation information, and in voicing their opinions and ideas, were relatively successful in engaging citizens’ participation in online consultation.

However, the GetInvolved online consultation did not come with ready-made modes of operating as a project for deepening citizens’ involvement in policy-making. The government agencies still had major responsibilities for managing the consultation and for deciding final policies. Citizens were limited in their ability to participate in the policy-making processes. In developing the SEQ Regional Plan 2009-2031, the Department of Infrastructure and Planning was responsible for providing all information, for formulating the e-mail online consultation and for deciding final policies. So, SEQ
residents using GetInvolved were able only to voice individual ideas through e-mail. This form of online consultation in GetInvolved does not encourage lively discussion of issues of between government agencies and citizens, or between online consultation participants. This may be an important reason why the offline consultation remained as the dominant means of consultation, as addressed in Technological Frame. Furthermore, the distinctive division of online contributions - between government agencies on one side and citizens on the other - maintained the vertical relationship between them.

On these challenges in GetInvolved online consultation, the Department of Communities pointed out that these challenges influenced the reduced use of online consultation these days, as addressed by the Technological Frame. To increase the popularity and re-use of GetInvolved by citizens, the Department of Communities is now focusing on developing those online technologies that can more effectively facilitate deliberative discussions by citizens in decision-making process. One of the Department of Communities’ interviewees offered:

What the Department of Communities emphasizes the use of GetInvolved for the future is to interact between government agencies and community visibly and actively, to discuss among all participants, and to drive a whole range of policy-making process (GetInvolved manager, July, 30, 2009).

The GetInvolved online consultation was formulated to reduce the long-term political and government problems of Queensland. This goal of using online consultation seems to have been actualized, given the national and international appraisals focused on engaging citizens participation in decision-making processes. From the exploration of using GetInvolved online consultation in developing the SEQ Regional Plan 2009-2031, online consultation was an effective tool for providing thorough information. However, the online consultation did not create a new form of interaction format between governments and citizens in policy-making processes. Nevertheless, it is worth noting here that the incorporation of the internet into a consultation frame and the design and operation of GetInvolved as e-consultation, is perhaps not surprising. There were existing legal requirements for public consultation relating to planning and land issues. The Queensland Government was required by law to provide citizens with an opportunity to view and respond to its SEQ Plan, and the government was required to respond to submissions made by citizens. This legally required consultation process was already routinely enacted through the display of planning proposals in shopping centres and other public spaces, and it provided the template for the architects of GetInvolved.
7.3 Analysis of the Epeople Portal of the South Korean Government

In South Korea (Chapter 3), national governments have had a strong authority supported by the President to manage public policies and business; this is quite different from the Australian political system. Local governments in South Korea have been responsible for managing local administration since the middle of the 1990s, but they are still dependent on central governments. As shown in Chapter 5, the South Korean e-government strategies and practices have been initiated by the central government, and the framework of e-government (participatory e-government) was decided by the central government. The integrated online system (Epeople) for practicing participatory e-government was planned and actualized by the central government (The Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs), but was linked to by all levels of government and all government agencies. Epeople became the first successful national government-led single participation portal in South Korea.

As described in Chapter 6, Epeople online participation consists of five public participation channels and three of them - Civil Petition, Civil Proposal, and Policy Discussion - focus on engaging public participation in online consultation and online decision-making. Of these, Policy Discussion is the online space to decide policies through discussion with citizens: it aims to engage the participation of citizens, from agenda-setting to making final decisions, by discussing the suggested public issues and then drawing the conclusion which best satisfies most of the public. Policy Discussion consists of three modes: E-forum, Online Public Hearing, and E-survey; e-forum is the online venue for deep discussion on the suggested agenda topic. In e-forum, there are various forum issues, but many of them are directly related to residential issues such as discussing a proposed mobile monitoring system to prevent speeding on the road, or a forum on improving the health and welfare systems.

This study focuses on a good example from the e-forum, Discussion about the free-ride subway service for pensioners, the disabled and national merits people in Busan. This is because many citizens participated in discussing this issue, and the Busan City Government was actively involved in the decision-making process. In the first six months of 2009, there were a total of 19 e-forum issues including the issue of the free-ride subway services for pensioners, the disabled and national merits people in Busan. Four of these issues were local issues, and the remaining 15 were registered by the

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36 National Merits define a group of people who contributed their efforts to achieve independence of South Korea, to protect against Wars in Korea and in other countries, and to develop South Korean politics. It also includes people who were killed and disabled in public duty. For more information, refer to the website of the Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs. http://english.mpva.go.kr/press/statistics_view.asp?page=1&news_seq=33&p_part=0&p_item=
national government departments; one of the 19 issues was the need for integration of local
government administrations, registered by the Ministry of Public Administration and Security; another
was the improvement of welfare system for army service soldiers, registered by the Ministry of
Defence. All e-forum issues followed the same online discussion and decision-making process, so any
issue could be a representative example for analysing the practice of making e-decisions in epeople.
So the researcher considered the number of participants and the quality of online discussion, and
picked the Busan example. This example is analysed using the three key dimensions of the social
construction of technology.

**The Development of the Free-ride Subway Services for Pensioners, the Disabled, and National
Merits People in Busan**

The discussion of how to improve the current free-ride subway services for pensioners, the disabled,
and national merits people in Busan was initiated by the suggestion of an individual named Lee, Sam-
Yun. Agenda-setting in e-forum can be decided in two ways: citizen suggestions, and registration of
an issue by relevant government agencies. For citizen suggestions, an individual fills in the online
application for suggesting e-forum issues, indicates the importance of the topic, and posts (or links to)
supporting information such as pictures and websites. The citizen also selects a government agency
that can deal with the suggestions. In the case of the free-ride subway services for pensioners, the
disabled and national merits in Busan, Mr. Lee pointed out the current problems of immoral subway
service users where regular people traded on the free-ride services for special people. He believed
that this practice of fraudulent use by regular people was widespread, and, so, suggested this service be
abolished. When the suggester submitted the online application and selected the issue-relevant
government agencies, the application was automatically handed to the Policy Planning Office in the
Busan City Government. Then, the Policy Planning Office handed the topic to the City Metro team of
the Transportation Bureau in the Busan City Government, and the City Metro team organized an
online discussion and made a final decision. One of the Busan City Government interviewees
explained:

> This issue was suggested by a citizen, and handed to the Policy Planning Office in the Busan
City Government. The Policy Planning Office evaluated the importance of the suggestion and
decided the suggestion should be discussed. Then the Office handed the issue to the City Metro
team, which handles the relevant tasks of the suggestion. The team organized online discussion
and decided the final decision (City Metro manager, January, 5, 2010).
To discuss this issue with citizens, the team organized online discussion only. The online discussion began when the City Metro team posted the issue on the online discussion of the Busan City Government website. This Busan Government online discussion is integrated with e-forum in Epeople, as the Busan City Government had earlier joined the integrated system of Epeople (Yang, 2008). The Busan City Government announced that the online discussion in the Busan City Government website is a component of the Epeople e-forum, and applies the management policy of Epeople. To conduct the online discussion, the team provided information explaining the topic, stating the discussion period, and giving the name of the issue suggester.

Figure 7.3. The Integration between Busan online discussion and e-forum in Epeople


(Source: No 19. Discussion about the Free-ride Subway Services for Pensioners, the Disabled, and National Merits People in Busan from E-forum in Epeople)
During the e-forum period, everybody who had an Epeople account could participate in the discussion. Interested participants wrote their ideas, chose pros or cons of the issue, and voted whether or not it was a good idea. All opinions and activities of participants in the e-forum are open to the public, so both the government team and the public could read written opinions of citizens anytime and be informed of new ideas and updated activities. After the discussion ended, the team made a decision by internal discussion, and the decision of the team became the final decision after approval by higher levels of administration staff. Then, the team published in e-forum a summary of online public opinions and the final decision. The final decision was to introduce digital cards to prevent illegal free-riding of Busan subway from October 2009. By checking individual information about whether the traveler is entitled to the free-riding subway service, the digital cards ensured that only pensioners, the disabled, and national merits people could use the free-riding subway services.

**Relevant Social Groups**

In the Busan case discussed above, it can be seen that there were two relevant social groups: the Busan City Government and Busan citizens. The first relevant social group, the Busan City Government, had an important responsibility for managing the online decision-making process, and for engaging citizen participation. The major responsibilities of the Busan City Government were to decide the discussion topic, to manage a healthy online discussion, and to make (and publish) a final decision. As mentioned in the previous section, the issue of improving the current free-ride subway services for pensioners, the disabled, and national merits people in Busan was decided by the Busan City Government by scrutiny of an idea suggested by a citizen Lee, Sam-Yun. At the same time, the Busan City Government let Mr. Lee know through e-mail of their decision to post his topic for discussion. To conduct the e-forum, the Government stated the discussion topic and the discussion period. However, it was not necessary for the Government to provide additional information to supplement the original information of the topic, because the original topic clearly included the current problems of the free-ride subway services in Busan City (many people used the free-ride illegally) and a suggestion for solving the problem (abolishing the free-ride subway services). So, the Busan City Government provided only the original information of the topic.

During the online discussion, the Busan City Government did not participate in the e-forum to communicate with citizens, but remained responsible for managing a healthy online discussion. The Busan City Government had authority to delete any postings that were commercial, or that used vulgar or slanderous language, or that repeated postings. Practically, the Government did not need to
act on its authority to censor the written postings, because there were no stray comments on this topic. As one of the Busan City Government interviewees said:

As you read all postings of the issue, there is no dogmatic, emotional or aggressive comment. Some personal ideas in response to the issue are more strongly related to the issue than others. On the other hand, some comments are not so strongly related to the topic, but it does not mean they are out of the topic; these comments were agreed to be relevant to the current problems of the Busan subway free-ride system and they need solutions, but just do not suggest direct and strong solutions. From all comments, the Busan City Government understands the necessity of considering the existing subway free-ride system (City Metro manager, January 5, 2010).

At the end of the online discussion period, the Busan City Government decided how to apply the various ideas of the public, and then published the summary of the online discussion and the adoption plan on how the discussion would be translated into reality. The Government made a decision and published it in Epeople within one month from the time the online consultation ended.

Figure 7-4. The Result of Online Discussion and the Final Decision

![Figure 7-4](http://www.epeople.go.kr/jsp/user/po/filterOff/forum/UPoForumPolicy.jsp)

(Source: final result of online forum about the free-ride subway service for pensioners, the disabled and national merits people in Busan. Retrieved on 15 June 2009, from http://www.epeople.go.kr/jsp/user/po/filterOff/forum/UPoForumPolicy.jsp)
While the first ‘relevant social group’ was the Busan City Government, the second relevant social group was Busan citizens. The responsible government for the Busan free-ride subway services is the Busan City Government, so it can be assumed that a Busan resident suggested the issue, and that Busan citizens were the target participants to discuss this issue. In the agenda-setting, anyone could suggest discussion ideas, if they have an Epeople account; there is no requirement to join Epeople. Once they become a member of Epeople, they can freely use all contents of Epeople including suggesting ideas and participating e-forum. But, as information about the agenda suggester (except the name) and the agenda-setting process are kept confidential, it is not certain that the issue suggester was a Busan citizen. Nevertheless, as the Busan City Government was chosen to deal with this issue, the proposer may well have been a citizen of Busan City; in the agenda-setting process, the agenda suggester has to select a relevant government agency to deal with the suggestion, and when the agency agrees to work on the suggested agenda, the agency become responsible for the suggestion.

E-forum participants can be assumed to be the Busan citizens. It is clear that e-forum participants are internet users, and that e-forum allowed participants to be involved in online discussion individually. However, it is not possible to say with certainly whether or not they are Busan citizens, because information on e-forum participants is kept confidential. Nevertheless, the Busan City Government, as the responsible government for the issue, has to assume that e-forum participants live in Busan, and that they use the Busan subway in their lives, so understand the need to improve the existing subway services (Figure 7-5).  

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38 An anonymous citizen wrote that my parents do not work, because of old age and disabilities. So, they use the Busan free-riding subway services when they want to go somewhere. They are very satisfied with the free-riding subway services. It is a part of very good welfare services, but the problem is that ordinary people immorally use this service. This problem should be solved. To do this, I suggest adopting ID card for pensioners, the disabled and national merits. Punishment regulations should be created to prevent illegal use of ID cards. In addition, monitors can be hired to randomly check whether or not this new system is correctly working. This monitoring system may further help reduce the rate of unemployment (Translation of Figure 7-5).
Chapter 7 Cross-country Comparison of State and National Levels

Figure 7-5. A Post of Citizens on the Issues of the Free-ride Subway Service in Busan


By contrast, not all Busan citizens participated in online discussion. According to the result of the e-forum, a total of only 89 comments were posted during the e-forum open period. This number of comments is very small compared to the population of Busan (around 3.6 million people). This is a challenge of using e-forum: there was no publicly available analysis of who contributed to the non-online discussion, of why large amount of people do not participate in online discussion and of how the non-online discussion users voice their ideas to the government.

These two ‘relevant social groups’ - the Busan City Government, and Busan citizens - are directly linked in the decision-making process on the issue of improving the free-ride subway services for pensioners, the disabled, and national merits people in Busan. Additionally, the Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission (hereafter called ACRC) could be a third relevant social group. The ACRC was not strongly involved in the process about the decision-making of a free-ride subway service in Busan. But the ACRC partly contributed in the development process of the issue; the ACRC provides incentives to the selected issue suggester (in the example of Busan case, Mr Lee Sam-Yun) according to the decision of issue relevant government agencies (the Busan City Government). Broadly, the ACRC, as presented in Chapter 6, is responsible for managing all technological issues of Epeople, and for keeping all online participation including e-forum in Epeople healthy, and for helping citizens and government agencies to effectively use Epeople.

In the decision-making process of improving the free-ride subway services for pensioners, the disabled, and national merits people in Busan, the Busan City Government and Busan residents were
the major relevant social groups. The Busan City Government had the main responsibility for managing the issue and for the e-forum process, to ensure a good decision for the public. Busan residents participated in agenda setting and in online discussion. In addition, the ACRC could be another relevant social group, because the commission manages all contents and functions in Epeople to ensure that online decision-making works, and to ensure that discussion is civil and respectful.

**Technological Frame**

Technological Frame in Epeople goes toward e-decision making. This frame was decided firmly by President Roh’s pledge in the early 2000s. He promised two national objectives: the achievement of a fully democratic nation, and the balanced development of a tolerant society. To achieve these two national objectives, the Roh Government provided the vision of e-government; the three goals of e-government were to provide innovation in service delivery, improvement of both effectiveness and transparency of administration, and government by the people (MOGAHA, 2004; Kim, 2007, p. 112). Delivery of these three e-government goals rapidly reached an advanced level, particularly in areas of public application, taxation, and customs, but the other two goals were more limited in their achievements. The limitations were in three areas: firstly, the public lost their interest because the information remained supplier-centric; secondly, the expectation of citizens that administration would improve through the adoption of ICTs was not fully actualized, because government agencies still preferred to use the traditional ways and methods for public administration; thirdly, co-ownership of information among government agencies was not yet achieved. This situation made effective practice of participatory e-government at that time difficult (Kim, 2007).

To solve these problems, the Roh Government proposed ‘e-government’ as an administrative reform and innovation, and focused on integrating fragmented e-government practices of government agencies and on providing citizen-centric e-government information and services (MOGAHA 2005; Kim 2007). So, in 2003, the Korean E-Government Innovation and Decentralization Committee set up the national vision and strategic principles of e-government and the national e-government roadmap include 4 goals, 10 agendas and 31 tasks (See Appendix 7-1). One of the E-Government Goals in the roadmap was to achieve the Innovating Civil Services, and “Increasing Online Citizen

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39 The 2010 UN e-government survey presented the Epeople is the successful example of e-decision making (UN, 2010, p. 88).
40 The Korean E-Government Innovation and Decentralization Committee was the government body responsible for government reform and innovation and to advise on the national e-government plan and strategy to the President during the office of the President Roh. The Committee organized a professional group on e-government, the E-Government Expert Committee, to drive e-government strategy at the national level (Kim, 2007, pp.112-113).
Participation” was 25th task of 31 tasks. It aimed to enlarge citizens’ access to the information actively provided by governments, and to engage citizens’ participation in decision-making processes. This 25th task motivated the building of the integrated online system, Epeople, to achieve the two elements of the e-government strategy of the Roh Government.

Epeople is an online government portal for handling all kinds of public participation including complaints, agenda-setting, public hearing, survey, and discussion. The online government portal began in 2005 with the integration of three websites of government agencies, so that citizens could complain, discuss, and monitor government performances (MOGAHA, 2005; Kim, 2007; Yang, 2008). Then the integration expanded to all levels of government departments and agencies, and to public institutions; the system was integrated throughout South Korean government departments and agencies in 2008 (NIA, 2010).

This online participation portal, Epeople, produced benefits for both government and citizens. From the perspective of government, Epeople increased the effectiveness of administration and public services, and improved the communication level with citizens (Kim, 2007). From the perspective of the citizen, Epeople reduced the time needed to find information, and to receive feedback from government agencies. It also increased the satisfaction of citizens in interacting with government and government services. This is because the use of the portal allows citizens to participate for many purposes such as getting information, complaining, discussing, and suggesting new ideas to help improve to government services. The use of Epeople also allows citizens to make sure that they receive feedback from government agencies (ACRC, 2010).

In the process of improving the free-ride subway services for pensioners, the disabled, and national merits people in Busan, the Busan City Government inevitably used Epeople for online decision-making. This is because, in 2007, the Busan City Government integrated the City’s online discussion to Epeople. Decision-making in Epeople began with setting an agenda. As addressed in Relevant Social Groups, this issue was initiated by a proposal of an individual, and then the Busan City Government investigated whether or not the suggested issue was valuable to discuss and to be actually implemented. So, the e-forum agenda-setting in Epeople is not only the responsibility of government departments and agencies. This applies not only to this Busan example: during the first six months in 2009, there were a total of 19 e-forum discussion issues, and eight of these issues were initiated by individual citizen suggestions. The eight issues registered by individual citizens were under five government agencies and public institutions: three of the eight issues ‘belonged to’ the Busan City
Government, two of them ‘belonged to’ the Ministry of Justice, and the last three issues ‘belonged to’ respectively the Public Procurement Services, the South Korean Communication Commission, and the Gyeongsangnam-do Office of Education.

In the Epeople e-forum, there are two participation tools: posting comments with voting for pros and cons, and nominating good suggestions as recommendations. Posting comments with voting for pros and cons always come together, but nominating good suggestions is optional for online discussion participants. For the different participation mechanisms, discussion participants pay attention about the suggested ideas when posting their comments with voting for pros and cons, but they can nominate good suggestions without carefully reading about those suggestions. However, such a careless nomination for good suggestions did not happen in the Busan City subway case: all elected suggestions by citizens made direct arguments on the issue, and provided possible solutions for the future operation of Busan subway.

**Figure 7-6. Citizen Participation Tools in E-forum**


During the e-forum period, all comments were open to the public, except the personal information of participants. So, everyone could read a range of various ideas on the issue, but it is not clear whether
discussion posted were all by citizens of Busan City. In addition, there was no evidence of interaction between the Busan City Government and citizens, and the below interviewee assured me that the e-forum on the issue was operated only by citizens. Therefore, this issue in e-forum was purely discussed by individual Busan citizens.

The team members of the Busan City Government monitored the e-forum, but none of them participated in the discussion. It may be possible that public servants could participate as one of citizens in online discussion. However, in this case, no one in the team did that (City Metro manager, January, 5, 2010).

During the e-forum discussion on improving the Busan subway services, there were no other public consultation tools; the Busan City Government did not hold any offline events to discuss this issue. The use of online discussion only applies to other cases too: none of the 19 e-forum issues in the first six months in 2009 were found to have a public notice or evidence of any offline events. There is no specific reason to use only online discussion, but it does assume that using internet for finding information and for participating in discussion is very popular for Korean people. This assumption is possible from the saturation of internet access and of internet use: around 80% of South Korean population access the internet, and roughly 60% of them use e-government services (NIA, 2010).

The team used only online discussion to discuss the issue of the free-ride subway services for pensioners, the disabled, and national merits people in Busan. There is no special reason to use online discussion only; online discussion has been the popular discussion form at the Busan City Government since the early 2000s. As known, online discussion produced effective results in decision-making process, and, in the discussion of the issue, there were many valuable public opinions (City Metro manager, January, 5, 2010).

After the end of e-forum (Figure 7-4), the Busan City Government made a final decision and provided results, including a summary of the online discussion, an explanation of what ideas could be acceptable for final decision, and a plan of how to apply citizen suggestions. This is distinctively different from the development process of the SEQ Regional Plan in GetInvolved: the Department of Infrastructure and Planning did not provide the strength of citizens’ opinions on various issues; it was handled in a bureaucratic way. The publication of the final decision was applicable not only to this Busan example: 14 examples of a total 19 issues in the first half of 2009 provided final decisions in Epeople in the same format as the Busan City Government published. In this way, Epeople e-forum
handled public policies in a less-bureaucratic way than GetInvolved online consultation.

Nevertheless, the e-forum did not engage all Busan citizens and the number of participants was very small (addressed in Relevant Social Groups). The number of users of the e-government service is not low at all, but this does not necessarily translate into high levels of participation in e-forums, and this is typically the case for the 19 issues in the first half of 2009. However, as one interviewee explained (see below): the quality of discussion has been more important to maintain (or manage) in the online decision-making process than the number of participants.

The number of participants is important to keep for online discussion, but the more important thing is the quality of discussion. High quality discussion with less number of participation is much better to improve current public (or social) problems than a large number of participants with less quality discussion. It cannot be said the 89 comments give perfect coverage to consider all aspects of the issue, but the discussion was deep enough and satisfying. That is why the Government decided to change the Busan subway ticket system (City Metro manager, January, 5, 2010).

Technological frame in Epeople e-forum applies the form of e-decision making. It began with the political pledge in the early 2000s to improve and reform administration and to achieve a fully democratic society. The web-based e-government was initiated in the late 1990s, but it did not successfully achieve reform and innovation in all the administration. To improve limitations current at that time, a single-window government portal was established by the national government. This government portal facilitated partnership with citizens in decision-making processes: it allows citizens to participate in the setting agenda, to contribute to discussions, and to influence the final decision; all discussion contents and the final decision are open to the public, so decision-making processes are transparent. In addition, online discussion has become a popular venue for discussion for South Korean people, possibly because of high proportion of internet access and broad use of e-government services. On the other hand, the actual number of participants in e-forum in the case of the free-ride subway service for pensioners, the disabled and national merits people in Busan was not enough, but the deep discussion was important and influential in making the final decision.
Chapter 7 Cross-country Comparison of State and National Levels

**Interpretive Flexibility**

It is clear from the discussion above that e-decision making is the form and practice of participatory e-government to have emerged in South Korea. This interpretation and organization of participatory e-government contrast with the ‘online consultation’ ordering of participatory e-government practice seen in the Australian case discussed earlier. What are the contingences at play in shaping this very different form of participatory e-government in South Korea?

As explored in the Technological Frame, the government portal for achieving online decision-making, Epeople, was launched because of the need for administration reform, and the need to improve initial e-government practices. To achieve this goal, Epeople was designed to engage active participation of citizens in policy-making processes: it allows citizens to participate actively in the decision-making processes by suggesting agenda issues, by discussing public issues; government agencies then took these public views into account when deciding final policies (OECD, 2003; UN, 2010). This active participation was expected to improve the interaction between government agencies and citizens, and the transparency of government policies. These expectations seemed to be met, judging from the national and international praise (ACRC, 2009; UN, 2011)

During the Epeople e-forum on the issue of the free-ride subway service for pensioners, the disabled and national merits people in Busan, citizens were invited to actively participate in the policy-making process. Firstly, the issue was suggested by a citizen. The decision authority to decide the discussion agenda was still in the hands of the Busan City Government, but Epeople e-forum allowed citizens to participate in the agenda-setting process. Secondly, Busan residents freely shared various opinions and ideas on the issue with each other. Lastly, the Busan City Government made a final decision from the ideas suggested by citizens. As with the agenda-setting power, the Busan City Government was responsible for deciding the final policy, but the decision was based on citizens’ ideas. Also, the government provided detailed information about the policy-working process. This decision-making process in Epeople e-forum was employed to consider and to open up for public debate 19 issues during the first half year of 2009. From these facts, it can be said that online decision-making in Epeople positively increased the influence of citizens in policy-making processes.

However, during the e-forum, there was no communication between the Busan City Government and Busan residents. This occurred not only in the case of improving subway services in Busan, but also in other similar discussions. The user guide to Epeople was clear that the e-forum was an online venue
to share and discuss the ideas of citizens on public issues, and that a different online application should be used to directly interact with government agencies for purposes such as asking for information, or requesting interpretation of policies, regulations, and related laws.

After the e-forum ended, the Busan City Government assessed, and was satisfied with, the quality of online discussion, although the quantity result showed that only a limited number of citizens were engaged. The Busan City Government considered the debate representative of the range of views on the issue. The ACRC did consider the issue of the low number of participants, and has since integrated the Epeople online discussion to online discussion in popular portals such as DAUM and NAVER. This is because non-government portals had become the online social networking sites for discussion. One of Epeople managers commented:

The ACRC gives a great deal of consideration to engaging more people’s participation in Epeople. These days, the ACRC intends to integrate Epeople with popular portals. This is because these portals are not just commercial websites anymore. They already have their own online discussion forums and often raise important socio-political issues to engage active participation of internet users. The number of participants in these portals is much higher than in Epeople. So, it can be expected to open the best online discussion through the combination of good points between Epeople and portals (Epeople manager, December, 5, 2009).

Above all, online decision-making as the technological frame of Epeople was formulated by strong government leadership promoting e-government reforms to improve cooperation among government agencies and to provide citizen-centric services. These government demands were reflected in the building of a government portal with the online system integration among government departments, agencies, local governments and public institutions, and the prominence of tools to support the practice of online discussion and decision making. Epeople broadly achieved its stated aims, and particularly improved the influence of citizens on decision-making processes. However, it did not engage many citizens’ participation in decision-making processes. The ACRC saw this as a problem which it attributes to the lack of publicity, and recently linked online policy discussion to the popular portals and social networking sites.
7.4 Cross-country Comparison of State and National Levels of Participatory E-government Practices

This chapter analysed participatory e-government practices of the Australian Queensland State Government and of the South Korean government respectively. To analyse the two participatory e-government practices, the three key dimensions of the Social Construction of Technology - Relevant Social Groups, Technological Frame, and Interpretive Flexibility - were employed. Two specific examples of participatory e-government practices in Australia and in South Korea - the South East Queensland Regional Plan in GetInvolved, and the Free-ride Subway Services for Pensioners, the Disabled, and National Merits in Busan in Epeople - were chosen to deeply explore the development and the practice of participatory e-government. These two examples are typical issues for public consultation and discussion in each online environment. GetInvolved online consultation has been popularly used to consult on public plans, and to review acts for legislation, but Epeople e-forum is commonly used to discuss issues of concern to residents such as transportation services, and social welfare services. The comparative results are presented below.

Both Australia and South Korea had similar aims when developing participatory-e-government processes. Both participatory e-government practices aimed to engage active citizen participation in decision-making processes. As well, both practices aimed to improve the transparency and accountability of policy-making processes, and to increase the satisfaction of citizens who used e-government services. In addition, both participatory e-government practices were developed by the strong leadership of political leaders and government departments. In Australia, Premier Beattie and his Government initiated development of GetInvolved and the Department of Communities managed it. In South Korea, President Roh Moo-Hyun strongly led to moves to establish practices of participatory e-government and the Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs was responsible for launching Epeople.

However, the practice of e-democracy in each nation was shaped by the different environment in each country. The cross-country comparison of these participatory e-government practices Australia in Queensland Government and in South Korea makes visible how pre-existing socio-political conditions shaped both the development of the infrastructure, and the form of the e-democracy practice. Firstly, the meaning and shape of e-democracy does not follow in any straight-forward way from the technology itself. In each country, e-democracy became different things. The Queensland Government used online consultation. This online consultation was initiated to reduce the political
challenges of the Queensland Government, including characteristics of a large and highly-decentralized state, and inadequate accountability in the making of public policies in the 1990s, and to achieve the desire of Queensland citizens to actively participate in decision-making processes. By comparison, Epeople in South Korea aimed to implement e-decision making by integrating government systems. This integrated e-decision-making was begun by the political pledge of President Roh in the early 2000s to achieve fully democratic participation in the country. For these political aims, the Government focused on improving previous e-government practices, including integrating the fragmented e-government systems of each government agency, and providing citizen-centric e-government information and services.

Secondly, ICTs that promise to engage citizens in policy-making have to be ‘tamed’ and embodied within existing mechanisms of government and policy making, or to change pre-existing modes of citizen-government interaction. GetInvolved online consultation aimed to receive feedback from citizens on the issues, as well as to improve the relationship between the Queensland governments and Queensland citizens. In developing the SEQ regional plan, the responsibility to provide information and to organize and manage online consultation was with the Department of Infrastructure and Planning. This government department invited online consultation participants (SEQ residents) to provide their ideas on the issue. This form of online consultation was not created by adopting ICTs; rather, it is a long-term requirement for public consultation in planning policies and in enacting Acts in Australian environment. This process of legal public consultation is already routinized through offline events, which provided the template for citizen participation through GetInvolved.

By contrast, Epeople e-forum aimed to involve citizens in the whole process of online decision-making, and in stabilizing the constructive communication climate in the discussion. To achieve these aims, Epeople e-forum invited individual citizens to participate from agenda-setting to the discussion, and therefore to influence the final decision. In developing the improvement to the free-ride subway services in Busan, the issue was suggested by an individual, and the online discussion was conducted only by citizens (Busan residents). The Busan City Government was responsible for making a final decision, but it referred to the online opinions of citizens in making this final decision. Epeople as e-decision making is perhaps new. Although public engagement in all administration has been legally required in South Korea, it had not been actualized before the end of the 1980s because of a long-term undemocratic political regime. Since the democratic political transition, the South Korean Government has tried to achieve above aims, but it has not yet fully achieved them. The global use of ICTs increased the expectations of the South Korean Government to achieve reform and innovation in
all aspects of administration. For this context, the form of online participation of Epeople was created by actively applying ICTs.

Thirdly, the means to involve government departments and agencies in, and to attract citizens to participate in, participatory e-government practices were different between GetInvolved and Epeople. GetInvolved was formulated as an online consultation, and was built to receive feedback of citizens on planning policies and reviewing Acts. This online form enabled government agencies to collect more feedback from citizens on the issue. In developing the SEQ Regional Plan 2009-2013, the Department of Infrastructure and Planning used the online consultation of GetInvolved to gather opinions of citizens, and targeted people who did not (or could not) participate in various offline events. This showed the willingness of government to hear community demands, and to take account of citizen opinions in its final decision; this willingness of government increased the transparency of policy-making. This form also attracted citizens to participate in online consultation, because citizens were able to minimize their efforts in finding information, and in providing their ideas. SEQ residents who participated in the online consultation saved the time taken to search for information and to easily understand how to submit their ideas. This was because online consultation participants used information from the GetInvolved consultation, and took part in e-mail-based online consultation organized by the Department of Infrastructure and Planning. While this consultation was not new in the Australian context (as addressed in the second difference), the uses of ICTs made a more efficient channel of an existing form of consultation.

Comparably, Epeople was established by the ‘system integration’ of all levels of South Korean government departments and agencies, and was designed as a participation portal. From the government perspective, the integration system allowed all government agencies to improve the work process and to reduce the overlap in tasks. In the development of the Busan subway service, when the Busan City Government published the discussion issue in its government website, the discussion was automatically published in e-forum of Epeople without any other process. From the citizens’ perspective, the participation portal saves the time needed to find government agencies to handle their demands and requests. Citizens chose the issue-relevant government agency, when they suggest a discussion idea, and if they were not sure which government agencies would handle their issue, they would be supported by the ACRC. Also, allowing citizens to participate in the entire decision-making process improved the bureaucratic ways of decision-making, as did the openness of final decisions. In addition, citizens were attracted to participate in e-forum, because there was no other ways to submit their ideas and opinions of the issue. These motivations for government agencies and for citizens were
influenced by the strong leadership of the National Government to achieve e-government aims for reforming and innovating all aspects of administration, and by the popularity of using the internet and e-government services.

Lastly, the directions to solve challenges of existing participatory e-government practices between the two cases are different. The online consultation of GetInvolved did not change the dominant form of consultation in Queensland, and retained the top-down relationship between governments and citizens. This online consultation led to a decrease in the number of people who participated in GetInvolved. The GetInvolved manager, the Department of Communities, attributed the current challenge to the use of Web 1.0 technologies, and considers the adoption of Web 2.0 technologies would increase the participation of citizens. On the other hand, the Epeople e-forum did not engage as many participants as many as had expected: the number of participants in the online discussion was seriously low compared to the population of Busan. ACRC, which is responsible for managing Epeople, attributed the low number of e-forum participants not to the limited ways to participate in Epeople, but to the unfamiliar image of the government portal. To engage more citizens in the Epeople decision-making process, ACRC integrated online discussions into popular portals such as Daum and Naver.

Above all, the comparison of two high levels of participatory e-government practices in Australia and in South Korea showed how each practice was designed from, and combined with characteristics of its particular environment. The following chapter again compares the participatory e-government practices between Australia and South Korea, but focuses on the local government practices of the Melbourne City Council and the Seoul Metropolitan Government.
Chapter 8
Cross-country Comparison of Local Levels of Participatory E-government Practices in Australia and in South Korea

This chapter analyses and compares the two cases of local levels of participatory e-government in Australia and South Korea: the Future Melbourne Wiki of the Melbourne City Council, and SMG Online of the Seoul Metropolitan Government (hereafter called SMG). The focus on participatory e-government practices at the local level seeks to explore the effectiveness of local government’s e-democracy practices in the two countries. Some scholars (Gronlund, 2002; Philipsborn in Coleman & Norris, 2005) believe that e-democracy practices at local level are the most effective, because local governments are directly responsible for residential issues. But, from Chapter 5, the practices of participatory e-government at local levels of the two countries did not always support that belief: local governments of both countries have had less constitutional legitimacy for providing residential services and for managing e-democracy practices. Nevertheless, local governments in the two countries have actively tried to introduce participatory e-government practices, and the two local government e-democracy cases for this study are recognized as “best practice” in each country. So, it would be valuable to analyse the variations in how these two e-democracy practices at the local level compare.

Both the Future Melbourne wiki and SMG Online aim to engage citizens’ participation in policy-making processes in terms of achieving ‘collaboration’. However, the two local jurisdictions used different technologies to achieve their participatory e-government aims: The City of Melbourne Council uses the wiki, but SMG uses e-decision making. This difference may have occurred because of different interactions between technologies and socio-political contexts, among technologies, or among socio-political contexts. This chapter focuses on finding how, and with what effects, governments implemented these two local participatory e-government practices.

This chapter uses the same analytical dimensions (relevant social groups, technological frame and interpretive flexibility) that were used to analyse and compare GetInvolved (Queensland State Government) and Epeople (South Korea Government). These three terms from social construction of technology theory were introduced in Section 7.1 and are not described in this chapter again. The structure of this chapter is that the Future Melbourne Wiki of the Australian Melbourne City Council is explored first, and then SMG Online of the South Korean SMG is analysed; the chapter concludes with an analysis of the similarities and differences between them.
8.1 Future Melbourne Wiki of the Melbourne City Council

The Future Melbourne Wiki is an online tool to involve citizens in the Future Melbourne Plan. The Future Melbourne Plan has six fixed visions: people, creative, prosperous, knowledge, ecocity, and connected. These six visions were developed by collaboration between the Melbourne City Council and citizens in the wiki. Because of the purposive development of the wiki, the analysis of participatory e-government practice of the Melbourne City Council focuses on all activities used to develop the Future Melbourne Plan in the Future Melbourne Wiki, rather than the activities involved in choosing a vision.

The Development of the Future Melbourne Plan and Wiki

Participatory e-government practice at the Melbourne City Council began in the 1990s when Premier Jeff Kennett headed the Victorian State Government. Kennett was Premier of Victoria from 1992 until 1999; Kennett replaced the ten-year term Victorian Labor Government led by John Cain II (1982-1990), and by Joan Kirner (1990-1992). Kirner had been installed to try to save the Labor Government which had seen the scandal of the Victorian Economic Development Corporation (VEDC), and the collapse of the State Bank (“The Kennett Government”, 2011). The Kennett Liberal Government had a difficult goal to revitalize the Victorian economy. To restore the financial success of Victoria, the Kennett Government accomplished rapid public sector marketization and privatization reforms in fields such as education, public transportation, and tax (Burdess & O’Toole, 2004; “The Kennett Government”, 2011).

One of the major reforms enacted was the force increase in the legal size of councils to create economies of scale and dramatically increase the number of electors represented by each elected representative (Burdess & O’Toole, 2004). The Kennett reforms of local government did place emphasis on the role of councillor in community representation and advocacy, and consolidated the notion that local councils should ‘mirror’ the variety of opinion, the interests, different kinds and different perspectives of voters (Burdess & O’Toole, 2004, pp. 74-76). It is this view of councils that comes to shape the Future Melbourne Plan wiki (Burdess & O’Toole, 2004, p.67). The Kennett reforms impressed upon elected councillors a new role that was more like the role of company directors and board members. Their job was not to make day-to-day management decisions but to steer the ship, to set policy and strategic directions, leaving the employed council officers or contracted agents to get on with the job of providing customer focused services. With the average number of voters per councillor...
increasing from 2000 to 8000, the old ways of representing the interests of citizens at the council level was under strain. With the Kennett reforms there was a shift away from voters knowing their councillor personally and relying on their elected representative to personally advocate their interests (Burdess & O’Toole, 2004, pp.71-73).

In 1996, when Premier Kennett started a second term as Premier, he announced wide-ranging government reforms to prepare government for the challenges of the 21\textsuperscript{st} century, which he defined as more responsive government, and more citizen-focused service organizations (Burdess & O’Toole, 2004). The Kennett Government announced a new Victorian planning system; it provided regulatory tools and guided policy-based local planning schemes across Victoria to facilitate policy development in its regional context (Shackleton, Fisher & Dawson, 2006). Around this time, the use of ICTs in the world and the concept of ‘e-government’ were increasing, and the use of ICTs became an important theme for reforming administrations and government performances in Australia as well as throughout the world. Because of these global trends, and to speed up the new policy-planning schemes in Victoria, the Victorian State Government began considering how to make e-government work (Shackleton, Fisher & Dawson, 2006).

The Melbourne City Council was the first local council to implement both the local-planning scheme of the Kennett Government, and e-government practice. Melbourne is the capital city of the State of Victoria; the Melbourne City Council covers the central business district and was charged with considering local development for the coming decade applying the local planning scheme of the Victorian State Government (Shaw, 2003; Shackleton, Fisher & Dawson, 2006). In 1999, the Melbourne City Council presented its initial local planning and e-government strategy, and published City Plan 1999, the first city plan. In this Plan, three substantial objectives (\textit{building densities, housing affordability, and cultural life}) were chosen as goals for developing the city for the next ten years (Shaw, 2003). In 2001, after a two-year consideration period of the City Plan 1999, the City Plan 2010 was released. It aimed for Melbourne City to be a global city and one of the most liveable and sustainable cities in the world; the three objectives in the City Plan 1999 were re-developed to become the six issues for the plan of Future Melbourne identified \textit{prosperous city, innovative city, culturally vital city, people city, attractive city, and sustainable city} as the essential elements (Shaw, 2003). From the City Plan 2010, the Melbourne City Council has generally scheduled to produce a new strategic City Plan about every 10 years. In early 2007, as the life span of the City Plan 2010 was reaching its end, the Melbourne City Council started developing the new strategic plan for the next decade.
To replace the City Plan 2010, the Melbourne City Council researched what the Melbourne community, including residents and all people related to Melbourne city, really want for their city’s future. The City of Melbourne Council applied the concept of collaborative participation to bring the ideas, suggestions and demands of the broader Melbourne community into the future Plan (Elliott, 2008). The City of Melbourne Council sought the views of all people who visited Melbourne city for work, for its dynamic night life, its cultural institutions, or to attend its universities. This was a much broader group than its residential electors, but perhaps favouring its business and property owning voters. The concept of collaboration was practiced with three offline methods, and a wiki. The first of the three offline methods was to work with a number of organizations to set up the direction and steps for the development of the Future Melbourne Plan; the Melbourne City Council set six visions identified as people, creative, prosperous, knowledge, ecocity, and connected as the substantial goals of the new Future Melbourne Plan. The partner organizations included the committee for Melbourne, the Victorian Council of Social Services, the Australian Conservation Foundation, the Property Council of Australia, the Age newspaper and research partners such as the University of Melbourne and the RMIT Global Cities Research Institute, both of which were located in the City of Melbourne area. Second, the Melbourne City Council organized the Future Melbourne Reference Group, consisting of prominent Melbourne residents and leaders, to guide the development of Future Melbourne, and to advise on the direction of the Future Melbourne project (Elliott, 2008). Third, the Melbourne City Council sponsored other offline events to engage public participation in contributing
and sharing values, ideas, opinions, challenges and solutions for the Future Melbourne plan (Melbourne City Council, 2008a, 2008b). Particularly, the Melbourne City Council held a number of meetings and exhibitions between May 2007 and June 2008. The City of Melbourne Council held public forums at town-halls, conducted offline community surveys, and other events such as public road shows, community art-making, an exhibition, a state-wide newspaper campaign, and information hubs around the city (Melbourne City Council, 2008b). As one of Melbourne City Council interviewees noted:

The Melbourne City Council organized many offline events including public meetings and exhibitions to inform Melbourne City community of the new plan and to engage their interest and participation in the consultation processes (Future Melbourne Wiki manager, July 17, 2009).

At the same time, the Melbourne City Council created a wiki in an attempt, for the first time in Australia to use this technology to achieve transparency and work collaboratively with the Melbourne community to develop the new Future Melbourne Plan. The use of wiki technology in policy-making processes of Melbourne City Council was possible, because the City of Melbourne Council had long-term developed the application of ICTs in the life of the Melbourne community and in the decision-making process of Melbourne City Council. The Council began to use internet when the e-Government strategy of the Victorian State Government was first introduced in 1999. Since then, the Melbourne City Council has continued to develop the website format and content to build more mature web presence (Shackleton, Fisher & Dawson, 2006; Yigicanlar, O’Connor & Westerman, 2008). In addition, the significant growth of internet use in Melbourne encouraged the use of new technologies to engage its residents. In 2001, 41% of Melbourne residents accessed internet; in 2006, 67% of Melbourne residents accessed internet and 70% of them connected to high speed broadband (ABS, 2007; Yigicanlar, O’Connor & Westerman, 2008). This internet use of Melbourne residents increased 90 percents in 2009, as one of Melbourne City Council interviewees noted below.

Now, in 2009, internet access and use in Melbourne City is the highest in Victoria. Over 90% of Melbourne city residents connect to the internet and 89% of Melbourne city households have broadband internet (Future Melbourne Wiki manager, July, 17, 2009).

The creation of the Future Melbourne Wiki was inspired by lessons from the New Zealand Police Act.
The Melbourne City Council learned both positives and negatives from the use of the NZ wiki:

The Melbourne City Council researched the use of wiki in other countries and found a very successful example from New Zealand. The New Zealand Police used wiki technology to collect ideas and opinions from the public on the review of the nation’s Police Act. The wiki for the New Zealand Police Act Review was very successful: firstly, there were many fresh ideas and a number of ideas to develop existing contents of the Act; secondly, the people significantly increased their participation in the review of the Police Act legislation; lastly, the wiki developed a deep conversation with government on that issue. In spite of its big success, New Zealand Police Act Review had limitations to engage the public into the wiki. The Police Act Review wiki was not a core component of the consultation process and only opened in official working time, from 9 to 5, for two weeks. The Melbourne City council improved several weak points of the New Zealand Police Act wiki: Future Melbourne wiki has separated discussion pages for commenting on the various sections of the plan; Future Melbourne wiki (team) is in less control of utilising the wiki which means open to the public 24-hours per day and seven days per week (Future Melbourne Wiki manager, July, 17, 2009).

Through thorough research of the New Zealand wiki, the Melbourne City Council launched the Future Melbourne wiki in 2008 (Elliott, 2008). This Future Melbourne wiki was open for one month, from May 2008 to June 2008, to collect the ideas of citizens and to involve citizens in various ways to develop the new Melbourne Plan. During the online consultation time, citizens contributed in various ways, some of which included editing, reviewing, and discussing the Plan. After the wiki consultation ended, the Future Melbourne team in the City of Melbourne Council collected and summarized all data, and submitted it to the Mayor of Melbourne City Council. Then, the top decision makers including the Mayor, Robert Doyle\footnote{When the Future Melbourne Council Plan 2009-2013 was published, Mr Robert Doyle was the Mayor of Melbourne City Council: he has been elected in November 2008. But the wiki was launched and active during the term of Mayor John So: he was elected in 2001 and re-elected in 2004 (Wikipedia “John So”, 2011).}, discussed all of the public consultation results, drafted the final plan, and in July 2009, approved for publication the four-year term Future Melbourne Council Plan 2009-2013.

Relevant Social Groups

In the development of the Future Melbourne Plan 2009-2013, there were four relevant social groups: 1) the Victorian State Government, 2) the Plan development partners, 3) the Melbourne City Council, and 4) the Melbourne community. The first relevant social group, the Victorian State Government, was not actively related to the Future Melbourne Plan 2009-2013 and its wiki, but did provide a fundamental new framework for making local plans and policies. So the Victorian State Government was involved in the Future Melbourne Plan in an indirect way. The second relevant social group, the Plan development partners, were directly involved in setting the agenda of the Plan, but their involvement was rarely connected to the use of the wiki. Therefore, these two relevant social groups can be named the Future Melbourne Plan developers, but they stood behind the Future Melbourne Wiki and shaped its use.

On the other hand, the third and the fourth relevant social groups were actively related to the Future Melbourne Plan 2009-2013 and its wiki. The second relevant social group, the Melbourne City Council, was a strong actor responsible for managing the wiki as part of the Plan-making process. Particularly, the Future Melbourne Plan team at the Melbourne City Council had four major responsibilities to ensure the success of the wiki. Firstly, the team managed all tasks for working the wiki such as uploading information about events and developments. This process continued throughout the consultation and after consultation had closed.

Secondly, the team participated in wiki discussions by correcting errors of fact, and by linking citizen concerns to relevant plans and documents, and by replying to requests by citizens. Figure 8-2 shows how the wiki team participated in the wiki discussion during the public consultation period.
Thirdly, the Future Melbourne Plan Team had responsibility for keeping the wiki discussion healthy. The team set up very strong terms and conditions for participants to participate in the wiki discussion. Also, the team members checked new comments every single day during the consultation period (interview summary 2009). In addition, the team engaged a person to continually monitor participation behaviours in the Future Melbourne wiki. When inappropriate comments were posted in the wiki (see Figure 8-3 next page) the team or a staff monitor moved or removed the comments to other pages, and explained the reason for moving or removing.

Figure 8-3. An Example of Keeping the Future Melbourne Wiki Discussion Healthy

![Wiki Discussion Interface]


The participation terms, together with the everyday monitoring and checking system, helped the wiki discussion stay healthy during the public consultation period; the active participation of the wiki team as ‘wiki police’ produced good results, keeping to a minimum levels of spam, as well as off-topic or offensive comments during the public consultation. As one of Melbourne City Council interviewees commented:

Setting up the strong participation conditions for the wiki participants, and the monitoring by the wiki team members and an engaged person, were very useful to escalate the public consultation and discussion level. The team found several comments that had to be moved to different spaces, but did not find aggressive or disengaged comments during the consultation period. (Future Melbourne Wiki manager, July, 20, 2009).

Lastly, the Future Melbourne Wiki team was responsible for delivering the result of the public consultation to the Melbourne City Council decision makers. At the end of the consultation, the team collected all public consultation data and submitted them to the Mayor. Also, they continually (and strongly) communicated with decision makers to ensure the influence of publicly expressed opinions in the final decision. This effort by the Future Melbourne Wiki team increased the awareness of decision-makers about the importance of the wiki in hearing the voices of the Melbourne community. One of Melbourne City Council interviewees noted:
Since the wiki consultation was submitted to the decision makers, the team has continually contacted the decision-makers of the City of Melbourne to influence ideas of the Melbourne community in deciding the Future Melbourne Plan. The decision-makers of the Melbourne City Council recognized that the wiki was very useful to collect many opinions of the Melbourne community and to understand what the community needed (Future Melbourne Wiki manager, July, 17, 2009).

The fourth relevant social group was the Melbourne community. The Future Melbourne Plan focused on developing the life and liveliness of Melbourne City. The City of Melbourne Council decided to run the Future Melbourne Wiki, because the 2009 ABS census showed that there was quite a high proportion of young generation inhabitants in Melbourne, and Melbourne City Council wanted to tap their lifestyles into the Plan. From this information, it can be seen that Melbourne city residents (mainly young generation) are the target user group of the wiki although the Council expected broad participation for everyone living anywhere in the greater Melbourne area, in Australia and even in the world, to make a comment and to discuss their visions, and to respond to all versions of the draft, from the very first to the very last decision (Melbourne City Council, 2008b).

The median age of residents in Melbourne is twenty-eight, so that online is first nature for people of that age group. So the Council thought what proper means are to encourage the participation of those people in public consultation, and what suitable tools are for those people particularly who are unable to attend offline meetings due to employment or other commitments. The wiki was suitable for them (Future Melbourne Wiki manager, July, 17, 2009).

Analysis of the wiki user lists43 showed that over half of them lived or worked, or both in Melbourne City. From the analysis, it was impossible to find detailed socio-demographic information, because providing personal information (except the name) was completely optional. However, it was clear that individuals participated in the wiki to voice his (or her) views on the Plan. Some users were not members of the Melbourne community, but lived in other parts of Australia or in other countries such

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43 The wiki user lists of the Future Melbourne Wiki were a valuable source to find information about wiki users such as who are wiki users, what are their interests (related) to Melbourne, and why do they make accounts on the wiki. So the researcher analysed the lists to understand the socio-demographic factors of wiki users. In the wiki user lists, there were a total of 851 users in August 2011; the researcher sorted the user lists: who made an account during the time from when the wiki was opened to when the wiki consultation was ended, and it was 571 users. Around 60% of these sorted users lived or worked in Melbourne City, the other 40% of users did not indicate their relationship to Melbourne (or their interests in it), although five were visitors from other area in Australia or from abroad.
as the USA, Canada, and New Zealand; they were interested in making an account of and in participating in the wiki discussion, but there is no information about why they wanted to or how they knew about it.

In developing the Future Melbourne Plan, there were four relevant social groups, but only two of these - the Melbourne City Council, and the Melbourne community - were active users of the Future Melbourne Wiki. The Melbourne City Council (particularly the Future Melbourne Plan team) had the most responsibility for managing the wiki, including providing information, replying to and discussing with wiki participants, keeping wiki discussion healthy, and delivering the results of the public consultation to the decision-makers of the City of Melbourne. The Melbourne community was another active user group of the wiki; it was clear that individuals were the major users of the wiki during the consultation and that more than half of wiki participants were lived or worked in Melbourne City. However, it was difficult to find detailed socio-demographic information of actual wiki users because the wiki users determine to open their personal information in the wiki.

**Technological Frame**

The Melbourne City Council employed wiki technology to develop the Future Melbourne Plan. The decision to use the wiki was based on the complex interaction of three social and technological factors: the theme of the Future Melbourne Plan, the development of Web 2.0 technologies, and the City’s capacity to employ ICTs. The reform scheme of the Victorian State Government provided the future local planning direction for the Victorian local governments; this local planning scheme provided the authority for Victorian local governments to build local policies for developing local community-reliant plans (Shaw, 2003). The Victorian State Government scheme also provided the community participation in local policy-making processes. According to the scheme, the Melbourne City Council considered the notion of collaboration in the City Plan making process, and focused on the direct involvement of the wider Melbourne community in the Future Melbourne Plan-making processes (Shaw, 2003; Elliott, 2008).

This need to develop a Melbourne City Plan met the political potential of the Web 2.0 technologies. In 2007, when the City Plan 2010 reached its end and the Melbourne City Council began to consider improving the Plan, it researched how to engage community participation in the policy-making processes, and also what kinds of tools would help achieve collaborative work with citizens. At that time, Web 2.0 technologies, such as social-networking sites, YouTube, wikis, and blogs, became
popular online tools for internet users, because they allowed users to create and distribute content (Petrik, 2009, 2010). Particularly, the use of Web 2.0 technologies in election campaigns in the USA and in Australia showed the capacity of Web 2.0 for new forms of citizen participation in the political arena (Macnamara, 2008). The successful use of a wiki for engaging citizens’ participation in the Police Act Review of the New Zealand Police also showed the potential of Web 2.0 technologies as policy-making tools (Elliott, 2008). These successful uses of Web 2.0 inspired Melbourne City Council to establish a Future Melbourne wiki to allow citizens to help develop the Future Melbourne Plan (Elliott, 2008). As one of Melbourne City Council interviewees noted:

The attractive point of the wiki was to provide various forms of public engagement such as getting information, editing, and discussing pre-registered plan documents and the wiki content, and contributing ideas directly into the plan. In addition, the wiki technology was easy to get the navigation and transition, and allowed tracking any changes made. Every change was also captured from the very first draft when people made comments or edits (Future Melbourne Wiki manager, July, 20, 2009).

In addition, the City of Melbourne Council had already arranged the ICT infrastructure needed for using a wiki. As well, the number of people with internet access in Melbourne City had grown since 2001 (Shackleton, Fisher & Dawson, 2006; Yigicanlar, O’Connor & Westerman, 2008); now it reaches around 90%. Also, the median age of Melbourne city residents is 28, and ICTs are everyday tools in the lives of this age-group. These social factors equipped Melbourne City Council and residents with readiness to use the wiki in policy-making processes. One of Melbourne City Council interviewees commented:

There was a challenge to produce the Future Melbourne Wiki; it was very important ensuring everybody was comfortable with the technology. At this point, the wiki was a perfect fit for the community. This is because the average resident’s age in Melbourne is the late twenties and, for them, internet is just their lives. Also, most of them are workers, so they have difficulties to come to in-person consultations and offline consultations (Future Melbourne Wiki manager, July, 17, 2009).

The complex interactions among the three factors - the theme of the Future Melbourne Plan, the development of Web 2.0 technologies, and the City’s capacity to employ ICTs - successfully engaged citizens’ participation in the wiki during the public consultation period, from May 2008 to June 2008.
During online consultation time, more than 30,000 page-views were undertaken by 7000 individuals; according to an interview with one of the Future Melbourne Wiki managers, total 131 people registered to participate in the wiki consultation by editing, reviewing, and discussing the Plan, and made several hundred contributions to the plan.

**Figure 8-4. Distribution of Participation in Future Melbourne Wiki**


The wiki technology, during the public consultation, achieved collective and nonlinear creative processes of consultation through allowing wiki users to discuss, edit, and create. For instance, there were a total of 72 edits of all discussion issues, Future Melbourne wiki could compare all the changes as all comments [were] revealed back to the original draft. All participants, including the public and council staff, equally made and discussed changes which had been made; this increased the satisfaction of using the wiki, and the trust in the response of the Council staff. Therefore, the Future Melbourne wiki has attained the practice of collaborative policy-making process (Future Melbourne Wiki manager, July, 17, 2009).

This wiki was an important public consultation tool, but the Melbourne City Council also opened the traditional door such as in-person consultations, calling, visiting, and town hall meetings, in order to provide the same interaction opportunities to people who cannot or preferred not to access the internet. As one of Melbourne City Council interviewees said:

The team also used offline methods to provide opportunities for non-internet users during the
public consultation period. After the end of the consultation, the wiki was not used to contribute public participation. This is because, in September 2008, the consultation report was handed to the Council to await the final decision (Future Melbourne Wiki manager, July, 17, 2009).

While the wiki is still open today, the wiki consultation was open for only a specific time of a month in 2008. After the end of public consultation, the contribution of community to the wiki significantly reduced. The City of Melbourne Council had planned to re-open the wiki for discussion, but it has not happened to date. From this, it can be seen that the wiki was used as a temporary tool for developing a specific Plan, rather than becoming equipment for a continual public consultation (or a mechanism for ongoing discussion).

More seriously, the wiki possibly did not directly influence the final policy. The Future Melbourne Council Plan 2009-2013 has no publicly available analysis of where ideas in the final report come from, or of the extent to which the online consultation (or, indeed, other channels of public consultation) influenced the final plan. As one of Melbourne City Council interviewees commented below, this might be because the wiki was initially established not as a decision-making tool, but rather as an online consultation tool to collect community opinions on the Plan, and to discuss the thoughts and ideas of citizens. The results of online consultation were handed to the inner decision-makers when the consultation was ended, but the adoption of public ideas depended on the decision makers of Melbourne City Council. Also, the decision-making process and the final decisions, such as the publication of the City Plan, were not released or linked to in the wiki.

The wiki has been initially separated from the political scene in terms of democratic policy-making processes, but has been independently built to inform public policies, to collect public opinions and to discuss the ideas. For this reason, the adoption of good ideas discussed through the wiki has now been in the hands of the inner-decision makers of Melbourne City Council (Future Melbourne Wiki manager, July, 17, 2009).

To improve the current challenges of the wiki, the City of Melbourne Council considered how to effectively link the wiki consultation to the whole of decision-making process, and planned to make the wiki a continuing public consultation tool.

Technological Frame in the Future Melbourne Plan is the wiki. It was launched with the cooperation of its three components: the introduction of the Victorian State Government’s new local planning, the
development of Web 2.0, and the social fundamentals of Melbourne City. The local planning scheme inspired the adoption of collaboration in local planning process. Web 2.0 technologies enabled ‘collaboration’ in developing the Future Melbourne Plan. Young and internet-savvy residents appropriately used the wiki in developing the Plan. Through the perfect fit among these three, the wiki consultation produced successful results in engaging citizens, debating on topic and stimulating new ideas. This technological frame for the development of the Future Melbourne Plan shows that the wiki technology did not just stay in planning, but migrated to policy discussion. However, the wiki did not fully contribute in the whole policy-making process, as it has not continued to be used to engage citizens’ participation. To improve these challenges, the Melbourne City Council intended to actively apply the wiki to engage the public in local-planning decision-making processes.

**Interpretive Flexibility**

As can be seen from Chapter 6 and the previous two sections, the wiki was an effective tool to facilitate community participation in developing the Future Melbourne Plan, given the three components: the local planning scheme set by the Victorian State Government; the popular use of the Web 2.0 technologies; and the regional and socio-demographic appropriateness of Melbourne City to accept Web 2.0 applications (Burdess & O’Tool, 2004; Petrik, 2010). The use of new communication technologies in developing the Future Melbourne Plan was expected to engage the participation of many citizens in the policy-making processes, and to develop collaborative e-government practices of the Melbourne City Council. In particular, the use of Web 2.0 technologies was expected to allow citizens to participate in various ways, including setting agenda, making social networks, discussing policies, and deciding policies (Petrik, 2010).

These expectations of using the wiki in developing the Future Melbourne Plan were significantly realized: the Plan was nationally recognized as one of the best local government planning practices in Australia (Writer, 2009). This award particularly praised the Future Melbourne Plan project for ambitiously engaging the community in consultation, and for strongly presenting visions of community for the city; the wiki contributed to this success. The wiki was evaluated, by the post planning implementation review (2008), as the most successful citizen-centric consultation tool of the Melbourne City Council. The wiki was recognized as having successfully engaged the public in inclusive, interactive, meaningful and flexible ways such as directly editing the draft, making a network, discussing each other’s contributions, and communicating with council members, as well as improving transparency of the policy-making process, and increasing the efficiency and effectiveness...
Despite these achievements and the possibilities for collaboration using Web 2.0 technologies, in planning Future Melbourne, collaboration was not fully achieved. The wiki was not fully connected to the entire policy-making process of the Future Melbourne Plan, but was used for only a limited time, and for only a part of the process. The wiki was not actively used by the community at the end of wiki consultation. As well, the Council did not seek feedback from the community, after the end of wiki consultation period, and missed the opportunity to use wiki public consultation during the implementation of the plan. The final decisions remained with the elected decision-makers of the City of Melbourne Council. These challenges to traditional decision-making practices that the Future Melbourne wiki might have caused were avoided by locating the wiki within a policy-making process. As analysed in Technological Frame, the wiki was initially launched not to practice e-decision making, but to facilitate interaction between the professional planning staff of Melbourne City Council and the Melbourne community. From this analysis, it is possible to say that the Future Melbourne wiki did not fully create a partnership with citizens in the policy-making process, but creates online consultation.

Melbourne City Council considered the development of the wiki to take two new focuses: namely establishing an online community for all Melbourne residents; engaging their continuing participation. These focuses of the Council resulted not only from good implementation of the wiki during the public consultation, but also from the recognition, by the inner-decision makers, of the importance and influence of the wiki. As one of Melbourne City Council members commented:

The City of Melbourne achieved the most comprehensive community engagement through the wiki, and will continue to use online consultation to receive public ideas. However, the wiki, during the consultation period, was not the tool for achieving e-democracy; it is the future plan to adopt the ICTs as the instrument to practice e-democracy. For that, the Council considered and planned the establishment of better online tools (Future Melbourne Wiki manager, July, 17, 2009).

In summary, the Future Melbourne Wiki was launched because of the complex interaction among the local planning scheme, the introduction of Web 2.0 technologies, and the socio-demographic contexts in Melbourne. The wiki enabled huge participation by the Melbourne community in consultation, and helped develop the Future Melbourne Plan. However, the use of the wiki as a planning consultation tool did not engage the contribution of all Melbourne community members in the entire policy-
making process of the Council; Melbourne City Council developed the wiki to focus particularly on engaging the participation of young generations in developing the Future Melbourne Plan. Also, the wiki as a planning consultation tool emphasized online discussion rather than contributing community opinions in deciding a final policy. Nevertheless, the use of Web 2.0 technology to improve the existing template of public consultation at the local level was a brave initiative in the Australian context. As seen in Chapter 5, Australian local governments have not had strong involvement of citizens in policy-making processes, but the Future Melbourne wiki showed the potential for citizens to become a decision-making partner together with the City of Melbourne Council.

8.2 SMG Online of the Seoul Metropolitan Government

As described in Chapter 6, SMG Online comprised mainly three online participation mechanisms: Online Civil Application, Online Citizen Participation, and Chunmansangsang OASIS (the Oasis for Ten Million Imaginations, hereafter called OASIS). These three online participation mechanisms in SMG Online have different aims for engaging citizens’ participation: Online Civil Application is to engage the direct interaction between the Seoul Metropolitan Government and Seoul residents on the issues of public complaints and requests; Online Citizen Participation is for government-centric e-decision making; and OASIS was for citizen-centric e-decision making. Analysis of all three of them has been valuable for exploring the participatory e-government practices of SMG.

However, OASIS was chosen for this study as the representative example of participatory e-government practices of SMG, and as a case to compare with the Future Melbourne Wiki. This is because OASIS was the most popular online participation mechanism in SMG Online; it was recommended by interviewees from SMG as the best e-decision-making process in SMG Online. Moreover, OASIS was praised as a result of research and e-government evaluation (Negroponte, 2008; OECD, 2009; UN, 2009b). Particularly, the issue of providing an online Korean language course for mothers of multi-cultural families was selected for analysis using three dimensions of the social construction of technology to develop a deep understanding of the participatory e-government practice of SMG. This topic is one of decisions made by collaboration between SMG and Seoul citizens in February 2009, and one where such decisions were implemented well in Seoul society.
Chapter 8 Cross-country Comparison of Local Levels

The Development of Providing an Online Korean Language Course for Mothers of Multicultural Families

Chapter 6 described the four decision-making processes of OASIS: idea suggestion, idea discussion and development, idea evaluation, and idea realization. The development of providing an online Korean language course for mothers of multicultural families followed these steps. The issue was suggested by an individual, online identification was nbh002, in Sangsangjean (idea suggestion) on 17th January 2009. From December 1, 2008 to January 31, 2009, there were about 1,890 citizen suggestions, and this issue was one of the suggested ideas during that time. In Sangsangjean, citizens suggest ideas and also participate in various ways: making comments, giving a score for each topic and voting for good ideas. In early February 2009, the creation and innovation team of SMG evaluated all these ideas by the results of scores and voting of citizens in Sangsangjean as well as recommendations of Sangang Nuridan (a Citizen Committee for organizing OASIS) to select a small number of ideas to discuss in Sungsangtoron (online discussion); 269 ideas of 1,890 citizen suggestions were selected, and the issue of providing an online Korean language course for mothers of multicultural families was one of these selected discussion topics.

Figure 8-5. Screen Shot of Sungsangjean

Lists of all suggested ideas

Suggested Idea: providing free photo taking services for low-income families and pensioners.

Lists of replies


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Sangsangjean is the first step of OASIS decision-making process, is an online participation for Seoul citizens to suggest various ideas for making Seoul City better.
For two weeks, a total of 269 ideas were discussed in Sangangtoron, and citizens voted for and against, as well as making comments on the selected ideas. The issue of providing an online Korean language course for mothers of multi-cultural families was discussed from 28 January 2009 until 11 February 2009. At the end of the two-week online discussion, the creation and innovation team of SMG sorted 41 ideas from 269 discussion topics, the results of citizen activities in Sangangtoron and the recommendations of Sangsang Nuridan. These 41 sorted-ideas included various issues such as using a podcast to inform citizens of city policies and news, and providing an online transaction service for small business owners. These 41 sorted-ideas were reviewed by relevant experts and divisions from SMG during budget and public interest considerations. As a result of the review, six ideas were finally selected to evaluate for implementation and action. The issue of providing an online Korean language course for mothers of multi-cultural families was also reviewed by the Division of Women and Family Policy Affairs.
Then, the creation and innovation team of SMG organized the 14th Shilhyoun meeting (offline meeting to make a final decision on the six ideas) at the City Hall theatre on 26th February 2009. Participants at this meeting were the Mayor of SMG, Oh, Se Hoon; six idea suggesters; officers from issue-relevant divisions; experts from SMG’s City Research Centre; and 150 people. The Mayor of SMG chaired the meeting; each idea suggester explained why their issue was important and needed;
the leader of each issue-relevant division advocated its capability for idea realization; experts and researchers on each issue participated in the discussion to help SMG to make decision; and around 150 people \(^45\) (were invited) attended the 14\(^{th}\) Shilhyoun meeting to discuss issues with other participants. This offline decision-making process was available to the public in the form of a video clip in OASIS.

Figure 8-7. The 14\(^{th}\) Shilhyoun Meeting


In the 14\(^{th}\) Shilhyoun meeting, the suggester (ID: nbh002) of providing an online Korean language course for mothers of multi-cultural families persuaded others of the importance of the idea; the leader of the Division of Women and Family Policy Affairs of SMG and a researcher in the area from Seoul City welfare system advocated their capabilities for idea compliance. In addition, 150 attendees provided their opinions and preferences on the issue. As a result of the Shilhyoun meeting, the issue of providing the online Korean language course for mothers of multi-cultural families became the actual policy.

\(^{45}\) 150 people included the members of Sangsang Nuridan; a number of professors in public administration from several universities in the USA; public servants from the multicultural family support centre of Songpa Gucheong; social welfare volunteers of Korea University; South Korean centre of OECD research; and so on. At that time, only Sangsang Nuridan members represented Seoul residents in the meeting. However, as a result of highly increased demands for participating by Seoul citizens, the number allowed the Shilhyoun meeting was increased, and these days, ordinary Seoul citizens (non Sangsang Nuridan members) can apply through OASIS website to participate in the Shilhyoun meeting.
After the offline meeting, the Division of Women and Family Policy Affairs of SMG published a schedule for and plan for linking the online Korean language course to the website of the Seoul Centre of Women and Family Support, and also a plan to establish a website for multi-cultural families with the online Korean language course. This working process was opened in OASIS until the public business of providing the online Korean language course for mothers of multi-cultural families was fully implemented: the Division of Women and Family Policy Affairs of SMG established the website of multi-cultural families (http://www.mcfamily.or.kr) in June 2010, and provided the Korean language course on the website.

**Relevant Social Groups**

From the development of an online Korean language course for mothers of multi-cultural families, there were broadly two relevant social groups: SMG, and Seoul residents. Both relevant social groups were actively involved in the development of public policy (and government business), and in the use of OASIS. The first relevant social group, SMG, can be further sub-divided by three inner-groups: the Mayor, the creation and innovation team, and the issue-relevant divisions including the Division of Women and Family Policy Affairs. These inner-groups of SMG did not include elected councillors. This was because of the political structure of SMG. Elected councillors, based on districts in Seoul, constitute the Seoul City Assembly; the Assembly is an independent legislative body of SMG to enact, revise, and abolish municipal ordinances; the Assembly also examines and decides the appropriate budget of SMG; in addition, the Assembly inspects and examines the administrative affairs of SMG. But the decisions on public policies and administrative affairs within the local levels of laws and ordinances are in the hands of the Mayor, and of high-level leaders of issue-relevant divisions of SMG.

The first inner-group of SMG, the Mayor of SMG, is directly elected by citizens every four-years; she or he can be re-elected. But the Mayor becomes the head of SMG when he or she takes power. The Mayor, Oh Se-Hoon, launched OASIS in 2006 as a collaborative e-decision making tool of SMG, soon after he became the Mayor of SMG. However, he was involved in decision-making process of OASIS only as the chair of the Shillhyn meeting. Therefore, the Mayor was responsible for developing OASIS, but only partly involved in determining the outcomes from the use of OASIS.

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46 For more information on the Seoul City Assembly, access the website of Seoul City Assembly, http://www.smc.seoul.kr/main/index/index002.jsp
The other two inner-groups of SMG, the creation and innovation team, and the issue-relevant divisions, were actively involved in organizing and in managing a whole range of decision-making processes in OASIS. The creation and innovation team, and the issue-relevant divisions of SMG decided together on the discussion topics from ideas suggested by citizens, and the final businesses and policies for implementation by SMG administration and services. The Division of the Women and Family Policy Affairs worked with the creation and innovation team to evaluate the idea of the development of an online Korean language course for mothers of multi-cultural families. As one of SMG interviewees noted:

In particular, during the idea discussion and development, the issue-relevant divisions reviewed the suggested ideas, and provided their positions and capabilities on suggested ideas. Their information was very important to select ideas for discussion and further steps (OASIS manager, December, 15, 2009).

However, managing OASIS and the Shilhyoun meeting were in the hands of the creation and innovation team of SMG. The team was responsible for keeping online suggestions and discussion healthy. The team checked all new ideas and comments every single day to maintain all postings polite, cordial, respectful of others and on topic, and realistic. Around 130 Sangsang Jigi members, who are public servants of SMG voluntarily enrol to take OASIS manager work for a certain time, support the creation and innovation team to monitor the online suggestions and discussion. Both the creation and innovation team and Sangsang Jigi members could delete inappropriate ideas according to the idea suggestion guide, but they commonly used their authority to move the ideas to Wagul-Wagul, which is an online space to collect them. As one of SMG interviewees said:

The creation and innovation team and Sangsang Jigi members always monitored citizen ideas and sifted improperly written ideas and deleted them from Sangsangjean, according to the guide of idea suggestion. But, a month ago, the team added new content in OASIS to collect less valuable ideas for discussion, named Wagul-Wagul. The opening of Wagul-Wagul was an alternative method to keep Sangsangjean and Sangsangtoron clean, rather than just deleting inappropriate ideas such as libelling the Mayor, existing ideas, and ideas not related to benefits for public (OASIS manager, December, 15, 2009).

The creation and innovation team of SMG was also responsible for arranging the Shilhyoun meeting. The creation and innovation team organized the offline meeting, including setting the date and venue;
encouraging the participation of relevant experts, government officers, and individuals; inviting various groups of people, and posting the offline meeting process online. One of SMG interviewees said:

When the final ideas for implementation were decided, the creation and innovation team contacted the issue-relevant divisions, experts, and idea suggesters to encourage them to participate in the offline meeting. The team invited several groups which were working on the final issues. The team also received the online applications from citizens for participating in a Shilhyoun meeting (OASIS manager, December, 15, 2009).

On the other hand, the Division of Women and Family Policy Affairs of SMG was responsible for implementing the final decisions online. The Division of Women and Family Policy Affairs of SMG provided information about how the online Korean language course had been developed, when the portal for multicultural families in Seoul would be established, and how the portal would link to the Korean language course.

Another relevant social group was the residents of Seoul. From the information about participants on

Figure 8-8. The Policy Implementation

Title
Suggester
Key point of idea
Process of working

Validity of the idea
Description of the current situation of online Korean course

The future process of the policy implementation

OASIS, it was not clear which OASIS participants are Seoul residents, because the information about them was confidential. Nevertheless, it was clear that the aim of OASIS is to enable Seoul citizens to suggest policy ideas and to participate in policy-making process of SMG (OECD, 2009). It was also clear that policies are focused on the development of Seoul City. From the development of an online Korean language course for mothers of multi-cultural families, the idea suggester proposed the development of an online Korean language course at the SMG level.

**Figure 8-9. Suggestion of the Online Korean Language Course**

If the online Korean language course will open in SMG Online, it could produce good effects for Seoul such as publicity for Seoul City.

Seoul is the capital city of South Korea, so the SMG has to lead to provide an online Korean language course for multicultural families.


Seoul residents participated in a whole process of policy-making in OASIS. The first step of OASIS policy-making begins with citizens suggesting ideas in *Sangsangjean* in OASIS. Every Seoul resident is entitled to suggest, in *Sangsangjean*, ideas for making Seoul City better, and also to participate in the discussion on the suggested ideas in *Sangsangjean* and in *Sangsangtoron*. From the development of an online Korean language course for mothers of multi-cultural families, the idea was suggested by an individual, given the ID nbh002, and was discussed by a number of OASIS participants; all
participants agreed with the suggestion by the proposer ID nbh002. But it was not certain that all discussion participants on this issue were citizens or residents of Seoul, because there was no public information other than an online nick-name.

Figure 8-10. OASIS Participants’ Discussion

Seoul residents could become a member of *Sangsang Nuridan* by applying. *Sangsang Nuridan* is the Citizen Committee for evaluating citizens’ ideas, and for discussing these ideas with SMG, as an interviewee commented below. This committee is organized by volunteer citizens, and has about 600 members now. In developing the online Korean language course for mothers of multi-cultural families, *Sangsang Nuridan* participated in evaluating ideas, and in the offline meeting on behalf of all Seoul residents. Generally, *Sangsang Nuridan* also monitors online postings to help SMG to keep online participation healthy, but, in this example, they did not play this role.

*Sangsang Nuridan* is organized by voluntary citizens. The major tasks of *Sangsang Nuridan* are to manage OASIS and to support offline meetings. The members actively participate in managing OASIS and in discussing and making final decisions in the *Shilhyoun meeting*. Furthermore, they voluntarily act as OASIS ‘citizen police’ to keep the OASIS discussion...
healthy; this activity of theirs is very helpful to the innovation team of SMG to manage OASIS (OASIS manager, December, 15, 2009).

In OASIS, there are two relevant social groups: SMG, and the residents of Seoul. SMG consists of three inner-groups: the Mayor, the creation and innovation team, and the issue-relevant divisions. Different from the development of the Future Melbourne Wiki, as discussed in an earlier part of this Section, the Seoul City Assembly had no involvement in shaping OASIS. Instead, the Mayor had comprehensive responsibility for developing OASIS; the creation and innovation team, and the issue-relevant divisions of three groups of SMG were responsible for managing OASIS, organizing the offline meetings, and informing the public about the process of implementation. Seoul residents participated from the agenda-setting to the final decision. These two relevant social groups - SMG and Seoul residents - interacted with each other throughout the entire policy-making process: the policy-making began with the ideas suggested by citizens; the discussion topics and the implementation topics were decided on after a comprehensive evaluation by the Citizen Committee, the creation and innovation team, and the review of the relevant divisions (the Division of Women and Family Policy Affairs) of SMG; and at the final decision meeting, the two relevant social groups made the final decision together. Importantly, SMG received support from the Citizen Committee to keep the online participation healthy.

Technological Frame

SMG Online, including OASIS, implies e-decision making. This technological frame in SMG Online was initiated by the National strategy of e-government in the early 2000s, but was developed by SMG for its needs. At the initial stage of e-government development, one of the e-government strategies of the country focused on increasing online participation of citizens, so that the online decision-making through the government websites was practiced across all public areas throughout the nation. As the capital city of South Korea, SMG had a strong responsibility to employee the national strategy to the local level. The SMG set the aim of e-Seoul Government: it provides a high-quality public service for citizens, and marketing that creates brand value for Seoul; it also promotes an innovative organizational culture, under the vision of becoming ‘Clean and Attractive World-best City’ (Moon, 2008). To achieve these aims, SMG developed public MISs (management information systems) in four areas including Service, Information Resources, Infrastructure, Technology47 (Moon, 2008). One

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47 Service: Front Office (Citizen-centred IT Service), Back Office (Management Information System)
Information Resources: Integrated management through Seoul Data Centre
of the system areas, Service, focused on providing government information and services to businesses and citizens, and launched SMG Online.

In particular, SMG emphasized offering e-participation channels for citizens, and created ‘Online Citizen Participation’ in the SMG Online to encourage citizens to participate in municipal affairs. Importantly, the Online Policy Forum in Online Citizen Participation of SMG Online was built to allow citizens to participate in the policy-making process, and to enable policy-makers to better understand citizens’ opinions. It has greatly contributed to increasing citizens’ participation in policy-making processes (Moon, 2008). Nevertheless, this practice did not fully integrate the volume of accumulated information and information services. It also did not fully achieve the notion of citizen-centric e-government: SMG retained responsibility for making final decisions on issues covered in Online Policy Forum (Moon, 2008).

To solve these limitations of e-government practice, SMG attempted a new way of online citizen participation, collaborative e-decision-making: it was initiated by the idea of the new Mayor, Oh Se-Hoon in 2006 (Shin, 2009). He was deeply interested in using ICTs to reflect ideas and demands of citizens in making municipal policies and business. As seen in his inaugural address below, he strongly believed that collaboration between SMG and citizens in policy-making processes was crucial for improving trust in the government and its policies, and that the development of the current e-government system could contribute to achieving this collaboration.

I will develop creative ideas that will be implemented into the city administration and bring about notable changes in the city government… I will open a website under the banner of the ‘Oasis for Ten Million Imaginations’ to better collect dynamic and innovative ideas from our citizens regarding the politics of our administration. And I will actively administer these ideas through my newly envisioned Cyber Civil Policy Management System (Inaugural address of Mayor Oh in 2006, cited in Shin, 2009, pp.3-4).

According to the pledge of the Mayor, OASIS was launched in October 2006. To achieve the aim of OASIS, collaborative policy-making, SMG allows citizens to participate in the policy-making process from agenda-setting to making a final decision; SMG discusses ideas with citizens, and makes the
final decisions with citizens; SMG opens the working process of policies and business to the public. This notion of collaborative policy-making applies to all ideas in OASIS. The example for this study, the development of an online Korean language course for mothers of multi-cultural families, also followed this process of collaboration: this issue was implemented as an SMG policy after a suggestion by an individual; all decisions, including the selection of discussion topic and the decision of final policies, were made by interaction between SMG and its citizens; the implementation process was opened in OASIS. As a result, SMG successfully launched a multi-cultural family website with Korean language course.

This variety of options for citizens’ participation increased the number of contributions: in December 2008, a daily average of around 24 ideas was suggested; by October 2009, they had increased to 43 ideas. So this collaborative e-decision making in OASIS improved the position of citizens as decision-making partners with SMG in the policy-making process. In addition, it improved the transparency of SMG policy-making process, and the accountability of SMG (OECD, 2009). Despite these benefits of using OASIS, SMG still seeks to improve e-decision making methods that will increase citizens’ participation.

Technological Frame for OASIS (a part of the SMG Online) can be said to follow the notion and practice of collaborative e-decision making. It was initiated by the response of SMG to the National strategy of e-government in the early 2000s, but it was activated by the pledge of the Mayor in 2006 to aim for collaborative policy-making with citizens. To achieve this aim, SMG launched OASIS to allow citizens’ full participation in policy-making processes. This citizen-centric policy-making increased the amount of participation, succeeded in sharing policy-making power with citizens, and improved the transparency and accountability of SMG policies and performances.

**Interpretive Flexibility**

As addressed in Chapter 6 and in the previous Section, SMG Online employed ‘e-decision making’ as the preferred form of participatory e-government practice at local level in response to the National Government Strategy. Soon after, it developed the collaborative e-decision making tool, OASIS, according to the pledge of the Mayor. The development of collaborative e-decision making to engage citizens’ participation in policy-making by use of OASIS was expected to increase the interest of citizens in public issues and policies, and to decide citizen-centric public policies. OASIS in SMG Online was also expected to improve the relationship between SMG and Seoul citizens. These
expectations for using OASIS have actually been achieved; OASIS has nationally and internationally been praised as the best e-democracy practice at local government level, and many local governments and public institutions have adapted OASIS for their own e-decision making (OECD, 2009; UN, 2009b).

Importantly, OASIS enables the practice of full collaboration: citizens participate in the entire policy-making processes. From the development of an online Korean language course for mothers of multicultural families, OASIS policy-making process began with the citizen-centric policy idea suggestion, and ended with policies decided with citizens. The participation of citizens in the decision-making process of OASIS is also varied: discussion panels, voluntary online citizen police officers, and monitors of policy implementation. This collaboration in OASIS acquired more participation by citizens, and assured transparency of the SMG policy-making process.

My small proposal that I had thought no one would pay attention to was actively discussed on this community. Shortly after, I was invited to the City Hall, and I had the opportunity to talk about my proposal in front of the mayor and many experts. Small thought, but the fact that this was actually implemented was a great honour for an ordinary individual like me that I could not imagine (interview with one of idea applicants, cited in Shin, 2009, p.8).

From the collaborative e-decision making of OASIS, the internet facilitates deep involvement of ‘ordinary citizens’ in policy-making. However, it cannot explore the full meaning of who ‘ordinary citizens’ are in OASIS. Instead, from the interviews by the above idea applicant and by the below interviewee, it can be seen that OASIS allows ‘ordinary individuals who do not have specific stakes or interests to the government’ to have an interest in public issues, and to express their ideas to SMG. This OASIS e-decision making can also be seen as engaging the active participation of ordinary individuals in the policy-making process, and as making public policies for the ‘broad public’.

SMG can categorize the two participation patterns of citizens: online and offline. The stakeholders are likely to use the offline methods such as visiting and calling, but ordinary individuals (Seoul citizens) prefer to use the internet to say something to the SMG. So, the offline methods are purposely used to push the interests and demands of stakeholders to the SMG, but the online participation provided objective perspective (views of ordinary people) of public issues (SMG Online manager, November, 11, 2009).
The participation of ordinary citizens in policy-making processes was not practiced offline. Public consultation by SMG had been a legal requirement when developing local policies (and business) since the Local Autonomy Act was published in 1995 (Kim, 2009), and SMG was responsible for engaging citizens to participate in consultations and to decide public policies and business. However, most South Korean local governments including SMG rarely engaged the participation of citizens in offline policy-making consulting. This decision-making process of SMG has been changed through the use of the internet: by the initial practice of e-decision making in SMG Online, such as Online Policy Forum, the condition of engaging citizens’ participation in policy-making process was improved, and the development of pre-existing e-decision making (OASIS) increased the influence of citizens in the policy-making processes of SMG.

Above all, e-decision making in SMG Online was implemented in response to national participatory e-government practices. Taking the form of e-decision making in SMG Online was not surprising, because the form of e-decision making was nationally promoted to engage citizens’ participation in policy-making processes since the early 2000s. However, the existing form of e-decision making (in SMG Online) did not achieve citizen-centric e-government practices. To improve earlier form of e-decision making, OASIS was developed, but the decision to develop OASIS was very brave. This is because OASIS practices collaboration (or partnership with citizens) in the policy-making process of a local government. The decision to use OASIS has improved accountability of SMG in making policies and providing services, and transparency of SMG performances. From the analysis of OASIS, it is clear that deep context shaped the building OASIS, however this would not have been possible without the strong leadership of the new Mayor in 2006; the development of OASIS introduced a new template for online decision-making by South Korean government agencies.

8.3 Cross-country Comparison of Local Levels of Participatory E-government Practices

This chapter analysed participatory e-government practices of the Melbourne City Council, and of the Seoul Metropolitan Government; the same analysis methods as in Chapter 7, the three dimensions of ‘social construction of technology’ were used to explore and compare the participatory e-government practices of the Melbourne Future Wiki (of the City of Melbourne Council) and the Chunmansangsan OASIS (of SMG). To explore the practices of participatory e-governments at local levels, a specific example of each practice was chosen: the Future Melbourne Wiki was established as a new form of online collaboration to develop the Future Melbourne Plan with citizens; it has only
one issue - the Future Melbourne Plan. By comparison, OASIS was established as a policy-making tool to enable citizen-centric development of public policies in Seoul City; the issue of developing an online Korean language course for mothers of multi-cultural families was chosen to explore the policy development processes in OASIS. The comparative results are discussed below.

Both Australia and South Korea had similarities in initiation, aim, and management (leadership) of these e-democracy developments. Both the Melbourne City Council and SMG began their participatory e-government practices by responding to policies from higher levels of governments. The Melbourne City Council designed the Future Melbourne Plan, including the wiki, because of the local planning scheme of the Victorian State Government. SMG also launched SMG Online because of the South Korean national strategy of e-government. Also, both had a similar aim: to use the internet to improve city life, and to become the “best” city in each country. The Future Melbourne Plan of Melbourne City Council aimed for Melbourne to be one of the best cities in the world. SMG also applied the internet in public management to develop Seoul as one of the most attractive cities in the world. In addition, both practices were fortunate to have strong local government management (or leadership): the Future Melbourne Wiki was successfully developed by the strong leadership of the Melbourne City Council, and OASIS in SMG Online was launched by the strong leadership of the Mayor.

However, the modes of organizing all these elements to create these two participatory e-government practices are very different. Firstly, the two cases used different tools to practice participatory e-government. The Future Melbourne Wiki used online consultation, but the OASIS used collaborative e-decision making. The wiki faithfully practiced online consultation: the City of Melbourne Council and the Melbourne community interacted equally, actively participated, and produced a nonlinear creative process in online consultation through the wiki. However, the decision-makers (elected councillors) of the Melbourne City Council were responsible for the final decision; it was not clear how the activities of citizens in the wiki influenced decisions on the Melbourne Plan 2009-2013. Nevertheless, the Future Melbourne Wiki showed the potential for ICTs to improve the typical form of Australian online consultation. The Melbourne City Council tried to apply the principles of collaboration for the entire policy-making process.

By contrast, OASIS produced collaborative e-decision making: citizens were responsible for the whole decision-making process from proposing ideas (agenda-setting) to monitoring the implementation of decisions. In the online and offline discussions and in the final decisions, the SMG
also worked together with citizens. In contrast to the Melbourne City Council, the inner-decision makers of SMG in the OASIS decision-making process were the Mayor (elected councillor) and topic relevant divisions (public employees): as addressed in relevant social groups of OASIS, the SMG was responsible for making decisions in the OASIS decision-making process, because the public administration is in the hands of SMG (not in the hands of Seoul City Assembly). This OASIS collaborative decision-making between SMG and citizens produced several benefits for the policy-making process, and importantly shared the decision-making power with citizens. The e-decision making as a template of participatory e-government is not surprising for the South Korean government departments and agencies. However, OASIS introduced the new notion of e-decision making (collaboration), and inspired all South Korean governments to improve their existing practices of participatory e-government.

Secondly, the two cases focused different groups of community on developing participatory e-government and allowed different roles of citizens online. One of the major considerations of developing the Future Melbourne Wiki was the socio-demographics of Melbourne City: the median age in Melbourne City was 28 and this figure significantly influenced the decision to use the Wiki. The Future Melbourne Wiki invited the Melbourne community to contribute to developing the Future Melbourne Plan in various ways such as editing, and posting comments, but the form of participation in the Wiki focused on engaging citizens in the consultation. At the same time, to broadly engage the participation of citizens, the Melbourne City Council used traditional communication methods, such as calling and visiting. Comparably, OASIS invited ordinary Seoul residents to participate in a whole range of SMG policy-making processes as decision-making partners. There was no detailed definition of ordinary Seoul residents, but, from two interviewees (see Section on interpretive flexibility), ordinary citizens included all people who lived in Seoul, but did not have a particular power or interest in SMG. Importantly, OASIS allowed Seoul citizens to organize a Citizen Committee that supported managing OASIS, and making decisions in all steps of OASIS decision-making, including selecting discussion topics and making final decisions. The supports from a Citizen Committee helped keep the OASIS discussion healthy and influenced citizen involvement in making decisions.

Through Chapter 7 and 8, two different levels of participatory e-government practices in Australia and in South Korea have been analysed and compared: Chapter 7 focused on the state and national levels of practices - GetInvolved of the Queensland State Government, and Epeople of South Korean National portal; Chapter 8 focused on the two local levels of practices - the Future Melbourne Wiki of the Melbourne City Council and OASIS of the SMG. The following Chapter turns the research focus
to the involvement of citizens in *national* policy-making, and compares e-civil participation in the two countries.
Chapter 9
Cross-country Comparison of E-civil Participation Practices
in Australia and in South Korea

This chapter analyses e-civil participation practices in Australia and in South Korea. The use of ICTs in civil society of both countries began with the offline-based Not-for-Profit Organizations (hereafter called NPOs), and then created new forms of NPOs such as online-based NPOs and online journalism. In addition, the use of ICTs in civil societies in both countries has engaged citizens’ interest and participation in politics. However, the concept and practice of e-civil participation are implemented differently in the two countries. This different implementation may have occurred because of the complex interaction between social-political elements and technologies, and they have been influenced by earlier forms of civil participation.

To explore the differences in e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea, this chapter compares how the meanings of e-democracy were implemented in two specific e-civil participation practices: GetUp! in Australia, and the 2008 Candlelight Protest against US Beef Imports in South Korea. Both of these practices aimed to increase political participation of citizens and to increase the influence of demands by citizens in political decision-making processes. However, the way to achieve these goals differed in the two cases: they engaged different groups of citizens, used different forms of technologies, and were differently imagined. These differences may result from the different interactions among all relevant elements, including social groups and technological frames, and thus demonstrate interpretive flexibility. This chapter explores and compares how these relevant elements interacted with each other in shaping each e-civil participation practice.

To explore the development of these e-civil participation practice cases in Australia and in South Korea, this Chapter applies social construction of technology and its three dimensions (relevant social groups, technological frame, and interpretive flexibility), as used to discuss four participatory e-government practices in the previous two chapters. The adoption of these three concepts of social construction of technology enables an understanding of how the relationships between the elements shape practices of e-civil participation in the two countries. The meaning of these three terms from the social construction of technology theory is not described again in this chapter, because they are already presented in Chapter 2 and Chapter 7. This chapter first analyses the Australian e-civil participation practice, GetUp!. It then explores the South Korean e-civil participation practice, the 2008 Candlelight Protest against US Beef Imports. Based on the analysis of each case, this chapter
Chapter 9 Cross-country Comparison of E-civil Participation Practices

compares them to analyse how each of these cases was shaped by, and comes to incorporate the specificities of, its particular environment.

9.1 GetUp! in Australia

This section focuses on analysing the Australian online-based grass-roots organization, GetUp!. GetUp! was initiated online, but, at the same time, it also takes an offline world to actualize its political influence. The GetUp! website is used to take various political activities online, such as petitioning and fundraising. GetUp! also organizes and holds offline events to discuss socio-political issues with citizens, and to engage participation of citizens in political activities. To fully understand how GetUp! was developed and is practiced as e-civil participation, the example of Our Rights was chosen. A campaign to introduce an Australian Bill of Rights has been a long-term important issue for GetUp!, since it was established in 2005. This issue has been the subject of several specific campaigns: a campaign to ‘Bring David Hicks Back Home’ focused on ensuring the human rights of Australian citizens detained in Guantanamo Bay; a campaign for ‘No Child Detention’ aimed to improve the inadequate rights of refugee children in detention. The Our Rights campaign focused on introducing a comprehensive Human Rights Act in Australia, and was one of the hottest issues in the first six months of 2009. Different to typical GetUp! campaigns (which are usually initiated and developed by awareness of GetUp! staff and citizens on a current socio-political challenge in Australia), this campaign began with an announcement by the Rudd Government, and developed to response to the Government announcement.

The Development of Our Rights Campaign

Our Rights was a GetUp! campaign to organize a national human rights consultation, and to submit the report on the public consultation to the Rudd Government in August 2009. It was initiated after an announcement by the Attorney-General of the Rudd Government on 10 December 2008, to open a public consultation on the issue of human rights for Australians. This announcement by the Rudd Government aimed to introduce an Australian Bill of Rights for the first time in Australian history. In line with the Government announcement, GetUp! focused on the Our Rights campaign in both online and offline worlds. To successfully gather ideas of citizens and submit the consultation report, GetUp! shared the information and activities of its Our Rights campaign with the National Human Rights Consultation Committee. The committee was responsible for organizing and managing the official
Chapter 9 Cross-country Comparison of E-civil Participation Practices

public consultation. There is no publication that shows why or how GetUp! related to the Committee, but their sharing information and activities was probably aimed at maximizing their common aim: since it was established, GetUp! has continually campaigned for a Bill of Rights in Australia, and the Committee needed to engage as many Australians as possible in public consultation to collect public ideas on a Human Rights Act.

The Our Rights campaign of GetUp! began with an online campaign on its website to advise of the statement by the Government and of the need for and importance of the Bill, and to provide e-mail addresses to collect ideas and opinions of ordinary Australians on Human Rights. Also, Getup! sent an e-mail to its members to inform them of the Government announcement, and to engage members’ participation in a campaign to tell the Government about their views about an Australian Human Rights Act. To develop the public consultation report to the Government, three offline public consultation events (public consultations around Australia, local discussions in local area throughout Australia, and a public hearing in Canberra) were organized by GetUp! and the Committee. GetUp! campaigned two of them (public consultations around Australia and a public hearing in Canberra) to support the Committee, and conducted local discussions to collect ideas of GetUp! members. All three offline events for these human rights public consultations were minimally advertised in mainstream media such as TV advertisements. Instead, GetUp! only used online resources: its website, and e-mail. These website and email information (an outline of expectations, time schedule, and places of consultation or local discussions) aimed to encourage citizens to register for these three kinds of offline events. When each of these offline events were finished, GetUp! continued its online campaign to collect the ideas and opinions of citizens on the issue, up until the day before the submission date.

The first kind of offline activity, public consultations, were held in capital and big cities throughout Australia for several months, and one of them was held in Canberra in March 2009. GetUp! sent an e-mail to Canberra members to let them know of the public consultation in Canberra, and to encourage them to participate in the Canberra consultation. The e-mail included the importance of the Human Rights Act for Australia, key issues that would be discussed at the Canberra consultation, information about the consultation (venue, time, and duration of consultation), and how to register. When members registered, GetUp! also sent a confirmation e-mail to them. The Canberra public consultation was attended by about 100 people (around 10 people sat at each roundtable) and the process took two hours. The consultation consisted of key presentations, and then public discussion. Key people such as the Chair of the National Human Rights Consultation Committee (Father Frank Brennan) presented the aim of the consultation and the expected results from the consultation, and
then started public discussion.

Most of the consultation time was spent by the consultation participants sharing ideas and opinions on a range of human rights issues. The consultation was organized to collect public answers on three key issues: which human rights should be protected and promoted; are these human rights currently sufficiently protected and promoted; how could Australia better protect and promote human rights. Members of each round-table group shared their experiences and views in response to these three issues. One member of each round-table became a secretary, and captured the ideas of all participants from that round-table on a paper. For instance, one round-table discussed the lack of human rights for immigrants and disabled people, which were raised by two people. The two discussion topic providers presented their experiences and suggested that these issues be discussed as the priorities in that round-table. Other people at that round-table agreed with them, and shared their own experiences about human rights for immigrants and disabled people. Then they discussed ways to improve the current challenges in these aspects of human rights; they agreed on the need to improve the education system to teach respect for human rights from a very early age. At the end of the consultation, the Committee and Getup! executives and everyone else heard the responses to the above three questions from each round-table, and collected all ideas suggested by consultation participants.

The second offline event, local discussions, was held on one day - 11 June 2009 - all around Australia. The information for local discussions was published on the GetUp! website and was sent to members about two week prior to the discussion date. This information focused on encouraging citizens’ participation in offline discussions in their locality, and on recruiting a host for their discussion. Active members registered to be the host of the local discussion, and the places for local discussions were shown in GetUp! website linked to Google maps. This made it easy for GetUp! members and non-members easily to find discussion places near them. The discussion followed the structure and the process provided by GetUp!. For instance, one of the Canberra local discussions was held in Campbell. There were five people including the host in the discussion, and the discussion took about two hours. The host was the chair of the discussion, provided the discussion issues from the discussion format of GetUp!, and led the discussion. The discussion began with participants sharing their stories of lack of human rights, and with identifying the current problems of Australian human rights environment. Based on the experiences of participants, the discussion focused on developing a Human Rights Act: participants chose discussion issues from a total of 24 issues on which to base their stories, conducted intensive discussion on the selected issues, and concluded with potential

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48 The address of discussion place was opened only to those registered to participate in the local discussion.
Chapter 9 Cross-country Comparison of E-civil Participation Practices

suggestions about what the Act should include, and how the Act should be developed. At the end of the local discussion, the host sent the results of the local discussion to GetUp!.

The third offline event, the National Human Rights Consultation public hearing, was held in Canberra for three days from 1st July to 3rd July 2009. To encourage citizen participation in the public hearing, GetUp! campaigned for the event in its website and sent e-mails to members several days before the public hearing. The online campaign and e-mail emphasized that this was the last chance for the voices of citizens to be heard on the issue, and explained how to register to attend the public hearing. During the three days of public hearings, there were three themes and a total of 20 sections such as ‘four hot-button issues’, ‘how does it look in the United Kingdom?’, and ‘the role of other protections for human rights’. In each section, various experts (academics, and politicians), social activists, and practitioners in the area of human rights presented and discussed; then Question and Answer between presenters and the public attendees was conducted to help understanding of citizens. At the end of the (offline) public hearing, all presenters and the public attendees had a comprehensive Question and Answer section to finally develop the consultation report.

As the result of e-mail submissions and the offline public consultations, about 35,000 submissions were made to the Committee. When the committee submitted the results of the public consultation to the Federal Government, both GetUp! and the Committee sent e-mails to Getup! members to inform them of the successful submission. In October 2009, the Federal Government recommended enacting a Human Rights Act in Australia. GetUp! informed members of this announcement by the Government through e-mail and the website. Then, in April, 2010 the Human Rights Framework was introduced by the Attorney-General, and two months later, the Human Rights Bill 2010 was introduced into Parliament. One of the Human Rights Action Plan items in the Framework was to work with Australian State and Territory Governments to develop the Plan: it included consultation with governments of states and territories, with NPOs, and with Australian people. One of the Australian State governments, the Victorian State Government, launched a review of the Charter of Human Rights in 2011. Getup! opened a new campaign targeted at the Victorian community, and sent e-mails to its members to engage their online participation by expressing their opinions through e-

49 Each day had its own theme: the first day theme was how are human rights and responsibilities presently protected and promoted in Australia? This theme focused on defining what are human rights, and who needs protection. In this theme, the four issues, including euthanasia and the right to die, abortion and the right to life, same sex marriage, and religious freedom in employment, were intensively discussed. The second day theme was: what difference would a Commonwealth Charter of Human Rights make? This theme focused on learning about the UK charter of human rights, and on implementing (and developing) an equivalent in the Australian environment. The third day theme was: How could we better protect human rights and promote responsibilities in Australia? This theme provided a chance to hear government perspectives and intentions for developing a Human Rights Act.
mail on enacting a Human Rights Act in Victoria by 10th June 2011. The development of the Charter is in the process of internal decision-making.

**Relevant Social Groups**

In the Our Rights campaign, there were three relevant social groups: the Rudd Government (including the National Human Rights Consultation Committee), the GetUp! organization, and GetUp! members. The first relevant social group, the Rudd Government, was partly involved in the process of the Our Rights campaign and public consultation: the Government initiated the opportunity for Getup! to campaign on Our Rights and to engage citizens’ participation in a formal Government public consultation. When Kevin Rudd became the Prime Minister of Australia in 2007, he committed his government to take steps to improve several key areas of disadvantage, including social, civil, and economic participation in order to promote respect for Australian human rights. The Rudd Government tried to improve fundamental Australian human rights: the Prime Minister apologized on behalf of the nation to all indigenous Australians (particularly stolen generation) for their past disadvantages, and the Rudd Government committed itself to make a justice framework for better and safer lives; the Government also made significant investments to improve housing, education health services for all Australians; and the Government amended the disability discrimination legislation to better enable people with disabilities to participate in Australian society and its economy. To achieve fundamental Australian human rights, the Government introduced the Human Rights Act in Australia, and in December 2008 announced public consultation to seek (and collect) views of Australians in the issue of human rights. The independent National Human Rights Consultation Committee was appointed to accomplish its consultation.

The National Human Rights Consultation Committee was responsible for collecting submissions from citizens, and for submitting the final results of the consultation to the Government. To maximize success of the public consultation on National Human Rights, the Committee organized two offline events including the national human rights public consultation, and the national human rights public hearing. These two offline events were advertised through the online campaign by GetUp!, Our Rights (in the GetUp! website). This initiative of GetUp! to advertise the two offline public consultations helped the Committee to effectively inform citizens of these events, and also encouraged the participation of citizens in the two public consultations. In this process, the Committee did not contribute to the online campaign, (Our Rights), but was actively involved in holding the public consultations and hearings to collect opinions and ideas of citizens. So, the Committee acted as
manager of the offline events to collect feedback from citizens on developing the Human Rights Act, but was not directly involved in the online campaign.

The second relevant social group was GetUp!. GetUp! has an organizational structure: there is a Chief Executive Officer, a Board of Directors, paid and volunteer staff, and members who join the organization. The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for all Getup! activities. The Board advises on funding, community profile, and strategic development. Paid and volunteer staff work on online and offline campaigns on socio-political issues (Vromen, 2008b). All GetUp! organizers including a Chief Executive Officer, Board members, and staff are not allowed to have any political preferences, because GetUp! aims to be a party political independent advocacy group. A founding director of GetUp!, Evan Thornley, had to resign his position in GetUp! when he took a seat for Labor in the Victorian Upper House in November 2006; one of the board members of GetUp!, Bill Shorten, also resigned his position in early 2006, because he went back to the Australian Labor Party as the State President of the Victorian Labor Party in December 2005. Deciding what campaigns to undertake is generally done by the above organizers of GetUp!, but there is no clear evidence to help understand either the inside process of campaign-issue making, or the methods of becoming members of the Board.

GetUp! is responsible for encouraging citizens to become GetUp! members. To do this, GetUp! provides the easiest and simplest way for citizens to join GetUp!: it did not require qualifications, and GetUp! provided an e-mail membership application form in the website. So any Australian who is interested in current socio-political issues can become a GetUp! member through registering his/her e-mail in the GetUp! website. These easy and simple forms for becoming a member have increased the number of members in a short time: GetUp! had about 15,000 members when it launched its first campaign in 2005, “Bring David Hicks Back Home”, and membership increased to a 174,000 in June 2007; the membership of GetUp! was more than 580,000 in 4th October 2011.

During the Our Rights campaign, GetUp! was involved in online and offline activities. When the Government announced its public consultation on human rights, GetUp! promptly decided to begin an online campaign to provide information about the need for, and the importance of, a Human Rights Act in the Australian environment, and to encourage citizens to submit their opinions online. At the same time, GetUp! e-mailed members to also provide that same information to the offline consultation and the public hearing organized by the Committee. These activities of GetUp! staff successfully led to participation by GetUp! members in the two offline events. GetUp! was also responsible for
organizing local discussions to collect submissions by GetUp! members. GetUp! organized independent offline events to discuss human rights in small local areas, and to collect many ideas and suggestions of GetUp! members. These independent local discussions were notified by GetUp! on the GetUp! website and by e-mails. Above all, GetUp! played an important role in informing and organizing the online campaign Our Rights, and in engaging citizens to participate in developing fundamental national human rights.

The last relevant social group is GetUp! members. In general, GetUp! is seen as a youth-led online social advocacy group (Coombs, 2009). However, GetUp! members are not all from the young generations. According to the results of Vromen’s survey (2008b)\(^{50}\), only a quarter of GetUp! members are under 34 years old, while 30% of GetUp! members belong to 35-49 age group, and 33% are 50-64. In the case of the Our Rights campaign, members of all age groups, from 20s to retired people, participated in the online campaign, and in offline consultations and public hearings. However, it was not clear who actually submitted online consultations and participated in the offline public consultation and hearing, because e-mail submissions and participation in the offline events did not provide personal information. Nevertheless, the age distribution of discussion participants in the local discussions seems to have reflected the above GetUp! membership ratios, the researcher participated in one of local discussions, and talked with other participants: in the Campbell discussion, three of the five participants were over 40, one was in the 30s and the other was in 20s.

Also, Vromen’s survey found that most GetUp! members are highly educated. Three quarters (76\%) of GetUp! members have a diploma or a bachelor or a postgraduate degree from university, and only 10\% had no post-school qualification. This demographic was not available for the national consultation and in the national public hearings. Whilst it may not be possible to generalize in the local discussion of Our Rights campaign, the Campbell discussion, all five participants had at least bachelor degrees.

In addition, the survey by Vromen showed that GetUp! members were experienced supporters of, or members of social or political organizations and had a strong preference for progressive political parties. Almost one-quarter (24\%) of GetUp! members joined one organization, and another 24\% were a member of two organizations. Around 30\% of GetUp! members were members of three or more organizations, while only 22\% had never been members of organizations (Vromen, 2008b, pp.

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\(^{50}\) Vromen conducted a survey of GetUp! members using the online survey tool Survey Monkey in September 2006 and she received 17,500 legitimate responses (Vromen, 2008b).
Furthermore, GetUp! members had clear identification with progressive political parties. Tables 9-1 shows that GetUp! members had a strong identification with the Australian Labor Party and the Australian Greens, but they had the least identification with the Liberal Party. In Vromen’s survey, no GetUp! members identified with the National Party.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party Identification</th>
<th>GetUp! members (%)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALP</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrats</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greens</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Party</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Party</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


This information about the political preferences of GetUp! members, and their experience of organizational membership, and in the political preferences could not be related to the participants’ characteristics in the Our Rights campaign. However, it is worth noting this general information about GetUp! members, because this feature of GetUp! members differs from the characteristics of participants of the 2008 candlelight protest against US beef imports in South Korea, which will be analysed in the next section.

In summary, there were three relevant social groups in the GetUp! campaign Our Rights: the Rudd Government, including the National Human Rights Consultation Committee; GetUp! as an organization; and GetUp! members. All of them contributed to introducing the Human Rights Act in the Parliament. However, the Rudd Government was only minimally related to the online campaign of GetUp!, Our Rights. The Rudd Government opened the public consultation on the issue, and finally introduced the Australian Human Rights Act Framework. According to the Government announcement, the National Human Rights Consultation Committee was responsible for collecting submissions on the issue by citizens, and for organizing the public consultation and the public hearing. GetUp! was responsible for organizing the Our Rights campaign; this campaign was initiated by the organizational decision-making processes of GetUp! in response to the announcement of the
Government. GetUp! created online membership of GetUp! to engage ordinary citizens to join GetUp! campaigns, and during the Our Rights campaign, GetUp! actively used the website and e-mails to campaign and to inform members of the issues. GetUp! also used the online and e-mail activities to encourage GetUp! members to submit their ideas online, and to participate in offline consultations. As well, GetUp! organized local discussions to collect opinions of members. GetUp! members were successfully mobilized to become major participants in the online campaign and in offline consultations, however many of them could be said to be educated, to be already interested in socio-political issues, and to have participated in many offline political activities.

Technological Frame

GetUp! built the notion and practice of ‘media activism’. Media activism is defined as encouraging active participation of citizens in public discussion and communication relating to political decision-making processes (Rodan & Balnaves, 2009). Participation in media activism includes joining the membership, taking various political actions (petitioning, campaigning, and participating in offline events), and discussing issues among members (McCaughey & Ayers, 2003; Rodan & Balnaves, 2009). These forms of active participation aim to make the demands of citizens influential in government decisions. This meaning and aim of media activism is implied in the aim of GetUp!: the two co-founders of GetUp! established this online-based socio-political advocacy group to grasp a new way of being citizens, as acting politically every day, week, month and year to make accountable and progressive the Australian Parliament (GetUp!, 2006, 2007).

GetUp! leverages full mileage from the internet to effectively make their actions become political events. GetUp!’s website is core to the network of members. Getup! invites citizens to become GetUp! members only online, and the online membership process is easy; the number of GetUp! members reached over 580,000 people in August 2011. This membership number of GetUp! is higher than the membership numbers of any of the major political parties: national membership of the ALP was approximately 45,000 in 2010 (Bracks et al., 2010). GetUp!’s website is also core to the financial support which comes only from citizens. GetUp! invites citizens to provide finance for various campaigns, both online and offline, but online financial supporting is a new and easy way for citizens

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51 Rodan & Balnaves borrowed the term of ‘media activism’ from Pateman (1970), but they developed the meaning of media activism (to apply to the internet-broadened society) through analysing and discussing the use of this term by Meikle (2002) and Cammaert (2007). This study uses the term and the meaning of media activism of Rodan & Balnaves (2009). For more information on the definition of media activism and the development of its meaning, refer to Rodan, D and Balnaves, M (2009). Democracy to Come: Active Forum as Indicator Suites for e-Participation and e-Governance.
Chapter 9 Cross-country Comparison of E-civil Participation Practices

to donate finance; GetUp! campaigns are run by support only from citizens. In addition, online campaigns and e-mail information is core to mobilizing members in political activities. These two methods encouraged people, particularly those who had never been involved in politics before, to participate in political activities (Coombs, 2009). For the Our Rights campaign, GetUp! used online and e-mail information to promote member awareness of the issues, and these two methods were significantly influential in mobilizing members to attend offline public consultations and hearings (Roden & Balnaves, 2009).

In addition, GetUp acts collaboratively with issue-relevant activist groups and not-for-profit organizations. This cooperation with issue-relevant advocacy groups was seen to legitimise and augment the campaigns. Its benefit has been seen from the early campaigns. For instance, the introduction of RU 486 in 2006 had influenced a changed policy to legalize this abortion pill in Australia. In this campaign, GetUp! formed a partnership with Reproductive Choice Australia, who specialized in the issue of RU 486. The coalition between Getup! and Reproductive Choice Australia increased the awareness of the issue to Australians, and the legitimacy of the policy changes. As a result, the RU 486 campaign is praised as one of the most successful GetUp! campaigns (Vromen, 2008b). Since then, the effectiveness of coalition has been shown through various campaigns. In one of the latest examples, the Our Rights campaign, GetUp! did not cooperate with advocacy groups or NPOs. Instead, GetUp! helped the National Human Rights Consultation Committee to increase the awareness of citizens about the need for a Human Rights Act, and to encourage citizen participation in online and offline events. To achieve this, the two groups played different roles, but Getup! helped the Committee to succeed in two offline events: Getup! acted as the campaign host to increase citizen awareness of the issue, and the Committee acted as the host of public consultation. Getup! mobilized citizens to participate in submitting consultations, and the Committee consulted with citizens gathered by Getup!. As a result, the public consultation on human rights act was successfully organized.

As well, Getup! applies mainstream media such as TV and newspapers to advertise GetUp! campaigns. Importantly, Getup! uses mainstream media to increase citizen participation in campaigns. In campaigning for Our Rights, Getup! engaged many members to participate in offline consultations and discussions without using mainstream media. But the use of mainstream media has often succeeded in more broadly raising citizen awareness of the issues and engaging participation in GetUp! activities, than use of the internet alone. For instance, “BRING DAVID HICKS HOME” was a very high profile campaign, in 2006 and 2007, to release an Australian citizen (David Hicks) from Guantanamo Bay. To achieve this aim, GetUp! sponsored multi-faceted campaigns including full page
newspaper advertisements in *The Australian*, and national and international media coverage. This use of mainstream media gathered 7,000 supporters, engaged 65,000 people to sign the petitions, and closed to 20,000 members wrote directly to the US government. Also, more than AU$180,000 was donated within 72 hours (GetUp, 2007, p. 9). Furthermore, this campaign was able to broaden the issue from that of David Hicks to the more general human rights issue of a fair trial for all Australian citizens.

GetUp! mobilizes both online and offline worlds for succeeding in its campaigns, but is coordinating across the boundaries of online and offline worlds in a very conventional manner. The online activities of GetUp! have been effectively co-ordinated with offline activities to achieve the goal of each campaign. Through the offline activities, the mobilization and the solidity of online networks have been strengthened. The Our Rights campaign was one of the most active campaigns of GetUp! in the first six-months of 2009 to engage Australian’s attention on the issue of Human Rights and to achieve Human Right Act. Our Rights began with online campaign and e-mail information to increase the awareness of GetUp! members on the issue, and to encourage them to participate in the offline public consultations. Then, the National Human Rights offline consultations were organized all around Australia in June and July 2009 to gather GeUp! members’ demands and opinions and to input the public consensus into the body of the Act. During the offline consultation, thousands of GetUp! members participated in a number of offline meetings throughout Australia and carried out overwhelming and intensive deliberations, discussions and consensus decision making with other offline consultation participants, and then delivered them to the government (GetUp! online campaign, 2009). GetUp’s conventional manner of coordinating between online and offline worlds increased public attention on the socio-political issues and effectively engaged the public to take political actions.

Although the GetUp! website has created a huge broad network and new important socio-political issue, Getup! has not brought collective deliberations into its website. As mentioned above, GetUp! uses its website to take actions, exemplified by raising funds and e-petitioning, and to organize offline events such as house meeting discussions and consultations. To take online socio-political actions, GetUp! largely focuses on the internet as working media: creating advertisements, political campaigns, and publishing interviews as well as creating broadcasting campaigns. However, the discussion and -collective identity - activities of GetUp! are always practiced offline. This feature clearly showed in the campaign of Our Rights. Online campaigns provided e-mail addresses for internet users to submit their ideas to the Government, but e-mail submissions did not include deliberations between internet
users. Instead, all discussions, consultations, and public hearings for Our Rights were held offline. For these distinctive activities between online and offline, the GetUp! website operated only as an online venue to circulate political information and to generate political activities rather than to create online forums, discussions or deliberation.

Technological Frame of GetUp! is that of media activism. This is implied in the aims of GetUp! to “engage citizen participation in political decision-making process and achieve accountable and progressive Australian Parliament” (GetUp!, 2006, 2007). For this goal, Getup! actively has used its website to mobilize members, to raise political finance, to inform on socio-political issues, and to increase awareness by citizens of those issues. GetUp! has also cooperated in campaigns with issue-relevant organizations to legitimize these campaigns. In addition, GetUp! has used TV and newspapers to increase citizen awareness of the campaign. Finally, Getup! has coordinated across the boundaries between online and offline in a conventional manner to help engage the participation of citizens in political activities. These practices of media activism in GetUp! has influenced the Australian progressive political culture: it increased the attention of citizens on socio-political issues and the political participation of citizens; it also influenced governments, although GetUp! activities are sometimes ignored by politicians. However, the GetUp! website is actively used to provide information and to support political activities to lead campaigns successfully, but is not used for online discussion or deliberation.

**Interpretive Flexibility**

GetUp! has applied ‘media activism’ as its preferred form of e-civil participation. The purposeful adoption of ICTs in Australian civil society is expected to increase citizen interest in socio-political issues and citizen participation in political decision-making processes, and to increase the voices of citizens in decision-making processes in the Australian Parliament. These expectations have the goal of improving accountability and progressive decision-making in the Australian Parliament. This goal of GetUp! is intended to deliberately change Australian social and political culture.

The adoption of media activism as the technological frame in Getup! has been praised nationally and internationally as the first successful bottom-up e-democracy practice in Australia (Macpherson, 2006; Vromen, 2008a; Coombs, 2009). Particularly, media activism in GetUp! is recognized for its encouragement of ordinary citizens to become political activists. GetUp! does not require its participants to have experience of involvement in social movements, or identities as activists, but just
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requires them to have concerns on current socio-political issues in the country (Vromen, 2008a). GetUp! is also recognized for its achievement of progressive and pure grass-root socio-political organization, because it does not allow support by (or preference to) particular political parties (Rodan & Balnaves, 2009).

In the example of Our Rights campaign, GetUp! maximized encouragement of citizen participation and citizen demands in developing the Human Rights Bill, through the effective use of online campaigns and e-mail information services, the response to the National Human Rights Consultation Committee, and conventional coordination between online and offline worlds. The broad invitation of GetUp! to its participants also maximized the participation of citizens in Our Rights activities; GetUp! highlighted “no need for any special knowledge” in its e-mails to encourage citizens to participate in public consultations and hearings on the issue of Human Rights (Rodan & Balnaves, 2009, p. 177). As a result of these GetUp! activities, the mobilization of citizens in participating in the human rights consultation was successfully practiced.

However, the relationship among activists in GetUp! to organize campaigns is conventional and centralized. The mode of organizing campaigns and participation in GetUp! remains the form of offline organizations (top-down form of management) (Vromen, 2008b). GetUp! members suggest and are consulted on campaigns, but decisions on which campaigns GetUp! will promote, and the tactics and strategies pursued, are made centrally. Because of this process, GetUp! centrally organizes the production of the information provided, and GetUp! members remain to a large extent information consumers. Both online campaign and offline activities begin with Getup! staff sending e-mails that indicate how members can participate in political activities. GetUp! members follow these suggestions. This campaign process was implemented in the Our Rights campaign. Getup! staff sent e-mails to members to inform them of the public consultation on the Human Rights, and to engage citizen participation in online submission and offline events. This working process of Getup! also shows its focus on movement-oriented campaign actions rather than on building a deliberative online political culture (Vromen, 2008b).

There is no clear information about how GetUp! plans to improve the decentralized mode of campaign organizing and deliberative political culture. These days, GetUp! actively uses Web 2.0 technologies, including youtube, facebook and twitter, but all of them are used to engage the participation of citizens in campaigning on socio-political issues rather than in sharing ideas and discussing important public issues online.
In summary, media activism as the technological frame in GetUp! was initiated to increase citizen participation in politics and to improve the decision-making process of Australian Parliament. These aims have been actualized as demonstrated by the national and international appraisals focused on engaging citizen participation in socio-political campaigns. In the example of Our Rights, the media activism of Getup! successfully increased the participation of citizens in submitting consultations and influenced on introduction of the Human Rights Bill in the Australian Parliament. However, Getup! maintains an offline form of management and a movement-oriented campaign style. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that these forms of media activism in GetUp! are not surprising in Australia. The conventional and centralized mode of organization evident in GetUp! has a long history in Australian civil society. GetUp!’s governance model is widely shared across the third sector, and is supported by well established laws and procedures. By this widely shared environment of Australian civil society, GetUp! grasps a new instrument (ICTs) to take political actions every day, week, month and year to make the Australian Parliament more progressive. So, the imagined identities of media activism in GetUp! is as an alternative form of existing NPOs.

9.2 The 2008 Candlelight Protest against US Beef Imports in South Korea

The focus in this section is to analyse the South Korean e-civil participation practice, the 2008 Candlelight Protest against US Beef Imports. The 2008 candlelight protest is a good example of citizen demands influencing the Government through political activities in both online and offline worlds. This protest was initiated from online activities, including searching for and sharing information, and discussing the issue of the Korea-US Beef Protocol and of Mad Cow Disease, and these online activities led to offline candlelight protests throughout South Korea and around the world. These online and offline activities were soon integrated; this integration encouraged citizens’ voluntary participation in the street protest, and created a new form of e-civil participation. To fully understand how to develop and to practice e-civil participation using online activities, the 2008 candlelight protest is also analysed using the three concepts of social construction of technology: relevant social groups, technological frame, and interpretive flexibility. The 2008 candlelight protest against US beef imports in South Korea focused on a single issue to organize online and offline political activities; in this, it is quite different from the GetUp! case analysed earlier. Both the motivation and development of the 2008 candlelight protest were described in Chapter 6. Therefore, this section does not explore again the development of the 2008 candlelight protest, but begins with relevant social groups.
Relevant Social Groups

In the process of the 2008 candlelight protest against US beef imports, there were two relevant social groups: the Lee Government, and the candlelight protest participants. The first relevant social group, the Lee Government, caused the candlelight protest to begin, and severely exploded the anger of citizen during the candlelight rallies, and responded to disperse the protest. This candlelight protest began with the announcement of the Korea-US Beef Protocol by the Lee Government in April 2008. A particular point of the Protocol that allows US beef imports without any restriction increased the worries of citizens. These worries were presented online in the form of visits and posts to the website of the Blue House, and to the blog of President Lee Myung-Bak. The quick expansion of citizen worries about US beef imports required a response by the Government, but the Government avoided responding and was silent on the key demands of citizens. Instead, the Government insisted on the safety of US beef. This inadequate response of the Lee Government increased the anger of citizens, and led to the candlelight protest. The Government tried to use physical force to dismiss the protest, but this inappropriate response by government increased (and expanded) the online and offline mobilization of citizens. The Lee Government finally confessed their inappropriate measures to resolve the situation, and officially announced the re-consideration of the Protocol. This statement led to the voluntary dispersion of participants in the 2008 candlelight protest. However, the Lee Government was not directly involved in the online protest of the 2008 candlelight movement. For this, the Lee Government can be called the issue provider, but it remains separate from the online activities.

The second relevant social group, the candlelight protest participants, can be said to consist of all kinds of South Korean individuals, including school and college students, housewives, white-collar and blue-collar workers, and people of various age groups. There was no particular target group in the 2008 candlelight protests. Individual participants of various social classes were already engaged by the fact that the issues of US beef imports and Mad Cow Disease are closely related to everyday food, and citizens from all kinds of social groups could not understand why the Government made this irrational decision. Individuals voluntarily participated in either online activities or offline rallies, or in both. Their actions took various forms such as online discussions, online petitions, online donations, spreading flash mobs, passing internet ribbons, supporting offline rallies, attending offline rallies, informing of rally situation by online posts, social networking systems (hereafter called SNS) and mobiles, and broadcasting offline rallies.
The major participants were teenagers, particularly high school students. In Chapter 6, Table 6-3 shows the age distribution of major online communities that led the candlelight rallies, and teenagers dominated these online communities. As well, the offline rallies were initiated by an online suggestion by a high-school girl. Participation of teenagers in offline rallies were mainly the revolt of voluntary individual decisions: Yun and Chang (2008) surveyed about 800 school students who participated in offline rallies, and 71.3% teenagers (512 respondents) said that they voluntarily participated in the protest, followed by 18% who were influenced by peer group encouragement (129 respondents).

The major reasons for teenagers’ participation in online and offline political actions were the dissatisfaction with the government’s policies, and the fear of Mad Cow Disease. This issue of beef imports and Mad Cow Disease is directly related to their food and everyday life. These factors that engaged teenagers are likely to be the same reasons why adult participants contributed to the 2008 candlelight rallies (see Table 9-2 below, and Table 9-3 next page). So, it can be said that teenagers in the 2008 candlelight protest were not too immature to consider socio-political issues. They had the same interest as adults, and deeply understood the political and social issues in similar ways to the older generations.

### Table 9-2. Reasons for the Participating in Candlelight Rally: Teenagers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Number (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfaction with Lee government’s policies</td>
<td>329 (45.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fears about Mad Cow Disease</td>
<td>327 (45.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of personal curiosity</td>
<td>26 (3.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposition to education policy</td>
<td>24 (3.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposition to canal project</td>
<td>8 (1.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answers</td>
<td>4 (0.6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9-3. Reasons for the Participating in Candlelight Rally: General participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Renegotiation of US beef imports</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anger at the government and the President</td>
<td>29.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposition to other policies of the government</td>
<td>23.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impeachment of the President</td>
<td>17.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling sorry for other rally participants</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curiosity</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


So the relevant social groups in the 2008 candlelight protest against US beef imports can be categorized as firstly the Lee Government, and secondly the protest participants. The first relevant social group, the Lee Government, was directly involved in the start and the end of this protest: it triggered the 2008 candlelight protest, and put an end to the protest. But the Government stands outside the online activities. The second relevant social group, the 2008 protest participants, took online activities and organized offline protests. Various demographic groups, including students, workers, housewives, young generations and old people, made up the 2008 protest participants and contributed to developing the protest voluntarily and through diverse online and offline actions. Importantly, teenagers were a major group of participants and used the internet to search for and discuss information on Mad Cow Disease, thereby developing an understanding of this issue like adults.

**Technological Frame**

Technological Frame in the 2008 candlelight protest against US beef imports is a combination of cyberactivism and indi-media. Cyberactivism defines online-based socio-political movement activism, where disparate groups of netizens congregate to form online networks of individual citizens to voice their demands and their resistance to government decisions (Chang & Lee, 2006). Cyberactivism requires a collective identity of netizens; the collective identity is achieved by the exchange of ideas and opinions of individual online users, including sharing definitions of issues and discussing these issues online. The collective identity involves online-based collective socio-political actions such as hacking or website attacking, fundraising, and passing out internet ribbons. In so doing, cyberactivism requires citizen participation in both online discussion, and in other political activities that directly apply ICTs (McCaughey & Micheal, 2003; Chang & Lee, 2006).
Cyberactivism in the 2008 candlelight protest was practiced through three different modes of activities. Firstly, the 2008 candlelight protest was initiated by searching for online information about the Protocol and the influence of Mad Cow Disease. For the core participants in the 2008 candlelight protest (teenagers), the internet was a major tool to get this information. Yun and Chang (2008) conducted a survey of 800 young students who participated in candlelight rallies during the month of June 2008. The result, shown in Figure 9-1, shows that, for teenagers, internet websites (51%) were the most widely used source of information on US beef issues and candlelight rallies.

Figure 9-1. Means of Acquiring Information on US Beef Issues and Candlelight Rallies


Secondly, mobile phones became an important tool in the exchange of information and expansion of consensus to organize candlelight rallies. Voice calls and text messages were used as ‘instrumental motivation’ (Yun & Chang, 2008). For young people, text messages were a very useful tool to share information with their friends and family members and provided social motivation for rally attendance (Kim, 2006; Yun & Chang, 2008). According to a survey by SKT (one of the major mobile service providers in South Korea), approximately 12 billion text messages were sent and received everyday in June 2008 (Yun, 2008). This number of texting each day during the 2008 protests is much higher than the usual number of everyday texting in 2007. According to a survey by Statistics Korea (2007), South Koreans usually sent and received an average of only 60.1 text messages each day. KTF, which is another popular mobile service provider (along with SKT), reported the use of text messaging over the 15 days from 19 May to 3 June was 30% more than normal (Yun, 2008; Kang, 2009; Song, 2009).
Chapter 9 Cross-country Comparison of E-civil Participation Practices

Thirdly, non-political internet communities carried out a crucial role in organizing both online and offline protests. There are three major examples of this. First is the non-political online community 82Cook (www.82cook.com) which was established long before the 2008 candlelight protest to share living notes, housekeeping notes, and special recipes. During the 2008 demonstration, 82Cook members organized a group called “Assembly of People who Love Korea” (Narasarang Moim) and delivered supplies of drinking water and snacks, and sent their supporting messages to the offline rally participants. Another non-political online community, MLB Park (www.mlbpark.com), an online community of people interested in Major League Baseball, raised around 13 million Korean won online between 19th May and 23rd May, 2008 to provide supplies for the offline rally participants. Yeophokjin (http://cafe.daum.net/truepicture) was a teenagers’ online community, previously focused on sharing information about celebrities, horror stories, jokes and comedy, and reviews of novel books. Yeophokjin actively participated in the 2008 candlelight protests in various ways such as fundraising, participation in the rallies, and providing supplies to the rally participants. Members raised more than 22 million Korean won from 4th June to 21st June, 2008. The funds were used to supply food, drinking water and other relief supplies to the rally participants. Yeophokjin members brought handmade flags when they participated in the rallies. Those online communities, especially ‘82Cook’, politicized new communities usually seen as politically disengaged, during the candlelight protest period. They encouraged members to participate in the rally along with sharing information about US beef imports and Mad Cow Disease, and criticizing the decision of the government.

Another part of the technological frame in the 2008 candlelight protest against US beef imports is indi-media. Indi-media seeks new forms of information production and distribution, and of citizen participation in political arena. Indi-media has been actively practiced using Web 2.0 technologies including blogs, video sharing and SNS (Chadwick, 2006). This is because Web 2.0 technologies have helped citizens to produce political information, and to share with others various political accounts provided by other online users. Indi-media using Web 2.0 technologies expects to improve the role of citizens beyond ‘consuming’ political information to active production of citizen-authored political media, thereby strengthening the role of citizens in socio-political decision-making processes, and increasing the influence of citizens in the political arena.

During the candlelight rallies, rally participants used their ICT gadgets such as mobile phones, laptops, digital cameras, and wireless internet access to video-record and to broadcast the rally online to inform non-participants about the offline candlelight rallies. For example, a User Creative Contents website, Afreeca TV (www.afreeca.com) played a distinctive role in the rally process by enabling
citizens to emerge as key reporters of the demonstrations, as they learned and shared information using the internet. It was a primary channel for broadcasting audiovisual information about the rally. Table 9-4 shows that around 440 video clips about an offline rally were posted and broadcasted on 25th May, but the number of video clips increased to more than 2,500 in Afreeca when the rally reached its peak, on 2nd June 2008. The number of ‘Broadcasting Jockeys’ also increased from 98 to 425 to broadcast material about the offline rallies in real time (that is, during the progress of offline rallies).

Table 9-4. Statistics of Live Broadcasting of Offline Rallies in Afreeca

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number of Daily Broadcasts</th>
<th>Number of Daily Viewers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25 May</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>240,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 June</td>
<td>2,501</td>
<td>1,270,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 June</td>
<td>1,357</td>
<td>560,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 June</td>
<td>1,357</td>
<td>700,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Song, K. J. (2009). Network Age and Socio-Political Implication of Civil Movement. p. 220)

This online live broadcasting of the rallies facilitated borderless integration between online and offline worlds. The live broadcasts made a substantial contribution in bringing thousands of citizens out to the street to become offline rally participants, who then took their offline experience back to the online environment and took further political actions online. This feedback between online and offline worlds mobilized citizens in both ways (Song, 2009). The most powerful event of effective feedback between online and offline worlds was to paralyse the website Cheong-Wa-Dae (www.president.go.kr) on 10th June 2008. One of the offline rally participants asked these netizens who were watching internet live broadcast to visit the Cheong-Wa-Dae website. Netizens took action immediately, and around 160,000 netizens visited the website in a minute, so that the website was paralysed.

This simultaneous interaction between online and offline worlds in the 2008 candlelight protest quickly enabled the protest to become global. Koreans who lived in other countries read online news about the domestic situation, shared that information with Koreans around the world, and discussed the issue through the internet. They supported candlelight rally participants in South Korea by online fundraising, and also by organizing offline candlelight rallies in their living country of residence such as America, France, German, Australia, New Zealand and Russia.
Technological Frame in the 2008 candlelight protest against US beef imports is that of cyberactivism and indi-media. The discussion of the development of e-civil participation in Chapter 5 showed that the frame of cyberactivism in South Korean civil society had been practiced since early 2000, and had been developing since that date. However, there is no clear reason why and how indi-media were actively used during the 2008 protest, but it may be because the communication infrastructure had been built, and this population was at the forefront of internet use. The popular use of ICTs did successfully engage citizens to be information providers, and to make a broad worldwide network that integrated the online and offline world. This use of ICTs produced the huge political mobilization of the public and reinforced both online and offline participation (Song, 2009, p. 224). In addition, the practice of cyberactivism and indi-media broadcasting introduced a new way to influence the Government, and achieved the government’s promise to consider re-negotiating the Protocol.

**Interpretive Flexibility**

The 2008 candlelight protest against US beef imports employed cyberactivism and indi-media as forms of e-civil participation. As discussed in Chapter 5, since the experience of NGO Korea in the 2000 Assembly election, cyberactivism had developed and had become a major form of e-civil participation practice in South Korea. However, prior cyberactivism in South Korea did not rely on citizens voluntarily, horizontally, and spontaneously filling online spaces; the existing civil activists and the civil organizations took responsibility for mobilizing citizens. For example, the experience of NGO Korea in 2000 showed that there were important factors that shaped the practice of e-civil participation in South Korea and can be seen to have influenced the success of this form of e-civil participation, but it was not obvious that cyberactivism would win over competing forms of e-civil participation. Indi-media had been also practiced since an online newspaper, Ohmynews (http://www.ohmynews.com), was launched in 1999 (Chadwick, 2006). Ohmynews has introduced a citizen-originated online newspaper with a slogan “every citizen a reporter”, and has influenced change in mainstream South Korean journalism (Chadwick, 2006, p. 303). However, indi-media in Ohmynews focused on publishing an online newspaper rather than on producing a range form of information.

Compared with the previous e-civil participation practices in South Korea, the 2008 candlelight protests actively used new practices - cyberactivism and indi-media - as explored in previous section Technological Frame. This practice of cyberactivism and indi-media in the 2008 protests was expected to improve the culture of deliberative discussion and to encourage participation by citizens.
in political activities. These practices aimed to engage citizens in influencing and changing (re-negotiating) the decision of the Government.

The adoption of cyberactivism and indi-media in the 2008 protest have been praised nationally and internationally for engaging young generations to participate in political activities. The adoption and integration of the two in the 2008 protest actualized the suggestion of Chadwick (2007) that ICTs can increase the political participation of young generations. The adoption of cyberactivism and indi-media in the 2008 protest has also been applauded because they introduced a new form of e-democracy practice in South Korea (Lee 2008; Shin, 2008). The 2008 candlelight protest is recognized for its equalization of participants in politics by engaging previously disengaged citizens. The 2008 candlelight protests demonstrated to Koreans, and to the world, the potential of the online public sphere where the free and voluntary sharing of information and discussion of issues can improve the South Korean political culture (Lee, 2008).

During the 2008 candlelight protest, the adoption of cyberactivism and indi-media were characterized and shaped by the following four features. Firstly, the 2008 candlelight protest had no centrally organized structure. There was no central, formal governance structure, and no leadership positions. The 2008 candlelight protest participants emerged spontaneously as a result of a cloud of online activity that did not originate from a single centre. Individuals freely posted their ideas and opinions online, and voluntarily shared information and made networks to take political actions. The formation of networks, and the structural positions in networks, were determined through a series of interactions among various participants.

Secondly, the 2008 candlelight protest was significantly pre-configured through the building of an imagined e-public sphere. Many portals and websites including Naver (http://www.naver.com) and DC Insides (http://www.dcinsides.com) played a role in promoting online discussion, but Daum Agora (http://agora.media.daum.net), a petition board of South Korea’s most popular portal website, was very active in constituting a public sphere for getting and discussing information related to the US Beef Protocol and Mad Cow Disease. This can be seen in the analysis of online media in Figure 9-2.
In Daum Agora, around 139,000 postings in April 2008 and 480,000 postings in May were related to the US beef imports and the 2008 Candlelight Protest. This number of postings increased hugely to more than one million in June. The number of postings related to the US beef imports and the 2008 Candlelight Protest in June was a 702.1% increase compared to the posting number in April. The number of Page Views, was also much higher, from around 80 million views in the first week of April to approximately 500 million views in the first week of June 2008. The quality of discussion, including rational content, seriousness and healthiness, remained at a high level (Chang, 2008). The active online discussion in Daum Agora engaged citizens into online and offline political actions and encouraged an online discussion culture in South Korea.

Together with the two factors - the imagining of voluntary participation and the configuring of an online public sphere - a third characteristic of the 2008 candlelight protest was the influence of the sources of cyberactivism and indi-media as the main form of e-civil participation in South Korea, and
this practice as a peaceful protest movement. Fostering a peaceful protest environment had begun since 2000, but the 2008 candlelight protest reached new heights by promoting itself as a most enjoyable movement and protest; indeed, it called itself a ‘candlelight festival’. This peaceful and enjoyable form of protest was maintained to the end; when the government and the National Policy Agency labelled the 2008 candlelight rallies as illegal demonstrations, the 2008 candlelight participants avoided using physical implements and confronting the police. Instead, the protest participants actively staged online demonstrations such as passing out internet ribbons or candlelight pictures (Figure 9-3), and staging cyber attacks on certain websites.

Figure 9-3. An Example of Online Candlelight Protest


In addition, the networking between individuals using ICTs - particularly Web 2.0 communication tools - introduced new forms of indi-media, particularly, street journalism or one-person media. The active use of the new communication tools made a strong simultaneous interaction between the online and offline worlds, and that use processed integration between online and offline worlds (Song, 2008). Rally participants brought their personal ICT gadgets and broadcast online the realities of offline rallies. People who did not or could not participate in offline rallies watched online broadcasts and took part in online activities. The flourishing of indi-media could be seen as a response to the major conservative media such as Chosun Ilbo (Daily Newspaper), Jungang Ilbo and Donga Ilbo which distorted citizens’ perspective and demands on US beef issues and always represented the government perspective (Kang, 2009). In particular, direct reporting (and broadcasting) of citizens about violence linked online and offline activities together in the process of the 2008 candlelight protests. Online broadcasting about the police force attempts to stop all rallies engaged many citizens in online protests such as paralysing a website of the Blue House, and were influential in mobilizing citizens both in offline rallies and in online activities at the same time.
The 2008 candlelight participants imagined themselves as peaceful protest citizens. The participants in the 2008 candlelight protest against US beef imports are being invited to seize public space, to protest online and offline against a government that excludes them and forecloses their voices being heard. The motivation of the 2008 candlelight protests was to show citizens’ anger to the Government because that Government did not consider opinions of citizens and made a wrong decision. The anger of citizens was represented as peaceful and enjoyable, but erupted in the form of offline rallies and of online actions, such as attacking a website and passing ribbons, during the 2008 candlelight protests.

The 2008 candlelight protest against US beef imports were formulated by the integration of cyberactivism and indi-media. The adoption of this technological frame in the 2008 candlelight protest is expected to improve democratic political culture in South Korea. This expectation is practiced by making horizontal networks of participants, creating online public sphere, and organizing peaceful and enjoyable protests. Also, the technological frame in the 2008 candlelight protests integrated the boundaries between online and offline worlds of political activities. However, the 2008 candlelight protest was imagined precisely as a ‘protest’ and the protest was imagined as ‘civil eruption’. This way of imagining e-civil participation in the 2008 candlelight protest follows a long-term form of South Korean civil movements. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the 2008 candlelight protest is also imagining and configuring e-civil participation as being engaged in acts of strong self-expression, as pioneers of a new ethic of individualistic participation that breaks with a tradition where community order is valued above individual self-expression.

9.3 Cross-country Comparison of E-civil Participation Practices between Australia and South Korea

This chapter analysed e-civil participation practices of Australian GetUp! and of the 2008 candlelight protest against US beef imports in South Korea. To analyse the two e-civil participation practices, the three key dimensions of social construction of technology - relevant social groups, technological frame, and interpretive flexibility - were applied. To deeply explore the developments and the practices of e-civil participation in Australia, the Our Rights campaign of GetUp! was chosen. This campaign was the hottest issue in Australia during the first six months of 2009, and was a successful example of citizens’ demands influencing a final decision of government (introducing the National Human Rights Act). For South Korea, the 2008 candlelight protest against US beef imports was chosen as both the research case and the particular example. This is because the 2008 candlelight protest was representative of the practice of e-civil participation in South Korea, and, at the same time,
focused on a single issue (US beef imports including the Protocol and Mad Cow Disease). The comparative results are presented below.

The meaning and shape of e-civil participation in both countries had similar elements; in both countries, e-civil participation is done as online activism. Online activism was used in both countries, because ICTs introduced new mechanisms for citizen to participate in policy-making processes. From the analysis of the two cases in the two countries in this chapter, it can be seen that both cases went beyond the consumption of political information. GetUp! campaigns are based on citizens’ interests and suggestions, and the 2008 protest began when citizens searched for information and visited the websites of the US beef protocol and Mad Cow Disease. In both cases, the online world went beyond political information production and consumption. GetUp! website enabled the political actions such as petitions and fundraising, and the 2008 Candlelight Protest practiced online political demonstrations and the making of an online public sphere. In addition, both cases engaged political participation outside of formal elections, and promoted the notion of life politics (Giddens, 1990 cited in Cho, 2009, p. 289). Neither case focused on voting for representatives, but emphasized making public life better through constant interaction of citizens with government, and thus holding government accountable between elections.

However, the way of organizing e-civil participation practices was different in the two cases, with three important issues to point out. First, in each case there were a different mode of organizing participation that constructed relationships between citizens, issues, objects (e-petitions, funds, and candles), and the public sphere. GetUp! was modelled on the governance structure of many of the organizations that constitute Australia’s large not-for-profit civil society sector. This governance model of community-based organizations was established by laws and procedures, and has long been implemented in Australian civil society (Kang & Dugdale, 2010). GetUp! also joins many other advocacy not-for-profits in its fundraising: GetUp! does not accept financial support from government or from political parties, but raises all of its operating funds only from its members. Campaigns and activities of GetUp! are organized predominantly by e-mail, along with a high profile of mainstream media. This is because access to broadband has been slow and expensive in Australia: Australia is a geographically large country; the establishment of broadband infrastructure has been partly privatized; and Telstra (the biggest tele-communication company in Australia) has been the dominant provider of communication services. For these reasons, GetUp! inevitably chose e-mail and is still using e-mail to receive suggestions, opinions or feedback from online populations. The e-mail dominant activities of GetUp! retard the public sphere that shares and discusses political issues between citizens in the
offline world.

On the other hand, the 2008 Candlelight Protest created networks and a horizontal mode of organization. The reasons for individual networked civil movements in 2008 were based on South Korea’s well-built communication infrastructure. South Korea has rapidly broadbanded its communication infrastructure and its population has rapidly accessed and used the information communication technologies. This fast uptake of ICTs by South Koreans encouraged many-to-many communication networks. Participants used all kinds of online networks and interactions to generate identification with the issue, to create an online public sphere, to mobilize participation in the candlelight rallies, and to maintain rallies for a considerable time span and expand their movement to various places. This form of organizing in the 2008 candlelight protest showed the role of ICTs in distributing the power by making possible a horizontal network of individuals. This 2008 candlelight protest supports an argument made by Chadwick (2007) that the internet in the political arena is able to act as a force ‘uniting non-hierarchical social movements’.

Second, coordination across the boundaries of online and offline worlds was differently coordinated in the two cases. GetUp! coordinated boundaries of online and offline worlds with conventions to engage many people to get involved in political participations. GetUp! does use a traditional social movement structure of organizing around specific ‘campaigns’, and it has built a distinctive way of coordinating between online and offline worlds to effectively campaign on issues. Once a decision is made to adopt and campaign on a particular issue, online action is used to efficiently build the campaign, raise resources, and engage participants in offline actions. Thereby online and offline worlds in GetUp! campaigns are coordinated in an orderly way and sequentially linked.

The 2008 candlelight protest integration of boundaries between online and offline worlds contrasts with this. Rather than a campaign plan where the online and offline are sequentially linked, the protests were enacted simultaneously in online and offline worlds. This coordination was possible due to the rapid uptake of new communication infrastructure and tools in South Korea. For street journalism, this was in part a response to the major conservative media which always represented the government perspective. Citizens used online media to stage an online boycott of these conventional media, and called on citizens to report or broadcast the real situation by themselves. Those situations and actions led the candlelight protest to be livelier in both the online and offline worlds, and to bring the online and offline political actions closer. An online viewer could instantly view scenes from a street protest, and many were encouraged to respond immediately to the protest action.
The third important difference in the practices of e-civil participation between the two countries related to who participated in the political actions, and how they identified as active citizens. Various tactics of GetUp! reinforced the solidarity of existing political participation. A number of GetUp! members had previously joined social or political organizations, and had political preferences. They imagined themselves as already having their right to make demands of their political representatives, and their voices to be heard by their representatives. GetUp! encouraged these people to be more actively politicised to act in a pre-existing Australian political space, which is imagined as well ordered and as accountable by active citizens (Kang & Dugdale, 2010). But, at the same time, GetUp!’s tactics provided lower barriers, with a less arduous and informal basis for citizens who have not previously participated in political activities, to be involved in both online and offline political participation (Vromen, 2008a; Coombs, 2009).

In contrast to GetUp!, the 2008 candlelight protests encouraged politically apathetic groups, mainly teenagers (and housewives), to participate in political arena. Participants in the 2008 candlelight protests did not tend to have previous political participation, but imagined themselves as having specific concerns about the US beef imports and Mad Cow Disease, and as pushing their demands strongly to the Government. The identification of political participation in the 2008 candlelight rallies was imagined as peaceful protest. A resistance form of political participation had been shaped under the Authoritarian regime to express demands for human rights through physical conflict with the government in the street; the form of street protest was well known as tear gas, petrol bomb, and steel pipes. The invention of ICTs facilitated the emergence of a new form, and a place for protests, and of active citizenship to achieve their demands, on the government. The use of ICTs in the 2008 candlelight protests introduced peaceful and enjoyable offline protest movements, and various online political protests such as broadcasting offline rallies, passing ribbons, and attacking websites.

To conclude the commonly noted capability of ICTs to engage public participation in politics was demonstrated by GetUp! and by the 2008 candlelight protest against US beef imports. However, the way that citizen-based online political participation was practiced differed in three significant dimensions. Firstly, GetUp! had an institutional structure of organizing participation, but the 2008 candlelight protest evolved a network of loosely connected individuals. Secondly, GetUp! coordinated the boundary between online and offline world in the conventional mode of planning and coordination of online and offline activities. However, the 2008 candlelight protest enacted both online and offline worlds simultaneously, compressing the space. Lastly, GetUp! acted to progressively improve political apathy, and largely to engage more people more regularly in politics. But the people
engaging with GetUp! more regularly tended to be from the same strata of society as the already politically engaged. On the other hand, the 2008 candlelight protest formed a new kind of resistance movement and engaged large numbers of politically apathetic groups including teenagers and housewives. These differences between GetUp! and the 2008 Candlelight Protest were shaped by a combination of the development of technology, and the historical progress of civil society in Australia and in South Korea.
Chapter 10
Conclusions and Implications

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have become essential instruments in the political arena to facilitate procedures for decision-making and to increase the political participation of citizens. The use of ICTs is generally expected to improve the deficits of contemporary democratic and political systems. However, the application of ICTs has not always been the same in all political arenas, possibly because of different environments including the political system, the establishment of technology infrastructure, and aspects of the development of civil society. Recent e-democracy research has focused on the relationship between ICTs and socio-political contexts in shaping practices of e-democracy in particular environments (Yun & Chang, 2007; Edelmann & Parycek, 2011; Jensen, 2011). This current research trend of e-democracy aims to find how various factors build different e-democracy practices, and to set the standards for generally applying e-democracy practices. Nevertheless, this trend of e-democracy studies has not been deeply (or holistically) investigated. For this reason, this study focuses on a range of practices of e-democracy in different backgrounds.

This study compares e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea. The cross-country-comparison of e-democracy practices in this study divides its focus between the two major actors in the political arena (governments and citizens), and its analysis between the two forms of e-democracy practices (participatory e-government and e-civil participation). The comparison of participatory e-government practices in the two countries also divides between the two different levels of governments: state and national levels of participatory e-government practices, and local levels of participatory e-government practices. The results of the comparison of e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea are presented, analysed and discussed in Chapters 7, 8 and 9. This chapter summarises and integrates the major discussions from the multiple-case study of e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea in response to the research questions outlined in Chapter 1, and to the theoretical implication presented in Chapter 2. It then discusses the possible generalizations of the case study and of the key findings. The chapter concludes with directions for future research.

10.1 Implication of the Multiple-Case Study

This study uses a multiple-case study to compare e-democracy practices between Australia and South Korea in order to illuminate the relationship between ICTs and socio-political contexts in shaping different e-democracy practices. This study seeks to answer the four research questions:
Chapter 10 Conclusion and Implications

1. How do ICTs affect contemporary democracy?
2. What is e-democracy in Australia and in South Korea?
3. What are the similarities and differences of e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea?
4. What has shaped the specialized national practices of e-democracy in Australia and in South Korea?

The contemporary democratic political system, which is broadly known as representative democracy, has revealed three political deficits: a lack of qualifications of public representatives, a lack of political interest by the public, and a lack of public participation (Barber, 1984; Elster, 1986; Wolff, 1998). These political deficits have reduced the political legitimacy of representative democracy as a dominant political system in contemporary times. To solve these political deficits of representative democracy, some scholars (Barber, 1984; Offe, 1985; Dahl, 1989) point to ‘political participation’ as the most important political theme, and focus on how political participation can be increased. The expectation of engaging more participation of citizens has increased each time that a new communication tool— including newspapers and television – was applied in the political arena. In particular, the rapid development of ICTs has created high expectation for improvements in these three political deficits, because of positive features of ICTs, such as openness, cost effectiveness, and unlimited participation across space and time (Schmidtke, 1998; Gibson & Ward, 2000).

The development of ICTs has been widely expected to increase political participation of citizens. The features of ICTs may help citizens to understand political issues more fully, to lead citizens to make deeper discourses, and to increase the participation of citizens in decision-making processes (Lee, 2004; Noveck, 2004; Chadwick, 2006; Yoon, 2008). The features of ICTs can engage citizens to participate in various political activities such as monitoring government performance, raising funds or organizing social movements (Chadwick, 2006; Kean, 2009). The features of ICTs may also improve the relationship between political institutions and citizens, and the political position of citizens in decision-making processes (Pitkin, 2004; Lee, 2004; Chadwick, 2006; Cho, 2009; Bruns & Swift, 2010). This expectation of using ICTs to increase participation of citizens in political arenas has been supported through continual exploration of various e-democracy practices (Clift, 2004b; Bishop & Anderson, 2004; Ma, 2007; Ward, Lusoli & Gibson, 2007; Flew and Wilson, 2008; Song, 2008; Bruns & Swift, 2010). This study is based on this positive perspective of using ICTs in democracy; it does not argue about whether ICTs lead to strengthening or weakening of democracy, but it does argue that practices of e-democracy need to be fostered to promote the benefits to democracy. In particular, this
study focuses on the use of ICTs in engaging (and increasing) participation of citizens in a range of political decision-making processes, particularly e-participation and e-engagement.

This study explores how the use of ICTs can engage participation of citizens in decision-making processes, with a particular focus on practices in Australia and in South Korea. Both Australia and South Korea actively use ICTs in the political arena to engage citizens in political participation, and to solve current political challenges. However, ICTs are used differently in Australia and in South Korea to practice e-democracy. To analyse different e-democracy practices between the two countries, this study explored ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions of developing e-democracy practices rather than focusing on judging ‘what’ is the best e-democracy practice, or on evaluating effectiveness of e-democracy practices. This is because e-democracy practices in both countries have already become relatively mature.

To analyse how and why e-democracy is differently practiced in the two countries, this study divides into the two notions of e-democracy: participatory e-government (government-centric citizen engagement) and e-civil participation (citizen-centric voluntary participation); participatory e-government practices divides into two different levels (state and national levels, and local levels). Governments and citizens are both dominant players in applying ICTs for political (or administrative) activities in decision-making processes in Australia and in South Korea. Particularly, governments of various political institutions, including political parties, politicians and Premiers, have enthusiastically employed ICTs to engage citizens’ participation in policy-making processes in the two countries.

To achieve the aim of this study, six research cases were chosen: GetInvolved of the Queensland State Government, Future Melbourne Wiki of the Melbourne City Council, and GetUp! in Australia; Epeople of the South Korean National Integrated Participation Online, SMG Online of the Seoul Metropolitan Government, and the 2008 candlelight protest against US beef imports in South Korea. Four of them - GetInvolved, Future Melbourne Wiki, Epeople and SMG Online - are participatory e-government practices; two of the four (GetInvolved in Australia and Epeople in South Korea) are high levels of participatory e-government practices; and two others (Future Melbourne Wiki in Australia, and SMG Online in South Korea) are local levels of participatory e-government practices. The last two of the six research cases - GetUp!, and the 2008 candlelight protest against US beef imports - are e-civil participation practices. All six research cases are well known e-democracy practices in their countries, and also internationally. All of them have shown the effectiveness and influence of ICTs in engaging participation by citizens in decision-making processes in their respective countries.
10.2 Implication of Social Construction of Technology

The theoretical approach to studying e-democracy has long focused on defining a relationship between technology and socio-political change. The long-running arguments in the e-democracy theoretically are framed by the division between technological determinism and social determinism. More recently the theoretical frame of social construction of technology is being brought into e-democracy research. Technological determinism has been a popular approach for understanding the relationship between technology and socio-political changes, and social determinism has always been against technological determinism. For this reason, theoretical approaches in e-democracy research and various models of political participation in e-democracy research (Section 2.4) have tended to go independently and to be against another.

However, as some scholars (Castells, 2000; Stanley & Ward, 2004; Norris, 2005; Chadwick, 2006) insist, e-democracy practice is shaped by complex relationships between technology and socio-political elements in a particular national context. These recent claims of e-democracy scholars lead the theoretical perspective of exploring e-democracy practices to value the importance of both technology and socio-political elements, and this has increased the value of social construction of technology to e-democracy research. Nevertheless, e-democracy research has not yet been approached by drawing explicitly on social construction of technology. Given that, this study tried to go beyond the current theoretical challenges of e-democracy research, and focused on identifying the complex relationships between technology and socio-political contexts in empirical situation.

To explore and compare e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea, this study applies social construction of technology. This approach avoids the dominant importance of either technology or socio-political context, but believes the particular form of e-democracy practice in particular environments is created by the complex relationship between technology and the socio-political context. Three concepts from social construction of technology - interpretive flexibility, relevant social groups, and technological frame (Bijker, 1992, pp. 75-76) - are adopted to analyse each research case and to compare the e-democracy practices of the two countries within three categorizes (high level government participatory e-government; local level government participatory e-government; and e-civil participation). ‘Interpretive flexibility’ is a methodological direction to demonstrate how different groups attribute different meanings to technological artefacts, and how the artefacts become differently designed as a consequence. It is based on the idea that the nature of artefacts does not determine outcome, but is variously influenced by cultural, social and political
context (Pinch & Bijker, 1987).

‘Relevant social groups’ is a key concept for understanding the inter-relationship between socio-political and technological changes (Bijker, 1992). To account for technological development, social construction of technology looks to the meanings of artefacts acquired by particular social groups, and these groups are called ‘relevant social groups’. These relevant social groups are important, because their gradual interactions lead a particular interpretation of an artefact as it becomes successfully stabilized. In this process, the number of flexible interpretations of an artefact decrease, and a particular meaning becomes dominant (Bijker, 1995). ‘Relevant social groups’ can be identified as various actors including direct users of a technology; technology developers; all the groups who are involved in negotiating the use of a technology and its meaning; all the groups that influence other groups or are influenced by the other groups; and all groups that are co-constructed along with the artefact and its meanings (Bijker, 1995).

‘Technological frame’ is a theoretical concept that helps interpret technical artefacts and the relevant social groups effectively, and to better understand the interactions within and among relevant social groups (Bijker, 1995). It is the comprehensive understanding of complex links between above factors in a particular society, including shared meanings of artefacts, definitions of problems, various means of solving problems, ways of learning and innovating, and preferred modes of acting and interacting. The technological frame positively and negatively structures the interactions among the actors of relevant social groups in the social development of artefacts or technology by providing favoured pathways (Bijker, 1995). The technological frame is located between actors, and is built up through interpretations and interactions with artefacts. The existing technological frame guides the interactions of relevant social groups without being determining. (Bijker, 1995).

Social construction of technology and its three key dimensions provided a valuable theoretical frame for achieving the aim of this study, which compares e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea. In particular, this study deeply focuses on finding not only what are the differences in e-democracy practices in the two countries, but also how e-democracy practices in the two countries are differently defined and developed, and how the differences in the two countries have been influenced (or shaped), rather than on simply analysing the linear flows to make differences. This is because both Australia and South Korea are countries that enthusiastically practice e-democracy; both use ICTs to engage political participation of citizens in decision-making processes. However, the practice of e-democracy in Australia differs from that in South Korea, and the differences have been created by the
complex interaction between various relevant social groups and technological frames in a particular socio-political context. Social construction of technology provides a valuable and effective theoretical direction to investigate these interactions and, as a result, the variations in how e-democracy is practiced in Australia and in South Korea were fully analysed.

10.3 Comparative Discussion of E-democracy Practices in Australia and in South Korea

As presented in Section 10.1, this study chose six research cases from the three sections (state and national levels of participatory e-government practices, local levels of participatory e-government practices, and e-civil participation practices) to discuss and compare e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea. These six research cases, categorized by the three sections, are analysed by the three dimensions of social construction of technologies: interpretive flexibility, relevant social groups, and technological frame. The findings are discussed below.

10.3.1 Comparative Discussion of the State and National Levels of Participatory E-government Practices

GetInvolved (the Queensland State Government) and Epeople (South Korean National portal) are explored and compared. Both were initiated, designed, and practiced by the leadership of State or National Government (Premier Beattie and his Government in Queensland, and President Roh and his Government in South Korea) to increase participation by citizens in government decision-making processes, and to solve a pre-existing political challenge. Both cases did increase the participation of citizens in policy-making processes, and did improve both the transparency of policy-making processes and the accountability of government in implementing policies.

However, these similarities of the two cases were evident in different ways. The first difference was that the two cases used different tools for practicing participatory e-government. GetInvolved (the Australian Queensland State Government) used online consultation to improve the existing political environment of the Queensland Government in several ways, including improving the transparency of Government decision-making, and engaging more participation by citizens in policy-making processes. On the other hand, Epeople (South Korea) integrated all levels of government systems and implemented e-decision-making in order to achieve national objectives (the achievement of a fully democratic and participatory political system in South Korea).
The second difference was the influence of ICTs in existing mechanisms of governments, policy-making and citizen-government interaction. GetInvolved online consultation focused on improving the relationship between the Queensland State Government and Queensland citizens through the active involvement of the Queensland Government in using ICTs. The Queensland State Government departments and agencies already provided information and invited citizens to offer their ideas on issues. This form of offline consultation is well routinized in the Australia political arena, and provided a template for GetInvolved. By contrast, Epeople focused on encouraging citizens to participate in a whole range of decision-making processes in order to remove any carryover from the earlier undemocratic political environment in South Korea. To achieve this aim, Epeople applied e-decision making; Epeople e-decision making could be implemented by the active use of ICTs.

The third difference between GetInvolved and Epeople was the meaning of participatory e-government. GetInvolved was formulated in a form similar to offline consultation: government departments and agencies are responsible for providing information and for making final decisions; citizens are invited to contribute through consultation. So the online consultation in GetInvolved was shaped by long-term legal requirements for public consultation in Australia, but online made this consultation much earlier for citizens and for government departments and agencies. On the other hand, Epeople e-decision-making was newly created by integrating the systems of all levels of South Korean government departments and agencies: the integrated system within Epeople allows government departments and agencies to cooperate to deal with all aspects of public administration; it encourages citizens to actively participate in online decision-making processes. This e-decision-making in Epeople was shaped by the relationship between the new political promises and the popular use of ICTs in early 2000s.

The last difference was the pathway for improving the challenges of current participatory e-government practices. The different existing practices (shaped by the influence of socio-political contexts) between the two higher levels of participatory e-government provide a different perspective from which to consider the challenges, and lead in different directions for improving the current practices. Major challenges in GetInvolved remained the top-down consultation form, so that the number of participants has been gradually reduced. The Department of Communications attributed these challenges to technological limitations, and was considering applying Web 2.0 technologies to again increase the participation of citizens. By contrast, an important problem in Epeople was the low number of citizens who participate. The ACRC attributed this problem to the un-preferred image of a government portal. To solve the current challenges in Epeople, the ACRC linked Epeople to online...
discussions in popular portal websites.

These results from analysing the State and National levels of participatory e-government practices can support the two e-democracy definitions. The practices of GetInvolved and Epeople both share Clift’s definition of e-democracy (2004b) which “uses ICTs to help sustain and adapt representative democratic governance”. Both cases apply ICTs not to change a political system, but to improve the current representative political systems. This point could also (but partly) support an e-democracy definition by Koichiro Matsuura (2003), which is that it “aims to increase public trust in government and to improve relationship between government and citizens”. In addition, both cases would support the E-democracy in Organization of Kim’s four e-democracy categories (2006), because both are developed and practiced by the strong leadership of each government departments and political leaders. This point supports the Supplier Orientation Model of political participation in e-democracy that engages political participation of citizens by active responsibility of governments (OECD, 2003; Clift, 2004a, 2004b; INVOLVE, 2005; Dutton & Peltu, 2007).

Different to common supports of the two cases, some aspects of GetInvolved (including government responsibility to provide information and to receive citizen feedback) and some aspects of Epeople (such as allowing participation of citizens in setting agenda and in discussing issues, and making final decisions reflected by citizen opinions) support respectively to the Information Provision Model of e-democracy and the Interactive Model of e-democracy from Kim’s categories. These aspects of Epeople could also support the notion of deliberation (Habermas, 1996) of three participatory dimensions presented in Section 2.3.3, but have not fully supported the deliberation ideals, because Epeople has not shown those aspects of deliberation which negotiates to make agreements between governments and citizens, or clarifies disagreements between them (Pitkin, 2004; Lee, 2004; Cho; 2009; Östling, 2011).

10.3.2 Comparative Discussion of Local Levels of Participatory E-government Practices

The Future Melbourne Wiki (Melbourne City Council in Australia) and Chunmansangsang OASIS (Seoul Metropolitan Government in South Korea) were explored to understand the meaning and implementation of participatory e-government at local levels. Both cases were developed with strong management and leadership of local governments in response to policies from higher levels of governments: Melbourne City Council developed the Future Melbourne Plan according to the local
planning scheme of the Victorian State Government, and used a wiki technology to effectively develop the Plan; SMG launched SMG Online by responding to the e-government strategy of the National Government, and the new Mayor in 2006 created a new online participation website, OASIS, to improve existing SMG e-government practices. In addition, both local governments applied ICTs to practice collaboration with citizens in decision-making processes, and purposely used ICTs to create an image of being one of the best and the most liveable cities in the world.

However, these two local-level practices of participatory e-government were differently shaped by different influences. Firstly, the forms of participatory e-government practised in the Future Melbourne Wiki and OASIS differed. The Future Melbourne Wiki adapted online consultation: Melbourne City Council members and the Melbourne community actively interacted and created nonlinear content in the wiki consultation, but the final decision was made by the inner-decision makers of Melbourne City Council. The use of online consultation is not surprising in the Australian context, but the wiki introduced new possibilities of ICTs to develop existing forms of online consultation. On the other hand, OASIS adapted collaborative e-decision making: SMG and Seoul citizens worked together from setting the agenda to making final decisions. E-decision making is a typical form of participatory e-government in South Korea, but OASIS added the concept of collaboration into decision-making processes, and introduced a new form of e-decision making.

Secondly, the two cases differed in the target group of the community that used ICTs in government decision-making processes, and in the role of online participants in online decision-making processes. The City of Melbourne Council aimed to engage all Melbourne citizens in policy-making processes through the use of ICTs, but importantly considered the demographic factor of the City of Melbourne when choosing the wiki: the average age of Melbourne City residents was mid-20s; when the Council was considering new directions for the Future Melbourne Plan, ICTs were natural tools for that age-group of people to use. The decision to use the wiki as the consultation tool allowed the Melbourne community to participate in various ways in the consultation including editing, sharing, and discussing. This Future Melbourne Wiki was influenced by the interaction between the routinized consultation form in Australia, and the demographic characteristics of Melbourne City residents. On the other hand, OASIS invited ordinary Seoul residents who lived in Seoul and did not have any stakes in SMG to participate in decision-making as a policy-making partner of SMG, so citizens contributed in a whole range of decision-making processes. Particularly, OASIS allowed citizens to organize a Citizen Committee to support some tasks for both the creation and innovation team and the issue-relevant divisions of SMG, these included keeping the OASIS discussion healthy, and
contributing to decision-making in the OASIS decision-making processes. The typical form of e-decision making in South Korea influenced SMG to maintain e-decision making as a communication template, but to develop a better form of e-decision making. The new form of e-decision-making (collaborative e-decision making) allowed citizens to participate widely (and variously) in decision-making processes.

These results from the two local practices of participatory e-government show that the Future Melbourne Wiki and OASIS fulfil the e-democracy definition of the UK Hansard Society (2003). The UK Hansard Society raises the important element of e-democracy connecting among people, as well as between citizens and governments. Both of these local cases focus on engaging the participation of citizens in discussion with other citizens, as well as with council and government staff. Also, the two local cases are strongly related to one or two dimensions of the three participatory dimensions: deliberation, collaboration, and monitory participation. The Future Melbourne Wiki could implement deliberation (Pitkin, 2004; Lee, 2004; Cho, 2009) although Melbourne City Council presented the use of the wiki to apply ‘collaboration’ in the policy-making processes. This is because the wiki is actively used to engage the participation of citizens in discussion and negotiation of the Plan draft, so as to make rational and mutual agreements. On the other hand, OASIS could connect to collaboration (Noveck, 2004), and (partly) monitory participation (Kean, 2009). The aspect of OASIS that engaged the participation of citizens in a whole range of decision-making processes connects to collaboration. Also, some aspects of OASIS (the agenda-suggesting from citizens, the continual participation and influence of citizens in OASIS decision-making processes, and providing working processes of final decisions) meet the concept of monitory participation presented by Kean (continual involvement by citizens to prevent improper behaviour of decision-makers in the decision-making process).

In addition, results from the two local-level cases partly support the effectiveness of local level practices of e-democracy suggested by Gronlund (2002) and Philipsborn (2005) (cited in Backhouse, 2007). As general practices of e-democracy at local levels, both in Australia and in South Korea, do not fully meet the effectiveness criteria for e-democracy practices (addressed in Chapter 5), both the Future Melbourne Wiki and OASIS have limitations: it is not clear how much the public demands collected through the Future Melbourne Wiki influenced the final policy; only a small number of ideas have been actualized as policies and business of SMG through the OASIS decision-making processes. On the other hand, some aspects of the two cases - such as engaging a number of citizens in participation online, and actively interacting among citizens, and between citizens and governments - connect to the effectiveness criteria of e-democracy practice at local levels.
10.3.3 Comparative Discussion of E-civil Participation Practices

Two e-civil participation cases, GetUp! in Australia and the 2008 candlelight protest against US beef imports in South Korea, were discussed to understand how the meaning and implementation of e-civil participation are shaped by the interaction between ICTs and their specific socio-political contexts. Both cases went beyond the traditional role of citizens and the typical culture of civil society: citizens in both cases were not passive political information consumers, but active political information finders (sometimes becoming further information providers). The online world in both cases was a place to take various political activities rather than just a tool to find or share political information. Both cases enlarged the timing of political activities from election time to everyday life: in both cases, the political actions did not focus on voting for their representatives, but focused on taking political action about socio-political issue which affect the lives of citizens.

However, the way of practicing e-civil participation differed between Australia and South Korea. Firstly, the form of e-civil participation between GetUp! and the 2008 candlelight protest differed. GetUp! had a governance structure to organize citizens’ participation in campaigns. GetUp! used e-mail and mainstream media to effectively organize participation by citizens in campaigns. The governance structure of Australian NPOs was established by law, and has a history of implementation in Australian civil society. This well-formulated form of governance structure influenced the design and form of citizen political participation online. In addition, the slow internet access and expensive cost of using broadband in Australia (caused by a geographically large country, a part-privatization of broadband infrastructure, and the dominance of tele-communication service by Telstra) maintained the dominance of email and main stream media in GetUp! campaigns. On the other hand, the 2008 candlelight protest showed voluntary participation by networked individuals and a horizontal relationship among participants. This form of e-civil participation in the 2008 candlelight protest was influenced by the popular use of ICTs in South Korean society. The rapid broad-banded infrastructure of communication technologies in South Korean society, together with the active use of various ICT gadgets, and online communities by netizens, created a new form of citizen participation in the South Korean political environment.

Secondly, the coordination of the boundary across the online and offline worlds differed between Australia and South Korea. GetUp! coordinated the boundary across the online and offline worlds in a conventional manner, and used a traditional form of social movement. GetUp! used online and offline worlds distinctively to achieve the success of their campaigns: GetUp! used online to raise issues, to
increase awareness of the public on a particular issue, and to build campaigns; these online activities provided resources to help organize offline activities. This coordination across the boundaries of online and offline world by GetUp! was influenced by the slowness and expensiveness of using ICTs in Australia. In contrast, the 2008 candlelight protest integrated online protests and offline rallies. Offline rallies and online protests were enacted simultaneously, because the fast uptake of using ICTs in South Korea allowed citizens to use them to produce co-presence and in various ways. Offline rally participants brought their mobiles gadgets and broadcast the situation of lively offline protests; online users watched video clips uploaded by offline rally participants and straight away enacted online protests such as visiting government websites and passing ribbons and online candles.

Thirdly, the identification of citizenship was different in the two cases. GetUp! reinforced the existing political participation. Many GetUp! members were already members of one or more social or political organizations, and had clear political preferences. So, the members in GetUp! were people who were already politicized people in the well-ordered and accountable Australian political environment. Online tactics of GetUp! helped them to more actively participate in the political arena. At the same time, the online activities of Getup! provided lower barriers to engage new people who had never participated in politically activities. By contrast, the 2008 candlelight protest engaged the participation of political apathetic groups (teenagers and housewives), because the issue (US beef imports possibly carrying Mad Cow Disease) was directly related to their daily lives, and because teenagers were the most active ICT users in South Korea. But the 2008 candlelight protest imagined itself as resistance to the exclusion of public opinions before the policy was decided. Despite the imagination of resistance in the 2008 candlelight protests, the identification of resistance in the 2008 candlelight protests was totally different from the previous identification of resistance: the 2008 candlelight protests avoided physical conflicts with governments, but created peaceful and enjoyable forms of resistance. Public anger at the South Korean government decision remained influential in the resistance, but the popular use of ICTs in South Korea built a new form of protest; in the both online and offline worlds.

Both GetUp! and the 2008 candlelight protest against US beef imports connect to the perspective of the influence of ICTs in emerging networked society (Castells, 2000; Chadwick, 2006; Yun & Chang, 2007). These scholars believe that the development of ICTs has increased ownership by citizens to participate in the political arena, and influences the creation of new mechanisms for socio-political movements. Both cases directly meet the belief of these scholars: GetUp! used online to make networks, to campaign on particular political issues, and to facilitate political activities (such as
fundraising and petitioning); the 2008 candlelight protest was developed by networked-individuals, focused on a particular issue (the Korean-US beef Protocol and Mad Cow Disease), and introduced new forms of citizen participation including online public sphere, online activism, and indi-media. The introduction of an online public sphere and its active use in the 2008 candlelight protest also connects to some aspects of deliberation and public sphere which discusses political issues with diverse individuals (Habermas, 1996), but the 2008 candlelight protest did not show those aspects of deliberation which negotiate to make agreement between government and citizens.

The discussion results show an increase of voluntary political participation by citizens, as well as the creation of networks between citizens, and the collective public power of individual citizens online (Rheingold, 1991; Boncheck, 1997; Hague and Uhm, 2003; Chadwick, 2006; Edelmann & Parycek, 2011). Also, the discussion results of the two cases show the increased participation of citizens and the greater attention by citizens to public issues (Negroponte, 1995; Dertouzos, 1997). At the same time, the analysis of GetUp! supports the perspectives of Norris (2001) and Jensen (2011): that online citizen participation tends to be by well-educated people and pre-existing political participants, who shift their political activities from offline to online political arenas.

10.4 Generalization of Case Study Approach and Discussion

This study used the case study approach to understand the meaning of e-democracy in a particular environment, and the various relationships between the technology and socio-political contexts in different countries. The recognition of different e-democracy practices in a particular socio-political environment has recently become an important subject in e-democracy studies by some scholars (Castells, 2000; Clift, 2004; Gibson et al., 2005, 2008; Yun & Chang, 2007). This recognition has led e-democracy research to investigate the complex relationship between technologies and socio-political contexts. As current e-democracy research requires the identification of core factors that shape e-democracy practices, this case study provides a good exemplar for understanding significant concepts and contingencies of e-democracy research and practice in particular environments.

To achieve the aim of this study, social construction of technology was applied: it contributes to the theoretical capability to analyse the relationship between technology and socio-political contexts in shaping e-democracy practices in a particular environment. The results of this study applied social construction of technology to provide the flexible perspectives that interrelate among all factors that
influence or shape e-democracy practices. In particular, the outcomes of the study applied social construction of technology to overcome an assumption of deterministic perspectives (mainly technological determinism) which inevitably lead to improved democracy, and is still a major perspective of current e-democracy studies (Edelmann & Parycek, 2011). The social construction of technology approach does not deny the importance of ICTs (as themselves), but provides a new way to identify the meaning and form of technology in a given situation. This visible value of social construction of technology presented in this study may attract other e-democracy scholars to take up this approach.

This study used a multiple-case approach to study e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea in order to minimize the lack of generalizability of a solitary case study. This multiple-case study categorized the two perspectives of e-democracy practices: participatory e-government, and e-civil participation; the participatory e-government practices also divide to the two different levels of participatory e-government practices (state and national levels, and local levels). This multiple-case comparison in this study provides a comprehensive understanding of e-democracy practices, including aims, developments, and challenges, both in Australia and in South Korea. Also, the multiple-case study used in this study allows deep comparisons of e-democracy practices between Australia and South Korea. The outcomes of this study contribute to an understanding of various concepts of e-democracy and of different practices of e-democracy in response to the complex relationship between the development of technology infrastructure, the distribution of technologies, the pre-existing political environment, including the political system and relationship between citizens and political institutions, and the development of civil society.

Furthermore, the findings and discussions of this multiple-case study present a new research direction for overcoming existing challenges in e-democracy research. This study shows the significant influence of social, cultural, and political differences and their complex relationship with technology in shaping e-democracy practices; the importance of both technology and national contexts has been only recently recognized, and e-democracy research has not previously (and fully) investigated these complex relationships between technology and socio-political factors. In addition, this study provides a greater experimentation in e-democracy research for both scholars and practitioners in the two countries explored in this study and in other countries, including both developed and developing countries. For e-democracy scholars, the findings and discussions in this study may provide guidelines for how they can effectively analyse current e-democracy practices. The outcomes of this study may also provide e-democracy scholars with further ideas for exploring other factors that influence the
shaping of e-democracy practices. For e-democracy practitioners, including administration and civil organizations (including individual activists), the findings and discussions of this study can provide significant lessons to help them find a suitable form of e-democracy in their particular environment, and to develop existing e-democracy practices. It is hoped that the cross-country comparison presented in this study will encourage e-democracy practitioners in the two countries to experiment with new forms of e-democracy practice. Therefore, the outcomes of this study provide valuable guidelines for e-democracy scholars and practitioners to consider when planning their future e-democracy research and practices.

10.5 Research Limitations

Despite the many significant outcomes of the study, this study reveals several limitations in research methodology. The study clearly reveals an important limitation in data collection as mentioned on page 99. The data for exploring the two e-civil participation cases was collected mainly by documentation, because of unexpected difficulties conducting interviews. In addition, the study uses only qualitative analysis to understand and to compare different forms of e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea. It would be worthwhile for future research to investigate quantitatively whether the pattern of differences found in this research project between e-democracy in South Korea and Australia holds, and whether it is sustained over time. To support its qualitative analysis and discussion, the study uses quantitative data from existing documentation such as national and international survey reports, but the supportive-quantitative data had limitations, such as when it came to discovering perspectives on e-democracy practices such as citizens’ opinions on each research case. Also, the study focuses on comparing the e-democracy practices of only two developed countries (Australia and South Korea). Furthermore, though the research cases are selected to examine both top-down and bottom-up perspectives of e-democracy practices, 3 research cases in each country and only 2 government-centric research cases in each country to represent the top-down perspective may not be enough to generalize about the e-democracy practices of a nation.

10.6 Directions for Future Research

This study identifies a theoretical approach - social construction of technology - to compare e-democracy practices (including participatory e-government and e-civil participation practices) in Australia and South Korea based on a qualitative analysis. The theoretical approach identified in this
study might be applicable for other e-democracy practices initiated either by political parties or by other (internal and external) political bodies which use ICTs to increase political interest of public and to increase the political participation of citizens. In addition, future research might further explore the efficiency of e-democracy practices by measuring the perspectives of the public, and by using both statistical and qualitative analysis. Future research also needs to investigate further (or additional) social, political, and cultural factors that might enable better understanding of the diverse meanings of e-democracy in different contexts, to uncover further influences that shape e-democracy practices, and to strengthen the adoption of social construction of technology approach in studies of e-democracy.

This study demonstrates the importance of socio-political contexts, and of their interaction with technology, to shape particular e-democracy practices in Australia and in South Korea. The further studies might be needed to discover additional factors in social, political and cultural contexts, and to analyse deep interaction between technology and national contexts to develop e-democracy research and practices in each country. In addition, further studies might compare a range of countries having both similar environments and differing national backgrounds to gain a wider understanding of e-democracy in a particular environment, and to gain a better understanding of the relationship between technology and socio-political factors. Such studies have the potential to contribute further to both the theoretical and practical knowledge about e-democracy.


Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee.


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APPENDICES
Appendix 4-1.

Information Form for interviewees

Title: A Comparative Study of E-democracy Practices in Australia and in South Korea: Top-down and Bottom-up Cross-country Practices

This research hopes to explore 6 case studies of e-democracy in Australia and in South Korea. The researcher will explore the websites, and conduct interviews with key people involved in the following websites: GetInvolved supported by Queensland government, Future Melbourne organized by Melbourne city council, Epeople launched by the Korean Ministry of Public Administration and Security, Forum.Seoul managed by Seoul city government, GetUp! that the Australian online political community, and Daum Agora that played a major role in the Korean light vigil movement against the U.S. beef imports. All cases are well known as e-democracy practices in each country and in the world. The research cases have been chosen to reflect national trends of using ICTs in politics.

Participants will undertake interviews which will be audio-recorded. The interviews will focus on participants’ involvement in GetInvolved, Future Melbourne, Epeople, Forum.Seoul, and GetUp! Questions will be about why they think involvement in these cases is important, what it has achieved, what the limitations and possible improvements are. The interviews will be conducted at the convenience of participants. The interviews will be taken at the participants’ office or at a preferred place. The interviews will last no more than one hour. In addition, participants are entirely free to discontinue participation at any time or to decline to answer particular questions.
Confidentiality

The material provided by participants will not be accessed by other researchers. If secretarial assistance is employed for transcription, the material provided by participants will be assigned code numbers or pseudonyms to assure confidentiality. All IT equipment that the researcher uses for collecting and analysing data will be password protected and stored under lock and key. The final results will be held according to the University of Canberra policy for data retention.

Ethics Committee Clearance

This research project has been approved by the Committee for Ethics in Human Research of the University of Canberra.

Queries and Concerns

If you have any enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact me;

Hye-jung (Binni), Kang
Doctoral Candidate
Faculty of Business and Government
E-mail: h.kang@student.canberra.edu.au
Appendix 4-2.
An informed Consent Form

Project Title

A Comparative Study of E-democracy Practices in Australia and in South Korea: Top-down and Bottom-up Cross - Country Practices

Consent Statement

I have read and understood the information about the research. I am not aware of any condition that would prevent my participation, and I agree to participate in this project. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about my participation in the research. All questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

Name…………………………………. Signature……………………………………
Date …………………………………

A summary of the research report can be forwarded to you when published. If you would like to receive a copy of the report, please include your mailing address below.

Name……………………………………
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Appendix 4-3.
Interview Issues

1. Demographic issues

Position
Major task and involvement with e-democracy initiatives

* do not ask more than presented demographic issues

2. General issues of using website

2-1 General information of websites such as number of access or log-in, famous content
2-2 The role of website to engage citizens’ participation
2-3 Plans and challenges of using and improving website focus on engaging citizens’ participation

3. Specific issues of e-democracy practices

3-1 Understanding of e-democracy practices
3-2 The importance of online forum/consultation in the public policy-making process
3-3 The way to communicate between citizens and representatives or among citizens
3-4 Citizens’ preference to participate in online consultation/discussion
3-5 Representatives’ responsibilities or duties of running online consultation/discussion
3-6 Participants’ attitudes on the online consultation/discussion
3-7 Achievements of using online discussion and future plans to move with e-democracy
### Appendix 7-1.
E-government Roadmap Task and Responsible Agency

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<th>Goals</th>
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