



Innovation by Constraint: The Unintended Effects of Korean Videogame Governance

Hengran Yang^{1,*} and Xingzhao Duan²

¹Department of Global Fine Art, Kyonggi University, Suwon-si 16227, Republic of Korea

²Department of Global Business, Kyonggi University, Suwon-si 16227, Republic of Korea

Abstract

South Korea's ascent as a video game titan is not a simple narrative of state-led industrial success. This paper analyzes the dualistic nature of the Korean government's game policy, from the post-financial crisis "informatization" drive and the foundational Game Industry Promotion Act, to restrictive regulations such as the "Shutdown Law" and debates on game addiction. The core argument is that this paradoxical policy environment—simultaneously fostering innovation while imposing social controls—created unique evolutionary pressure. This pressure inadvertently accelerated the industry's pivot to mobile platforms, refined hyper-competitive monetization models, and drove an aggressive global export strategy as a hedge against domestic regulatory risks. By examining key legislative milestones, market data, and corporate strategies, this paper demonstrates how the friction between promotion and restriction acted as a catalyst, ultimately shaping today's technologically advanced, commercially aggressive, and resilient South Korean gaming industry.

Keywords: South Korean game industry, industrial policy, game regulation, shutdown law, innovation, mobile gaming.

1 Introduction

In the global video game sector, a domain defined by rapid technological disruption and intense commercial competition, South Korea has completed a stunning transformation from a regional player to a world-class leader over the past two decades. The nation has not only nurtured industry giants such as NCSoft, NEXON, and Netmarble, but its products, particularly Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPGs) and esports titles, have defined category benchmarks worldwide, becoming an indispensable part of the "Korean Wave" (Hallyu) of cultural exports [1]. At first glance, Korea's success appears to be a model case of a latecomer nation achieving leapfrog development through the concentration of resources, a perfect synergy of visionary government industrial planning and corporate innovation.

A deeper examination of the Korean game industry's development trajectory, however, reveals a far more complex and internally contradictory picture. The Korean government has played a dual role in this process, acting as a "dual-faced engine" that simultaneously presses the accelerator and applies the brakes. Following the 1997 Asian Financial



Submitted: 28 September 2025

Accepted: 21 December 2025

Published: 13 May 2026

Vol. 3, No. 2, 2026.

10.62762/JSSPA.2025.735971

*Corresponding author:

✉ Hengran Yang

yanghengran@kyonggi.ac.kr

Citation

Yang, H., & Duan, X. (2026). Innovation by Constraint: The Unintended Effects of Korean Videogame Governance. *Journal of Social Systems and Policy Analysis*, 3(2), 100–108.



© 2026 by the Authors. Published by Institute of Central Computation and Knowledge. This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Crisis, successive administrations identified the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector, including games and cultural content, as a new engine for national economic transformation. To this end, the government provided fertile ground for the industry's emergence and growth through comprehensive measures such as infrastructure development, the establishment of support agencies, and the provision of financial and tax incentives [2]. The industry's rapid expansion and its profound influence on society, especially on youth, also gave rise to widespread and deep-seated social anxiety. Concerns over "game addiction," academic underachievement, and the physical and mental health of adolescents eventually materialized into a series of regulatory measures that are among the strictest in the world, such as the mandatory "Shutdown Law" and tight regulations on "Loot Box" mechanics, becoming a sword of Damocles hanging over the industry [3].

This paradoxical policy approach of simultaneously acting as both "midwife" and "regulator" is the key to understanding the unique character and formidable competitiveness of the South Korean game industry. Traditional studies of industrial policy often focus on the positive effects of government support or the restrictive impacts of regulation, seldom exploring the complex chemical reaction that occurs when these two seemingly opposing forces act upon a nascent industry. The central thesis of this paper is precisely this: the persistent tension between promotion and restriction has forged a unique mechanism of "Innovation by Constraint." This mechanism has not simply hindered or advanced the industry's development. This mechanism has fundamentally altered the industry's evolutionary trajectory, inadvertently giving rise to a technologically advanced, commercially aggressive, highly globalized, and resilient industrial ecosystem. This paper will trace the historical context, analyze the dual impact of key policies, and combine market data with corporate case studies to demonstrate how this distinctive governance model has shaped the global leadership of today's South Korean game industry.

2 Laying the Foundation: From Economic Crisis to an Informatization Powerhouse

The ascent of the South Korean game industry was not built in a vacuum; its foundations are deeply rooted in a profound national socioeconomic transformation driven by crisis at the end of the 20th century. The 1997 Asian Financial Crisis served as a critical historical turning point. It not only exposed the vulnerabilities of

Korea's traditional economic model, which was reliant on heavy industry and large conglomerates (Chaebol), but also compelled the government and society to seek new engines of economic growth with unprecedented urgency [4]. Against this backdrop, then-President Kim Dae-jung articulated a national vision of building an "informatization powerhouse," establishing the ICT industry as South Korea's core competency for the 21st century. This decision created a historic opportunity for the emergence of the game industry.

This top-down transformation was first manifested in the forward-thinking deployment of infrastructure. To turn the "informatization" blueprint into reality, the Korean government initiated a nationwide information infrastructure plan with unparalleled determination and resources. Through policy guidance and financial subsidies, the government successfully spurred fierce competition among telecommunications operators, which resulted in the rapid proliferation of affordable high-speed broadband internet access for the vast majority of households and businesses [5]. By the early 2000s, Korea had miraculously become one of the world's leading nations in broadband penetration and internet speed. This "digital soil," composed of inexpensive, stable, and ubiquitous high-speed networks, provided the essential prerequisite for the explosive growth of online applications, especially for online games that demand massive data exchange and persistent connectivity [6].

A bottom-up cultural shift was occurring in parallel. In the wake of the financial crisis, "PC bangs" (internet cafés) emerged in great numbers, partly as a low-barrier entrepreneurial option for the unemployed [7]. They quickly evolved into unique sociocultural spaces that transcended their initial function. PC bangs offered adolescents a "third space," a realm away from the supervision of family and school where they could freely socialize and entertain themselves with peers [8]. Here, they could access top-tier computer hardware and the latest popular games at a very low cost, allowing them to explore, compete, and share gaming experiences together. The phenomenon of games like *StarCraft* was ignited within the unique physical space of the PC bang, rapidly forming Korea's earliest and most vibrant esports communities [9]. The PC bang was not merely a site of game consumption but a center for the production and dissemination of game culture. It massively popularized online multiplayer gameplay and social models within Korean society, laying an irreplaceable user base and cultural foundation for

the future professionalization and industrialization of online games and esports.

With both the technological infrastructure and the sociocultural soil prepared, the government's top-level design provided the industry with legitimacy and a sense of direction. The enactment of the Game Industry Promotion Act in 2006 was a landmark event. On a legal level, it officially elevated the status of games from a negatively perceived "amusement business" or mere pastime to a core component of the "cultural industry" [10]. This fundamental shift in positioning meant that the game industry was formally integrated into the sphere of national strategic support. The Act and its subsequent amendments provided a solid legal framework for the government to systematically support the industry's development. It covered a wide range of areas, from R&D support, talent cultivation, and overseas export to the development of esports and intellectual property protection, and established the administrative and promotional functions of specialized agencies like the Korea Creative Content Agency (KOCCA) [11]. Through this legislation, the government transformed its role from that of a bystander to an active shaper, aiming to forge the game industry into a globally competitive strategic export sector through comprehensive and flexible intervention. This approach stands in stark contrast to the model in Japan, where significant government

involvement in the game industry only began in the 21st century [12].

3 The Dual-Faced Engine: The Parallel Logic of Promotion and Restriction

Building on the positive foundation laid by the Game Industry Promotion Act, the South Korean government constructed a complex policy framework full of internal tensions. It injected powerful momentum into the industry's development through a variety of incentive measures, while simultaneously imposing strict limitations out of deep consideration for social stability and youth welfare. These two seemingly contradictory forces, like the two cylinders of a "dual-faced engine," have jointly driven the South Korean game industry down a rugged and unique path of high-speed development.

The industry's vigorous growth was first fueled by the government acting as an "accelerator" with its comprehensive promotional efforts. This support system fully embodies South Korea's "developmental state" tradition, with a systematic and comprehensive approach that is rare on a global scale. The government began by establishing the institutional backbone for policy execution, creating core agencies such as the Korea Creative Content Agency (KOCCA) and the Game Rating and Administration Committee (GRAC).

Table 1. Key Promotional Policies and Institutions of the South Korean Game Industry.

Policy Name	Institution	Enacted / Active	Core Content	Primary Impact
National Infrastructure Plan	Broadband	1999–2005	State-directed investment and subsidies to telecommunications operators to achieve nationwide high-speed internet coverage	Created the foundational "digital soil" for online game growth; made Korea a world leader in broadband penetration by the early 2000s.
Game Promotion Act	Industry	2006–Present	Legally elevated games to the status of "cultural industry"; established frameworks for R&D support, talent cultivation, overseas export, esports development, and IP protection	Transformed the government's role into an active shaper; provided the legal and institutional backbone for systematic industry support.
Korea Creative Content Agency (KOCCA)		2009–Present	Flagship agency for content industry promotion; administers R&D funds, SME support, international exhibitions, and overseas export programmes	Enabled Korean game companies to expand globally through institutional support; actively promotes the "G-Wave" as a pillar of Hallyu cultural export.
Esports Professionalisation Policy (KeSPA)		2000–Present	Government support for the Korea e-Sports Association and professional league formation; esports athletes granted military service exemptions and social recognition comparable to traditional athletes	Established South Korea as the world's first nation to strategically cultivate esports as a national brand; greatly enhanced the commercial value of game culture.

The former, as the flagship for industrial promotion, wields multiple tools including R&D funds, support for small and medium-sized enterprises, organization of international exhibitions, and export promotion. The latter is responsible for content rating and market supervision, ensuring the industry operates in an orderly fashion (see Table 1). Recognizing that creativity and technology are the lifeblood of the industry, the government has vigorously funded universities to establish game-related departments and has set up vocational training systems like "Game Academies" to continuously supply the industry with professional talent in planning, art, and programming [13]. South Korea is notably the first country in the world to strategically cultivate esports as a national brand. By supporting the establishment of the Korea e-Sports Association (KeSPA) and the formation of a professional league system, the government not only granted esports athletes a social status and practical benefits (such as military service exemptions) similar to those of traditional athletes but also successfully shaped esports as a part of the national image, significantly enhancing the social recognition and commercial value of game culture [14]. All these efforts point toward a clear objective: globalization. The government, through KOCCA's global network, has provided an escort for the overseas expansion of game companies, making every effort to promote the "G-Wave" (Game Korean Wave) as another pillar of "Hallyu" cultural export after K-Pop and K-Drama [15].

As the industrial engine was running at full speed, another powerful force—deep-seated social anxiety—compelled the government to apply the "brakes." With the popularization of games, the issue

of youth "game addiction" rapidly became a focal point of public opinion in South Korea, viewed as "digital opium" that affected academic performance, disrupted families, and harmed health. This intense social sentiment eventually translated into concrete legal regulations, the most symbolic of which was the 2011 amendment to the Juvenile Protection Act, infamously known as the "Shutdown Law." This law, under the pretext of protecting adolescents' right to sleep, mandated that game companies cut off server access for all users under the age of 16 between midnight and 6:00 AM [16]. This "one-size-fits-all" approach, a direct intervention of state power into personal entertainment time, was unprecedented globally and dealt a heavy blow to the game industry, particularly the PC online game ecosystem.

The social war surrounding game addiction did not subside with the introduction of the Shutdown Law. Segments of the medical community and political sphere have continued to push for "Gaming Disorder" to be officially classified as an addictive "disease" on par with gambling and alcohol, and to be managed under the national disease code [17]. This "pathologization" attempt has met with strong opposition from the game industry, which views it as a stigmatization of the entire sector. This protracted tug-of-war continues to play out in Korean society, profoundly reflecting the dual, contradictory identity of games as both "cultural hero" and "social enemy."

The government's regulatory reach also extended to the core business models of games. In response to the increasingly prevalent "loot box" or "gacha" mechanics, South Korea was the first to legislate mandatory disclosure of detailed probability information. New regulations that took effect in March 2024,

Table 2. Restrictive Regulations in the South Korean Game Industry and Their Impacts.

Regulation Name		Enacted/Repealed	Core Content	Primary Impact
Shutdown Law (Juvenile Protection Act Amendment)		2011–2021	Prohibited users under 16 from playing online games from midnight to 6 AM	Dealt a heavy blow to the PC online game market, accelerated the industry's shift to mobile, and sparked widespread debate on state intervention in personal freedom.
"Pathologization" of Game Addiction Proposal		2019–Present	Attempts to classify Gaming Disorder in the Korean Standard Classification of Diseases (KCD), managed by the Ministry of Health and Welfare	Continues to cause significant conflict between society and the industry; if passed, it would greatly impact the social image and market environment for games.
Probability-based Item Information Disclosure Act		2024	Mandates that game companies comprehensively and clearly disclose the acquisition probabilities of all probability-based items	Increases compliance costs for game monetization design and enhances consumer protection, but may affect the revenue of games reliant on such models.

with unprecedentedly strict standards, require the disclosure of the independent probabilities of all obtainable items, aiming to protect consumers' right to be informed [18]. This measure, while aligning with global calls for transparency in in-game purchases, has undoubtedly imposed significant compliance costs and design challenges on Korean game companies that are heavily reliant on such business models (see Table 2).

4 Evolution Under Constraint: The Industry's Adaptive Mutations

Confronted with a contradictory policy environment of generous support at times and severe regulation at others, South Korean game companies did not stand idly by. They demonstrated remarkable adaptability and strategic adjustment. It can be said that these restrictive "shackles" forced them out of their comfort zones to explore a development path distinctly different from their counterparts in Europe, America, and Japan. This evolutionary pressure can be understood through a simplified conceptual model:

$$P_i = (G_p + M_s)R_d \quad (1)$$

where P_i represents Innovation Pressure, G_p stands for Government Promotion, M_s is Market Saturation, and R_d signifies Domestic Regulatory Friction. This formula illustrates that when strong growth drivers (government promotion and competitive needs in a saturated market) encounter significant domestic regulatory friction, firms are compelled to channel their energy toward innovation that circumvents restrictions and opens new frontiers, thereby generating immense innovation pressure. This pressure manifested in several key areas:

The uncertainty of domestic regulation, exemplified by the Shutdown Law, made Korean game companies keenly aware of the significant risks of over-relying on the local market. A single, sudden regulation could decimate the prime time revenue of a PC game, a policy-driven business risk that is difficult to predict or hedge. "Going global" thus evolved from an optional strategy into a matter of survival, becoming a core strategy to hedge against domestic policy risks [19]. Korean companies first set their sights on the culturally proximate and high-potential markets of Greater China and Southeast Asia, using them as a springboard to gradually penetrate North American and European markets. The fundamental purpose of this strategy was not just to find new growth points, but to build a

more diversified global revenue structure capable of withstanding policy shocks in any single market. This strong motivation for overseas expansion also explains why Korean games often appear more aggressive and invested in localization and overseas operations than companies from other countries.

A direct consequence of the Shutdown Law was the catalysis of an epic platform migration. As the law in its initial implementation in 2011 primarily targeted "online games" on the PC platform, the nascent smartphone game market was fortunate to exist in a relative "legal gray area." This regulatory loophole, combined with the rapid proliferation of smartphones, provided a powerful impetus for the strategic shift of the Korean game industry's center of gravity from PC to mobile [20]. Major companies began to pour their best development resources and most valuable intellectual property (IP) into mobile game development. They creatively applied the complex game systems, refined art styles, and mature online community management experience accumulated during the PC MMORPG era to the mobile platform in a "dimension-lowering" fashion. This gave birth to an unprecedented wave of high-quality, hardcore mobile games like Lineage M, completely disrupting the global mobile game market, which had been dominated by casual mini-games. From this perspective, the Shutdown Law unintentionally acted as a key catalyst for South Korea's transformation into a "mobile gaming kingdom."

The intense domestic market competition and the strict external regulatory environment collectively pushed the business models of Korean game companies to their limits. With user playtime artificially shortened by the Shutdown Law and market competition becoming increasingly fierce, how to derive maximum revenue from limited online time became a critical factor for corporate survival. This directly led to the extreme evolution of the "Free-to-Play" (F2P) model in Korea [21]. Korean developers became masters at designing complex economic systems, sophisticated numerical growth frameworks, and highly attractive probability-based paid items (Gacha). Through precise data analysis and high-frequency operational activities, they maximized players' willingness to pay, especially the spending potential of a few "whale" players (high-spending users). Although this model has been controversial due to its potential for inducing consumption and its gambling-like nature, from a commercial standpoint, it proved to be extremely efficient. When these business models, hardened

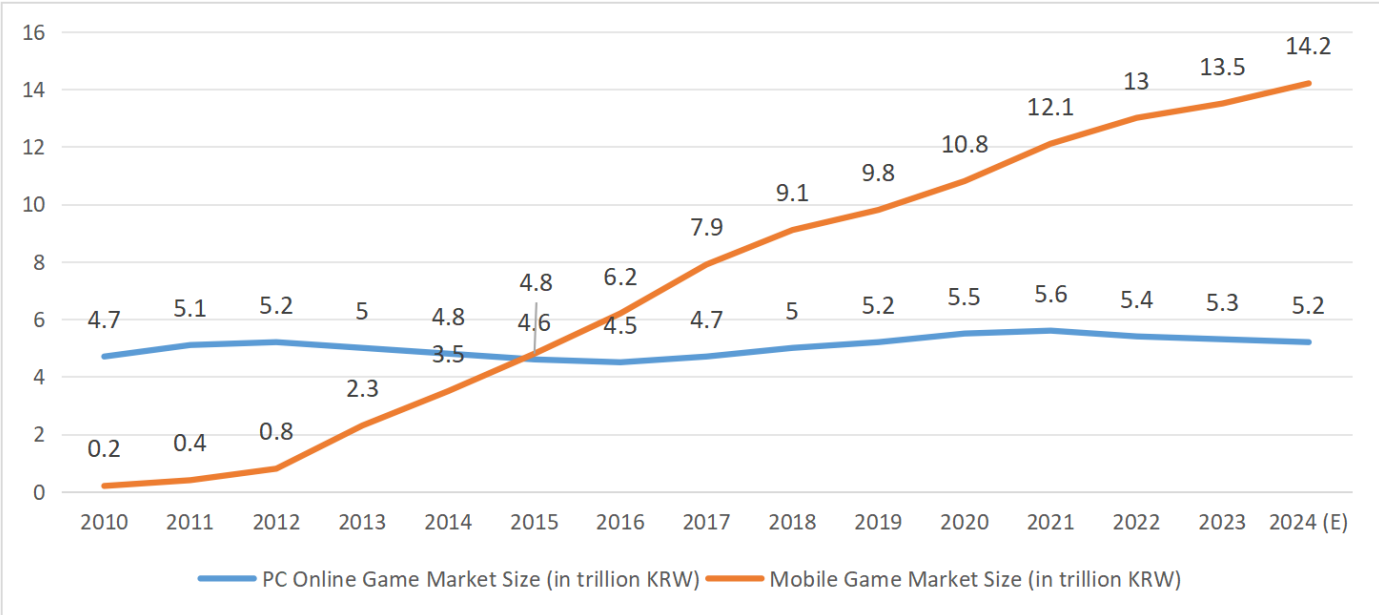


Figure 1. Market Size Trend of PC Online vs. Mobile Games in South Korea (2010-2024).

in the crucible of the Korean domestic market, were applied to the global market, their powerful revenue-generating capabilities were immediately evident, becoming a core competitive advantage for the commercial success of Korean game products worldwide.

5 Data and Case Analysis: From PC Bangs to Global App Stores

The adaptive mutations of the South Korean game industry under policy pressure are not merely theoretical deductions; they are corroborated by a wealth of market data and corporate behavior.

The platform strategy migration driven by regulatory pressure has left a clear imprint on market data. As shown in Figure 1, the implementation of the Shutdown Law in 2011 served as a distinct watershed. After this point, the growth of the South Korean PC online game market slowed significantly, even stagnating at times. The mobile game market, conversely, began a period of explosive, exponential growth. Within a few short years, mobile games surpassed PC games to become the dominant force in the market. This clear inverse trend visually reflects how the entire industry’s resource allocation and user attention strategically shifted from the PC to the mobile platform.

The financial data of leading game companies also eloquently attest to the successful implementation of the globalization hedging strategy. As shown in Table 3, over the decade from 2012 to 2022, the

share of overseas revenue in the total revenue of South Korea’s three major game companies (Nexon, Netmarble, NCSoft) all saw astonishing growth. This indicates that when faced with domestic market growth bottlenecks and persistent policy uncertainty, these industry leaders successfully expanded their business focus globally. For them, overseas markets have long since transitioned from a supplementary source of income to the dominant engine driving the company’s future growth.

Data Note: The data in this table is estimated and compiled from the annual financial reports of each company and public market information, intended to illustrate strategic trends.

The development trajectory of Netmarble serves as a perfect microcosm of the adaptive mutation of the South Korean game industry. The company, which started in PC game publishing, decisively transformed into a mobile game developer and publisher at the advent of the mobile era. It not only successfully migrated classic IPs from the PC era to mobile platforms, giving them new life, but also swiftly built a powerful international distribution network through a series of aggressive global M&A and strategic investments. The massive success of its products like Marvel Future Fight and Lineage 2: Revolution in the global market is a direct manifestation of the successful export of high-quality content and aggressive business models honed in the Korean domestic market.

Table 3. Change in Overseas Revenue Share for Top South Korean Game Companies (2012-2022).

Company	2012 Overseas Revenue Share	2017 Overseas Revenue Share	2022 Overseas Revenue Share
Nexon	45%	61%	78%
Netmarble	8%	54%	72%
NCSOFT	28%	35%	63%

6 Conclusion: The Global Legacy of a Dual-Faced Engine

Looking back at the rise of the South Korean game industry, we see that it did not originate from a flawless, consistent top-level design. It was born from a unique policy ecosystem full of internal contradictions and continuous contestation. The government's "dual-faced engine," on one hand, laid a high-speed highway to the digital age with powerful industrial policies, providing ample fuel for the industry's takeoff. On the other hand, it applied the brakes with severe social regulations, setting numerous restrictions and obstacles for this high-speed journey and creating constant friction.

The analysis in this paper shows that it is precisely this simultaneous action of "accelerator" and "brake," this paradox of promotion and restriction, that has exerted immense, asymmetrical evolutionary pressure on the industry. Like a harsh environment in natural selection, it has forced South Korean game companies to undergo a series of adaptive mutations in order to survive and thrive. These mutations ultimately forged their core competencies today:

1. **Abandoning Comfort for the Globe:** Domestic policy risks prevented them from relying on the domestic market, forcing them to view overseas markets as a "safe harbor" for survival and growth, thereby honing strong cross-cultural operational and localization capabilities.
2. **Pioneering a Path to Mobile Dominance:** When they encountered a growth ceiling and a policy "hard brake" on the PC side, they were the first to capture and define the market opportunity for hardcore mobile games, completing a brilliant platform pivot and establishing their leadership in the global mobile gaming sphere.
3. **Refining Business Models to Perfection:** In the face of intense domestic competition and compressed profit margins, they evolved the F2P and probability-based payment models to their

zenith, creating a level of commercial efficiency that has drawn the attention of global peers.

The great success of the South Korean game industry is, in a sense, an "unintended effect." The government's restrictive policies, originally intended to respond to social anxieties and solve real-world problems, objectively became a powerful catalyst for the industry's self-renewal and search for new avenues. This is not an endorsement of the rationality of restrictive policies, but an attempt to reveal the profound complexity of industrial ecosystem evolution—where pressure, constraints, and even crises can sometimes elicit the most powerful survival instincts and innovative vitality from an organism.

The Korean experience offers valuable and complex lessons for other nations seeking to develop their digital cultural industries. It suggests that neither pure financial support nor complete laissez-faire may be the optimal solution. A moderately "tense" policy environment that maintains a dynamic balance between encouraging innovation and setting norms may be more conducive to stimulating an industry's internal resilience and long-term competitive potential. It must be clearly recognized that the success of the Korean model is also deeply rooted in its unique historical and cultural context, efficient administrative system, and national character, making it highly inimitable. Looking ahead, this powerful "dual-faced engine" will still face severe challenges, such as how to better balance commercialization with social responsibility, how to navigate the increasingly complex global geopolitical landscape (especially the issue of dependence on the Chinese market), and how to continuously produce top-tier creative content with global appeal in the face of fierce international competition. These are all questions that the South Korean game industry will need to continue to answer in the next decade.

Data Availability Statement

Data will be made available on request.

Funding

This work was supported without any funding.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

AI Use Statement

The authors declare that no generative AI was used in the preparation of this manuscript.

Ethical Approval and Consent to Participate

Not applicable.

References

- [1] Dal Yong Jin, & Chee, F. (2008). Age of new media empires: A critical interpretation of the Korean online game industry. *Games and culture*, 3(1), 38-58. [CrossRef]
- [2] Kwon, S. H., & Kim, J. (2013). From censorship to active support: The Korean state and Korea's cultural industries. *The Economic and Labour Relations Review*, 24(4), 517-532. [CrossRef]
- [3] Choi, J., Cho, H., Lee, S., Kim, J., & Park, E. C. (2018). Effect of the online game shutdown policy on internet use, internet addiction, and sleeping hours in Korean adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 62(5), 548-555. [CrossRef]
- [4] Oh, M., & Larson, J. F. (2020). *Digital Development in Korea: Lessons for a Sustainable World* (2nd ed.). Routledge. <https://www.routledge.com/Digital-Development-in-Korea-Lessons-for-a-Sustainable-World/Oh-Larson/p/book/9781032091389>
- [5] Song, J. W. (2021). New wine in old bottles? Korean state actors' policy engagement with the online gaming industry. *Competition & Change*, 25(1), 97-123. [CrossRef]
- [6] Huh, J. S. (2008). Culture and business of PC bangs in Korea. *Games and Culture*, 3(1), 26-37. [CrossRef]
- [7] Chee, F. (2006). The games we play online and offline: Making Wang-tta in Korea. *Popular Communication*, 4(3), 225-239. [CrossRef]
- [8] Stewart, K., & Choi, H. P. (2003). PC-Bang (Room) culture: a study of Korean college students' private and public use of computers and the Internet. *Trends in communication*, 11(1), 63-79. [CrossRef]
- [9] Park, M., Hatano, K., Nogawa, H., & Otake, H. (2021). The development process and present situation of esports in south korea. *Journal of Japan Society of Sports Industry*, 31(2), 2_197-2_209. https://web.archive.org/web/20210716194706id_/https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/article/spo-sun/31/2/31_2_197/_pdf
- [10] Yoshimatsu, H. (2005). The state and industrial evolution: The development of the game industry in Japan and Korea. *Pacific Focus*, 20(1), 135-178. [CrossRef]
- [11] Lee, H. K. (2019). *Cultural policy in South Korea: Making a new patron state*. Routledge. <https://www.routledge.com/Cultural-Policy-in-South-Korea-Making-a-New-Patron-State/Lee/p/book/9780367588557>
- [12] Peichi, C. (2008). New media for social change: Globalisation and the online gaming industries of South Korea and Singapore. *Science, Technology and Society*, 13(2), 303-323. [CrossRef]
- [13] Tsang, D., & Park, Y. (2013). How culture and government shape entrepreneurial innovation: the case of Korean and UK online gaming firms. *Asian Journal of Technology Innovation*, 21(2), 237-250. [CrossRef]
- [14] Grantham, A. J. (2024). *Ready Player Won: A study of e-sports' compatibility with South Korea nation-branding and development of national star power* (Doctoral dissertation). The Australian National University. [CrossRef]
- [15] Lee, Y. (2016). Developing standards and strategies for globalizing the storytelling of Korean online games. *Indian Journal of Science and Technology*, 9(46), 1-6. [CrossRef]
- [16] Sang, Y., Park, S., & Seo, H. (2016). Mobile game regulation in South Korea: A case study of the shutdown law. In *Mobile Gaming in Asia: Politics, Culture and Emerging Technologies* (pp. 55-72). Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands. [CrossRef]
- [17] Kim, C., & Lee, S. (2020). Fragmented industrial structure and fragmented resistance in Korea's digital game industry. *Global Media and China*, 5(4), 354-371. [CrossRef]
- [18] Xiao, L. Y., & Park, S. (2025). Better than industry self-regulation: Compliance of Mobile games with newly adopted and actively enforced loot box probability disclosure law in South Korea. *Acta Psychologica*, 260, 105490. [CrossRef]
- [19] Niemczyk, J., Borowski, K., & Nobel, M. (2022). Strategy approaches in the video game industry. The case study of South Korea, the USA and Poland. *Informatyka Ekonomiczna*, (1), 29-55. https://cejsh.icm.edu.pl/cejsh/element/bwmeta1.element.ojs-doi-10_15611_ie_2022_1_04
- [20] Korea Creative Content Agency. (2024). 2023 Game Industry White Paper. KOCCA. <https://www.kocca.kr/kocca/bbs/view/B0000146/2005396.do?menuNo=204154>
- [21] Kim, N. S., & Min, Y. (2016). How the Media Contextualize Computer Games: A Comparative Analysis of the US and Korean Game Coverage. *International Journal of Multimedia and Ubiquitous Engineering*, 11(11), 291-296. <https://www.earticle.net/Article/A292359>



Hengran Yang is a PhD candidate in the Department of Global Fine Art at Kyonggi University, South Korea. His research delves into the intersection of game art, aesthetics, and game design studies. In addition to his doctoral pursuits, Yang Hengran serves as a Visiting Lecturer at the Communication University of China, where he specializes in delivering art-focused courses on game design and development. (Email:

yanghengran@kyonggi.ac.kr)



Xingzhao Duan, Ph.D Department of Global Business, Kyonggi University. Research interests include E-commerce, Marketing, Consumer Behavior, and digital transformation. (Email: asdfghj111sef@gmail.com)