

What do We value more during Pandemic?

- Comparing Public Perception Survey 2014 and 2021

Eun Mi Lee¹⁺

¹College of General Education, Kookmin University, 77, Jeongneung-ro, Seongbuk-gu, Seoul, 02707 Korea

A B S T R A C T

This study examines how the pandemic has changed the public perception. In particular, it tries to find the answer to the questions; while experiencing COVID-19, what kind of change in perception has the public brought, and how difference in perception is there by sector? This study analyzed public perception change, differences according to individual characteristics, and factors using data from the public perception survey conducted in 2021 and 2014. As an analytical result, the public perception emphasized more on sustainable economic growth, securing advanced science and technology, national defense, and respect for law and order in 2021 compared to 2014. This shows that, during the pandemic, awareness of survival and economic issues has become more important than cultural leisure. In addition, the demand for a safety system to prepare for disasters and crisis is higher than before the pandemic, emphasizing the need for tangible alternatives by the government.

Key words: COVID-19; pandemic; public perception change; survey; crisis management perception

1. Introduction

COVID-19 is progressing as a pandemic, the spread of infectious diseases around the world, and as an endemic. With the spread of COVID-19, the world has become a completely different world from the past. Because the degree of change is very large, it is sometimes divided into BC (Before Corona) and AD (After Disease) based on before and after COVID-19. Daron Acemoglu (2012) and others emphasize the critical juncture in <Why Countries Fail>. Based on cases from around the world, they are proving that the degree of national development differs depending on whether an inclusive or exploitative system is adopted at the decisive turning point. COVID-19 is also a turning point. Let's take a look at what we need to change at the turning point of COVID-19.

Daron Acemoglu, et. al. (2012) emphasize the critical juncture in "Why Countries Fail". Based on cases from around the world, they are proving that the degree of national development differs depending on whether an inclusive or exploitative system is adopted at the critical juncture. COVID-19 is also a turning point. In the Corona New Normal Era, it is necessary to examine how our public perception changes and what kind of policy demands are there.

2. Materials and Methods

In order to analyze changes in the public's perception, the raw data collected and reused for the 'People's Perception Survey on the Future of Korea in 2021' (hereinafter the '2021 National Perception Survey') and 'the original data of the 2014 public perception survey' was used. The 2021 National Perception Survey conducted a web survey based on a structured questionnaire targeting 1,000 men and women over the age of 18 nationwide. Sampling was done by proportional quota sampling based on region, gender and age, and the survey was conducted from April 13 to 16, 2021 (Hankook Research, 2021). The data from the '2014 National Perception Survey' is the original data of a face-to-face interview survey of 1,206 adult men and women over the age of 19 nationwide. Sampling was randomized after proportional allocation by region, gender, and age, and the survey was conducted from August 25 to September 17, 2014 (Sul and Lee, 2021). Statistical analysis was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics 25. T-test, ANOVA and regression analyses were conducted.

<Table 1>Descriptive statistics

<i>Group Statistics</i>					
연도	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	p(2-tailed)
Importance 1.					
Consolidation of democracy and promotion of human rights					
	2,0211,000	4.16	0.924	-1.417	0.157
	2,0141,204	4.21	0.809		
Importance 2.					
Sustained Economic Growth					
	2,0211,000	4.45	0.741	2.655***	0.008
	2,0141,205	4.37	0.739		
Importance 3.					
Reduction of income inequality and polarization					
	2,0211,000	4.31	0.815	-0.223	0.823
	2,0141,203	4.31	0.767		
Importance 4.					
Respect for cultural diversity and opinions					
	2,0211,000	4.02	0.908	-2.103**	0.036
	2,0141,201	4.09	0.802		
Importance 5.					
Securing Advanced science and technology					
	2,0211,000	4.50	0.726	4.303***	0.000
	2,0141,205	4.36	0.733		
Importance 6.					
Conservation of nature and resolution of environmental problems					
	2,0211,000	4.46	0.767	1.394	0.164

	2,0141,203	4.42	0.706		
Importance 7.					
Safety system for disasters and dangers					
	2,0211,000	4.44	0.761	-0.501	0.617
	2,0141,204	4.46	0.715		
Importance 8.					
Unification between South and North Korea					
	2,0211,000	3.17	1.271	-16.785***	0.000
	2,0141,204	3.98	0.934		
Importance 9.					
National defense power to solidify national security					
	2,0211,000	4.25	0.851	-2.289**	0.022
	2,0141,204	4.33	0.767		
Importance 10. Gender equality in the home and society					
	2,0211,000	4.03	0.915	-2.493**	0.013
	2,0141,202	4.13	0.768		
Importance 11. Respect for law, order and principles					
	2,0211,000	4.43	0.730	3.724***	0.000
	2,0141,204	4.31	0.732		
Importance 12. Less working hours and more leisure time					
	2,0211,000	3.82	0.931	-6.620***	0.000
	2,0141,204	4.07	0.827		
Importance 13. Rise of Arts and Culture					
	2,0211,000	3.82	0.870	-2.807***	0.005

	2,0141,204	3.92	0.807						
Importance									
14. A social trust	2,0211,000	4.32	0.737	-1.447	0.148				
	2,0141,204	4.37	0.699						
Lack 1. Consolidation of democracy and promotion of human rights	2,0211,000	3.50	1.020	-2.804***	0.005				
	2,0141,205	3.61	0.833						
Lack 2. Sustained Economic Growth	2,0211,000	3.57	1.024	2.873***	0.004				
	2,0141,204	3.45	0.959						
Lack 3. Reduction of income inequality and polarization	2,0211,000	3.99	1.002	4.594***	0.000				
	2,0141,202	3.80	0.940						
Lack 4. Respect for cultural diversity and opinions	2,0211,000	3.51	0.991	0.649	0.516				
	2,0141,202	3.48	0.879						
Lack 5. Securing Advanced science and technology	2,0211,000	3.46	1.064	-0.136	0.892				
	2,0141,201	3.46	0.947						
Lack 6. Conservation of nature and resolution of environmental problems	2,0211,000	3.81	0.986	-0.369	0.712				
	2,0141,200	3.83	0.900						
Lack 7. Safety system for disasters and dangers	2,0211,000	3.72	0.998	-6.885***	0.000				
	2,0141,203	4.00	0.886						
Lack 8. Unification between South and North Korea	2,0211,000	3.12	1.212	-9.876***	0.000				
	2,0141,201	3.58	0.909						
Lack 9. National defense power to solidify national security	2,0211,000	3.55	1.069	-4.483***	0.000				
	2,0141,204	3.74	0.914						
Lack 10. Gender equality in the home and society	2,0211,000	3.41	1.047	-0.979	0.328				
	2,0141,200	3.46	0.906						
Lack 11. Respect for law, order and principles	2,0211,000	3.81	0.994	3.018***	0.003				
	2,0141,200	3.69	0.868						
Lack 12. Less working hours and more leisure time	2,0211,000	3.48	1.060	-3.201***	0.001				
	2,0141,200	3.62	0.889						
Lack 13. Rise of Arts and Culture	2,0211,000	3.18	0.941	-4.396***	0.000				
	2,0141,202	3.35	0.846						
Lack 14. A social trust	2,0211,000	3.74	0.981	-2.451***	0.014				

Public perception of the importance was high in 'Securing advanced scientific technology', 'Respect for law and order/principles', 'Sustainable economic growth', 'Conservation of nature and resolution of environmental problems', and the awareness of its importance has increased compared to 2014. On the other hand, 'defense power to solidify national security' and 'gender equality at home and in society'. In 'Consolidation of democracy and human rights', 'Respect for cultural diversity and opinions', 'Less working hours and more leisure time', it was lower than in 2014. In particular, awareness of the importance of work labels (less working hours and more leisure time) showed the lowest level among the 13 areas along with 'the flourishing of art and culture'.

On the other hand, perception of necessity (lack) was high in 'reducing income inequality and resolving polarization', 'respect for law, order, and principles', 'conservation of nature and resolution of environmental problems'. It was found to be low in 'the prosperity of culture', 'Securing advanced scientific and technological power', and 'Low working hours and more leisure time'. Compared to 2014, perception of 'reducing income inequality and resolving polarization', 'respect for law, order and principles', and 'continuous economic growth' has increased.

5. Limitations

In this study, it was tested that the pandemic had an effect on the change of public perception by sector. However, if there were 2019 data of COVID-19 direct, compared to 2021, it would have been possible to examine the impact of the pandemic more accurately.

In addition, this study were limited to Koreans perception change during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Profile

Eun Mi Lee (foodbo@kookmin.ac.kr)

She received her Ph.D. from Yonsei University, Korea in 2014. She is an assistant professor in College of General Education, Kookmin University. Her research focuses on Information Policy Science, Big Data-based Policy Decision-making, and Research Methods.

Since research on overcoming a pandemic has a worldwide impact, there is a need to examine various countries' data compare the results in the future.

6. Conclusions

The results show that, in the context of the pandemic, people recognize that areas related to direct survival such as advanced science and technology, continuous economic growth, fairness, and resolution of polarization are important and necessary, and national defense, human rights, gender equality, culture, arts and diversity.

The pandemic has prompted distrust and hatred of certain groups and led to a decrease in public perception of cultural diversity. It requires policy attention because it can be a factor in social conflict. In particular, due to COVID-19, as exchanges between individuals and groups are limited and non-face-to-face services are spreading. Understanding of public perception change and consideration are more important than ever. In the current crisis, it is necessary to find ways to policy demands and resolve social conflicts.

Acknowledgement: The public perception survey data used for the analysis was provided by the Korean Public Administration Association.

References

- Acemoglu, D., and Robinson, J. A. 2012. *Why nations fail: The origins of power, prosperity, and poverty*. Currency.
- Hankook Research. 2021. Survey on the Peoples's Perception of the Future of Korea-Result Table.
- Sul, J. B., & Lee, E. 2021. Changes in Perception of Cultural Diversity in COVID-19 Era. *Crisisonomy*. 17(9): 39-53.