Korea Public Perception on Fukushima Nuclear Accident

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Fukushima Nuclear Accident

• On 11th March 2011, the massive earthquake and tsunami has caused a nuclear crisis in Japan. After the earthquake, cooling systems at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station failed shortly and soon after the accident, radioactive material flowed into the sea.

Social Media and Public Discourses

Which topics influenced Korea public the most in the after math of the Fukushima nuclear accident?

• Following the Fukushima nuclear accident in Japan, South Korea was affected gradually via the burst of public discussion on nuclear safety that ranged from radio-active contamination, nuclear waste, etc.
• These various online chatters may increase the rate of negative public sentiment, which speed up the public anxiety. It has made the Korea public more sensitive to the nuclear issues, and also causes various social movement, such as an antinuclear protest.

• Since social media facilitate communication and help form social capitals prior to occurrence of such catastrophic situation [1], observing what topics are discussed online is the most pressing task for minimizing social confusion in emergency situation.

Data Collection

• 4-year period: Jan 1, 2011 – Dec 14, 2014
• Scale: 158,964 Korean tweets including ‘radioactive’, ‘radiation’, ‘nuclear power’.
• Meta-data gathered: user name, tweet content including URLs, time of posting, number of retweets, favorites, and comments.

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