

Function of Social Capital and Civic Engagement in Urban Regeneration: Examining University-Community Relations in a Campus Town

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By examining Jochiwon, a campus town in rural Korea, the study explores the intersection of university-community relations, social capital, and civic engagement, in the process of urban regeneration. Interviews with 34 local residents and college students showed that each group only had bonding capital amongst themselves with weak bridging capital across groups; residents and students were not concerned with each other; the existence of a conflict of interest between the two groups; and a lack of trust and respect for each other. Moreover, in terms of civic engagement, findings show that students lacked information and time to engage in civic activities, whereas locals lacked knowledge and expertise, despite being motivated. Critical problems in university-community relations were misunderstandings and limited opportunities to meet and engage in conversations, and not perceiving each other as partners in a symbiotic relationship. Implications and suggestions for future research are discussed.

Keywords: *university-community relations, social capital, civic engagement, urban regeneration, campus town*

Introduction

Tension between universities and local communities in small campus towns have long been a critical issue in city development; hence, ways to strengthen collaboration and minimize conflict have been important research topics in urban development and sustainability literatures. One of the ways to encourage urban development has been to strengthen social capital and civic engagement, as social capital that is accrued through civic engagement reinforces social bonds. Social bonds function as building blocks that uphold a given society, which further builds trust and collaboration. Therefore, ways to accumulate social capital and encourage civic engagements have been implemented in various government programs for urban regeneration in Europe, including but not limited to Ireland and the United Kingdom.

Such a topic is also of import in Korea, as many rural areas in Korea face population decline and economic stagnation. The issue is more critical in rural areas that also serve as campus towns. Since college students make up a large part of the population and are the key consumers for local businesses, it is critical to build amicable university-community relations in these cities. However, fundamental tensions between universities and local communities prohibit the two groups from partnering with each other and collaborating to reach a common goal, that is, community development.

Therefore, the purpose of the current study is to examine a rural area in Korea that is also a campus town, in terms of its university-community relations, social capital, and civic engagement, and explore how these three components influence community development. Though social capital and civic engagement have been found to primarily strengthen urban development, whether and how these two factors influence campus towns in rural areas have not been examined prior. Examining the intersection of these components and their dynamics can shed light on the importance of university-community relations, especially when the Korean government is actively engaging in urban development projects.

The current study's examination reveals what is lacking in rural areas within urban regeneration research, as well as implications for what is needed to sustain and strengthen depopulated communities that are layered with conflicting relationships. To the author's knowledge, intersections of these factors have not been examined in depth; hence, a qualitative research method is used to investigate and explore previously underexamined areas. Findings and implications extend and expand literatures on social capital,

civic engagement, university-community relations, and urban regeneration.

University-Community Relations

Effective partnership between a university and its local community is known to be a vital element of community growth (Hastad and Tymeson 1997). However, due to conflicts of interest, the relationship between university and community often results in conflict and tension rather than collaboration and cooperation. The university-community problem is nothing new (see Bender 1988, 1998; Brunning, McGrew, and Cooper 2006; Goddard 1997; Robson et al. 1995) and has been primarily centered around two issues. First, universities have traditionally been identified as that which is detached from the community (Bender 1998). The university has identified itself as a part of the international and national academic and research communities. In this regard, Bender posits that “the university has always claimed the world, not its host city, as its domain. Whatever its local roots, the university historically has striven for learning that at least reaches towards universal significance” (Bender 1988, p. 294). In this respect, scholars argue that universities have played a vital role in nation-state identity building; namely, in respect to creating cultural values (Readings 1996).

Another issue of debate in terms of the relationship between universities and community is in respect to religion, which led to a physical breach between universities and communities. Universities in the United States were originally developed to educate members of the ministry (Mayfield 2001). Because they felt that the community was morally corrupt, universities developed policies to protect students from the community (Brockliss 2000). Eventually, many universities in the US adopted the campus model, developed from 1945 to 1990 (McGirr, Kull, and Enns 2003), which allowed students to meet all of their needs on campus. Thus, universities became “self-sufficient cities,” where students rarely had to leave campus to meet their needs (McGirr et al. 2003, p. 16).

Even when universities that were granted federal land under the Morrill Act in 1862 were required by law to provide public service in return for federal aid,¹ rather than establishing collaborative partnerships, universities saw their public service as an obligation (Brockliss 2000). Moreover, the aforementioned campus model further inhibited universities from making

¹ Under the Morrill Act, each state was granted 30,000 acres of federal land for each congressional representative (Encyclopedia 2004).

any economic or social contribution to the local communities, and university-community relations were further strained.

Despite this, a number of colleges and universities have begun addressing these issues in recent years and have adopted some strategies to build a positive relationship with the local community. One such strategy is to increase students' access to community resources through programs like internships and volunteer activities. While these real-life experiences offer important opportunities for the students, the community also benefits from students' time and talent (Bonsall, Harris, and Marczak 2002). Another relationship-building strategy is to extend the expertise of the university to the community in the form of technical assistance, leadership training, job training, and social and recreational programs (Mullins and Gilderbloom 2002). Although these strategies cannot resolve all issues between universities and communities, they can begin positive conversations and possibly resolve potential misunderstandings or tensions.

Conflicts between universities and communities in Korea remain largely economical. Since many local businesses make their living by providing housing to college students, universities that seek to provide cheap and convenient housing to their students by building new dormitories are often met with fierce opposition from private housing owners who object to university plans with boycotts (Lee 2017; Won, Jung, and Lee 2019). As universities need approval and support from local communities, they can be left with difficult choices. Many choose to delay building dorms or to build dorms far from the campus to avoid competition with one-room housing, or studio apartment, owners (Lee 2017; Won et al. 2019). However, these consequences fall to students to deal with, as local housing is not cheap; on average, only 10 percent of students are able to live in school dormitories (An 2018) and most students end up paying for expensive housing in the local community (Jang 2020). Therefore, the relationship between college students and local housing owners is inherently tense (Jang 2020). Students who are from, or who attend colleges in, large metropolitan areas like Seoul somewhat avoid this problem since they can either commute from home or choose other housing options. However, the problem remains relevant and unresolved for students whose homes are far from the college they attend and/or who attend colleges in small rural areas where housing options are limited. These students must sign hefty annual contracts if they are unable to obtain a room in their college dormitories. As such, conflict and tension between universities and communities in Korea largely center around individual college students and local businesses, rather than universities and

local communities, and this issue remains a problem for many universities.

Social Capital and Urban Regeneration

Social capital is one of the key concepts that guides this research. Recent studies in urban development and urban regeneration have identified social capital as an important concept in understanding social cohesion and community self-help (Kearns 2004). Communities can utilize social capital in the process of strengthening social cohesion.

Social capital refers to the tangible and intangible resources that individuals receive merely by their membership of or affiliation with an organization. While Coleman (2000) emphasized the social structure that facilitated the action of certain members to produce social capital, and Bourdieu (1985) emphasized the benefits members could acquire by membership or investments, scholars understood and defined social capital as “the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of membership in social networks or other social structure” (Portes 1998).

As types of organizations vary, along with the resources members can contribute, the capital available to members may also vary, ranging from human capital (i.e., skills, education, and experiences) and market capital (i.e., tangible material goods) to social capital (i.e., intangible resources). While there are intangible forms of social capital, such as prestige, that may be available to all members by virtue of belonging to a socially prestigious organization, certain resources are only available to some. The benefits available to members may vary to a large degree depending on the type of organization and its social ties. In other words, access to and the degree of resources available to a member are contingent upon the available social ties and what resources those social ties are willing to offer.

The extent of social capital accessible via social ties is just as important, if not more important, as the number of social ties a person holds. Those social ties can be distinguished as bonding and bridging ties. Bonding ties refer to the relationships that individuals have with their strong ties. Bonding is necessary for social support. The more embedded one is within a tightly knit network, the more power that individual holds (e.g., to control information or relationships).

Bridging, on the other hand, refers to the weak ties that individuals have within their networks, as well as the ties that are several degrees removed from the individual's network (e.g., a friend of a friend who is in a network to which the individual does not have direct access; Burt 2000). This bridging

function is more important for business purposes than social purposes, as actors function as bridges to create relations across different networks. The bridging role offers benefits such as the power to control information. Regardless of the length of membership, it is the number of social ties, the type of resources available to those social ties, the strength of ties, and the type of ties that function as predictors of the type of social capital available to members of an organization. Individuals can sever ties, establish new ties, or strengthen or weaken particular ties in order to accrue more social capital.

Studies show that social capital is critical in urban regeneration. According to the Social Exclusion Unit (hereafter SEU) operated by the United Kingdom,² social capital has also been identified as a key factor that contributes to “social stability and a community’s ability to help itself” (2004, p. 24). Hence, ways in which social capital can be built and accumulated is included in the SEU agenda for reviving communities (Kearns 2004). Specifically, the SEU (2004) suggests volunteering as a way to build social capital within communities; establishing new contacts outside one’s normal social circles can broaden and extend that individual’s network, thereby expanding their social capital.

On the other hand, lack of social capital has been identified as a key factor in population decline in neighborhoods that experience rapid population turnover (Kearns 2004; SEU 2004). Moreover, groups that only have strong bonding social capital and are geographically concentrated by desire and by default, such as ethnic minority communities, can become insular and disconnected with outside groups (Kearns 2004).

Civic Engagement and Urban Regeneration

Civic engagement is another key theoretical concept that guides this study. Civic engagement, or civic participation, is defined as “individual and collective actions designed to identify and address issues of public concern” (Ramakrishnan and Bloemraad 2008, p. 42). At the individual level, civic engagement can be measured in two dimensions: (1) behavioral, and (2) knowledge and attitude. Civic engagements that are carried out behaviorally include: a) joining associations, b) contributing time and labor (that is, volunteering), c) making donations, and d) assuming leadership roles in

² The Social Exclusion Unit was launched in 1997 in the UK by the Labour government to provide the UK government with strategic advice and policy analysis to address social exclusion issues (Kearns 2004).

associations. Knowledge and attitude dimensions include: a) having information about civic opportunities, b) having civic skills (enabling collective action), c) civic norms, and d) generalized trust in others (Ramakrishnan and Bloemraad 2008). The level of civic engagement is often measured to determine the level of democracy in a given society (Putnam 2000; Rossteutscher 2008).

Studies have shown close relations between social capital and civic engagement. Specifically, studies have found that participation in associational activities (mentioned above) is a key indication of social health (Putnam 1993, 2000). According to Putnam, a dense network of civic engagement produces a capacity for trust, reciprocity, and co-operation (social capital), which in turn, leads to a healthy economy and a healthy democracy (Putnam 1993, as cited in Lowndes and Wilson 2001). As scholars posit, social capital relies on social inclusion; therefore, it cannot be developed unless people participate in civic engagement via various social activities (Lowndes and Wilson 2001; Putnam 1993).

As civic engagement has been found necessary for strengthening a political or economic situation (Putnam 1993; Shortall 2008), ideas for participation or civic engagement have been included in a number of rural development programs to encourage social integration, including but not limited to programs under the Department of Agricultural and Rural Development in Northern Ireland (Shortall 2008).

University-Community Relations in Jochiwon, Korea

Jochiwon, located in Sejong City in South Chungcheong Province, has a population of 46,413 (approximately 19,000 households) with an area of 5.29 sq. miles (Sejong City ND). The town is about an hour and a half drive from Seoul, the capital city of Korea, and is also close to the cities of Daejeon, Cheonan, and Cheongju. Jochiwon was upgraded to a town, or *eup*, from a *myeon* in 1931, at the same time as Daejeon (Sejong City ND).³ However, while Daejeon has now become a metropolitan city with over 1.5 million in population, Jochiwon remains an *eup* today.

Despite its slow growth, a significant change came about in 2012 when the Sejong Special Autonomous City was established to ease congestion in Seoul. Since then, the Korean government has relocated a number of ministries and agencies to Sejong, including but not limited to the Ministry

³ Township, a lower administrative region than *eup*.

of Environment, the Ministry of Health and Welfare, as well as the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism. Although Sejong is still undergoing major construction, the city is expected to be completed in 2030 with a population of about 500,000 (Kim 2012). When Sejong was established, Jochiwon fell within the Yeongi District in Chungcheong South Province, but became administratively incorporated under Sejong. When it was first announced that their town would be included Sejong, Jochiwon administrators and residents were excited to become part of a new city because it meant growth, specifically in population and administrative budget.

Jochiwon is the host of two four-year universities, one with approximately 5,000 students and the other with about 11,678 students (Wiki ND). Considering the local population of Jochiwon, the combined student bodies of the two universities (about 16,678 students) is not a small number. Like other universities, many students at these two universities reside in private housing near their campuses, in what are referred to as one-room *chon* (areas with many studio apartment housings)⁴ near the two campuses.

In 2013, Korea enacted the Special Act on Promotion of and Support for Urban Regeneration to carry out urban regeneration in areas facing urban decline, depopulation and an aging population (Ryu 2019). For this purpose, varying locations have been selected as Urban Renewal Leading Areas where funds were concentrated to bring economic, social, and cultural revitalization (Jo and An 2019). In Sejong, two areas (one of which being Jochiwon), have been selected as the Urban Renewal Leading Areas and have each been given approximately \$7.5 million in national funds to revitalize the region (Architecture and Urban Research institute ND).

Thus far, the literature has examined previous studies on university-community relations and the conflicts thereof, social capital, and civic engagement. Though social capital and civic engagement have been found to strengthen social cohesion, thereby accumulating social bonds that can further bring trust and cooperation at the community level, such a conceptual framework has not been used to examine a rural campus town community that is engaging in urban regeneration. Therefore, the current study asks the following research questions to explore the intersection of university-community relations, social capital, civic engagement, and urban regeneration:

⁴ *Chon* means an area and one-room refers to studio apartments. Since housing is expensive and in short supply, many privately owned housing-owners near college campuses built residential area that are made up of one-room apartments. Koreans generally refers to such an area as “one-room *chon*” (National Institute of Korean Languages ND).

RQ1: How do college students and locals make meaning of social capital in Jochiwon?

RQ2: How do college students and locals make meaning of civic engagement in Jochiwon, and what factors motivate and inhibit residents and college students from engaging in civic activities?

RQ3: How do college students and locals make meaning of the university/student-locals relationship?

Method

Given the exploratory nature of the study in examining previously under-explored areas, as well as the purpose of the research questions, this study employed qualitative research methods. Qualitative research methods are appropriate for researchers who are “intrigued with the complexity of social interactions as expressed in daily life and with the meanings participants themselves attribute to these interaction” (Marshall and Rossman 1995, p. 2). In the process of obtaining these complexities embedded in the participants’ daily lives, the researchers can gather “detailed description of situations, events, people, interactions, and observe behaviors” (Patton 1980, p. 22). This study used the in-depth interview method. The in-depth interview method is appropriate as its goal is to obtain in-depth and open-ended narrative rather than trying to fit participants’ experiences into certain categories (Patton 1987). Although the interviewer may guide the conversation, the interviewer still “respects how the participant frames and structures the responses” (Marshall and Rossman 1995, p. 82). Hence, the greatest advantage of the interview over other methods is its ability to capture the participants’ experiences in greater depth and breadth.

Sample

The study employed purposive and convenient sampling to recruit participants. A total of 34 students and local community residents were recruited as participants. Eighteen students from two universities, majoring in 12 different areas of studies (M = 10, F = 8) participated in either a one-on-one in-depth interview or a focus group interview per their preference (see Appendix A, B).⁵ Sixteen local residents (M = 5, F = 11) participated in either a one-on-one interview or a focus group interview. The data recruiting

process started with personal and professional contacts. Fliers were also used to recruit students from the two campuses. The researcher tried to bring in a variety from the student participants in terms of years of residence in the community, different living experiences, and age. As for the local residents, the researcher asked professors who were from the area for assistance as they had more social ties in the area. The researcher also visited and sat in on Urban Regeneration Development School (hereafter URDS)⁶ classes several times to build relationships with the local residents and community leaders. Once the relationships were established, the researcher asked the locals for their time in person.⁷ Having participants from different backgrounds allowed multiple perspectives to emerge through discussions and in-depth interviews. Rubin and Rubin (2005) stressed that when a researcher provides a “variety of perspectives,” which offers “different vantage points” (p. 67), the study’s credibility increases as a result.

The in-depth interviews took about 90-130 minutes on average and were led by open-ended questions that were semi-structured. All the participants were asked about their prior knowledge about the project, and if they lacked information about it, they were given a brief explanation about the project prior to the interview.⁸ All the participants gave consent to be audiotaped prior to the interview, thus all the interviews were audiotaped. Audiotaping interviews help the researchers to analyze the data accurately. The researcher compensated the participants either with a meal or \$20 for their time and participation. Once the interviews were completed and audiotaped, the

⁵ All of the interviews were done face-to-face sometime between August and December in 2019.

⁶ The government established a law in 2015 called the Special Act on Promotion of and Support for Urban Regeneration to bring economic, social and cultural revitalization in cities, establish self-sufficient development platform, and revive local communities to strengthen citizens’ welfare (Korea Ministry of Government Legislation ND). In implementing this law, Sejong has launched an Urban Regeneration Development Schools, an eight-week program where experts (e.g., professors) are invited to educate local seniors. Interested local communities can apply and the local government provides administrative supports and funding (Sejong City Urban Regeneration Center 2015).

⁷ Eight resident participants were from the URDS class (participants from this group include the *eup*-leader and the local women’s association leader); these participants had attended the classes for two eight-week programs, thus had some knowledge of the urban regeneration project in Jochiwon (see Appendix A for details of the demographics).

⁸ Participants were not required to know about the urban regeneration project in order to participate in the interview because the purpose of the interview was to discover and identify issues in the relationship status between residents and students; not to only explore positive relationships already established from working together toward achieving urban regeneration goals. However, they were asked about their prior knowledge of the project and those who lacked information were given a brief explanation about the project and its goals.

researcher began the transcribing process. Analysis then began after about the third interview.

Data Analysis

Grounded theory was employed to analyze the data for this study. The grounded theory approach, developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967), seeks to explain and theorize about a phenomenon from the data. This approach takes upon a systematic and constant comparison approach to collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the data. Corbin and Strauss (2008), Strauss and Corbin (1990), and Glaser and Strauss (1967) suggest open coding, axial coding, and selective coding processes in data collection and analysis. These coding processes enable researchers to achieve systematic and constant comparison approach during the data collection and analysis process. By noting the topics or key terms that emerged consistently throughout the data collection process, themes and patterns were identified. Once categories were identified through axial coding, connections were made amongst the six categories to identify the storyline and central phenomenon.

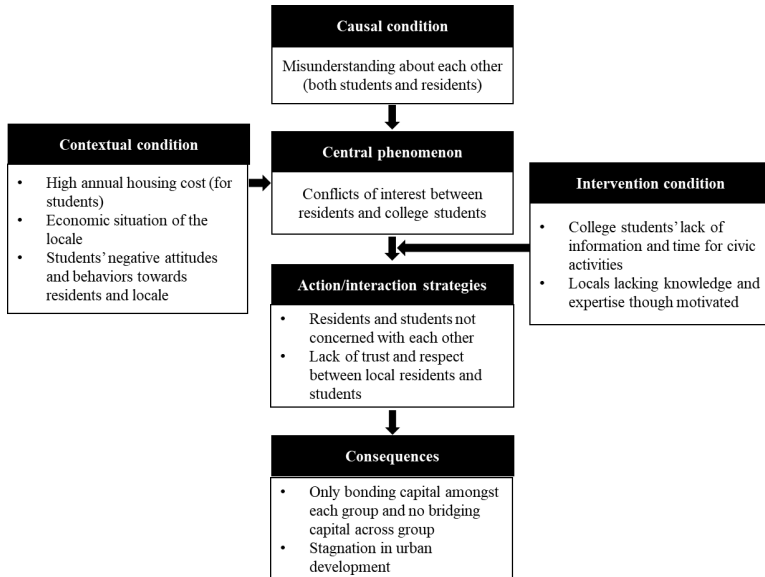


FIG. 1.—ABOVE PRESENTS THE GROUNDED THEORY MODEL USED IN THIS STUDY

Results

Results show that research questions 1 and 3 are closely aligned; when interviewees answered questions pertaining to research question 1, answers related to research question 3 inevitably followed. Therefore, the findings of research questions 1 and 3 are reported together below.

RQ1: How do colleges students and locals make meaning of social capital in Jochiwon?

RQ3: How do college students and locals make meaning of the university/student-locals relationship?

Only Bonding Capital and No Bridging Capital

Interviews revealed that the resident and student participants only had social capital amongst themselves. Student interviewees discussed how they mostly networked amongst themselves and reached out to their friends and family when they needed help. One student said, “When it comes to class-related materials, my go-to person would be my friends or upper-classmen...but if I get sick or need some emotional support, I call my friends.” Another student remarked, “Having lived here for about four years now, I actually rarely need help. But when I first came here, my upperclassmen helped me out a lot. I got a lot of used stuff from them. And I returned the favor to those who came after me. Now, when I need help with anything, I usually call my boyfriend.” Yet another student said, “When I need money, I call my parents. (Laugh.) I got really sick in my first semester here, so I called my mom, and she called the ambulance for me.” In these ways, student interviewees generally contacted classmates, close friends, or family members depending on their needs; none of them reached out to community residents, whether it was for physical, emotional, or informational assistance.

Resident interviewees were also close to one another, networking and reaching out to each other when in need. When asked about how much they relied on each other, one resident said, “We often cook and eat together. Just before coming here, we went to her (pointing another participant) place and had dinner.” Three elderly women residents who came to the interview together were all living alone and were found to spend much time together, frequently sharing meals together. Community leaders (e.g., women’s association leaders) paid special attention to elderly residents who did not

live with their children, making sure they were healthy and well.

Interviews revealed that most of the residents had resided in the area for a long time. One of the participants who was in her 60s was born, raised, and had lived in Jochiwon all of her life. Another resident had moved to the area upon marriage and had lived in Jochiwon since. Yet another resident had moved to the area after retirement. None of the resident interviewees recruited through URDS class had lived in Jochiwon for less than 10 years. As they met weekly at the class and as the location of the URDS class was a community center for the elderly they were all well acquainted with each other and very close to one another.

When the researchers asked how long some of the one-room housing owners planned on having their businesses, they discussed how they “don’t plan on going anywhere else” or plan on living in Jochiwon “until they pass away.” In these ways, a couple of resident interviewees who were also housing owners discussed their sense of belonging and attachment to the community. None of the residents had any plans of moving anytime soon.

Interviews revealed that both student and resident interviewees had no personal relationship with members of the opposite party. Some residents who owned one-room apartments talked to the students who lived in their housing once in a while, but the majority of discussions housing owners had with students were about rent fees and regulations pertaining to housing.

While six to seven of the community resident interviewees had experience working at the universities as security guards or cleaners, most of the conversations they had with students were limited to simple greetings. Therefore, no resident interviewees who described their relationship with college students as personal or close.

In these ways, both groups had much trust amongst themselves because they were close friends and/or acquaintances within their own networks. Tight-knit relationships with one another translated into strong bonding capital that was visible only amongst themselves and not between groups. None of the resident interviewees mentioned reaching out to college students for help or with a need, and none of the student participants discussed needing residents’ help.

Residents and College Students Not Concerned with Each Other

Interviews revealed that neither resident nor college student participants fully knew what the other group wanted from the community. For instance, the residents were primarily concerned with the economic development of

Jochiwon. A couple of the resident interviewees discussed how Jochiwon used to be economically prosperous in the 1980s into the early 1990s when a major company's factory was located near downtown Jochiwon; as many factory workers lived in or near the factory, local businesses flourished at the time. However, once the factory closed, the businesses began to rely on college students. That too changed when the university shuttle bus changed its route. One resident interviewee who had a business in the downtown Jochiwon business district said, "When the shuttle bus went through the downtown, students had to stop and wait for the bus downtown. They would shop and eat here, but since the change, students go directly to their school from the train station." Business owners in the downtown area lamented the effect the bus route change had on their businesses and discussed how the university needed to be more considerate of local businesses.

When asked why they did not shop or eat much downtown, student participants complained about expensive prices and lack of choices. Most student participants discussed how many stores in the downtown area lagged in terms of fashion and items. One said, "Frankly, shops only sell old-fashioned items. There is nothing to buy there. I usually shop online." Yet another said, "If they want us to shop there and spend money, they need to change either what they sell or bring more up-to-date clothing." Others discussed how overpriced things were. One student said, "One of the merits of living in campus-town is the cheap price. People expect food and others to be cheaper than elsewhere, but if you look at the prices here, they are similar to Seoul." Others discussed, "I wish there were more well-known food-chain stores like Subway or Starbucks. I want something I'm familiar with... I would rather go to Seoul or nearby cities than go downtown." In such a way, student participants lamented unreasonable prices and a lack of options when it came to food and other items. Therefore, rather than go downtown, they either chose to cook for themselves or eat near or on campus. The resident and student participants evidently had two varying perspectives on a same issue.

Furthermore, student participants' main concerns regarded employment. They were working toward attaining employment and many were seeking jobs in Seoul or elsewhere once they graduated. When asked if they had ever considered Jochiwon as a place to start their career, most of the participants first awkwardly laughed, then hesitantly said that they had never considered it. As Jochiwon is a rural area, they did not consider the locale as having a future for them in which to grow; they did not consider the location to have enough job opportunities for them.

Considering student participants' lack of consumer and employment interest in Jochiwon, students were not concerned with nor did they have any knowledge of the economic issues local residents faced. When asked what they thought were concerns of the community residents or what they thought were some of the socioeconomical issues of Jochiwon, none of the students were able to give an answer. In this way, the interviews revealed a lack of a relationship between community resident and student interviewees, and no knowledge of each other's concerns.

Conflicts of Interest Between Residents and College Students

During the interviews, many student participants described the relationship between community residents and students as *gab-eul* relations,⁹ especially the relationship between one-room landlords and student tenants. Interviews revealed that some landlords were found to discipline the students about cleaning the room, "as if the students are their children." Students discussed how many owners "step over the line" even when the relationship is only contractual and not personal. Many student participants did not think a "relationship" existed between owners and students. Interviews revealed that students were most frustrated with the price of the one-room apartments. Even though students only lived in the apartment during the semester (approximately eight months out of the year), they had to sign a 10-month contract and pay 10 months' worth of fees in an up-front lump sum when the contract was drawn up. While the large sum itself was overwhelming for college students, the student participants believed that housing owners "fixed the price" amongst themselves. Moreover, most of the student participants were unsatisfied with the overall facilities (e.g., poorly soundproofed walls) of the one-room apartments, given the high rent. While students chose to live in these housing locations because doing so afforded them more freedom than living in the dorms (as dorms generally have curfews), these issues left them unsatisfied and resentful of local residents. Therefore, while owners relied on students to make a living and students relied on owners to live in a residential option of their choice, students described the relationship as *gab-eul*, describing themselves as *eul*, that is, those who are in less power, and the housing owners as *gab*, those who are in power. Interviews showed that

⁹ *Gab* and *eul* are legal terms generally used in drawing contracts. *Gab* is those who are in power, and *eul* is those who are in less power (for instance, in housing contract, *gab* is the housing owner/landlord, and *eul* is the renter).

student participants did not think there was anything they could do to lower the rent or break the fixed price, thus they felt powerless.

On the other hand, the housing owners had their own reason for making ten-month contracts. Since the two universities become vacant during summer and winter vacations (which take up about five months), those who had businesses near the college campuses had no customers during those five months. These business owners repeatedly mentioned and emphasized how their “businesses become dead” with the “exodus of students during vacations.” During interviews, community elders unanimously spoke about the need for Sejong to find ways to keep students in the local area during the vacations. The resident interviewees agreed that the first and most important issue was finding a solution for this problem quickly.

Lack of Trust and Respect Between Local Residents and Students

Interviews revealed that resident interviewees perceived the students as having no respect for the community and its elderly residents. Specifically, interviewees were greatly concerned with noise and trash in the neighborhood. Since bars and restaurants near campuses tend to stay open late into the night, residents who lived close to campuses were greatly affected. One resident discussed, “At night [students] can be really loud... I can hear everything.” Others also remarked that students littered everywhere. Another resident complained about trash: “We have to clean the streets sometimes because [students] throw away their home trash and cigarette butts anywhere.” Others also mentioned that students did not follow the local regulations when it comes to putting out trash for pickup. One resident said, “You can’t just throw away food waste without using the designated bag, but I see students throwing away food waste without using those bags.” While trash disposal regulations are different across districts, in general, food waste needs to be thrown away separately from other types of trash. As some students did not follow this regulation, residents were frustrated and saw such a behavior as disrespectful to them and the community.

When the researcher asked students why they did not follow district regulations about trash disposal and noise, student participants laughed sheepishly. One student commented, “I think it’s because I consider this place to be [one I am] just ‘passing-by,’ I don’t strictly follow the local regulations.” Yet another student said, “I admit, I wouldn’t do that in my neighborhood back home.” Student interviewees admitted to not following these district regulations and that they felt bad for the residents, but they did not discuss

much about correcting their behavior. Because of these poor behaviors by some students, resident interviewees showed their disappointments and loss of interest in and care for the students.

RQ2: How do colleges students and locals make meaning of civic engagement in Jochiwon, and what factors motivate and inhibit residents and college students from engaging in civic activities?

College Students' Lack of Information and Time for Civic Activities

Interviews revealed that student participants had limited access to information about and opportunities to engage in civic activities in Jochiwon. Some students were found to have volunteered at local elementary schools or preschools as after-school teachers or volunteers to assist school teachers; however, students had volunteered because they could either receive scholarships or earn volunteer hours necessary to meet graduation requirements.¹⁰ Other examples of civic activity participation included volunteering at or visiting local festivals, but these were only one-time occurrences. Other than the aforementioned activities, student participants had not volunteered elsewhere, attended religious events, given donations, or participated in any other local activities.

When asked how and whether they could gather information about local activities, student interviewees mentioned a smartphone application for university students called Everytime,¹¹ in which students could check local activities and volunteer opportunities on an advertising page. A student said, "We check the 'hot boards' once in a while to see what others have viewed the most and what 'hot' news is out there. It's also where I found out about the Sejong Festival." Though non-students can request that students post news since only students have access and permission to do so, not all local news can be posted on the application.

Interviews showed that student participants had limited access to information about local news and events. Other than Everytime, they were unable to mention any other channel of communication for receiving local

¹⁰ Each university has different hour requirements but college students generally have to earn volunteer hours to meet graduation requirements.

¹¹ With this app, students can log in with their university name and check local information as well as university course schedule, shuttle bus schedule, course evaluation per students and others. All the announcements are anonymous and only registered students can have access to the application.

news. Moreover, as most students were busy with assignments and course-related activities, they rarely ventured out into local communities. One student said, "Given my major, which has lots of group assignments, I spend most of my time on weekends doing group assignments." Similar answers echoed throughout the interviews. Others also discussed how they either went back home on weekends or visited other cities with friends when they had the time. Given their responsibilities, student participants were tied down with school-related work and rarely had time to partake in civic engagement in the local community.

Locals Lacking Knowledge and Expertise Though Motivated

As for the locals, many were very involved in local community activities. Especially since the establishment of URDS, local community members had worked closely with the local government and experts to rejuvenate Jochiwon by engaging in various activities including but not limited to city cleanup, planting trees, and educating seniors on ways to develop the local community.

As Jochiwon received government funding for urban regeneration, Sin-an *ri*¹² had already applied for URDS, an eight-week program where experts (e.g., professors) are invited to educate local seniors, several times to learn specific ways to develop the community. A community leader of Sin-an, who was on his second term, was active in networking with the local government officials and experts to bring economic development to the community. However, while the leader was active and motivated to engage in various activities and apply for funds, most of the residents who attended the URDS program still lacked knowledge. Many repeatedly said, "What do I know?" while laughing awkwardly when asked what they wanted out of the program. One of the participants explained how he came to Jochiwon 10 years prior, after retirement, to earn a living running a one-room apartment. Similarly, others were either retired and running a one-room apartment or they worked on personal a farm. This answer echoed through the interviews: "[We] want the community to be well, but we don't know what to do."

As such, many were motivated to do something, but lacked the knowledge that could strengthen the economic, social, and cultural development of the community. However, because resident interviewees yearned for improvement, attendance of the URDS was high. In other

¹² *Ri* is a lower administrative region than *eup*; Sin-an *ri* is under Jochiwon *eup*.

activities that were offered as part of the larger Sejong municipal development project, such as Jochiwon festivals (e.g., Jochiwon Peach Festival), street cleaning day, and tree planting day, many volunteered and devoted their time and skills to set up tables, clean streets, post fliers, and cook for volunteers.

Discussion

Working on Establishing Social Capital and Civic Engagement at the Community Level

Results of the interviews show a chasm between the student and local community resident participants. Both students and local community members were found to have tight-knit social networks where the majority were in-group members. This phenomenon can be attributed to several factors. First, because students recognized the locale as a place where they were only “passing by,” they were not emotionally attached to the community and therefore saw no reason to interact with the locals. Second, there was a serious lack of opportunities for students and local residents to meet and communicate with each other, so the chasm remained. The resident interviewees who had personal businesses near the campus (e.g., one-room apartments, cafés, bars, convenience stores) engaged in small conversations with students, but personal relationships were not established. Most importantly, both groups did not recognize each other as helpful resources due to inherent resentment toward each other. Local businessowners viewed students as customers for their housing businesses and not so much as “residents.” They were also disappointed with students’ misbehavior when it came to following local regulations. Student participants, on the other hand, harbored resentment and maintained a distant relationship with the locals because they viewed them as *gab* who had power over housing prices. For these reasons, both groups maintained personal relationships only with in-group members and not across groups; they only accumulated bonding capital and not bridging capital.

This chasm between groups had consequences. Resident interviewees needed help in civic activities, but they lacked manpower, resources, and higher turnout rate in their activities because they did not have contacts and methods for reaching out to the student body; even when they wanted students to participate, they were unable to ask and/or receive any help.

Ironically, student participants had to travel far or seek out information about volunteer opportunities. Since this vicious cycle continued, social capital remained largely lacking at the community level.

Previous literatures also demonstrate groups being homophilic with strong bonding capital amongst themselves and not with each other (Han 2007; Hofstede 1991; Lee 2000). As social capital was only accumulated within their networks, social trust and collaboration between groups were also largely absent. Therefore, while students and locals could have been much richer in social capital and civic engagements had there been some intersections between the groups, each group had limited social capital and civic engagements (Lowndes and Wilson 2001; Putnam 1993).

Extending previous research, the findings of this study indicate that rural communities, here Jochiwon, that are mostly made up of elderly residents have limited knowledge and positive attitudes about civic engagements (Ramakrishnan and Bloemraad 2008). While the literature indicates that students should be considered important partners and stakeholders in community development (Bonsall et al. 2002; Mullins and Gilderbloom 2002), this was not the case in Jochiwon. Therefore, community residents should consider students as important partners in the community development process and work on building positive relationships with students so that students can become an asset by strengthening residents' civic skills, information about civic opportunities, and civic norms (Ramakrishnan and Bloemraad 2008).

Students should correct their behavior, but residents should first recognize and be more conscious of their power over students and find ways to work with students to resolve their economic issues. To do this effectively, both parties first need to come together and engage in open, honest, two-way communication to minimize misunderstandings and tension. Second, both parties need to recognize each other's resources, help in resolving each other's problems, and find ways to compromise so that both groups can be successful in reaching their goals. Third, bridging capital need to be established so that both groups can mutually benefit in case they need help, for instance, in civic activities. As previous research suggests, communities with weak social cohesion at the community level need to work with stakeholders (e.g., universities) to build bonding and bridging capitals across networks (Kearns 2004). Moreover, for the community to experience economic improvement, opportunities to gather and converse must be purposefully created; if not, social capital cannot be accrued at the community level (Putnam 1993, 2000).

Need to Focus on University-Community Relations to Reach Urban Regeneration Goals

Findings show that, in line with previous research, economic issues seem to be at the center of the conflict in the current campus town (Jang 2020); yet, other tensions and misunderstandings were also present between local and student participants. While the residents' and students' problems could be minimized with help from their counterpart, no group reached out to the other for help, and both groups were unaware of each other's problems. Also, even when both the students and locals indicated in the interviews the need for constructive, open, and honest conversations to resolve misunderstandings and find resolutions together, no one discussed taking specific action. In order for successful urban regeneration, residents first need to take action and invite students' to be involved because the locale is their hometown and place of livelihood. As students are in a way "guests," it is important for the locals to create an inviting and friendly environment and opportunities for students' involvement. Students in return, need to acknowledge that they are using the community's infrastructure and businesses without which they would have difficulties in carrying out their daily activities. Students must also understand critical role community resources play in supporting their residence in Jochiwon.

Also, in terms of civic engagement, while Jochiwon can be identified as an exemplary case when it comes to local residents' level of civic engagement, this participation by the locals is only half a success. Communities in campus towns need to consider relations with college students as symbiotic. Not cooperating and collaborating with college students that make up approximately one-third of the total population cannot be said to be a successful case. If opportunities for civic engagement, intentionally or not, exclude one-third of the population, the community could be said to have socially excluded them in terms of access and opportunity (Kearns 2004; SEU 2004). Therefore, in order for a rural community that is a campus town to enjoy greater economic and social development, it must first address the conflict harbored between students and the local community, and then create opportunities for students to join the social activities.

Though it may take more time and resources, efforts to encourage social inclusion need to be established for all comprehensive rural development. As studies suggest, rural areas that have weak community infrastructure need to make programs with specific intent to promote social inclusion (Shortall

2008). Even when college students may only be “passing by” during their college years, they ought to be considered important stakeholders in the community building process and an asset with their talent and knowledge (Bonsall et al. 2002; Mullins and Gilderbloom 2002). If positive relationships are established with students, they can use their talents to contribute by creating culture that is unique to the locale, which is what the rural residents in campus towns want from college students (Jang 2020). However, with college students’ busy schedules and pressure to build a career at an early stage, the community needs to create an environment in which students would be motivated to participate, for instance by creating attractive internship opportunities, awards, and other rewarding incentives to encourage students’ participation and celebrate their contributions. Universities can also join in the process by recognizing community service as a rewarding and worth time spent by accepting community services as volunteer hours.

Interestingly, different from previous literatures (Bender 1998, 1998; Bruning 2006), while both students and locals at some levels thought the relationship should improve, they did not consider the university to function as an official bridge to connect the two groups and mediate possible conflicts. In other words, both students and locals thought of the relationship as student vs. community and not as university vs. community relations. Such a perception may be indicative of universities’ current passive role in the university-community relations.

While students also need to make efforts to improve the relationship, in order for the community to resolve their economic issues, universities need to step up to resolve conflicts between the locals and students. As a first step towards resolving conflicts, universities must recognize their role when it comes to university-community relations. A university can join the process of urban generation by first becoming more active in providing necessary knowledge and information about the local history, geography, society, and culture to student body. This can be done by offering courses on topics such as “Jochiwon regional studies” or “Chungcheong regional studies” so that students’ interest about the area could be drawn naturally. Moreover, as universities in campus towns use much of the communities’ infrastructure and resources, they must acknowledge their responsibility and obligation to contribute to the economic development of local communities (Bonsall et al. 2002). As universities can create cultural diversity, nurture creativity, and lead economic development in rural areas, universities must also emphasize the importance of faculty, students, and employees’ role in the process of urban development. As a result, economic, social, and cultural development of local

communities can also bring benefits towards the university in return in terms of recruiting more students, graduates finding more job options, and students enjoying more culturally diverse environments during their transitional period (Benneworth et al. 2010; Franz 2011; Jang 2020).

Second, the local government also needs to take action to improve university-community relations. Because strong civic engagement not only benefits the locals, but also local governments as social bonds strengthen and contribute to the economic health of a society, local governments need to set long-term goals in urban development and find ways for all three stakeholders to work in cooperation and collaboration. For this objective, local governments need to recognize students' concerns in finding good jobs and provide internships or other work-related education or experiences for students. In addition, local governments need to acknowledge student's contribution to community work by offering incentives such as scholarships for community services. But most importantly, local governments can take action to resolve students' housing burden by controlling housing fees and/or supporting local residents with economic challenges so that they do not take advantage of students; when the students observe community's support and commitment in this issue, they may be more willing to contribute their time and expertise and be open to communication with the local residents. In terms of communicating with students, findings show previous channels were somewhat ineffective. The local government needs to provide more information and open various channels of communication, as well as work with community leaders to recruit students so that those willing can participate in civic engagement at the community level. Since the development of technology, students rely less on print resources; using channels of communications like social media could be one way to begin conversations (Sponcil and Gitimu 2013). With the help of the local government, other platforms such as news boards at supermarkets, cafés, and outdoor billboards could be used to make information more visible.

Conclusion

Findings show that urban regeneration in a campus town is more complicated as the student body consists of individuals with different goals and objectives while living in the same locale as the community residents. A lack of understanding on where the students are coming from and what their needs are can lead to serious downfall in the process of urban regeneration in

campus towns. While the locals can participate in civic engagement activities and build social capital that contribute to urban regeneration, the results can be much more effective and sustainable when the student body is invited into the process. Incorporating what students can bring to the process, such as their energy, outsiders' perspective, technology, and knowledge, can enable synergy. Moreover, experiences of collaboration and working on local projects can jumpstart students' careers, creating a win-win situation for all. The student-community relationship must be seen within the frame of university-community relations, where building a symbiotic relationship for all is the goal.

Since the current study was exploratory in nature, the lack of social capital and civic engagement in a rural campus town does not provide enough evidence to support whether these factors are the primary reason for economic stagnation. The cause-and-effect relationship can be explored with quantitative research to determine statistical support. Other factors must also be considered in testing the relationship such as the national economic growth rate and the effect of depopulation in economic situations of urban areas, to name a few.

While the researcher attempted to investigate social capital and civic engagement in a rural area that is actively trying to revitalize itself through various projects, the study is not without limitations. First, since the urban regeneration project is only in its fourth year, changes made as a result of the city projects have not been so visible. Additionally, there was limited access to government documents. However, the researcher tried to understand the process and the changes being made locally in day-to-day businesses of the locals and therefore sat in on the URDS courses frequently, visited the community town meetings, and engaged in personal conversations with professors involved in Sejong's development projects, including but not limited to URDS. Perhaps, after a few more years and with more collaborative work between the students and the local community, changes would become more evident. Also, the study could not include perspective of the university from the faculty and administrators due to difficulties in recruitment; since faculty play an important role in the university and to their students, future studies can examine their perspectives in the process or urban generation to capture a more inclusive view on university-community relations.

As a nation that is experiencing a low birth rate and as young people continue moving to metropolitan cities, many rural areas in Korea are experiencing a weakening of infrastructure. However, the case may be different for campus towns, with college students voluntarily moving into the

rural areas for education. Local communities, with a little more effort, need to work with young adults to revitalize their neighborhoods and perhaps bring back economic, social, and cultural changes. However, not perceiving the relationship as symbiotic and a lack of understanding can inadvertently lead to social exclusion, thereby bringing negative results in civic engagement and social capital. By engaging in open, honest conversations and purposefully creating opportunities for students to participate in civic engagement, social capital, the building blocks in creating health society, can be accumulated.

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Appendix A

Demographic Information of the Resident Participants

No.	Names	Sex	Age	Years in Jochiwon	Interview type	Location of interviews
1	Park00	M	57	57	1:1	Café
2	Kim00	F	60	45	FGI	Café
3	Lee00	F	58	57	FGI	Café
4	Kim00	F	60	10	FGI	Café
5	Bae00	F	60	12	FGI	Café
6	Shin00	F	62	40	FGI	Café
7	Lee00	F	62	38	FGI	Café
8	Lee00	F	65	38	FGI	Café
9	Park00	M	58	58	FGI	Community center
10	Kim00	M	62	11	FGI	Community center
11	Kim00	M	63	50	FGI	Community center
12	Park00	M	66	16	FGI	Community center
13	Lee00	F	70	45	FGI	Community center
14	Yim00	F	71	43	FGI	Community center
15	Park00	F	69	46	FGI	Community center
16	Kim00	F	45	45	FGI	Community center

Demographic Information of the Student Participants

No.	Names	Sex	Age	Years in Jochiwon	Housing type	University	Major	Interview type
1	Go00	M	26	7	one-room	University A	Major 1	1:1
2	Kim00	M	25	4	one-room	University A	Major 2	FGI
3	Park00	M	25	5	one-room	University A	Major 3	FGI
4	Yim00	M	26	4	one-room	University A	Major 4	FGI
5	Sim00	M	22	3	one-room	University B	Major 5	FGI
6	Kwon00	M	25	3	one-room	University B	Major 6	FGI
7	Na00	M	23	3	one-room	University B	Major 6	FGI
8	Se00	F	23	3	one-room	University B	Major 7	FGI
9	Kim00	M	23	4	one-room	University B	Major 8	FGI
10	Han00	F	22	3	one-room	University A	Major 9	1:1
11	Kim00	F	23	3	one-room	University A	Major 3	FGI
12	Choi00	F	23	4	one-room	University A	Major 3	FGI
13	Gong00	F	23	3	one-room	University A	Major 10	FGI
14	Lee00	F	23	3	one-room	University A	Major 10	FGI
15	Jung00	F	23	3	one-room	University A	Major 10	FGI
16	He00	M	25	3	one-room	University A	Major 11	1:1
17	Oh00	M	25	7	one-room	University A	Major 3	1:1
18	Kim00	F	27	6	one-room	University A	Major 12	1:1

*All interviews with the students took place at the researchers' office per mutual agreement.

Appendix B

Summary of Participants' Demographics

	Age	Sex	Years of residence in Jochiwon	Types of interviews	Others
Student participants	22-27	M=10 F=8	3-7 years; ave. 3.7 years	1:1 interview: 5 2 person FGI: 1 3 Person FGI: 2 5 person FGI: 1	University A: 13 students University B: 5 students Total number of majors: 12
Resident participants	55-71	M=5 F=11	10-57 years; ave. 38.2 years	1:1 interview: 1 3 person FGI: 1 5 person FGI: 1 6 person FGI: 1	Number of community leaders: 2 (one community leader of ri; another leader of local women's association)
Total number of participants		M total: 15 F total: 19 Total: 34			