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Factors Influencing Community Satisfaction in Rural South Korea

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Abstract

Community satisfaction has important implications for individuals and communities because it can influence a person's quality of life and overall well-being. The study aimed to identify the socioeconomic and community participation-related factors influencing residents' satisfaction with their community in rural South Korea. Data were collected from 375 residents of 38 rural villages in Chungnam Province through structured questionnaires. The results from the hierarchical regression analysis showed that residents with higher annual income were more likely to be satisfied with their community. Moreover, participation in new generation cooperatives, community development organizations, and hobby organizations were positively associated with the satisfaction of residents with their community. On the contrary, residents with leadership experience in their community were less likely to be satisfied with their community life. Policy implications were also drawn from the study.

Keywords: community satisfaction, community participation, hierarchical regression

1.0 Introduction

Community satisfaction is an important issue for both the individual and the community, as well as one's country. HannsScott (2016) elucidates that since community satisfaction markedly influences individuals' quality of life and overall aspects of the community, extensive research should be conducted on how they are interrelated. Community satisfaction is also a central component of community development and planning (Sirgy & Cornwell, 2001). Park, Nunkoo, & Yoon (2015) reveal that support for a development intervention in

a community is influenced by the residents' satisfaction with their community. It is, therefore, important to understand the factors that influence community satisfaction. Multitudes of factors can play a role in influencing residents' satisfaction with their community. Community satisfaction is influenced by the socioeconomic status of people in that individuals with higher socioeconomic status have the financial capacity and political power to modify their community to the way they need it to be (Hannscott, 2016).

Extensive literature has investigated community participation and community satisfaction as factors influencing a person's quality of life and overall well-being (Baum, Arthurson, & Richson, 2010; Hipp, 2009; Lu, 1999; Theodori, 2001). Satisfied residents are more likely to invest time and other resources into their communities (Baum et al., 2010; Hannscott, 2016).

Research also reveals that urban communities have a higher quality of life than their rural counterparts when measured by objective indicators, and in relative terms, rural communities are characterized by lower income, lower employment rate, and lower access to economic and social services (Sorensen, 2014). The same author also argues that despite these characteristics, rural communities have numerous advantages besides economic benefits and services, that are not measured objectively and that make them feel a higher sense of community and satisfaction than their urban counterparts. Theodori (2001) also contends that the proportion of rural dwellers who are satisfied with their community is higher than that of urbanites. In addition to socioeconomic characteristics, community cohesion has often been linked to community satisfaction.

According to Goudy (1977), in predicting community satisfaction, social dimensions are the notable ones in rural areas, with strong primary group relationships, participation in public affairs, taking decision jointly, and commitment to the community being strongly associated with higher community satisfaction. Filkins, Allen, and Cordes (2000) suggested that community ties and a strong sense of community have a greater role in predicting community satisfaction.

Community participation, sense of community and community satisfaction are closely related to the active involvement of community members in issues that affect their lives and the larger community in which they live (Talo, Mannarini, & Rochira, 2013). Community participation can be political (e.g., voting, taking part in a demonstration, campaigning, boycotting, signing a petition) or social participation (e.g., volunteering, organizing cultural events, mobilizing to promote the quality of services) and thus can be defined accordingly (Mannarini & Fedi, 2009; Talo et al., 2013). According to Chesoh (2010), community participation has the capacity to influence the direction and execution of community development interventions within a given locality. It is also one of the important factors for successful community development (Luloff & Wilkinson, 1990). Community participation has also been viewed as a prominent mechanism for crime prevention, improving services, and enhancing social conditions (Chavis & Wandersman, 1990).

The studies that have been conducted about community satisfaction so far have mostly been directed towards the satisfaction of life among urban communities (Ladewig & McCann, 1980). They also focused mostly on the socio-demographic and economic aspects of the residents to investigate their satisfaction with their communities, not taking community participation into account (Brown, 1993; Filkins et al., 2000; Stinner & Loon, 1992; White, 1985). Hannscott (2016) also argues that much is still not well understood about the linkage between socioeconomic status and community satisfaction. On top of

that, little attention has been devoted to the previous research to the role of socioeconomic diversity in understanding differences in community satisfaction (Hannscott, 2016). The majority of them have also focused on studying American and European communities (Brown, 1993; Dassopoulos & Monnat, 2011; Filkins et al., 2000; Fried, 1984; Hannscott, 2016; Lu, 1999; Ramos, Carvajal, Leon, & Trinidad, 2017; Sirgy, Gao, & Young, 2008; Sorensen, 2014; Theodori, 2001; Whorton & Moore, 1984).

This study thus aims to identify the socioeconomic and community participation-related factors influencing residents' satisfaction with their community in a rural Korean setting.

2.0 Previous Studies

2.1 Conceptual Issues

Community satisfaction has been the topic of sociological research since 1945 (Potter & Cantarero, 2014). Research in the area of community satisfaction is critically important in that it indicates the way for development policy and planning pertaining to community development (Grzeskowiak, Sirgy, & Widgery, 2003). Since community satisfaction is everything for an individual's social life, it has the capacity to influence the overall living conditions of an individual (Lu, 1999; Theodori, 2001).

Community satisfaction is also a key factor when individuals decide whether to continue residing in their community or leave it for another community which they think will be more satisfying because it might influence individuals' perceived quality of life (Bach & Smith, 1977; Baum et al., 2010; Heaton, Fredrickson, Fuguitt, & Zuiches, 1979; Rhoads & Raymond, 1981). When individuals become satisfied with their community, they tend to invest their time, knowledge, and financial resources in their community (Lu, 1999; Theodori, 2001; Hannscott, 2016).

According to Ramos et al. (2017), community is not just a geographical place; rather, it is an intricate web of interactions with ideas of unity, reciprocity, and collective well-being. Community satisfaction can be generally defined as people's subjective assessment of their well-being in relation to the extent to which their local community meets their personal needs (Potter & Cantarero, 2014). Community satisfaction as a concept denotes the entire response of an individual to the community and the result of how the community is perceived in satisfaction in different dimensions, the opportunities, benefits and the like (White, 1985). It is also defined as individuals' subjective evaluation of their condition regarding the extent to which their community meets their needs (Matarrita-Cascante, 2010). However, the concept of community satisfaction has several dimensions including general satisfaction, satisfaction with the environment, satisfaction with social services, interpersonal satisfaction, economic satisfaction, housing satisfaction, neighborhood satisfaction, residential satisfaction, political satisfaction and various social dimensions of satisfaction (Deseran, 1978; Fitz, Lyon, & Driskell, 2016; Grzeskowiak et al., 2003; Hannscott, 2016; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011; Sirgy et al., 2008). Thus, it is defined differently, taking each dimension into account. Fitz et al. (2016) argue that whereas individuals may be satisfied with some dimensions of their community, they may also be dissatisfied with other aspects.

Any study pertaining to community satisfaction needs to sort out the dimensions of a satisfying or good community (Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011). Filkins et al. (2000) argue that when investigating community satisfaction, all aspects of the

community including local governmental activities, economic services, employment opportunities, and social interactions need to be examined to determine how they affect the residents' satisfaction with their community. Several studies on community satisfaction have been undertaken over the years with an emphasis on different factors (Brown, 1993; Dutta-Bergman, 2005; Filkins et al., 2000; Grzeskowiak et al., 2003; HannsScott, 2016; Ladewig & McCann, 1980; Lu, 1999; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011; Sirgy et al., 2008; Theodori, 2001). Sirgy et al. (2008) emphasize that a multitude of factors influence community satisfaction and that it is ultimately a salient factor influencing satisfaction with overall life of residents. The socioeconomic status of individuals is the dominant factor influencing their satisfaction with their community (HannsScott, 2016).

Community participation is about the capacity of the local people to influence the process and implementation of community development projects rather than simply getting consulted and being the beneficiaries of the project (Chesoh, 2010). Community participation plays a pivotal role in promoting local development and social empowerment, improving the quality of the physical environment, social justice as well as solving community problems (Talo et al., 2013; Chavis & Wandersman, 1990).

2.2 Theoretical and Measurement Issues

It is difficult to determine which characteristic of a community affects its residents' satisfaction due to the absence of an agreed-on theoretical perspective on community (Ladewig & McCann, 1980; Theodori, 2001; Theodori, 2004; Filkins et al., 2000). Many socioeconomic factors influencing community satisfaction have been identified by previous research. Females and older people with house ownerships are more satisfied with their community and married couples with children are also more satisfied (Brown, 1993; Lu, 1999; Rohe & Basolo, 1997). Ladewig & McCann (1980) argue that the social setting, such as an individual's interpersonal relations in the community, can influence one's level of satisfaction. Brown (1993) identifies the length of residence and house ownership, with people owning a house being more satisfied, as salient factors affecting community satisfaction. High income and more education are likely to make people satisfied with their communities as such people can have increased access to information and plenty of choices regarding their place of residence (HannsScott, 2016). Moreover, higher income means people can purchase good quality houses in an attractive community, thus being able to choose a community in accord with their desires (HannsScott, 2016). The physical attractiveness of the community can also influence community satisfaction, the aesthetic satisfaction individuals feel, recreational and entertainment activities, religious services, cost of living, crime rate, and the nature of interaction with a neighborhood (Grzeskowiak et al., 2003; Park et al., 2015; White, 1985).

Socioeconomic status has also been an antecedent of community satisfaction because community residents with higher incomes and education have more residential choices and are better equipped to improve their surroundings (HannsScott, 2016). It means that community satisfaction is equated with community quality. However, the relationship between socioeconomic status and community satisfaction becomes less clear. More research needs to be done to understand this relationship better.

A number of studies (Dassopoulos & Monnat, 2011; Goudy, 1977; Huang, 2014; Sanchez-Franco, Buitrago-Esquinas, & Yniguez, 2012) have also revealed that community satisfaction and community participation are correlated. Sanchez-

Franco et al. (2012) argue that community satisfaction is an essential issue for effective community participation in that individuals are likely to participate in community events more when they are satisfied with their community, interact much with each other and develop affective relations. Goudy (1977) found that social dimensions were more important in determining community satisfaction than previous studies had indicated. The community social dimension scale used in Goudy's study consisted of the following items: primary group relationships, community participation, commitment, viability, heterogeneity, power distribution, and community pride. Huang (2014) also explicates that community satisfaction has a direct and positive correlation with individuals' community participation in decision-making and benefit-sharing and influencing community sense of belongingness of the individual residents.

Conversely, individuals who participate more in community life are likely to experience more satisfaction with their community (Dassopoulos & Monnat, 2011). Community participation has the capacity to instigate the disposition of individual residents to support and be active agents in interventions in their community (Huang, 2014). Community participation through direct decision-making and independent management has the tendency to enhance community satisfaction (Huang, 2014). Community participation can take different forms, including informal conversations with neighbors, volunteering for community organizations, participation in associations, self-help groups, and community meetings, monetary or in-kind donations for the community, taking part in community events, and attending church and community festivals (Dassopoulos & Monnat, 2011; Fitz et al., 2016; Mannarini & Fedi, 2009; Ramos et al., 2017). The participation of individuals in community meetings and volunteering in the community is found to have a greater association with a higher level of community satisfaction (Dassopoulos & Monnat, 2011). Residents participate more in the community when they feel more secure in their community, interact more with their neighbors, and when they have a better sense of community (Chavis & Wandersman, 1990).

Scholars have not yet reached a consensus on how to measure and define community satisfaction (Filkins et al., 2000; HannsScott, 2016). Fried (1984) also contends that several theoretical and methodological problems arise when satisfaction is used as a basis for measuring human experience. Moreover, satisfaction, being a subjective response to an objective environment, has been seen with skepticism as a measure and criticized (Potter & Cantarero, 2014). HannsScott (2016) states that individuals' expectations and assessments of situations can influence their satisfaction because it is a highly subjective concept. However, Potter & Cantarero (2014) argue that this issue can be addressed by using quantitative measures and qualitative measures together. Findings on community satisfaction may sometimes mislead policymakers in that the higher satisfaction of the respondents can be due to their lower awareness of better alternatives available (Francescato, Weidemann, & Anderson, 1987 cited in Potter & Cantarero, 2006).

The reviewed literature reveals that most of the detailed empirical research on community participation has concentrated on Western societies (Christens, Speer, & Peterson, 2016). This study, therefore, investigated the community participation of residents and socioeconomic factors influencing the community satisfaction of residents in a rural Korean community context.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Data Collection

This study investigated 375 residents living in 38 villages of the rural communities in Chungnam Province. The non-probability sampling method was used to select the villages and the respondents. The 350 villages in Chungnam were classified into remote villages, middle-level villages, and suburban villages to select the 38 villages. The 38 villages were selected purposively out of 350 rural villages in Chungnam Province based on the criterion that they have community development projects. This was intended to include residents' participation in the community development organizations, which are under the community development project and see its effect on the residents' satisfaction with their community.

A sampling allocation (quota sampling) was used to select respondents from each village. Accordingly, a total of 380 respondents, ten respondents from each village, were purposively selected from among those residents who have attended community development training and those with leadership experience in their community. Among those residents who had attended community development training and with leadership experience, those who were easily accessible were included in the survey. Thus, 380 survey questionnaires were distributed from June 12 to October 20, 2018, and 375 questionnaires were collected back with five non-response cases.

The investigators visited the villages in person to explain the purpose of the study and to make necessary clarifications on the questionnaire. Prior to the distribution of the questionnaire, the respondents were asked for their permission to participate in the survey, and all the respondents verbally gave their consent. The survey respondents completed the questionnaires on their own. In cases when the respondents had difficulty in reading and writing the questionnaire and where the village leaders were enthusiastically cooperative with the study, the target data were directly collected by these leaders. The leaders were given training on the questionnaire beforehand. In some cases where the leaders were not cooperative, the investigators interviewed the respondents, filled in the questionnaires and collected back the questionnaires themselves.

3.2 Measurement

This study used a structured questionnaire with an comprehensive list of questions so as to capture all the needed data pertaining to the topic under investigation. The questionnaire consisted of questions about the respondents' demographic and socioeconomic aspects as well as about satisfaction with their community using five items and about their participation in the community using five items, with a total number of 21 questions. The socioeconomic variables used in this study were the respondent's gender, age, level of education, occupation, annual income, community leadership experience, and length of stay in years in the community.

The community satisfaction variables and indicators were obtained using previous measurement scales (Brown, 1993; Brown, Dorius, & Krannich., 2005; Filkins et al., 2000; Goudy, 1977; Theodori, 2001). The five community satisfaction indicators used for this study were: (1) satisfaction with income earned, (2) satisfaction with community environment and facility, (3) satisfaction with community health care, (4) satisfaction with community cultural activities, and (5) overall satisfaction with the community. A 5-point

Likert scale measurement was used, and the scale items included: 1=“strongly disagree,” 2=“disagree,” 3=“neutral,” 4=“agree,” and 5=“strongly agree.” The composite mean was calculated for the five community satisfaction indicators before conducting the hierarchical regression analysis and was used for regressing the predicting variables.

The measurement of community participation indicators was also obtained in the same manner using measurement scales used in previous studies (Kempton, Holland, & Bunting-Howarth, Hannan, & Payne, 2001; Savage, Isham, & Klyza, 2005). The five community participation indicators used in this study were: (1) respondent’s involvement in agricultural cooperatives, (2) new generational cooperatives, (3) religious cooperatives, (4) community development organizations, and (5) hobby organizations. Again, a 5-point Likert scale measurement was used; the scale items were: 1=“strong disagree,” 2=“disagree,” 3=“neutral,” 4=“agree,” and 5=“strongly agree.”

3.3 Analysis

Data were collected from the 375 respondents selected for the final survey. Data analysis was done using SPSS software version 24. Preliminary tests for data cleaning were performed to determine the characteristics of each variable using statistical techniques. Accordingly, 33 outliers were identified among the respondents and were removed. The method of outlier testing was casewise diagnostics in SPSS software version 24, and cases with a standard residual greater than 3.0 for the composite mean of community satisfaction were deleted. Finally, 342 sample data were analyzed for the research.

We calculated a normal distribution of variables, extreme values (outliers), and linearity to analyze errors in the collected data. As a result, a normal distribution of variables was achieved to some degree based on skewness, kurtosis, and Cook’s distance.

After data cleaning, hierarchical regression analysis was employed to identify the determinants of community satisfaction. For the hierarchical regression analysis, the research model required two groups of independent variables: (1) socioeconomic and (2) community participation variables. For the first step, we considered socioeconomic variables, and in the second step, we added community participation variables. The reason for this order of regression was that since most previous studies have identified socioeconomic variables as predictors of community satisfaction, we wanted to verify it first. After controlling the socioeconomic variables effects, we also wanted to see the effect of community participation. This is because there is high covariance between socioeconomic and community participation variables according to previous studies (Awortwi, 2012; Chalcharoenwattana & Pharino, 2018; Chengcai, Linsheng, & Shengkui, 2012; Fakere & Ayoola, 2018; Plummer, 2000).

4.0 Results

4.1 Socioeconomic Characteristics of Respondents

As shown in Table 1, the study respondents were dominated by males (65.5%), and 64.3% of them were aged over 61 years. More than half (55.5%) had completed high school or a higher level of education. Most respondents (60.5%) earned an annual income of USD 30,000 or less, and the majority (62.6%) made a living from farming. Almost half of the respondents (42.7%) had lived in the community for more than 40 years, and exactly the same percentage of respondents had community leadership experience.

Table 1: *Profile of respondents (N=342)*

		Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)			
Gender	Male	224 (65.5)	Annual income (USD)	15,000 or less	113 (33.0)	
	Female	118 (34.5)		15001~30,000	94 (27.5)	
Age	30 or less	10 (3.0)		30,001~45,000	96 (28.1)	
	41~50	29 (8.5)		45,001~60,000	26 (7.6)	
	51~60	83 (24.3)		60,001 or more		
	61~70	139 (40.6)		Community leadership experience	yes	146 (42.7)
	71 or more	81 (23.7)			no	196 (57.3)
Education	Elementary or less	56 (16.4)		Length of stay (year)	10 or less	76 (22.2)
	Middle school	96 (28.1)			11~20	41 (12.0)
	High school	130 (38.0)			21~30	39 (11.4)
	College or more	60 (17.5)	31~40		40 (11.7)	
Occupation	Farm	214 (62.6)	41~50		52 (15.2)	
	Non-farm	128 (37.4)	51~60		44 (12.9)	
			61 or more	50 (14.6)		

As indicated in Table 2, the respondents were asked whether they actively participated in their community. The forms of participation were: involvement in agricultural cooperatives, new generational cooperatives, religious cooperatives, community development organizations, and hobby organizations. The average score was 3.41 (out of a possible maximum of 5.00). The dominant form of community participation was in community development organizations (3.94), followed by membership in agricultural cooperatives (3.71). Participation in religious organizations had the lowest score (2.83).

Table 2: *Community participation (N=342)*

	Mean	S.D.
Agricultural cooperatives (n=341)	3.71	1.102
New generational cooperatives (n=342)	3.32	1.214
Religious organizations (n=341)	2.83	1.228
Community development organizations (n=342)	3.94	.891
Hobby organizations (n=342)	3.24	1.134
Total	3.41	.679

1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree

4.2. Hierarchical Regression Analysis

We performed a hierarchical regression analysis to identify the factors influencing community satisfaction. As indicated in Table 3, regression Step 1 incorporates only socioeconomic variables and Step 2 incorporates community participation variables in combination with socioeconomic variables. These factors were used in the equation due to their statistically significant correlations with community satisfaction. Table 3 contains the standardized regression coefficient (β), R^2 , and change in R^2 (ΔR^2).

Among the socioeconomic factors in Step 1, income had a statistically significant positive correlation with community satisfaction, indicating that people earning a higher annual income were more satisfied with their community. This finding is in harmony with recent research that also indicated that income influences community satisfaction (Hannscott, 2016). On the other hand, leadership experience had a statistically significant negative correlation, indicating that respondents with more leadership experience were less satisfied with their community. Here are some possible reasons. First, this could be due to opportunities for the community leaders to get exposure to other communities in the form of training and field visits outside their community to places that are better than their own and the resultant comparison effect with their own communities. This is because satisfaction is highly influenced by past experiences and current expectations (Potter & Cantarero, 2014).

Second, community leaders in rural Korea are usually in charge of managing the community development projects in their respective communities because there are few organizations such as community development corporations in rural areas, despite the existence of many community development programs run by local and central governments. As such, community leaders are expected to make too much of a commitment to manage the development projects without any kind of incentive or reward. As a result, it is common to see community leaders wanting to give up or not be assigned to a community leadership position. Unlike previous studies (Brown et al., 2005; Brown, 1993; Lu, 1999), the age and length of stay in the community were not significant predictors of community satisfaction in this study.

Among the community participation variables in Step 2, participation in community development organizations had a statistically significant positive correlation with community satisfaction. This reveals that respondents who actively participate in community development organizations were more satisfied with their community. Participation in new generation cooperatives and hobby organizations also had a statistically significant positive correlation, indicating that people taking part in these organizations were more satisfied with their community.

About three percent of the variance in community satisfaction was accounted for by seven predictors used in Step 1. In Step 2, community participation factors changed the equation into $R^2=.347$, $F(5, 322) = 14.267$, $p < .01$. Thirty-five percent of the variance in community satisfaction was accounted for after Step 2. Comparison of the two steps also indicated that the change in R^2 was statistically significant, with a change in R^2 (ΔR^2) = .318 ($p < .01$).

Table 3: Hierarchical Regression Analysis

	Step 1			Step 2		
	B	β	t-value	B	β	t-value
Constant	3.659		9.462**	2.373		6.917**
Gender (male=1, female=2)	-.041	-.031	-.503	-.032	-.024	-.458
Age	-.002	-.026	-.406	-.003	-.043	-.805
Education	.005	.008	.117	-.040	-.061	-1.003
Income	.083	.144	2.440**	.016	.028	.551
Length of stay (year)	-.001	-.021	-.283	-.002	-.063	-1.022
Occupation (non-farm=1, farm=2)	-.033	-.025	-.411	-.099	-.076	-1.460
Leadership experience (no=1, yes=2)	-.064	-.050	-.853	-.151	-.118	-2.386*
Community participation						
-Agricultural cooperatives				.013	.022	.406
-New generation cooperatives				.067	.127	2.329*
-Religious organizations				.006	.000	-.002
-Community development organizations				.358	.488	9.943**
-Hobby organizations				.067	.118	2.354*
<i>F</i> value	1.410*			14.267**		
R^2	.029			.347		
Adjusted R^2	.009			.323		
ΔR^2				.318**		

Dependent variable: community satisfaction, Durbin-Watson= 1.499, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

5.0 Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the socioeconomic and community participation factors affecting the satisfaction of residents within the rural environment. We conducted a survey of rural residents and analyzed what socioeconomic and community participation factors influenced community satisfaction.

As a result of the study, income and leadership experience factors were found to be the socioeconomic variables that influence community satisfaction. These results are also consistent with previous studies (Hannscott, 2016; Permentier, Bolt, & Van Ham, 2011) that suggested the relationship between income and community satisfaction. It is interpreted that when individuals' incomes are

higher, it enables them to engage in various activities in the community and increases their community satisfaction. However, income is sometimes presented as an unrelated control variable (Fitz et al., 2016; Grillo, Teixeira, & Wilson, 2010; Long & Perkins, 2003; Mellander, Florida, & Stolarick, 2011). It was explained that individual income is not understood as community income, and it was suggested that it is difficult to expect an increase in community infrastructures at the same rate as personal income increases.

The results are also in harmony with the previous study by Potter & Cantarero (2014) that indicated a negative influence of leadership experience on community satisfaction. Although leadership experience had a negative influence in terms of additional efforts by individuals, there are also studies (O'Brien, Hassinger, Brown, & Pinkerton, 1991; O'Brien, Raedeke, & Hassinger, 1998) that revealed that when the satisfaction of the whole community is taken into account, leaders' cooperation and connection activities in the community increase the survival rate of the region. It is important to note that even though effort on the part of an individual to carry out leadership work has lowered their level of community satisfaction; many leaders have trust in their community and are cooperating with many organizations in there. The study also found that the age and length of stay did not affect community satisfaction. This was not consistent with previous studies (Bach & Smith, 1977; Brown, 1993; Brown et al., 2005; Fitz et al., 2016; Lu, 1999).

Among the community participation variables, participation in development organizations was found to influence individuals' satisfaction with their community. This finding is also in line with previous studies (Adams, 1992; Connerly & Marans, 1985; Crowe, 2010; Davis & Fine-Davis, 1981; Lee, Campbell, & Miller, 1991; Morton, 2003; Parkes, Kearns, & Atkinson, 2002; Sampson, 1988; Sampson, 1991) that identified participation in the developmental organizations to be positively related to community satisfaction. In this study, participation in new generation cooperatives and hobby organizations were also statistically significant variables. There are many perspectives on community participation as promoting local development and social empowerment and improving the quality of the physical environment (Chavis & Wandersman, 1990; Talo et al., 2013). The various forms of community involvement include dialogue with neighbors, volunteering, participating in associations, self-help groups, and local events, donating, and attending community meetings and church (Brown, 1993; Dassopoulos & Monnat, 2011; Filkins et al., 2000; Fried, 1984; Hannsott, 2016; Lu, 1999; Ramos et al., 2017; Sirgy et al., 2008; Sorensen, 2014; Theodori, 2001; Whorton & Moore, 1984).

This study indicates that socioeconomic factors and community participation factors influenced the satisfaction of individuals with their community. Higher annual income among socioeconomic factors and more participation in community development organizations among community participation factors had a positive effect on community satisfaction. On the other hand, community leadership experience among community participation-related factors led to less satisfaction of individuals with their community. 'Age' and 'length of stay' were found to be insignificant factors affecting community satisfaction in this study. In addition, 'participation in new generation cooperatives' and 'participation in hobby organizations' also showed statistically significant positive correlations with community satisfaction. This implies that when residents communicate more with their neighbors they feel more satisfied with their community and have a better sense of it.

The academic implications of this study are as follows. The direction of policies related to regional or community development should always be aware of residents' satisfaction with their community. Efforts should be made to further improve the income of the residents and their participation in community development organizations as they markedly affect community satisfaction. In addition, since community leadership experience is identified as a factor in dissatisfaction with the community, an institutionalized incentive mechanism and honorary support program should be in place for the community leaders to lessen their dissatisfaction.

The study also puts forward the following policy implications. The main goal of the local development act is the satisfaction with the community that the residents feel. Community satisfaction is in turn perceived as quality of life for residents and the positive evaluation of their community contributes significantly to their decision to stay in their community rather than move away from it. If residents have a personal network of friends in their community and have connections with others, it is plausible that they will decide to live in that community. Also, if they participate in a variety of community groups or volunteer as a resident, their community satisfaction increases. Therefore, policymakers and community development practitioners should target community intervention areas that enhance residents' interaction and participation in community affairs. Encouraging neighborhood interaction among residents through informal arrangements (such as labor exchanges and discussions) and arranging mechanisms for community dialogue forums can be mentioned in this regard.

This study also had limitations in that it only investigated the socioeconomic and community participation variables as factors affecting community satisfaction. Since the residents' satisfaction with their community is the result of multiple factors, there should be further research to sort out additional factors that influence community satisfaction. The further study needs to focus particularly on neighborhood attributes such as the neighboring population, contact with neighbors, social safety, shopping facilities and green spaces. Further research also needs to be conducted about why respondents' leadership experience as a community participation-related factor is negatively correlated with satisfaction with their community.

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