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Public Trust in Government in China and South Korea: Implications for Building Community Resilience

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Abstract: This study analyzes how citizens' satisfaction with governance values and perceived government performance affect public trust in government in China and South Korea and explores its implications for building resilient communities. The results of the study show that the level of satisfaction with democratic governance values and the government's performance in dealing with political corruption, the economy, and human rights are all significantly associated with trust in government in China. Government performance in dealing with political corruption and the economy is significantly associated with trust in government in South Korea as well. Government officials' attention to citizen input is significantly associated with trust in local government in both countries. Trust in people was significantly associated with trust in government in China only. Finally, implications of the study findings for building resilient communities and future research agendas are discussed.

Keywords: public trust in government, China, South Korea, community resilience

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Introduction

Public administration in global communities is continuously engaged in collaboration-based strategies and has expanded public-private sector partnerships, the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and volunteer activities in a civil society (Kim, 2009; O’Leary, Van Slyke, & Kim, 2010). Scholars in public administration pay attention to the development of collaborative governance as an alternative mechanism for achieving effective service delivery (Brown et al., 2008; Bryson & Crosby, 2008; O’Leary, Van Slyke, & Kim, 2010). Collaboration-based strategies could also aim to enhance governance efficiency, effectiveness, and citizen participation in government decision-making process as a way of overcoming the challenges of fiscal austerity and building social cohesion in both developed and developing countries.

However, in order to effectively implement policies in collaborative governance, government leaders need to develop effective and trustful relationships between citizens and government institutions and to support and understand citizens and businesses; the issue of community resilience is no exception. This paper first addresses the argument that a trustful relation between government institutions and the public could facilitate effective implementation of collaboration-based strategies devised for building resilient communities. Based on that argument, this paper aims to achieve two primary goals: (1) to identify the factors affecting public trust in government in China and South Korea; and (2) to discuss implications of the study findings for the role of government in building resilient communities.

While governance strategies devised for establishing resilient communities could vary by country, this study addresses the idea that sustaining and enhancing public trust in government could be a fundamental common strategy for both China and Korea. There are specific reasons why these two countries are selected for this research. Firstly, a comparative study of China and South Korea is meaningful in terms of analyzing citizens’ satisfaction with democratic governance and its impacts on their trust in government as

both countries face citizens' increased expectations for strengthening the capacity and delivery of democratic governance. China and South Korea have a long history of a hierarchical administration structure regarding control and power in central-local relations. In recent years, however, decentralization has become inevitable in the Asian regions (Aziz & Arnold, 1996; Kim, 2009). Given the increased role of local government in China and South Korea, it is important to examine factors affecting public trust in local government as well as central government.

Secondly, this study plans to compare two different countries where some variations of public trust in government are visible. China has been categorized in the trusted country group, where public trust in government has been ranked high compared to the level of trust in government expressed by citizens in other countries (Edelman, 2012, 2015). Meanwhile, South Korea has been categorized in the distrusted country group where public trust in government has been ranked low compared to the level of trust on government expressed by citizens in other countries (Edelman, 2012, 2015). It is important to study the two countries' different levels of public trust in government in order to compare the factors affecting public trust in government in different governance climates and to explore the study findings' implications for community resilience in two different settings of governance.

In order to identify the factors affecting public trust in government, the study analyzes the Asia Barometer Survey of 2003, collected in cities in China and South Korea. This data has been analyzed because the survey measures citizens' satisfaction with democratic governance values and public trust in government concurrently in both countries. This is rare data, collected concurrently in both countries, that is useful for conducting comparative research of citizens' satisfaction with democratic governance and public trust in government in China and South Korea. The study analyzes how citizens' satisfaction with democratic governance values, including freedom of association, freedom of speech, the right to be informed about government, the right to criticize the government, and perceived government performance affect public trust in

national and local governments in China and South Korea. The study tests the impacts of perceived citizen empowerment, trust in people, and individual demographic variables on trust in government. Finally, implications of the study findings for the role of government in building resilient communities and future research agendas are discussed.

Public Trust in Government

Scholars have been concerned about declining public trust in government in Europe and North America (Crozier et al., 1975; Hetherington, 1999; Norris, 1999; Ruscio, 1996; Thomas, 1998). But why does trust in government matter in public administration?

While there are various definitions of trust, trust at individual level is defined as “to have confidence in somebody; to believe that somebody is good, sincere, and honest; and to believe that something is true or correct or that you can rely on it” (Hornby, 2005, p. 1645). In terms of interpersonal trust, McAllister (1995, p.25) defines it as “the extent to which a person is confident in, and willing to act on the basis of, the words, actions, and decisions of another”.

Several scholars note that public trust in government enhances the legitimacy and the effectiveness of democratic government and encourages compliance with laws and regulations. Other scholars suggest that trust in government represents an evaluation of the government performance, indicating whether performance accords with normative expectations held by the public (Levi & Stoker, 2000; Miller & Listhaug, 1999; Newton & Norris, 2000). Results of several studies suggest that citizens’ perception of economic and political performance is highly associated with their trust in government (Mishler & Rose, 2001; Newton, 1999; Orren, 1997). In Japan, the Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan,

and Thailand, Chang and Chu (2006) demonstrated that the level of citizens' perception of corruption is inversely related to their trust in government institutions. Scholars in the public administration field have also emphasized that citizen participation leads to enhanced compromise, cooperation, and consideration of diverse policy options, as well as increased legitimacy of the decision-making process and deliberative democracy (Andrain & Smith, 2006; Nelson & Wright, 1995). Meanwhile, social capital literature addresses the influence of trust, networks, and civic norms on policy implementation, quality of services, and feasible and legitimate government innovation efforts (Putnam, Leonardi, & Nanetti, 1993).

The impacts of citizens' changing behaviors, attitudes, and values on their trust in public institutions have been explored by several scholars (Andrain & Smith, 2006; Inglehart, 1997; Norris, 1999). For example, Inglehart (1997) emphasizes that the rise of liberal values or self-expressed values that tend to reject authority may affect citizen trust in public institutions. Welzel and Inglehart (2006) argue that citizens' values of human autonomy and choice make people more receptive to the idea of individual freedom and self-expression.

Finally, scholars acknowledge that the causes and effects of changes in social norms and citizens' confidence and trust in government institutions are complex (Christensen & Læg Reid, 2005). For example, several scholars address that institutional context, political culture, and citizen-state relationships may be important factors that determine the level of trust in government (Bouckaert, Van de Walle, & Kampen, 2005; Bouckaert & Van de Walle, 2001; Christensen & Læg Reid, 2005; Kim, 2010).

Trust and Community Resilience

To fully understand changing social norms and public trust in government, Andrain and Smith (2006) suggest that scholars should examine the interaction between personal attitudes and sociopolitical structures. This focus has led researchers to increased awareness of the role of social capital in building resilient communities. According to Comfort, resilience can be defined as:

the capacity of organizations and actors to recognize risk, learn in a dynamic situation, adjust actions to existing constraints, and, most importantly, to continue operations for the community in the most innovative, effective way possible, given available knowledge, skills, and resources (Comfort, 2013, p.1).

Concerning community resilience and risk management process, scholars also emphasize the role of trust in facilitating effectiveness of risk management and community resilience. Related to the risk management process, scholars have highlighted that the level of confidence in the source of messages could be positively associated with the effectiveness of preparation, response, and recovery (Drabek, 1986; Lindell & Perry, 1992; Mileti & Sorensen, 1990). Baldwin et al. (2008) further report that the level of public confidence in the credibility of government sources may also affect the level of public compliance with government instructions in the context of terrorist attacks. Slovic (1993) contends that the distrust between the public, industry, and risk management professionals has influence on the contentiousness that has been observed in the risk management arena and thereby limits the effectiveness of risk-communication efforts. The mentioned study further emphasizes the importance of recognizing interested and affected citizens as legitimate partners in the exercise of risk assessment. Consequently, a proposal is made to adopt a public participation approach in both risk assessment and the

risk decision making process that can ultimately increase the legitimacy and public acceptance of the resulting decisions of risk management (Slovic, 1993).

In a study of how to enhance the capacity to manage resilience, Lebel et al. (2006) address the importance of a participatory approach to generate trust, and the role of deliberation to improve the shared understanding needed to mobilize and self-organize. Concerning public-private partnerships to improve community resilience, Stewart et al. (2009) note that building of relationships between government agencies and private sector partners will influence the ability of communities to adapt and respond to the consequences of disasters.

In order to devise specific strategies for enhancing community resilience, scholars need to pay attention to various dimensions of social capital research, including an individual citizen's trust in other citizens, community organizations, and local and national government. This research attention is essential, as government reforms in global communities have been continuously invested in collaboration-based strategies, including public-private sector partnerships, the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and community empowerment (O'Leary, Van Slyke, & Kim, 2010).

Although China and South Korea have different political systems, cultures, and citizen-state relationships, the two countries face similar challenges to develop administrative capacity and leadership competency for enhancing community resilience to effectively deal with ongoing economic crisis, emergencies, and security challenges. Through analyzing the factors affecting public trust in local and national governments, practitioners in China and South Korea may apply the lessons from public trust in government research for defining the role of government and leadership strategies for enhancing community resilience. Additionally, connecting the research fields of public

trust in government and community resilience could enhance collaborative governance capacity to improve crisis and emergency management in both countries.

Trust in Government: China and South Korea

China

Studies report high levels of trust in government and other political institutions in China (Edelman, 2012; Nathan, 2003; Wang, 2005). According to a survey conducted on a national representative sample of China in 1993 (Nathan, 2003), over 94 percent of citizens agree or strongly agree with statements such as, “we should trust and obey the government, for in the last analysis it serves our interests” (Nathan, 2003, p. 13.) Another 2002 survey conducted for the project “East Asia Barometer: Comparative Survey of Democratization and Value Changes,” showed high level of trust in both the central and local governments (Nathan, 2003, p.17).

In addition, according to the World Values Survey, conducted in China in 2001 on a national representative sample of 1,500 adults, political trust in China was very high: 97 percent of the respondents said they had ‘a great deal of confidence’ or ‘quite a lot of confidence’ in the national government, while 95 percent said this about the parliament (National People’s Congress), and 92 percent said this about the Communist Party (Wang, 2005, p.150). The Chinese public shows one of the highest levels of confidence among the 27 countries examined in the World Values Survey (Wang, 2005). According to the Edelman Trust Barometer data from 2012 to 2015, China was ranked as one of the five countries that showed the highest levels of public confidence in government among 26 countries included in the research (Edelman, 2012, 2015).

Since the economic reform movement began in 1978, the Chinese government and society have undergone continuous changes in terms of economic development, regulation policy, social development, privatization, civil service reform, and decentralization (Burns, 2003; Wang, 2006). Furthermore, Chinese economic institutional reforms have brought significant problems of corruption in various fields, including financial industries, building industries, state-owned enterprises, government bureaucracies, and law enforcement agencies (TI, 2006a). A report on the National Integrity System in China notes that there are more than 60,000 cases of corruption placed on file for investigation every year in China (TI, 2006a).

China has opened to the global community since the country joined the World Trade Organization in 2001, and has enjoyed fast-paced economic growth. Through decentralization reforms, some local governments have been empowered to open to the outside world to attract direct foreign investments, and regional coalitions have been promoted in the area of Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Macao, and Hong Kong to coordinate regional economic development. In terms of political reforms, in 1982 the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress recognized grassroots self-government organizations in the rural areas, and allowed direct elections for neighborhood committees in the towns and villages (Tao, 1997).

South Korea

Recent studies (KDI, 2006; Jung & Sung, 2012) on social capital and public trust in social and political institutions in South Korea indicate that the public trusted Congress the least, followed by the political parties, central government, and local government. Several international and national surveys data from 1981 to 2001 also document decreased trust in government in South Korea (KDI, 2006). Furthermore, the

number of voters who participated in presidential, parliamentary, and local elections has gradually decreased (Kim, 2005). While the South Korean government has made a great deal of progress on government effectiveness through reforms and innovations (World Bank, 2007), South Korea faces the ongoing challenges of decentralization and of improving transparency. One of many benefits resulting from the development of a democratic political system in South Korea is the reinstatement of local governments to expand local autonomy and democratic structures. In a recent study of social capital and public trust in social and political institutions in South Korea, public trust in the National Assembly was lowest, followed by the political parties, and executive branch (Jung & Sung, 2012).

In 1988, the National Assembly broke with the political tradition of centralized authority by passing the South Korean Self-Governance Act, which encouraged local governance and decentralization (Kim, 2010a). Elections for local legislative council seats began in 1991; elections for city mayors and provincial governors began in 1995. Prior to 1995, mayors, provincial governors, and other local officials were all appointed by the central government, as were top-level bureaucrats. Accordingly, the Self-Governance statute established in South Korea has provided a challenging opportunity for building local governance while promoting responsiveness, transparency, and accountability to local residents (Kim, 2010a. South Korea also has more than 20,000 non-governmental organizations in 2005 (TI, 2006b).

The South Korean government has implemented market-oriented reforms such as deregulation and privatization since the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997. Additional reforms have focused on the institutionalization of transparent governance and electronic-government development in order to promote openness, participation, and

integrity. For example, the Disclosure of Information by Public Agencies Act was enacted in 1998 to guarantee citizens' right to be informed of government activities. The South Korean government established the Korea Independent Commission Against Corruption (KICAC) in 2002, a central-level anti-corruption agency based on the Anti-Corruption Act of 2002 (TI, 2006b). Although the Korean government has carried out reforms to improve service quality, transparency, and citizen participation, public trust in government still ranks very low among the 26 countries studied by Edelman (Edelman, 2012, 2015).

Factors Affecting Trust in Government and Hypotheses

Democratic Governance Values

Since the 1990s, developing and developed countries have emphasized building democratic governance at the national and local levels to connect government reforms and economic growth to social development and civil society (United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 2006). The process of building democratic governance emphasizes the values of the rule of law, decentralization, accountability, transparency, integrity, and citizen participation. Many developing countries face not only the challenges of economic development and government capacity building, but also must deal with building the relationship between state and civil society (UNDP, 2006). Additionally, both national and local governments in developing countries struggle with redefining the structure of decentralization in terms of political power, authority, resources, and service integration.

Warren (1999) argues that democratic systems institutionalize distrust or skepticism by providing many opportunities for citizens to monitor the activities of people and institutions they supposedly trust. In addition, Van de Walle (2004) notes that the conditions needed for creating trust are not necessary to the same extent as those required for good governance. Specific experiences with the government and its services and the dynamic interaction between the public and government may affect the degree of trust in government (Bouckaert & Van de Walle, 2001). Christensen and Lægreid (2005) further find a positive relationship between citizens' satisfaction with the way democracy functions in Norway and their trust in public institutions and public administration overall. However, the research on the relationship between satisfaction with democratic governance values and trust in government is limited, and the relationship could vary by country.

What is the relation between citizen satisfaction with democratic governance values and trust in central and local governments? Are there any similarities and differences in the relation between China and South Korea? The democratic governance values included in the study are the right to vote, the right to participate in any kind of organization, the right to gather and demonstrate, the right to be informed about the work and functions of government, freedom of speech, and the right to criticize the government. This study explores the relationship between satisfaction with democratic governance values and trust in central and local government.

H1: The degree of satisfaction with democratic governance values is positively associated with the public's trust in both central (1a) and local (1b) governments.

Government Performance

Several studies suggest that citizens' evaluation of government performance is highly associated with trust in government (Lawrence, 1997; Mishler & Rose, 2001; Newton, 1999; North, 1990; Orren, 1997). Many of the performance indicators used in studies on trust measure perceptions of performance (Van de Walle, 2004) rather than performance output or outcome measurement. Studies find that the political performance of governments on issues such as security and policy responsiveness are associated with enhanced trust (Lipset & Schneider, 1987; Mishler & Rose, 2001; Turner & Martz, 1997). Miller and Listhaug (1999) argue that the evaluations of political performance are as important as those of economic performance. Political corruption is another factor affecting the degree of public trust in government (Miller & Listhaug, 1999; Otake, 2000; Pharr et al., 2000). This study analyzes how perceived central government performance on several public policy issues is related to trust in central and local governments in China and South Korea. The level of perceived central government performance may affect public trust in local governments, especially in nations with a long history of hierarchical relationships between central and local government (e.g., China and South Korea).

H2: The level of perceived central government performance is positively associated with trust in central government (2a) and local government (2b).

Perceived Citizen Empowerment

Another interest of this study is to explore the relationship between the degree of government officials' attention to citizen input and citizens' trust in government. Two forms of trust have been defined by McAllister (1995): cognition-based trust and affect-based trust. While cognition-based trust draws on beliefs about another's abilities, affect-based trust is founded on social-psychological bonds between parties. According to

these definitions, the sense of respect a citizen feels through government officials' attention to their input may increase their affect-based trust in government. For example, scholars emphasize that citizen participation in government performance evaluation is an important strategy for improving trust in government (Yang & Holzer, 2006; Wang, 2001). Based on a survey of chief administrative officers in U.S. cities with populations greater than 50,000, Wang (2001) finds that public managers perceive positive impacts of citizen participation on public trust in administration in terms of administrative competency, honesty, and fairness. Another study by Ho and Coates (2006) demonstrates that initiatives promoting citizen-driven performance measurement improve trust in government. The following hypothesis will be tested in the study:

H3: The degree of government officials' attention to citizen input is positively associated with the public's trust in central (3a) and local (3b) governments.

Trust in People

How does the degree of trust in people in general affect the level of trust in government? Scholars emphasize the impact of cultural norms and interpersonal trust on institutional trust (Mishler & Rose, 2001). From a cultural perspective, institutional trust is an extension of interpersonal trust, learned early in life and, much later, projected onto political institutions, thereby conditioning institutional performance capabilities (Inglehart, 1997; Jackman & Miller, 1996; Levi, 1996). This study explores the relationship between the level of trust in people and trust in government. It attempts to determine whether there is a difference in this regard between China and South Korea.

H4: The degree of trust in people is positively associated with trust in central (4a) and local governments (4b).

Research Methods

Data Collection

This study is based on the Asia Barometer Survey 2003 (Asia Barometer, 2008; Inoguchi, Basanez, Tanaka & Dadabaev, 2005) collected in China and South Korea. The survey targeted all adults aged 20–59 in several metropolitan cities in each country. The completed sample size is 800 for each country, and a multi-stage-stratified random sampling method was applied. The survey was conducted in face-to-face interviews from June to September 2003. The Chinese Academy of Social Science Research Center conducted the survey in China, and the field work was conducted from June 2 to June 21, 2003. Sampling methodology was as follows: 1) 100 samples are respectively allocated to 8 metropolises: Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Chongqing, Xi'an, Nanjing, Dalian, and Qingdao; 2) 10 survey points are randomly chosen from census enumeration districts in each city through probability proportional to size sampling; 3) 10 individuals are systematically chosen at equal intervals (interval=5) from the resident registration ledger at each survey point (Inoguchi et al., 2005).

In Korea, fieldwork was undertaken by the company Taylor Nelson Sofres Korea from June 3 to June 21, 2003. Sampling methodology was as follows: 1) based on the population determined by the latest census, 800 samples were allocated to seven metropolitan cities and five provinces—that is, Seoul, Busan, Daegu, Incheon, Daejeon, Kwangju, Ulsan, Kyongi, Kwanwon, Choongchung, Junra, and Kyonsang; 2) from each metropolitan city or province, two to four municipalities were selected randomly as primary sampling units based on the population of the metropolitan city or province; 3)

the sampling size was allocated to the primary sampling units in proportion to the population; 4) households were selected systematically from randomly chosen sampling points within the municipalities; and 5) individuals were extracted from each household with the Kish method, taking sex and age into consideration.

Measurements

The dependent variable of trust in government is measured by the following question: “Please indicate to what extent you trust the following institutions (the central government, the local government) to operate in the best interests of society on a scale from 1 (trust a lot) to 4 (don’t trust at all)”. Citizen satisfaction with democratic governance values are measured by the following items on a scale from 1 (very satisfied) to 4 (very dissatisfied): “How satisfied are you with the current scope of the following rights in [China/South Korea]”: the right to vote, the right to participate in any kind of organization, the right to gather and demonstrate, the right to be informed about the work and functions of government, freedom of speech, and the right to criticize the government. The Cronbach’s alpha for these items was 0.85 (China) and 0.69 (South Korea). Regarding government performance, the respondents were asked to rate how well the central government is dealing with the following issues on scale from 1 (very well) to 4 (not well at all): the economy, political corruption, human rights, unemployment, crime, the quality of public services, immigration, and environmental problems (see Appendix).

To measure opportunities for citizen input, the respondents are asked to what degree they agreed with the following statement on a scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree): “Government officials pay little attention to what citizens like me think”. Concerning trust in people, respondents were also asked to respond to the following

question: “Generally, do you think people can be trusted *or* do you think that you can't be too careful in dealing with people (that it pays to be wary of people)?”

Control Variables

Several studies find that the impacts of demographic variables on trust in institutions are weak or nonexistent (Mishler & Rose, 2001; Turner & Martz, 1997). While one study shows that women support public institutions more than men do (Læg Reid, 1993), another finds that older people generally have more trust in governmental institutions than younger people in Norway (Christensen & Læg Reid, 2005). Information regarding the impact of demographic factors on trust in government can be used to analyze long-term trends in confidence (Christensen & Læg Reid, 2005).

This study explores how the level of education, gender, age, frequency of purchasing newspapers, and getting information of politics and economy from the Internet affect trust in government. As the number of females in the workforce have been increased in both private and public organizations in Asia, it is worth to analyzing how gender affects trust in government. As there is continuous change in economic growth and social development, different generations may have different levels of trust in government. Regarding demographic variables, respondents were asked how frequently, if at all, they purchase newspapers and from which kind of media they get information about the specific subjects.

Citizens who are engaged in the political system generally have a higher level of trust in most governmental institutions than people who are less engaged (Christensen & Læg Reid, 2005). In order to measure citizen commitment to voting, as a way of measuring the engagement in the political system, the respondents are asked to what degree they agreed with the following statement on a scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 5

(strongly disagree): “Since so many people vote in elections, it really doesn’t matter whether I vote or not.”

While this study proposes a positive relation between trust in others and trust in government, social networks could also affect trust in public institutions. Based on the “social network” concept begun in sociology in the 1960's, Granovetter (1973) proposed that the network of *weak ties* is the key to the spread of social change. The social network theory indicates that weak ties—connections between groups that do not ordinarily interact—play an important role in getting valuable information (Granovetter, 1973). Weak ties could be the most effective people through which to access new ideas and contacts. According to Granovetter (1973), weak ties with low redundant information could facilitate innovation and creative ideas. Meanwhile, the social network theory denotes *strong ties* as people we know very well. Strong ties share similar ideas formed from a similar set of values and experiences. It is reasonable to assume that citizens with external networks (or weak ties) in other countries may have new information about political systems, government functions, civil society, and citizenship in those countries. Citizens’ external social networks in foreign countries may affect trust in government. Specially, in an authoritarian political system with limited media freedom, the external networks may influence citizens’ perspectives on government and democracy. The level of the external social networks of citizens is measured in terms of communicating with people in other countries via the Internet and e-mail. The variable of the external social network is measured by the following question: “I often communicate with people in other countries via the Internet and e-mail”.

Findings

Descriptive Analysis and Correlations

Table 1. Survey Participants in Urban Cities in the Asia Barometer Survey 2003

		China (N= 800)	South Korea (N= 800)
		%	%
Education	Elementary School/ Junior high school/middle school	30.1	7.3
	High school	28	53.5
	High school level vocational-technical school	10.9	.4
	Professional school/technical school	19.1	15.9
	University/graduate school	11.8	22.3
Sex	Female	50.9	49.1
	Male	49.1	50.9
Age	20-29	22.5	28.1
	30-49	57.9	56.3
	50-59	19.6	15.6
Purchase of newspapers	Every day/almost every day	67.3	61.4
Internet use for politics and economy		13.6	14.6

Demographics for the 1,600 survey respondents from both countries are shown in Table 1. The respondents' education levels show that a higher percentage of the Korean participants completed a high school education and the same is true for college education. The majority of respondents (67% in China, 61% in South Korea) purchase

newspapers every day or almost every day. In terms of age, the age group of 30 to 49 had the highest percentage of participants in both countries. Also, just under the 15 % of the respondents in both countries reported using the Internet for getting information on politics and the economy (Table 1).

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics, Reliabilities, and Correlations (China)

	Mean	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1. Trust in national government	1.67	1														
2. Trust in local government	2.00	.56**	1													
3. Democratic governance	2.41	.35**	.40**	1												
4. Quality of public service	2.32	.22**	.22**	.35**	1											
5. Political corruption	2.89	.36**	.38**	.40**	.26**	1										
6. The economy	2.35	.33**	.31**	.34**	.22**	.40**	1									
7. Human rights	2.46	.36**	.39**	.48**	.35**	.52**	.39**	1								
8. Unemployment	2.86	.23**	.24**	.30**	.28**	.40**	.37**	.39**	1							
9. Immigration	2.28	.18**	.20**	.30**	.38**	.29**	.26**	.31**	.28**	1						
10. Crime	2.47	.19**	.25**	.27**	.35**	.36**	.22**	.33**	.40**	.25**	1					
11. Environment problems	2.37	.18**	.17**	.27**	.44**	.28**	.19**	.23**	.19**	.23**	.22**	1				
12. Commitment to vote	2.85	-.07*	-.05	-.10**	-.02	-.04	-.07	-.07*	-.08*	-.03	-.10**	.06	1			
13. Citizen input	2.50	-.19**	-.20**	-.30**	-.16**	-.25**	-.18**	-.25**	-.24**	-.10**	-.21**	-.14**	.38**	1		
14. Trust in people	.54	.18**	.15**	.08*	.03	.06	.10**	.09**	.10**	.01	.07*	-.06	-.09*	-.07*	1	
15. External social networks	.10	.12**	.04	.11**	.03	.02	-.02	.04	-.06	.03	-.06	.03	.02	.03	-.08*	1

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics, Reliabilities, and Correlations (South Korea)

	Mean	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1. Trust in national government	2.94	1														
2. Trust in local government	2.90	.65**	1													
3. Democratic governance	2.39	.10**	.08*	1												
4. Quality of public service	2.68	.21**	.20**	.06	1											
5. Political corruption	3.37	.31**	.26**	.14**	.25**	1										
6. The economy	3.17	.41**	.29**	.12**	.30**	.51**	1									
7. Human rights	2.82	.26**	.25**	.14**	.37**	.35**	.38**	1								
8. Unemployment	3.35	.28**	.24**	.14**	.27**	.35**	.45**	.37**	1							
9. Immigration	2.86	.16**	.14**	.04	.40**	.20**	.19**	.31**	.26**	1						
10. Crime	3.08	.21**	.22**	.12**	.37**	.26**	.30**	.34**	.37**	.29**	1					
11. Environment problems	3.01	.20**	.19**	.08*	.38**	.25**	.31**	.31**	.35**	.23**	.28**	1				
12. Commitment to vote	3.15	-.10**	-.12**	.07*	-.07*	.05	-.06	-.06	-.00	.02	-.02	-.07*	1			
13. Citizen input	1.86	-.08*	-.14**	-.02	-.08*	-.16**	-.15	-.09*	-.11**	-.07	-.06	-.12**	.08*	1		
14. Trust in people	.45	.02	.04	.03	-.05	-.03	-.02	-.04	-.03	-.00	.03	.01	.07*	-.02	1	
15. External social networks	.05	-.02	.00	-.02	.09*	-.02	.00	.06	-.03	.00	.04	.00	-.07*	-.01	-.00	1

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Descriptive statistics and correlation coefficients for the study variables are presented in Table 2 and Table 3. The majority of the zero-order correlations were statistically significant at $p < 0.01$. For China, all of the measures appeared to be relatively distinct; the largest correlation between independent variables (between government performance in dealing with the economy and in dealing with human

rights) was 0.52 (Table 2). For South Korea, the largest correlation between independent variables (between government performance in dealing political corruption and in dealing with the economy) was 0.51 (Table 3).

This study found that participants in China show a higher level of trust in central as well as local governments compared to the level of trust in government expressed by participants in South Korea. Like past surveys, this study found a high level of trust in government in China. Interestingly, the degree of trust in central government was higher than the mean score of trust in local government in China. Meanwhile, compared to China, there were low scores for trust in government at both the central and local level in South Korea.

Overall, interestingly, the participants in both countries expressed their satisfaction with democratic governance values. While the satisfaction score for the right to vote ranked higher for both countries compared to the satisfaction scores for the other democratic governance values, its interpretation should be cautious as both countries have different institutions and systems for voting at the national and local levels. This study also found that Korean participants in the survey expressed a higher level of satisfaction with the right to vote compared to Chinese participants. This could be related to citizens' satisfaction with their right to elect the president, national assembly members, province governors, mayors, and local council members in South Korea. Interestingly, both countries' citizens were least satisfied with the limitations of the right to be informed about government.

Regarding government performance, participants in China gave the highest evaluation on the issues of immigration. The highest evaluation score given by the Korean participants was for the quality of public services. Interestingly, the

government's ability to deal with political corruption was the lowest evaluation score for both countries. Overall, the Chinese participants were more satisfied with their government's handling of policy issues compared to the participants in South Korea. In terms of being empowered citizens, the participants of both countries assigned low scores to government officials' attention to what citizens like them think, with Korean participants assigning lower scores to this item than Chinese participants. However, the Korean participants expressed a higher level of commitment to voting compared to the level expressed by the Chinese participants.

Multiple Regression Analysis

Regression models were analyzed to consider two important issues: 1) a comparison of trust in central government to local government; and 2) the comparative analysis of the impact of democratic governance and perceived government performance. Results from ordinary least squares (OLS) multiple regression analyses appear in Table 4 (China) and Table 5 (South Korea). The equation of each model achieves statistical significance at the .001 level.

China. The results of multiple regression analyses (Table 4) show that the levels of citizens' satisfaction with democratic governance values and with the central government's performance in dealing with political corruption, the economy, and human rights are all significantly associated with trust in both central and local governments in China. The degree of government officials' attention to citizen input is positively associated with trust in both central and local governments in Models 1 and 3. This study also finds that citizens' trust in people overall is significantly associated with trust in central and local governments. Among the independent variables, perceived government performance in dealing with the economy and trust in people

Table 4. Results of Regression Analysis (China)

	<i>China</i>			
	Central		Local	
	<i>Model 1</i>	<i>Model 2</i>	<i>Model 3</i>	<i>Model 4</i>
	<i>Beta</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>Beta</i>
Democratic governance	.26***	.10**	.34***	.17***
Quality of public service		.05		.06
Political corruption		.14**		.19***
The economy		.16***		.09*
Human rights		.10*		.13**
Unemployment		-.00		-.01
Immigration		-.01		-.01
Crime		.02		.03
Environmental problems		.04		-.01
Citizen input	-.13**	-.07+	-.12**	-.05
Trust in people	.16***	.15***	.11**	.09**
Commitment to vote	.01	-.02	.04	.01
External social networks	.09**	.09**	.01	.02
Sex	.06	.04	-.00	-.70
Age	-.09**	-.06 +	-.11**	-.10**
Education	.00	.02	-.01	-.01
Purchase of newspapers	0.8*	.06+	.07*	.07*
Internet (news for politics and economy)	.00	.02	-.06+	-.08*
<i>R</i> ²	.189	.275	.204	.300
<i>Adjusted R</i> ²	.178	.255	.194	.281
<i>F</i>	17.009***	13.769***	18.662***	15.533***

N= 800; † $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

overall best explain the variation in trust in the national government. However, satisfaction with democratic governance values and government performance in dealing with political corruption best explain the variation in trust in the local government.

Among demographic variables, older Chinese people showed a higher level of trust in government compared to younger people. The frequency of the purchase of newspapers is positively associated with trust in both national and local governments. Interestingly, people who use the Internet for politics and economy news were more likely to express a high level of trust in local government (Models 3 and 4). The degree of citizens' commitment to participating in elections is not significantly associated with trust in either central or local government. Regarding social networks, people who report frequent communications with people in other countries were more likely to express a lower level of trust in central government (Models 1 and 2).

South Korea. The results of regression models on South Korea (Table 5) show that satisfaction with democratic values is significantly associated with trust in government without performance variables. However, when the performance variables are included in the regression model, the relation was not significant. Meanwhile, the national government's performance in dealing with political corruption, the economy, and crime are significantly associated with trust in both national and local governments. Furthermore, the degree of government officials' attention to citizen input is positively associated with trust in local government only when the performance variables were not included in the regression model (Model 3).

Interestingly, according to the results of regression Model 4, younger people express a higher level of trust in local government compared to older people. Citizens who report a high level of commitment to participate in elections are more likely to express trust in both national and local governments. Those who use the Internet to get

Table 5. Results of Regression Analysis (South Korea)

	<i>Korea</i>			
	Central		Local	
	<i>Model 1</i>	<i>Model 2</i>	<i>Model 3</i>	<i>Model 4</i>
	<i>Beta</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>Beta</i>
Democratic governance	.11**	.04	.09*	.04
Quality of public service		.01		.01
Political corruption		.14**		.14**
The economy		.24***		.12*
Human rights		.01		.04
Unemployment		.03		.06
Immigration		.03		.02
Crime		.07+		.07
Environmental problems		.04		.05
Citizen input	-.05	.02	-.13***	-.05
Trust in people	.02	-.11	.04	.01
External social networks	-.03	-.02	.02	.01
Commitment to vote	-.12**	-.07+	-.14***	-.11**
Sex	.01	.02	-.01	.02
Age	-.00	-.00	.05	.07+
Education	-.00	-.02	.03	.05
Purchase of newspapers	.06+	.10*	.11**	.14**
Internet (news for politics and economy)	-.07*	-.04	-.01	.00
<i>R</i> ²	.045	.228	.061	.183
<i>Adjusted R</i> ²	.031	.202	.047	.158
<i>F</i>	3.208**	8.983***	4.419***	7.303***

N= 800; † $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

information on politics and the economy express a higher level of trust in central government only in Model 1. External social networks in other countries were not significantly associated with trust in government.

Discussion and Implications for Building Community Resilience

This study found that there are some interesting differences and similarities between China and Korea regarding public trust in government and the factors affecting public trust in government. The findings of this study show some differences in public trust in government in China and South Korea. Public trust in central and local governments in China was higher than public trust in central and local governments in Korea. For Korea, there is not much difference in the degree of public trust in central and local governments, but, for the Chinese public, trust in local government is lower than their trust in central government. Another interesting finding of the study is about the function of trust in people in general, as it relates to public trust in government. For China, the level of trust in people was a significant factor positively affecting public trust in both central and local governments. However, for Korea, trust in people was not a significant factor affecting public trust in government at all. These results demand further research to analyze the causes explaining these differences within China and between the two countries. Meanwhile, the study found similar factors that associated positively with public trust in central and local governments in China and South Korea, including citizen satisfaction with democratic governance, satisfaction with government performance of the economy and political corruption, and government officials' attention to citizen input.

What are the potential implications of these findings for improving community resilience capacity in both countries? These variations are important in terms of exploring the potential role of public trust in government concerning building community resilience in both countries. In China, it is beneficial to have a higher degree of public trust in government that could positively facilitate government and citizen relations in the process of building community resilience. However, government leaders should pay attention to the lower level of trust in local government compared to the Chinese population's trust in central government. Community resilience could be affected by building active and effective lines of communication between local government officials and local residents in resolving emergent local governance affairs. The study finding implies that local residents' lower level of trust in local governments could be a potential barrier for building community resilience in China. Meanwhile, for Korea, the study findings could be a warning sign that the lower level of public trust in both central and local governments could be a national concern for preparing community resilience in the era of austerity, public-private partnerships, and collaboration in public affairs. Furthermore, considering the positive relation between trust in people and public trust in government found from the China survey, the Korean government may pay attention to assessing the degree of trust in people at the local level as a way of analyzing community resilience capacity.

Another important finding of the study is that citizens in both countries expressed a low level of satisfaction with the right to be informed about government. This situation could be a barrier to effectively dealing with risk management and emergency management at the community level, as there could be limited information sharing between government and local residents for determining proactive and preventive

approaches to achieve resilient communities. This finding implies that national and local governments in China and South Korea should assess current policy on government information sharing and develop more effective methods to inform citizens about government and specific policy concerns in communities.

In order to build up stronger community resilience, sustaining and enhancing public trust in government is important as government takes a role of leading and facilitating negotiations on diverse public policy issues with various stakeholders. Accordingly, the study findings of the factors affecting public trust in central and local governments in both countries provide some insights for government officials to figure out ways of enhancing public trust in government.

For China, the results of the regression analyses show that more efforts to build democratic governance and protect human rights should be emphasized along with economic development policy to improve trust in national and local governments. Considering a lower level of public trust in local government compared to trust in central government in China, the findings are very informative. Government performance dealing with political corruption was the most significant factor affecting public trust in local government followed by satisfaction with democratic governance, and governance performance on human rights. For Korea, which showed a lower degree of public trust in local government compared to China, government performance in dealing with political corruption was the most significant factor affecting public trust in local government, similar to the finding from China. These findings imply that local government leaders in both countries should take note that reducing political corruption could be the most important facilitator for enhancing public trust in local governments. For China, the findings also suggest that enhancing

government performance related to democratic governance values and human rights issues in different regions would raise the level of public trust.

Another finding of the study is that Chinese citizens who often communicate with people in other countries were more likely to express a lower level of trust in central government. This finding implies that citizens with social networks in other countries may have different expectations regarding government functions and democracy in China. The citizens with external social networks tend to be more critical and might expect government innovations to enhance democratic governance.

The results from the regression analyses confirm that if government deals well with political corruption, public trust in government could be improved. Interestingly, participants from both China and South Korea evaluated the government's ability to deal with political corruption very low on the scale. While both countries have paid attention to institutionalizing laws and policies to prevent corruption, this study shows that citizens are not satisfied with the government performance on dealing with corruption. More attention should be paid to develop and assess management capacity for dealing with corruption in both national and local governments. Furthermore, the national and local governments could emphasize intergovernmental coordination by implementing laws and policies against corruption. Finally, government could create more opportunities for collaborations with citizens, non-governmental organizations, and international organizations to enhance the value of transparency in civil society.

Government officials' attention to citizen input is significantly associated with trust in local government in China and South Korea. The findings also highlight the importance of developing more opportunities for citizen input in government decision-making processes. Accordingly, it is vital to pay attention to effective

communication between citizens and government when large-scale reforms of administration are initiated in order to incorporate citizens' expectations in the reforms (TI, 2007). According to the survey results in South Korea, citizens' commitment to participate in elections was positively associated with trust in government. This implies that civil society should keep cultivating the value and the responsibility of citizenship to participate in the political process. Ultimately, community empowerment and effective communication between local communities and government would be essential for developing and sustaining resilient communities in both developed and developing countries.

What are the implications of the study findings for future research on building resilient communities? Firstly, there is a scarcity of in-depth case studies of how social networks and public trust in government influence recovery plans in local communities. In order to understand effective communication strategies for effective pre- and post-emergency management in local governance, we need to understand the decentralized communication systems in dealing with emergency at the local level. For example, social network analysis provides a method to map current communication systems and evaluate their strengths and weaknesses. Future research may focus on the following research questions: 1) To what extent do government officials intend to share government information regarding disasters and emergency with citizens and local community organizations?; 2) What are the communication systems in place that enable government to share government information regarding disasters and emergency with citizens and local community organizations?; and 3) How do inter-organizational social networks and trust among key institutions of emergency and disaster management influence the exchange of information between governmental agencies and local community organizations in the wake of catastrophe?

Secondly, the era of governance and citizen collaboration requires civil society to increase the value it places on civic engagement and citizenship responsibility. However, there are important gaps in our knowledge within public administration when it comes to the effectiveness of citizen participation in various countries. In order to apply collaborative governance in building resilient communities, the relation between citizens and the state should be a partnership rather than a vertical connection (Kim, 2010b; O’Leary & Bingham, 2009). More research on government strategy for effective communication and partnership building with citizens is one of the most urgent issues in building resilient communities.

Thirdly, more attention should be paid to evaluating the policy and system of citizen participation in building resilient communities at the local and national level and developing more flexible and effective methods for improving citizen participation. How to design participation programs and how to evaluate the effectiveness of the programs could be affected by different cultures, different national values, and different institutional needs in different countries. More in-depth case studies of civic engagement in resilient community building may help develop citizen participation models. Scholarly efforts to perform rigorous testing of the models with valid empirical data (e.g., integration of qualitative and quantitative data) would facilitate the crafting of theory on the relation between participation programs and community resilience.

Finally, another important issue is how to share government information and policy issues with citizens through adopting diverse and efficient media tools to improve public trust in both national and local governments and to facilitate community resilience building.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study extends our understanding of how citizen satisfaction with democratic governance values, perceived government performance, empowered citizenship, external social networks, and demographic factors effects trust in national and local governments in China and South Korea. Through comparative study, we can improve our understanding and knowledge about trust in government in both countries. Furthermore, governments can learn from each other how to build the trust that is essential for establishing resilient communities in the era of austerity, uncertainty, and complexity of public affairs in the 21st century.

Important limitations to this research should be noted. First, the study was based on data collected in urban areas only. In order to get a comprehensive picture of trust in government, more research on rural communities is necessary. Second, the measures used here were perceptual rather than objective; a more complete analysis would require additional data on government performance and longitudinal studies of the patterns of trust in national and local government. Finally, it is difficult to explain reasons for variations in public trust in government between these two countries with the limited data analyzed in this study. For that concern, a comparative study on the institutional, historical, political, and cultural dimensions of public trust in government in China and South Korea would be beneficial to understand the variation between these two countries.

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Appendix

Survey Items

- *Trust in government*: “Please indicate to what extent you trust the following institutions to operate in the best interests of society. If you don’t know what to reply or have no particular opinion, please say so”. (Scale: Trust a lot, Trust to a degree Don’t really trust; Don’t trust at all; Don’t know)
- *Satisfaction with democratic governance values*: How satisfied are you with the current scope of the following rights in [China/South Korea]? The right to vote; The right to participate in any kind of organization; The right to gather and demonstrate; The right to be informed about the work and functions of government; Freedom of speech; The right to criticize the government (Scale: Very satisfied, Somewhat satisfied, Somewhat dissatisfied, Very dissatisfied, Don’t know)
- *Government performance*: I would like to ask you some questions about the central government. How well do you think the [Chinese/South Korean] government is dealing with the following issues? The economy; Political corruption; Human rights; Unemployment; Crime; The quality of public services; Immigration; Environmental problems (Scale: Very well, Fairly well, Not so well, Not well at all, Don’t know).
- *Citizen input*: I am going to read out some statements about society and politics. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement: Government officials pay little attention to what citizens like me think. (Scale: Strongly agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree, Don’t know)
- *Trust in people*: Generally, do you think people can be trusted or do you think that you can't be too careful in dealing with people (that it pays to be wary of people)? (Scale: dummy variable)
- *Commitment to voting*: Since so many people vote in elections, it really doesn't matter whether I vote or not (Scale: Strongly agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree, Don't know)

- *External social networks*: “Does the following statement apply to you? I often communicate with people in other countries via the Internet and e-mail”.
- *Newspapers*: Please indicate how frequently, if at all, you purchase newspapers; (*Scale*: everyday/almost every day; every other day, 2-3 times a week, once a week, 2-3 times a month; about once a month; less often than once a month, don't buy; don't know)
- *Internet*: From which kind of media do you get information about the following subjects? Please select all media that apply for each subject; Politics and the economy (*Scale*: dummy variable)
- Please indicate your gender. Gender (male, female); (*Scale*: dummy variable)
- What is your age? (*Scale*: years old)
- What is the highest level of education you have completed? (*Scale*: No formal education; Elementary school/junior high school/middle school; High school, High-school-level, vocational-technical school; Professional school/technical School; University/graduate school)