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Article

Neighborhood Interaction Factors versus Social Compositions in Predicting Youth Socialization Development[1)]: An International Research

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This study compared the effects of neighborhood proximal interaction factors (i.e., collective efficacy and community violence) with those from social compositions (e.g., neighborhood deprivation) on indices of youth socialization development (i.e., social information processing and self-regulatory ability). The generality of those effects was assessed in three Asian countries and the United States. A total of 1279 undergraduates were instructed to recall their childhood experiences by answering several self-report questionnaires. Hierarchical regression analyses revealed that neighborhood interaction factors had significant effects on socialization indices when social compositions were controlled, and the generality of these effects was partially confirmed in all of the countries studied except Japan.

key words: collective efficacy, community violence, social information processing, self-regulation

Neighborhood factors and antisocial behaviors

One's neighborhood can affect child and adolescent social development through a variety of mechanisms. In particular, the effects of factors such as neighborhood deprivation on antisocial behaviors (e.g., aggressiveness and delinquency) have been extensively examined in recent psychological and sociological research (e.g., Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2000; Sampson, Raudenbush, & Earls, 1997). In a comprehensive review of research regarding neighborhood effects on child and adolescent outcomes, Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn (2000) made an important distinction between neighborhood structure (e.g., income and household composition) and the neighborhood social process (e.g., social cohesion and informal social control) in defining and identifying neighborhood characteristics. Neighborhood structure dimension is composed of census data, and can be distinguished from the organizational aspects of neighborhoods (i.e. neighborhood social process). These social, organizational dimensions of neighborhoods must be considered for studies

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attempting to reveal the mechanisms through which neighborhoods influence children and families.

Sampson, Raudenbush, & Earls (1997) defined the structure of a deprived neighborhood as a social composition and revealed that neighborhood deprivation weakens informal social control, which is a part of the neighborhood social process. They proposed that collective efficacy defined by the differential abilities of neighborhoods to share residents' values and manage social control of their community is prepotent predictor of neighborhood-level violence. Social control was referred to as the group-level ability to informally control residents according to desired principles in order to actualize collective goals. In communities with high social control, neighborhood residents are assumed to work together to deter crime and delinquent behavior because of the willingness to intervene for the common good. These goals have characteristics as opposed to forced or formalized controls by law enforcement organizations such as police. Neighborhoods with the ability to control group-level interactions and incivilities related to social disorder have been shown to have less interpersonal crime. Although informal social control at group-level plays a significant role preventing crimes within community, one is unlikely to intervene in a neighborhood context in which the rules are unclear and people mistrust or fear one another. Mutual trust among residents is considered necessary for effective control of their community. Sampson et al. (1997) measured informal social control, and social cohesion and trust (i.e., residents' mutual trust) within neighborhoods as indicators of community-level collective efficacy. They also revealed that collective efficacy was negatively associated with variations in violence within those communities.

In summarizing these findings, Wikström & Sampson (2003) implied that community-level (i.e., group-level) collective efficacy (1) facilitates socialization practices within the community and (2) increases the available resources and rules governing the particular patterns of behavior that comprise effective socialization practices. Such community environments have provided opportunities for youths to experience behavioral patterns that foster their self-control and morality development.

Based on Wikström and Sampson's implication, Yoshizawa, Yoshida, Harada, Unagami, Park, Nakajima, & Ozeki (2009) hypothesized that the effect of collective efficacy on adolescents' antisocial tendencies is perfectly mediated by the socialization indices of social information processing and self-regulatory ability. Previous research revealed that biases in information processing and deficits in self-regulation are well-validated major predictors of antisocial behaviors in adolescence (e.g., Baumeister & Vohs, 2004; Crick & Dodge, 1994). Social information processing theory has introduced a comprehensive model of how children and adolescents process and interpret cues and make decisions in social situations, which tend to result in more or less competent outcomes (Crick & Dodge, 1994; Dodge, Pettit, McClaskey, & Brown, 1986). Self-regulation is the ability for individuals to discipline and control themselves, and its failure causes a broad range of problems such as crime, teen pregnancy, alcoholism, drug addiction, venereal disease, educational underachievement, gambling and domestic violence (Baumeister & Heatherton, 1996).

Yoshizawa et al. (2009) analyzed the mediation model of socialization for Japanese participants using structural equation modeling and confirmed that the lack of collective efficacy within communities was mediated by the appropriateness of youths' social information processing and self-regulatory abilities. In communities with low collective efficacy, youths have antisocial cognitive tendencies and self-regulatory deficits. Consequently, they become increasingly likely to engage in antisocial activities. Their study also found that a lack of collective efficacy increased opportunities for youths to experience community violence, which subsequently heightened their risk for engaging in similar acts (i.e., unstructured routine activities). According to their results, both collective efficacy and exposure to community violence (the opportunities for children to observe or experience violence in their homes and neighborhoods) could be regarded as proximal neighborhood interaction factors that influence youths' socialization development. Other studies have also linked exposure to community violence to poor youth socialization (Farver, Xu, Eppe, Fernandez, & Schwartz, 2005; Schwartz & Proctor, 2000).

The generality of neighborhood effects

Previous studies revealed the possibility that direct effects from neighborhood interaction factors (process dimensions) such as collective efficacy and

community violence exposure facilitate or inhibit youths' socialization development within the community (Sampson, 2006). In addition, these neighborhood interactions are influenced by social compositions (structural dimensions) reflected by the level of neighborhood deprivation. These studies, however, disregard the establishment of generality of these direct and indirect causal mechanisms by methods such as a cross-national comparison.

Sampson & Wikström (2008) conducted a cross-national comparative study in Sweden and the United States. They showed that in both Stockholm and Chicago, lower collective efficacy significantly predicted higher rates of violence. Furthermore, collective efficacy was fostered by social compositions such as housing stability in both cities. These findings supported the generality of community social mechanisms between the two countries given their cultural and structural differences. However, the ability of this study to establish overall generality of community effects was questionable because the predominant culture in both of the sampled cities was Western.

Lederman, Loayza, & Menéndez (2002) examined the effects of the prevalence of trust in community members and the degree of participation in voluntary secular and religious organizations, on the incidence of violent crimes across various countries. They sampled 39 developed and developing countries, including Asian countries, and found that only one dimension of trust in community members consistently had a prominent reducing effect on the incidence of violent crimes across all sampled countries. This result offered more empirical support for the generality of community social mechanisms because trust within communities corresponded to one of the subordinate concepts of collective efficacy. Present study conducted comparative research in three different Asian countries (Japan, South Korea, and China) and a Western country (the United States) to test the generality of community social mechanisms.

The present study

Previous studies, with the exception of that by Yoshizawa et al. (2009), did not examine the direct effects of social compositions and neighborhood interaction factors (e.g., collective efficacy and community violence exposure) on socialization indices. Therefore, those studies could not compare the predictive power of the effects of social compositions and neighborhood interaction factors on youth socialization within the community. In light of the predictive significance of socialization indices in explaining antisocial behavior, the mechanisms of community processes must be further clarified using direct socialization measures.

Present study compared the effects of social compositions with those of collective efficacy and community violence exposure on two socialization indices (i.e., social information processing and self-regulatory ability). It was hypothesized that collective efficacy and community violence exposure have more predictive power than social compositions because the former has direct proximal effects whereas the latter has indirect distal effects. Consistent with Sampson & Wikström (2008) and Lederman et al. (2002), it was hypothesized that these direct and indirect effects would show similar patterns among the four countries being studied. These countries were selected because of the differences in their norms of connectedness (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). In contrast to Western cultures, people in Asian cultures possess a sense of interdependence and tend to consider themselves as participants in a larger social unit. Recent studies, however, have found differences in interdependency among Asian cultures (Matsumoto, 1999). This difference in connectedness would be reflected in the effect of collective efficacy on social development.

Methods

Participants

Comparative samples comprised 586 undergraduates (301 men, 281 women, and 4 unidentified; *M* age＝19.94 years, *SD* age＝1.21) in Aichi and Gifu, Japan; 344 undergraduates (122 men and 222 women; *M* age＝22.60 years, *SD* age＝2.70) in Jeonju-si, South Korea; 265 undergraduates (35 men, 229 women, and 1 unidentified; *M* age＝20.44 years, *SD* age＝1.42) in Dalian, China; and 84 undergraduates (37 men and 47 women; *M* age＝21.57 years, *SD* age＝1.90) in Santa Barbara, California, in the United States. All participants completed the study for partial fulfillment of a course requirement.

Measures

Social compositions Social composition indices in Japan used data collected in national and Aichi community surveys from 1995 to 2000, in-

cluding police records. The variables in the communities where participants had resided when they were of elementary and junior high school age were the number of homes, number of ownerships, number of households, number of people living alone, rate of employment, rate of advancement to college and university, population fluidity, net income per capita, and population density.

Participants in South Korea, China, and the United States were asked about their residence durations, their migration rates, the number of family members in their homes during their elementary and junior high school years, whether they lived with grandparents or a single parent, whether their parents were divorced, their parents' academic records, and their parents' incomes. Participants in the United States were also asked about the regional scales of their communities and about their races and the races of the majority of the people in their communities.

We conducted principal component analyses on the variables mentioned above to reveal a smaller number of factor structures regarding the social compositions of communities in different cultures (see Sampson et al., 1997). Analysis for the Japanese sample revealed that these variables had a three-factor structure, as follows: (a) number of households, (b) college and university advancement, and (c) low population fluidity. The same type of analysis revealed four-factor structures for the other three countries' data: The factor structure for South Korean data was (a) family size, (b) community migration, (c) academic record, and (d) family stability; for Chinese data, it was (a) economic status, (b) living with grandparents, (c) divorced parents, and (d) residential stability; finally, the factor structure for the United States data was (a) family size, (b) percentage of population identified as white, (c) divorced parents, and (d) residential stability. Factor scores were used as indices of social compositions.

Collective efficacy Informal social control was measured by five items developed by Sampson et al. (1997) (α=.79–.86). Participants were asked about the likelihood (coded from 4=very likely to 0=very unlikely) that neighbors where they had resided during their junior high school years could be counted on to intervene the situation such as "children were skipping school and hanging out on a street corner" in various ways. Social cohesion and trust was also measured by Sampson's five items (α=.83–.90). Participants were asked about the same neighbors, detailing how strongly they agreed (coded from 4=strongly agree to 0=strongly disagree) to items such as "people around here are willing to help their neighbors." We translated and back-translated this and the scale described below from Japanese or English into each of the other languages used in this study.

Community violence exposure Participants in Japan completed a revised version of the CEQ, a self-report assessment of exposure to violence in the community (Schwartz & Proctor, 2000) (α=.89). We made the revisions to lighten violent expression in scale items, in accordance with community conditions reflecting low crime rates in Japan (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), 2009). Participants were asked how many times they had experienced 16 distinct incidents (coded from 4=often to 0=never), such as "How many times have you seen somebody get robbed or have something stolen from them by force (like a person beating somebody up and then taking their money)?" Participants in China and the United States completed the original version of the CEQ, which contains two subscales. The first subscale includes 11 items assessing exposure to community violence by direct victimization (CEQ-VIC; α=.85–.88). The second subscale includes 14 items assessing exposure to violence by witnessing (CEQ-WIT; α=.82–.91). The CEQ items were not measured in South Korea because the number of survey items permitted for research in class was restricted by the university.

Social information processing The positive and negative aspects of social information processing were assessed by a social rule appropriateness assessment (Yoshizawa & Yoshida, 2004), the Normative Beliefs about Aggression Scale (Huesmann & Guerra, 1997; Yoshizawa et al., 2009), and the Cognitive Distortion Scale (Barriga & Gibbs, 1996; Yoshizawa & Yoshida, 2004). Social rule appropriateness was assessed by the general appropriateness of social rules applied to conflict situations. Participants were asked to read six conflict situation vignettes (two conflicts with friends or in public× three issues about "agreement," "liking," or "helping") and to select rule items from the list which were thought to match each situation. Rule appro-

priateness was represented by the mean of the appropriateness scores pre-assigned to each item on the list (Yoshizawa & Yoshida, 2004).

Normative Beliefs about Aggression Scale assesses the perception of how acceptable it is to behave aggressively under varying conditions of provocation. The retaliation belief subscale consists of 12 items (α=.75–.90). Participants were asked how strongly they agreed with questions (coded from 4=absolutely wrong to 1=absolutely right) such as "Suppose a boy says something bad to another boy, John. Do you think it's OK for John to scream at him?" The general belief subscale consists of eight items (α=.82–.86), and again participants were asked how strongly they agreed with items such as "In general, it is wrong to hit other people." The retaliation belief subscale was not measured in South Korea because of restrictions of survey items permitted for this research.

Cognitive distortion was measured with the short version of the How I Think Questionnaire (Barriga & Gibbs, 1996), which was developed by Yoshizawa & Yoshida (2004). It contains 15 items that can be clustered into three types of cognitive distortion: (a) self-centered (egocentric bias), (b) blaming others, and (c) minimizing/mislabeling. This scale can also be used to measure cognitive distortion as a single construct (α=.75–.83). Participants were asked how strongly they agreed (coded from 6=very false to 1=very true) with statements such as "You have to get even with people who don't show you respect."

Social self-regulation Self-regulatory ability was measured with the Social Self-Regulation Scale (Harada, Yoshizawa, & Yoshida, 2008). This reliable and valid self-report measure assesses the ability to inhibit or assert the self, depending on internal and external needs in a social setting, when there is discrepancy between desire, intention, and current perception. The self-assertion subscale consists of 13 items (α=.80–.84). Participants were asked how strongly they agreed (coded from 5=strongly agree to 1=strongly disagree) with the statements such as "I can assert my opinions even if people around me have different ideas." The self-inhibition subscale consists of 19 items (α=.69–.80). Participants were asked how strongly they agreed with items such as "I can endure the hardship and complete my task even if it is extremely difficult."

Results

Effects of social compositions on collective efficacy and community violence

The means and standard deviations of scale scores except social composition are shown in Table 1. Using multiple regression analyses, the effects from social composition indices on collective efficacy and community violence subscales were examined (see Table 2). These regressions were conducted separately for each country. Only participants who had resided in the same community for more than three years were analyzed because a certain period was required for social compositions to have effects on individuals.

These regressions revealed that significant effects from social compositions were found only in Chinese data. In China, economic status had a negative

Table 1 Mean Scale Scores

	Japan	South Korea	China	USA
Informal social control	2.57 (0.65)	2.60 (0.65)	2.53 (0.64)	2.62 (0.78)
Social cohesion and trust	2.61 (0.64)	2.55 (0.61)	3.11 (0.62)	2.50 (0.59)
CEQ	1.28 (0.41)	—	—	—
CEQ-VIC	—	—	1.35 (0.50)	1.37 (0.46)
CEQ-WIT	—	—	1.75 (0.56)	1.66 (0.58)
Social rule appropriateness	3.74 (0.18)	3.73 (0.19)	3.81 (0.25)	3.73 (0.18)
Retaliation belief	2.51 (0.58)	—	2.40 (0.52)	2.27 (0.59)
General belief	1.68 (0.47)	1.52 (0.42)	1.74 (0.47)	1.95 (0.76)
Cognitive distortion	2.80 (0.66)	2.78 (0.69)	2.90 (0.76)	2.24 (0.79)
Self-assertiveness	3.05 (0.64)	3.27 (0.57)	3.50 (0.67)	3.35 (0.60)
Self-inhibition	3.39 (0.51)	3.49 (0.52)	4.03 (0.59)	3.50 (0.59)

Note. CEQ=Community Experiences Questionnaire; CEQ-VIC=CEQ Victimization; CEQ-WIT=CEQ witnessing. Standard deviations are in parentheses.

Table 2 Multiple Regression Analyses Predicting Collective Efficacy and Community Violence Exposure

	Beta				
	Informal social control	Social cohesion and trust	CEQ	CEQ-VIC	CEQ-WIT
Japan					
Number of households	.11	.14	.09	—	—
College and university advancement	.02	−.18	.11	—	—
Low population fluidity	−.16	−.17	−.02	—	—
R^2	.04	.09	.02	—	—
South Korea					
Family size	.12	.11	—	—	—
Community migration	.02	−.06	—	—	—
Academic record	−.09	−.03	—	—	—
Family stability	−.12	−.08	—	—	—
R^2	.04	.02	—	—	—
China			—		
Economic status	−.14	−.52**	—	.07	.48**
Living with grandparents	.32	.32*	—	.05	−.09
Divorcement	−.17	−.25	—	.03	.47*
Residential stability	.19	.11	—	.03	−.01
R^2	.11	.27*	—	.01	.26*
USA			—		
Family size	.15	.14	—	.12	−.04
Percentage of white residents	−.02	.28	—	.07	−.10
Residential stability	.03	.13	—	−.24	−.19
Divorcement	−.05	−.15	—	.11	−.01
R^2	.03	.14	—	.09	.05

Note. CEQ＝Community Experiences Questionnaire; CEQ-VIC＝CEQ Victimization; CEQ-WIT＝CEQ Witnessing.
*$p<.05$. **$p<.01$.

effect on social cohesion and trust and a positive effect on CEQ-WIT; living with grandparents had a positive effect on social cohesion and trust; and divorce had a positive effect on CEQ-WIT.

Prediction of socialization indices

A series of hierarchical regression analyses was conducted to examine the effects of collective efficacy and community violence on the socialization indices of social information processing and social self-regulation factors after controlling for social compositions (see Table 3). These analyses were conducted for the same participants as above.

Consistent with the hypothesis, the addition of collective efficacy and community violence significantly improved the predictions for several socialization indices, except in Japan. In South Korea, informal social control facilitated social rule appropriateness and self-regulatory abilities but inhibited cognitive distortion. In China, informal social control inhibited normative beliefs about aggression; social cohesion and trust facilitated self-assertiveness; CEQ-VIC inhibited social rule appropriateness and retaliation belief; conversely, CEQ-WIT facilitated retaliation belief. In the United States, retaliation belief was inhibited by social cohesion and trust but was facilitated by informal social control; CEQ-VIC had the same effect on social rule appropriateness as in China.

A few direct effects from social compositions were found in step 2 betas in countries except South Korea: low population fluidity increased cognitive distortion in Japan; economic status increased self-assertiveness in China; and in the United States, a high percentage of white residents increased retaliation belief and residential stability decreased self-inhibition.

Discussion

In this study, we compared the predictive power of social compositions and neighborhood interac-

Table 3 Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analyses Predicting Social Development Indices

	Social rule appropriateness		Retaliation belief		General belief	
	Beta for step 1	Beta for step 2	Beta for step 1	Beta for step 2	Beta for step 1	Beta for step 2
Japan						
Number of households	.14	.16	−.11	−.10	−.13	−.12
College and university advancement	.07	.07	−.13	−.14	.11	.11
Low population fluidity	−.03	−.04	−.02	−.03	.16	.15
Informal social control		.05		−.01		−.04
Social cohesion and trust		−.10		−.08		−.02
CEQ		−.16		.00		−.02
R^2	.02	.05	.03	.03	.05	.06
ΔR^2 from step 1		.02		.01		.00
South Korea						
Family size	.04	.01	—	—	.03	.05
Community migration	−.04	−.04	—	—	.03	.02
Academic record	.04	.06	—	—	.06	.05
Family stability	−.09	−.07	—	—	.04	.03
Informal social control		.22*		—		−.06
Social cohesion and trust		.00		—		−.12
R^2	.01	.06	—	—	.01	.03
ΔR^2 from step 1		.04*		—		.02
China						
Economic status	−.07	−.01	−.17	−.39	−.10	−.28
Living with grandparents	.14	.23	.02	.20	−.21	.00
Divorcement	−.23	−.22	−.16	−.43	−.01	−.19
Residential stability	.21	.27	.23	.31	.11	.22
Informal social control		−.27		−.42*		−.52*
Social cohesion and trust		.05		.09		−.06
CEQ-VIC		−.62**		−.49*		−.12
CEQ-WIT		−.05		.52*		.18
R^2	.06	.47**	.05	.25	.07	.29
ΔR^2 from step 1		.41**		.20		.23
USA						
Family size	.12	.16	.10	.10	.08	.07
Percentage of white residents	−.23	−.23	.22	.35*	−.07	−.07
Divorcement	−.18	−.08	−.09	−.16	−.23	−.24
Residential stability	−.14	−.25	.07	.19	.02	.00
Informal social control		.02		.33*		.07
Social cohesion and trust		.22		−.45**		−.06
CEQ-VIC		−.54**		.16		.01
CEQ-WIT		.25		.16		−.16
R^2	.12	.34*	.07	.40**	.07	.08
ΔR^2 from step 1		.22*		.33**		.02

Table 3 (Continued)

	Cognitive distortion		Self-assertiveness		Self-inhibition	
	Beta for step 1	Beta for step 2	Beta for step 1	Beta for step 2	Beta for step 1	Beta for step 2
Japan						
Number of households	−.21	−.21	−.06	−.09	−.01	−.03
College and university advancement	−.18	−.20	.07	.03	−.01	.00
Low population fluidity	.23	.24*	−.21	−.20	−.08	−.06
Informal social control		.15		.09		.08
Social cohesion and trust		−.08		−.04		.11
CEQ		.02		.23		.05
R^2	.11	.13	.05	.11	.01	.03
ΔR^2 from step 1		.02		.06		.03
South Korea						
Family size	−.03	.00	.00	−.02	.02	−.01
Community migration	.04	.04	.08	.08	−.10	−.10
Academic record	−.05	−.07	.04	.05	.04	.06
Family stability	.04	.01	.12	.14	−.06	−.03
Informal social control		−.22*		.17*		.22*
Social cohesion and trust		−.05		.02		.02
R^2	.01	.07*	.02	.05	.02	.06*
ΔR^2 from step 1		.06**		.03*		.05**
China						
Economic status	.07	−.19	.20	.51*	−.08	.12
Living with grandparents	−.20	−.02	.09	−.03	.21	.11
Divorcement	−.02	−.23	.21	.38	−.05	.07
Residential stability	−.04	.04	−.18	−.20	.28	.25
Informal social control		−.36		−.21		.03
Social cohesion and trust		−.17		.50*		.31
CEQ-VIC		.18		.21		−.33
CEQ-WIT		.22		−.18		−.04
R^2	.05	.35	.07	.29	.10	.35
ΔR^2 from step 1		.31*		.22		.25*
USA						
Family size	−.17	−.13	.13	.05	.16	.14
Percentage of white residents	.05	.14	.16	.10	.23	.17
Divorcement	−.13	−.16	−.04	−.04	.14	.18
Residential stability	−.09	−.01	.01	−.05	−.19	−.29*
Informal social control		−.01		.25		.01
Social cohesion and trust		−.22		.08		.18
CEQ-VIC		−.01		.14		−.17
CEQ-WIT		.31		−.39		−.21
R^2	.06	.22	.05	.18	.13	.29
ΔR^2 from step 1		.16		.14		.16

Note. CEQ＝Community Experiences Questionnaire; CEQ-VIC＝CEQ Victimization; CEQ-WIT＝CEQ Witnessing.
*$p<.05$. **$p<.01$.

tion factors with respect to youths' socialization development. This comparative research, conducted in three different Asian countries and one Western country, tested the generality of community social mechanisms.

Interestingly, significant effects of social compositions on neighborhood interaction factors were found only in Chinese data. In China, economic status had a negative effect on social cohesion and trust while living with grandparents had the opposite

effect, and economic status and divorce had positive effects on witnessing community violence. These influence of social compositions can be interpreted as being due to the influence of urbanization, because social ties are known to be difficult to forge in urbanized and wealthy areas (Ruan, Freeman, Dai, Pan, & Zhang, 1997; Wirth, 1938); in addition, the prevalence of nuclear families and divorce is increasing in those types of areas (Tsui, 1989). There is the possibility that China's rapid economic growth has amplified the community-level variance linked to urbanization. As an evidence supporting our speculation, Dalian Development Area (DDA) is located in Dalian, China as the first Economic and Technological Development Zones nationwide in 1984. DDA had a GDP of 70.31 billion yuan in 2007, a growth of over 2000 times since it was established 23 years ago in 1984. The fact that these effects of social compositions were found only in China might be explained by the distinctive characteristics of these communities as a symbol of rapid economic growth in Dalian.

In terms of their predictive power for socialization indices, the results showed that neighborhood interaction factors had significant effects on those indices after controlling for social compositions, while social compositions had few effects on those indices. These results supported the hypothesis that neighborhood interactions have stronger direct effects on socialization than do social compositions. The generality of these effects was partially confirmed, with the results supporting our hypothesis in all countries but Japan. The difference in measured indices could explain this, as social compositions in Japan were indexed using data collected in national and community surveys, whereas those in other countries were measured by self-report questionnaires. It is likely that the objective data from national and community surveys had poor predictive power for the self-reported socialization indices (dependent variables) in this study. Previous studies have confirmed small to moderate effects of neighborhood structural influences as measured by objective data (Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2000).

Consistent effects of informal social control on socialization indices were found in all countries except Japan. Overall, youths' exposure to informal social control through community residents fostered positive information processing and self-regulatory ability while inhibiting negative information processing. Social cohesion and trust had less of an effect than informal social control. This difference may signify that informal social control has greater proximal effects on socialization than social cohesion and trust does, because close ties within communities are prerequisites for effective social control by residents (Sampson et al., 1997). No significant effects from collective efficacy to socialization indices in Japan are also interpretable as the result of methodological difference from other three countries. Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn (2000) pointed out that stronger and more consistent neighborhood effects have been documented in the national and multisite studies than in the regional and city-based studies. The data of national and community surveys in Japan were limited to participants who had resided in Aichi prefecture, whereas the data in other countries were measured from undergraduates from diverse communities which resulted in quasi multisite sampling. Consistent with our interpretation, Yoshizawa et al. (2009) found that informal social control significantly predicted social information processing indices in more diverse community sample from Aichi and other prefectures in Japan.

Victimization by community violence was shown to inhibit youths' selection of appropriate social rules for certain situations in China and the United States. Similarly, in China, both victimization and witnessing violence had effects on retaliation belief. However, we could not compare these results across all countries studied because exposure to community violence was not measured in South Korea, and the effects of victimization and witnessing violence were not distinguished in Japan. Despite these methodological limitations, the detrimental effect of victimization on positive information processing implies that victimization disrupts trust in community and social systems, and subsequently weakens normative consciousness in youths.

The results regarding retaliation belief are consistent with previous findings that witnessing violence has a greater effect on social information processing than on self-regulation (Schwartz & Proctor, 2000). We found that the negative effect of victimization on retaliation belief was contrary to the effect of witnessing violence. In addition, we found that although the effects on self-inhibition, which included effects on emotion regulation ability, were not sig-

nificant, victimization still had a moderate negative effect on self-inhibition. In a previous study, Schwartz & Proctor (2000) also found that violence victimization inhibited emotion regulation. This could mean that traumatic victimization through community violence disrupts emotion regulation, and in turn leads not to the legitimization of beliefs about aggression, but instead to internalized problems such as withdrawal and symptoms of anxiety and depression.

Apart from some incongruence among countries caused by economic and methodological factors, the findings from this study indicate that collective efficacy and community violence exposure have more power than social compositions in predicting the social information processing and self-regulatory abilities of youths in their communities. Generality of this community effect was supported based on the data from four multicultural countries. Methodological improvements will contribute to clarify the generality of this community effect. In line with previous findings regarding crime (Lederman et al., 2002; Sampson & Wikström, 2008), we assume that neighborhood interaction factors will remain significant predictors of youths' socialization after this improvements. Our findings suggest that neighborhood interactions might serve as proximal factors that facilitate youths' socialization development, as well as protect them from engaging in antisocial behaviors, beyond the effects of social compositions.

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