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Research Paper

The role of stakeholder collaboration in culture-led urban regeneration: A case study of the Gwangju project, Korea

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ABSTRACT:

The preliminary stages of a large scale culture-led urban regeneration project initiated by the Korean government in Gwangju were studied. Stakeholders' perceptions of culture's contribution to urban regeneration and their views on collaborative partnerships were explored. Qualitative data were gathered via semi-structured interviews from 19 purposively selected stakeholders. This case study determined public-private cooperation in regenerating Gwangju could, simultaneously, generate positive socio-cultural and economic impacts in society. However, stakeholders lacked opportunities for active participation. Hence, closer working relationships between central-municipal government and public-private/voluntary sectors were recommended. The case confirmed that long-term implementation of such projects needs to be anticipated and based on longitudinal and structured strategic planning to promote successful partnership collaborations amongst central/municipal governments, local communities and residents. This paper contributed to the knowledge gap in the area of stakeholder collaboration in building tourism/ cultural systems by examining the micro-level interactions amongst stakeholders.

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ABSTRACT

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Keywords:

Urban regeneration

Cultural tourism

Gwangju project

Stakeholder collaboration

Korea

Partnerships

1. Introduction

Deindustrialization in postindustrial cities in Europe and North America has considerably shrunk the workforce and, in turn, contributed to stagnant economic growth due to socioeconomic problems (Kollmeyer, 2009). As such, many cities have initiated urban regeneration to neutralize deindustrialization and attract new investments to stimulate their economies (Jones & Evans, 2008). However, urban regeneration projects are time consuming, complex, have a high uncertainty rate of completion and a high failure rate, and involve a chain of actions to improve “the economic, physical, social, and environmental conditions” of cities (Yu & Kwon, 2011: 889). Hence, practitioners, stakeholders and scholars have continued to debate the challenges of such initiatives in the context of economic, political, social and environmental factors, and are yet to come to terms with them. For instance, an African regeneration project led by the government to develop telecenters in the region failed because most Africans were unable to gain access to telecommunications (Benjamin, 2000).

Urban regeneration can be initiated by, and associated with, different themes like property developments, arts, culture, strategic marketing and image reconstruction, and mega events (for example Garcia, 2004; Shin, 2010). Due to resource constraints, the present study focuses on culture-led urban regeneration. The ‘pros’ of culture-led urban regeneration to stimulate economy and to revive postindustrial cities have been well documented (for example Garcia, 2004; Middleton & Freestone, 2008; Sasaki, 2010). However, the confusing interpretation of culture and multiculturalism, and the lack of discussion of reality of culture-led urban regeneration, are key issues awaiting further exploration (Miles & Paddison, 2005). In reality, the success of culture-led urban regeneration cannot be achieved without the cooperation and participation of various stakeholders (Lee, 2007; Shin, 2010; Timur & Getz, 2008) as stakeholder partnerships form the basis of efficient policy outcomes and value delivery (Kort & Klijn, 2011). Research regarding the mechanisms and perceptions of stakeholders’ collaboration in culture-led urban regeneration in Asian cities is dearth. As such, the present study aims to identify, elicit and analyze stakeholders’ perceptions of their collaboration, participation and partnerships in a real culture-led urban regeneration project in Asia.

The Korean government has instigated more than 500 urban regeneration projects during the last 40 years, although in 2011, Yu and Kwon noted that more than half of these initiatives had not yet commenced. However, one of the promising urban regeneration projects led by culture is ongoing in Gwangju, South Korea; it is founded on the rich local and regional cultural resources in both rural and urban areas (Shin, 2010). Through this project,

the researchers were presented with a rare opportunity to explore stakeholders' long-term perceptions of the contribution of culture to a real large government led and initiated urban regeneration project. As such, the following two questions were posed to address the aim: i) What are the stakeholders' perceptions of culture-led urban regeneration at micro-level interactions among stakeholders during the conceptualization of a large collaborative project (cf. Arnaboldi & Spiller, 2011) in Gwangju city? ii) What are the stakeholders' views on the current environment and the status of participation and partnerships in the project in Gwangju city? Issues encountered in structural planning for long-term implementation are also considered.

In order to provide a research context, key pertinent issues examined in the literature review are urban regeneration in the context of cultural tourism and stakeholder collaboration in urban regeneration. Subsequently, taking account of the roles, responsibilities and perspectives of the stakeholders, the documentation and procedures involved in setting up the Gwangju project are studied. Then, through semi-structured interviews, socio-cultural and economic aspects of the case are examined through the eyes of key stakeholders. The paper then addresses the issues raised in the literature in the context of the case of the Gwangju project. Finally, potential positive and negative perspectives are highlighted, tactical tourism developments are proposed and strategies for the long-term implementation of collaborative project outcomes are put forward.

2. Literature Review

This section sets a foundation for the present study by critically reviewing literature related to culture-led urban regeneration and stakeholder collaboration in urban regeneration in the following sub-sections.

2.1 Cultural Tourism and Urban Regeneration

Since the early 1990s, cultural tourism has become one of the fastest growing sectors of the tourism market, particularly in Europe, and the relationship between culture and tourism has been shown to be mutually beneficial (for example, Hughes, 2002; Urry, 2002). Smith (1997), investigating the negative and positive effects of tourism on local communities, found that visitor type (explorer, elite, off-beat, unusual, incipient mass, mass and character), expectations and numbers all play significant roles in the effect of tourism on local culture. Gamper (1981), examining the influence of tourism on ethnic relations between two populations in southern Austria, revealed that tourism had the effect of breaking down ethnic boundaries and Hughes (1998) revealed its effect on culture in theatres (diverse, adventurous

and innovative theatrical scene and creative artistic talent) in London. In 2008, Sharpley investigated the relationship between tourism and contemporary culture, particularly the way in which certain characteristics of postmodern society impacted on tourism. He pointed out that changes in the cultural condition of the tourist's society are likely to bring about changes in the style and significance of tourism. Cultural tourism is seen as a panacea for heritage conservation and development worldwide (Aiesha & Evans, 2007), that plays a significant role in revitalizing local and national economies and in enhancing people's quality of life. An increasing number of cities have initiated festivals and events within urban regeneration projects to promote local cultural tourism (Thrane, 2002). These festivals and events have helped to generate economic benefits, enhance local quality of life, and create community social solidarity while simultaneously causing environmental damage, increasing traffic congestion, and perhaps adding to law enforcement costs (Frey, 1994; Getz, 1993).

Certain European cities, like Barcelona, Glasgow and Bilbao, have used the approach of culture-led urban regeneration as a postindustrial solution (Garcia, 2004; Middleton & Freestone, 2008; Miles, 2005). Reviewing the case of Glasgow, European's Capital of Culture in 1990, Garcia (2004) perceived that, although Glasgow had benefited from improved infra- and super-structure, it suffered from a lack of long term planning in terms of public and private partnerships. Garcia (2004) determined this problem to be a consequence of Glasgow's approaching the event from a purely economic rather than a cultural perspective. In fact, culture-led urban regeneration in this instance was judged to be a "creative impulse for economic growth" that "diminished considerations of social equity in development" (Mooney, 2004: 338). To overcome such a problem, various researchers (including Garcia, 2004; Sharp, Pollock & Paddison, 2005; Timur & Getz, 2008) suggested that private and public partnerships should ensure community involvement in order to acquire and sustain long-term benefits. In this vein, Middleton & Freestone (2008) confirmed that culture-led urban regeneration schemes in Europe often failed to succeed due to the lack of local residents' support. In order to gain local residents' support, Bydgoszcz in Poland, Zaragoza in Spain and Rotterdam in Holland, all of whom have distinguished cultural backgrounds (Banks, 2011), integrated arts, design, engineering, architecture, religion and sports in both the city centers and the outlying areas in order to take account of less-privileged communities. However, funding needs to be available to develop and maintain the cultural infrastructure in the long term to ensure sustainable development. In the context of cultural urbanization and tourism development, Al-Hagla (2010) studied the importance of sustainable community development in the city of Saida, Lebanon and concluded, in line with the European context, a

need for community involvement to ensure sustainable community and tourism development. In addition, Toke (2005) investigated community wind power initiatives in the UK and concluded that initiatives progressed and led by the local people can generate more benefits than those developed by the governments. Furthermore, Fraser et al. (2006) revealed that environmental initiatives, like desertification reduction, lacked of community involvement have led to project failures.

In an Eastern/Asian context, culture-led regeneration is considered to be the key to boosting long-term economic growth. For example, Wang (2009) reviewed the Red Town project in Shanghai, which was documented to be set up as an attempt to enhance the development of art and culture but it transpired that its planning and execution was solely to generate revenue. Subsequently, critics referred to “deliberate manipulation of culture”, with a particular focus on social inequity due to the fact that low cost industrial properties were transformed into creative spectacular buildings and then sold as office spaces without any economic benefits for the community or the artists (Wang, 2009: 319). Sasaki (2010) studied the Japanese city of Osaka, where policies failed to achieve culture-led urban regeneration in 2007, not due to a lack of community involvement but because of financial problems and political changes. Later in 2007, private and public entities worked together and started projects in order to develop Osaka with the result that the citizen’s council decided to build creative places throughout the city in line with a movement launched by the citizens that transformed Kanazawa into a creative city (Sasaki, 2009). These cases demonstrate and underpin the importance of not only private and public partnerships but also community involvement. However, it is noted that the concept of Western culture-led urban regeneration cannot be mapped directly onto Eastern/Asian cities due to their cultural and political differences. Sasaki (2010) emphasized the fact that Japanese organizations have less strength in terms of forcing cultural policies than their counterparts in Western cultures. Additionally, in Eastern/Asian cities the concept of sustainable development is not as widely recognized as it is in Western cities (Dixon, Otsuka & Abe, 2010).

In order to successfully create sustainable communities, multiple stakeholders need to be involved, including community consultation and participation (Garcia, 2004; Shin, 2010; Timur & Getz, 2008). Previous research has identified positive impacts of local cultural events on the residents’ quality of life (Bachleitner & Zins, 1999; Shin, 2010). Culture-focused tourism quarters and districts (cf. Law, 2002; Montgomery, 2004) have often been built and developed to create an innovative tourism perspective by utilizing existing cultural activities within the history and locality of the city. Through their involvement in such

activities, local community groups and residents are able to recognize that local cultural production and consumption play a key role in the revitalization and culture-led urban regeneration of contemporary cities; in turn, they can see how localized cultures are instrumental in the regeneration of the city.

There are three key benefits of culture's contribution to urban tourism and regeneration: facilitating regeneration; strengthening organic development and building partnerships; and generating economic benefits (Evans & Shaw 2004). In addition, culture as a central part of a regeneration initiative can play a distinctive role in bringing economic benefits to cities (Evans, 2005). Therefore, involvement of key stakeholders during the early stages of collaboration in the Gwangju project between central-municipal government, public-private sectors, and municipal government-local residents was, and still is, crucial (cf. Aas, Ladkin & Fletcher, 2005; Bramwell & Sharman, 1999).

2.2 Stakeholder Collaboration in Urban Regeneration

Stakeholder theory branched out from the theory of the firm to study complex stakeholder (governments, investors, political groups, suppliers, customers, trade associations, employees and communities) relationships, partnerships and collaborations which can include public and private organizations (Savage et al., 2010). However, this theory was criticized as 'creating confusion' as there are many different variations of stakeholder relationships (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). Moreover, urban regeneration is a complex, long-term and often fragmented process. To succeed, it usually requires the collaboration of a wide range of organizations, communities and individuals working together with a shared vision and common goals (Roberts & Sykes, 2000). Araujo & Bramwell (2002) stressed that collaboration can occur when several groups want to provide feasible solutions to a common problem so stakeholders work together to obtain various benefits, possibly avoiding the cost of resolving adversarial intra-stakeholder conflicts in the long term (Yuksel, Bramwell & Yuksel, 1999). Therefore, it is important to identify partners with legitimate interests to ensure effectiveness and trust; involvement of key stakeholders during the early stages of collaboration is pivotal (Aas et al., 2005; Bramwell & Sharman, 1999; Sautter & Leisen, 1999). In addition, the issues of maintenance of collaboration, capacity of stakeholders to participate (distribution of power), information sharing and heterogeneity (Aas et al., 2005; Araujo & Bramwell, 2002; Jamal & Stronza, 2009) are identified as challenges in stakeholder collaboration. Another main issue is the long-term implementation of collaborative outcomes; very little tourism research has addressed this issue explicitly. Trist (1983) argued that long-term direction, management, monitoring, regulation and implementation in a complex domain

may require more formalized structuring of a collaborative referent organization (cf. Andriof, Waddock, Husted, & Rahman, 2003), whilst Bramwell & Sharman (1999) emphasized the importance of stakeholders' acceptance of systemic constraints on feasibility. Further, Jamal & Stronza (2009) examined the challenges of long-term implementation of collaborative outcomes, including long-term structuring, and involving local communities and residents. However, despite significant advantages, there may be tensions caused by conflicting objectives: different outcomes aiming to obtain in culture-led urban regeneration; conflict with those responsible for protecting the historic buildings and spiritual ethos of an area; different funding operation systems; and over demanding requirements (Evans & Shaw, 2004). Having reviewed the pros and cons in the context of the aim of the present paper, a decision was taken not to employ the broad stakeholder theory in this preliminary exploratory study, but rather to examine 'public-private partnership' (PPP) interactions at the micro-level.

Public-private partnerships are "cooperative ventures that involve at least one public and one private sector institution as partners" (Carroll & Steane, 2000: 37) as well as DeSchepper, Doms and Haezendonck (2014: 2) stating that "at least two focal organizations or partners can be observed, namely the public initiator and a selected private consortium, mostly in the form of a Special Purpose Vehicle". Li and Akintoye (2003: 3) confirm that PPP aim to offer "a long-term, sustainable approach to improving social infrastructure, enhancing the value of public assets and making better use of taxpayer's money". On the other hand, the United Nations Organization PPP Urban Environment included community involvement into their definition by adding "informal dialogues between government officials and local community-based organizations, to long-term concession arrangement with private businesses" (Li & Akintoye, 2003: 5). Also Hodge and Greve (2007: 547) supported this notion by identifying five key areas of PPP including "institutional cooperation for joint production and risk sharing; long-term infrastructure contracts; public policy networks in which loose stakeholder relationships are emphasized; civil society and community development in which partnership symbolism is adopted for cultural change; as well as urban renewal and downtown economic development" which is most pertinent in the context of the present study.

The participation and involvement of a myriad of stakeholders involved in the planning system of both national and local governance is becoming much more common and governments regard participation as a powerful driving force to effective planning and development (for example, Dredge, 2006; Evans & Shaw 2004). Maitland (2006) points out that it is important to: acknowledge the contributions of all stakeholders; ensure continued

involvement and ownership of the project by the local community through their direct participation in management, governance, delivery and evaluation. Therefore, discussion with stakeholders, and sharing the findings with the interested parties, should help to increase the extent and frequency of participation in culture-led urban regeneration.

Globally, there are many examples of culture-led urban regeneration projects that have succeeded through strong and effective partnerships with all stakeholders, with Bilbao being referred to most often as the prime example (Middleton & Freestone, 2008). Regeneration partnerships demonstrate a collective attempt to add value to, or derive some mutual benefits from, activities that individual actors or sectors would be unable to attempt alone (Kort & Klijn, 2011). Furthermore, partnerships can generate a real and sustainable impact at both the local, regional and national levels, taking into account potential long-term impacts on the environment (Beatty, Foden, Lawless & Wilson, 2010). As demonstrated by Ozcevik, Beygo and Akcakaya (2010), participatory collaboration, involving not only national but also local and regional governments as well as the local community, has a vital role and value in culture-led urban regeneration; however in academic literature, local and regional studies tend either to lack a rationale for measuring the impacts of collaboration with stakeholders in relation to regeneration or, at best, the rationale does not appear to be defined clearly and hence may not be valued by governments. There are very few integrated approaches that can be applied to culture-led urban regeneration in terms of participation and partnerships with stakeholders. In particular, regeneration program assessment and evaluative instruments and methodologies have not been developed in a comprehensive way with regard to the stakeholders' perceptions, participation and partnerships in culture-led urban regeneration. In this regard, the key success factors of the Gwangju project are the minimization of problematic issues, the reduction of the negative impact of the central government approach, the involvement of the local community (cf. Krutwyscho & Bramwell, 2010), and the establishment of culture governance for successful implementation of a cultural regeneration project (Nakagawa, 2010). To conclude, collaboration has many potential benefits, particularly in the context of urban regeneration and city marketing, due to the pooling of knowledge, expertise, capital and other resources, greater coordination of relevant politics, increased acceptance of the resulting policies, and more effective implementation within the city (Kort & Klijn, 2011).

According to stakeholder theory, that has been recognized widely as a key contributor to the establishment of successful tourism/cultural systems (Araujo & Bramwell, 2002; Bramwell & Sharman, 1999; Jamal, 2004; Jamal & Tronza, 2009), planners and developers need to be concerned about the perspectives of diverse stakeholder groups, whilst recognizing

that a high level of complexity is associated with stakeholder management and inter-organizational relationships (Sautter & Leisen, 1999). However, most tourism researchers' contributions have disregarded micro-level interactions which regulate networks and collaborations within the context of tourism/cultural planning; only limited research has been conducted on the participatory dimension through a micro-level study of the Banff Bow Valley Round Table (Jamal, 2004) and the micro-level dynamics involved in constructing a Cultural District (Arnaboldi & Spiller, 2011). Therefore, there remain gaps in the body of knowledge of the micro-dynamics of stakeholder collaboration in building tourism/cultural systems (Arnaboldi & Spiller, 2011). Acknowledging these gaps, the present study evaluates the micro-level interactions among stakeholders during the early stages of a government-initiated culture-led urban regeneration project. To achieve the research aim, based on the literature review, the framework in Figure 1 was developed.

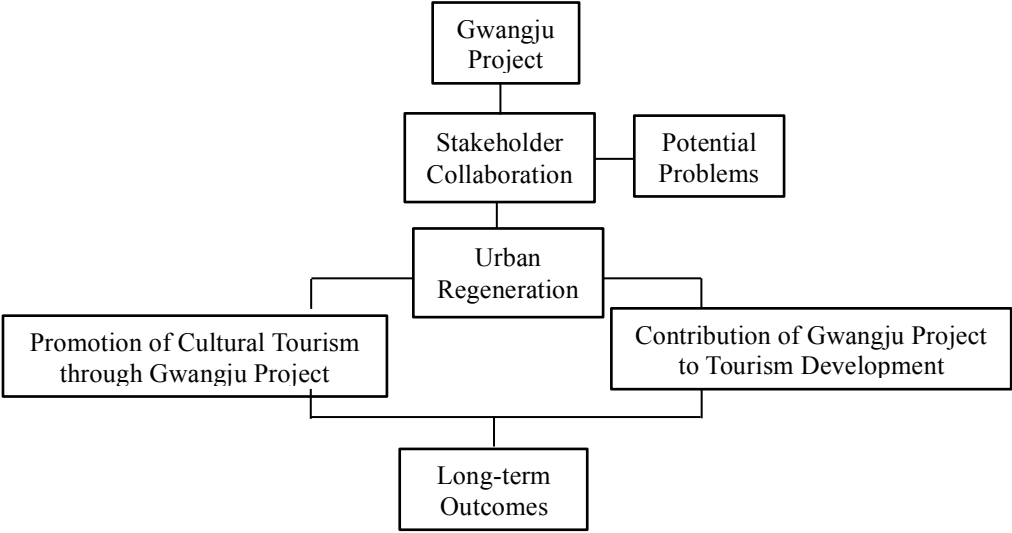


Figure 1. Research Framework

3. Methodology

A case study approach was adopted with the subject of the case being the Gwangju project in Korea. Firstly, the documentation and procedures involved in the setting up of the Gwangju project were reviewed and studied in depth, taking account of the roles, responsibilities and perspectives of the various stakeholders. Then, in order to examine the socio-cultural and economic aspects from the perspective of participation with respect to the various partnerships of the stakeholders, semi-structured interviews were employed to collect qualitative data at the commencement of the Executive Phase of the Project. Nineteen stakeholders, who were involved both directly and indirectly in the project, were selected

purposively. In order to achieve the research aims, the interviewees were recruited from four categories, namely, 1: Public sector (n=5), including policy makers in the public sector and middle-ranking staff in Korea Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (KMCST); 2: Public sector (n=4), comprising staff working on culture-led urban regeneration in Municipal Government from Gwangju Metropolitan City (GMC) and the member of the National Assembly responsible for planning, participation and partnerships in culture-led urban regeneration schemes; 3: Researchers directly involved in research on the Gwangju project (n=6); and 4: Private sector (n=4), comprising project partners, as listed in Table 1.

Table 1 Categorization of interviewees (n=19)

Interviewee codes	Interviewee Categories
	Category 1: Public Sector (Korean Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism – Central Government)(n=5)
KMCST1	Employee in KMCST
KMCST2	Employee in KMCST
KMCST3	Employee in KMCST
KMCST4	Employee in KMCST
ICACC	Person in charge of the construction of the ACC in the OHCAC in KMCST
	Category 2: Public Sector (Cultural Regeneration – Municipal Government from Gwangju Metropolitan City)(n=4)
CULTREG1	Person 1 working on cultural regeneration in GMC
CULTREG2	Person 2 working on cultural regeneration in GMC
CULTREG3	Person in charge of cultural regeneration in the Dong-Gu Borough of GMC
NATASS	Member of National Assembly responsible for cultural regeneration of GMC
	Category 3: Researchers (n=6)
RES1	Researcher in the OHCAC in KMCST (exhibition & performing equipment)
RES2	Researcher in the OHCAC in KMCST (operation and management of the ACC)
RES3	Researcher in charge of investment and partnership in the OHCAC in KMCST
RES4	Researcher in charge of participation in the OHCAC in KMCST
RES5	Researcher in charge of cultural city development in the OHCAC in KMCST
RES6	Researcher in charge of cultural city policy in the OHCAC in KMCST
	Category 4: Private Sector (n=4)
NEWS	Newspaper reporter in Gwangju
ARTS	Employee in an organization related to arts and culture in Gwangju
COY	Employee in a company that participated in Gwangju Project
RESID	Local resident who participated in Gwangju Project

This categorization is in line with the literature, which points out that the stakeholder sample should encompass not only contributors from the public sector, whose roles are

perceived to be powerful driving forces in effective planning and development with respect to the contribution of cultural projects within urban regeneration at national and local governmental levels (cf. Evans & Shaw 2004, KMCST 2007a), but also researchers and representatives from the private sector (cf. Garcia, 2004). There may appear to be an imbalance between the public and private sector subsamples. However, by virtue of the fact that they lived in Gwangju, most of the public sector representatives could also consider the issues debated from the perspective of the private sector, that is, as local residents.

The semi-structured interview questions were composed of three sections. In the first section, there were general questions on urban development in Korea. For government policy makers (KMCST1, KMCST2, KMCST3, KMCST4, ICACC, NATASS) some detailed questions on funding schemes and progress of the ongoing project were included. The second section comprised questions relating to culture-led urban regeneration and the Gwangju project. In the last section, questions on participation and partnerships in the Gwangju project were posed. This final part was designed to highlight any difficulties that had been encountered to date, to discuss ways in which they might be resolved and to examine strategies for facilitating participation and partnerships between the public and private sectors. Ritchie and Spencer's (1994: 174) framework analysis, a "systematic process of sifting, charting and sorting material according to key issues and themes" employed the themes that were developed from the literature (Urban Regeneration, Urban Tourism, The Gwangju project, Participation and Partnership in The Gwangju project) and subsequently subsumed within the interview questions. The analysis is presented in line with themes pertinent to the developed research questions, which include PPP, cultural tourism, economic aspects, tourism development, roles and responsibilities, voluntary and community involvement, impacts, problems, and strategic and funding issues.

4. The Gwangju Project: The Hub City of Asian Culture (HCAC)

Gwangju is the fifth largest city in South Korea; it has been identified as a place of democracy, human rights and peace as a result of a democratic uprising in 1980 (KMCST, 2007a; Lee, 2007). Gwangju is famous for its tangible and intangible cultural heritage, including literature, pottery, arts, traditional music, traditional Korean food, events and festivals in which local communities and residents participate (KMCST, 2007a; OHCAC, 2011). However, in recent years, the unstable national development strategy has impacted negatively on the local economy and the employment rate (KMCST, 2007a) and local tourism has lost its appeal for both domestic visitors and day-trippers (OHCAC, 2011). Notably, other

similar urban regeneration projects have been developed mainly as catalysts to economic growth or solutions to tackle the sharp decline of the traditional manufacturing industry in the North of England, America's Great Lakes and in the German Ruhr area (Yahagi, 2009). Initiated by political impacts and an imbalance in regional development during the industrialization period (The Jeonnamilbo, 2008), the Gwangju project, the single largest culture-led urban regeneration project in the history of the nation (KMCST, 2007a; Shin, 2010), was set up. It aimed to recreate Gwangju as 'a futuristic urban developmental model, through balanced national development and culture' ... 'a Cultural Capital in Korea' (KMCST 2007b; OHCAC, 2011) by establishing a hub for the sharing and exchange of Asian cultural resources, with complementary training to enhance the overall quality of life of Asian societies (KMCST, 2007a). Initially, clarification was required regarding cultural uniqueness and authenticity in order to differentiate, preserve, distribute and commercialize unique local cultural themes and cultural heritages and highlight diverse Asian cultures such as legends and traditional music, dances, knowledge and medicine; the plan is to develop further five major culture content industries, namely, music, porcelain/design, game, film and edutainment (a combination of education and entertainment) industry (OHCAC, 2011).

The Gwangju project consists of four missions: (i) to establish and operate the Asian Culture Complex (ACC) as a production center for cultural contents; (ii) to develop a culture-based urban environment; (iii) to promote arts, culture and tourism industry; and (iv) to heighten the city's status and reinforce its cultural exchange functions (OHCAC, 2011). It has a four phase implementation strategy: 1. Initial Phase (2004-2008) in which relevant laws were legislated and the Master Plan was formulated; 2. Executive Phase (2009-2013) during which there are plans to complete the construction of the ACC, begin operation, establish the ACC Zone and Asian Cultural Exchange Zone of the Seven Culture Zones; 3. Maturing Phase (2014-2018) which will expand the Seven Culture Zones Project; and 4. Completion Phase (2019-2023) which will complete the Seven Culture Zones and settle the HCAC in successful establishment (KMCST, 2007a). The ACC, constructed in a historically important central area, renowned for its spirit of democracy, human rights and peace, comprises the Cultural Exchange Agency, Cultural Promotion Agency, Asian Arts Theatre, Agency of Culture for Children and Asian Culture Information Agency. It will provide an opportunity for communities to work together to plan, develop and organize artistic activities such as events and festivals (Garcia, 2004; Sharp et al., 2005).

The HCAC will be funded mainly by the national budget; the total construction cost was estimated to be 798 million US dollars (US \$1= 1003.00 KW, as of 2008) which amounts

to 13% of the total budget (KMCST, 2007a), which is approximately 5,003 million US dollars (central government funding: 53%); municipal government funding: 15%); private sector investment: 32%). The distribution of expenditure is: construction and ACC operation (38%); regeneration of urban environment (40%); promoting arts and culture/tourism (14%); and facilitating cultural exchange (8%). The Project was estimated to generate over 9,760 direct and indirect jobs and production and wages worth over 100 million US dollars (OHCAC, 2011).

The Gwangju project is government initiated and the stakeholders comprise 'essential' internal partners from the public and private sectors including, NGOs, researchers, cultural/tourism industrialists and, ultimately, local residents and indigenous dwellers (KMCST, 2007a). In addition, considering this project is a Pan-Asian cultural project, the collaboration with external stakeholders such as the Gwangju project coordinator, UNESCO, international cultural organizations, cultural policy makers in other Asian cities is imperative. Further, as an urban tourism destination, consisting of diverse nested systems (Farrell & Twining-Ward, 2004), which are operating within an interconnected local-global system (Milne & Ateljevic, 2001), an assessment of the economic, social and cultural, environmental impact of the Gwangju project should be considered. From a long-term perspective, considering the Gwangju project is a Government initiated project, there may be issues and limitations in terms of maintenance of the collaboration process (cf. Reed, 1997) and distribution of power (cf. Aas et al., 2005; Bramwell & Sharman, 1999) among stakeholders as a result of potential political instability due to a number of changes of regime throughout its duration (Sasaki, 2010). Further, considering the principal aim of Gwangju project is to establish a base city in which the cultural resources of Asia are exchanged and shared, there must be strategic consideration in terms of power influence and distribution, legitimacy, control as well as proximity of both internal and external stakeholders' involvement during collaborative planning process (Jamal & Stronza, 2009).

5. Findings

Based on the analysis of the interview transcriptions, a summary of the key findings is displayed in Table 2. The findings linked to the emergent themes and subthemes were employed to answer the research questions posed earlier.

Table 2 A summary of key findings

Themes	Sub-themes	Key findings
Gwangju project conceptualization	Perceptions	Different Revitalizing versus development Lack of voluntary participation Biggest national project Appropriate location
	Role of Culture	Important Critical tool Expand communication and exchange Attract tourists Stimulate economy and culture positively Enhance quality of life Encourage creativity
	Purpose	Stimulate tourism industry Enhance brand value of Gwangju city Stimulate economy Attract visitors Promote PPP
	Long-term Outcomes	Strategies need consideration Reformation of inefficient system by central government Establishment of social agreement Reinforce a close network with other Asian cities Establishment of evaluation applied formulaic impact methods Overcome barriers to cooperative partnerships Investment of further funds from private businesses Involvement of voluntary and community-led organizations
Stakeholder Collaboration	Perceptions	Validate urban regeneration policy Attract private investment Encourage voluntary action Active reflection Build confidence and self-esteem Generate positive socio-cultural and economic impacts Encourage social cohesion and community solidarity Strong need to participate and maintain involvement
	Potential problems	Lack of opportunities for active participation Unequal access opportunities Uncooperative attitude Unrelenting resistance Insufficient discussion Inefficiency and inflexibility of central government Lack of evidence regarding participation Unfair distribution and discriminative treatment of power Pursuing self-interest Domination of professionals and central government

5.1 Stakeholders' perceptions of culture-led urban regeneration informed by micro-level interactions amongst stakeholders in the project in Gwangju city

During conceptualization of the Gwangju Project, the respondents (KMCST1, KMCST2, KMCST3, CULTREG1, CULTREG2, RES1, RES3, RES6, NATASS) confirmed that the background and purpose of this project were not entirely synonymous with those of similar urban regeneration projects (for example the post-industrial solution projects in Barcelona, Glasgow and Bilbao). They stressed that while regeneration projects in other cities were usually focused on revitalizing the run-down areas due to a decline of the manufacturing industry, the Gwangju Project was initiated by central government in order to develop the city through culture, arts and tourism in a balanced way as reflected in the statement:

“The purpose of urban regeneration, in general, is to re-use or renovate the useless manufacturing facilities and to revitalize a decline of the inner city or downtown due to the reduction of the manufacturing industry. Gwangju Project aims at developing and revitalizing Gwangjuusing culture and the arts” (KMCST1).

CULTREG3, who was in charge of culture-led urban regeneration in the Dong-Gu Borough of GMC, pointed out a distinctive difference: while other EU regeneration projects have developed through voluntary participation and active partnerships between government and local communities, the Gwangju Project faces a lack of such partnership opportunities. Regarding perspectives on the Korean governments' reasons driving the Gwangju Project, just over half of the interviewees (KMCST1, KMCST2, KMCST3, CULTREG3, ICACC, RES1, RES2, RES3, RES5, NATASS), notably from the public sector, claimed that, taking account of the politics of balanced regional developments, it was regarded as the biggest national project for culture-led urban regeneration. When explaining why central government had selected Gwangju as a reasonable place to create the HCAC, the majority of the respondents (KMCST1, KMCST3, ICACC, RES1, RES2, RES3, RES4, RES6 and NATASS), excluding any representative of the Municipal Government involved in Culture-led urban regeneration, maintained that Gwangju has the characteristics of democratization and human rights due to the Gwangju Students' movement for the independence and the May 18 Democratic Uprising in 1980 (Yea, 2002), as well as current cultural activities in Gwangju such as Gwangju Biennale.

In terms of the role of culture in this project, all of the interviewees agreed that culture can play an important role in reinventing Gwangju city, especially via the construction and management of the ACC as a flagship project. Some respondents believed that development of cultural industry clusters/districts can be regarded as a critical tool for the sustainable development and regeneration of Gwangju city (KMCST1, CULTREG3, RES1, RES3, RES4, RES5, NATASS, and ARTS). The development of tourism in general and cultural tourism in particular, was regarded as an important element of the project for the local and national economy. Since the project aims to expand communication and cultural exchange with Asian communities, cultural tourism should play a vital role in attracting further tourists. In particular, the ACC was considered to be the epicenter of creation, consumption and exchange, and the converging point of the HCAC's network. The majority (KMCST1, KMCST2, KMCST3, ICACC, CULTREG2, CULTREG3, RES1, RES2, RES3, RES5, NATASS) commented that the ACC should function as a cultural power plant in that the cultural energy would diffuse not only throughout Gwangju but also across all cities in Korea to generate the positive economic and cultural effects, thereby enhancing the quality of life and encouraging the creativity. As a result, Gwangju should become an international cultural city with Asian value and the culture business town which is available to supply and consume Asian culture. One of researchers stated:

“The ACC..... will play a head-quarter’s role in developing a power plant of cultural resources and cultural contents, by a close link to a series of different functioned districts in the city, thereby Gwangju will develop in balanced development way..... The HCACwill be developed to feature a circular structure in which the entire city is a cultural belt area. The basis of the project is to build a virtuous cycle of sustainable development at the local, regional, national and Asian levels” (RES1).

Another researcher added:

“By supporting arts and traditional cultures and boosting cultural/tourism industries, Gwangju will achieve harmony between cultural values and economic benefits, thereby realizing a successful culture-based economy” (RES3).

All but four of the interviewees believed that the Gwangju Project earmarked Gwangju as an HCAC that would stimulate the tourism industry in Gwangju city as well as the

domestic tourism market (KMCST1, KMCST2, KMCST3, KMCST4, ICACC, CULTREG1, CULTREG2, CULTREG3, RES1, RES2, RES3, RES5, RES6, NATASS, NEWS). KMCST1 noted that tourism demand would increase with the creation of major cultural zones and various facilities including ACC events and festivals, thereby attracting the MICE (Meeting, Incentives, Convention and Exhibition) industry to Gwangju by establishing a strategic linkage between the ACC and Kimdaejung Convention Centre. The creation of cultural industry clusters/districts as well as the opening of the ACC will enhance the brand value of Gwangju and thus Gwangju will regain much of the self-confidence as a new destination was supported by representatives of the Municipal Government and local community (CULTREG1, CULTREG3, NATASS). RES2 and RES4 stressed that the Gwangju Project would stimulate the national economy as well as Gwangju communities by attracting new visitors from other cities in Korea and from overseas so bringing about a synergistic effect through strategic cooperation with other balanced national development projects. In addition, by developing tourist attractions connecting the HCAC with the regional communities, and in close cooperation with various adjacent cities, Gwangju would have the potential to introduce high-quality cultural tourism to attract visitors from all over the world. However, at least one interviewee from each category (KMCST2, KMCST4, ICACC, CULTREG2, CULTREG3, RES2, RES3, RES6, RESID) was concerned that the current construction of the ACC had not contributed significantly to the development of Gwangju tourism in the Initial Phase but they believed that it would attract a number of tourists from the outside communities after the completion of ACC in 2012. Nevertheless, they considered the Gwangju Project to be important for urban regeneration focusing on cultural tourism.

CULTREG3, who had lived for 33 years in Gwangju, emphasized the need for central government and municipal authorities to develop the 'tourism business district (TBD)' in the vicinity of the ACC through partnerships with the private sector, in line with Getz (1993) who referred to the TBD as a concentrated cluster of visitor-oriented urban functions. He maintained that the TBD could create a distinctive cluster of activities and attractions related to tourism and recreation for tourists and residents, as well as linking to the ACC. The development of tourism clusters such as the TBD might encourage people to visit and/or stay in Gwangju, consequently vitalizing the tourism market in Gwangju and providing investors with good returns on their capital.

Regarding long-term implementation of the collaborative outcomes of Gwangju Project, strategies need to be considered by central and/or municipal government, in order to facilitate participation and partnerships. Although there was a minor disagreement, the

majority of the interviewees, including most of the central government category and all of the researchers, (KMCST1 KMCST3, KMCST4, ICACC, CULTREG3, RES1, RES2, RES3, RES4, RES5, RES6, NATASS, NEWS) suggested that central government should take into consideration the reform of an inefficient system (for example organizations, laws, budget and employment of staff) and establish a related committee and/or set up a joint task force composed of representatives from the different stakeholder organizations and bodies. The objectives of this body should be: to plan and hold various events, such as a promotional campaign on the basis of customer relationship marketing; to encourage closer collaboration with the private sector, to create new governance between the public and the private sector; and to introduce a local funding system as a partnership model. A social agreement for the Gwangju Project should also be established to ensure the responsibility of local community. Moreover, two interviewees (RES1, ARTS) mentioned that when considering the goal of the Gwangju Project, central government and local communities need to make all efforts to reinforce a close network with other Asian cities. Two of the private sector interviewees (ARTS, COY) believed that the government and municipal organizations should also take into consideration the establishment of evaluation applied formulaic impact methods such as multipliers in order to undertake the required gathering of evidence at the outset and over time. Therefore, the public sector needs to seek to overcome the barriers to cooperative partnerships and provide useful and acceptable evidence to support their decisions in the future. Apparently, provided the public sector can secure the evaluation accuracy and transparency of the Gwangju Project, businesses and others who are keen to obtain economic benefits should be willing to invest further funds in the Gwangju Project and participate in culture-led urban regeneration programs with self-esteem (COY). Finally, it was pointed out that the government should consider how voluntary and community-led organizations, as major players, can play a vital role in the planning and implementation of the Gwangju Project. ARTS mentioned that maintaining a close relationship with the Gwangju Culture Forum, in particular, would be an effective way of empowering local communities to collaborate in culture-led urban regeneration programs in Gwangju. An employee in an organization related to arts and culture in Gwangju stated:

“It can be agreed that the related department and executive agency in central government as well as GMC have tried to reinforce partnership working structure with a number of organizations to pursue policy at more detailed levels such as cultural facilities and services, education and employment. In particular, community’s voluntary involvement is

important. For example, the Gwangju Culture Forum organized by the private sector plays a crucial role in promoting and participating in more residents towards Gwangju Project” (ARTS).

5.2 Stakeholders’ views on the current environment and the status of participation and partnerships in the project in Gwangju city

Several interviewees, including three researchers (RES1, RES3, RES6) and the Member of National Assembly elected to represent the Gwangju community (NATASS), stressed that participation and partnership would contribute to enhancing the validity and availability of culture-led urban regeneration policy and would attract more inward investment of the private sector to the Gwangju Project. They believed that participation could encourage voluntary action, active reflection and build confidence and self-esteem of local communities as well as its being a successful regeneration project initiated by central government. One of the researchers stated:

“To succeed in culture-led urban regeneration projects, participation and partnerships among the multiple stakeholders are very important. In this sense, in order to implement Gwangju Project successfully, the most important thing is to ensure participation and partnerships of the multiple stakeholders, whilst the strong ambition of central government to create the HCAC is needed. It cannot ensure a success without voluntary participation and partnerships of various stakeholders” (RES1).

All but NEWS from the private sector, expected that collaboration in the early stages would generate positive socio-cultural and economic impacts to all stakeholders involved in the Gwangju Project. They noted that local community involvement in urban regeneration programs could provide them not only with a sense of achievement but also inculcate an important sense of status. Moreover, they understood that collaborative activities to create Gwangju as the HCAC would encourage social cohesion and community solidarity from a local and possibly national perspective. Furthermore, stakeholders representing both public and private sectors acknowledged that there is a strong need to participate and maintain involvement in the regeneration process. One employee in an organization related to arts and culture in Gwangju stated:

“With regard to the extent of participation in government policies related in the communities,..... Particularly, voluntary organizations related to arts, culture, education and environment have well-established participatory partnership structure and schemes as a consequence of communities’ cultural characteristics. These organizations tend to promote participation and partnership working in the community and assist in the implementation and monitoring of culture-led urban regeneration programs” (ARTS).

During the interviews, the participants were asked to share potential problems with respect to stakeholder collaboration in the Gwangju project. The majority representing the public sector, and all of the interviewees from the private sector, noted that there were not enough opportunities for active participation and close partnerships amongst the associated stakeholders. In particular, a problem was highlighted between central government-municipal government (GMC) and the public sector-local communities at the early stage (KMCST1, KMCST3, KMCST4, ICACC, RES1, RES2, RES3, RES5, RES6, CULTREG1, NEWS, ARTS, COY, RESID). In terms of access to participation and partnerships, furthermore, the respondents perceived that the stakeholders’ access opportunities to the Gwangju Project were lacking and unequal. There were some clearly differing views amongst the interviewees from both central and municipal government, and those interviewees who were residents of Gwangju. With regard to the reasons for lack of participation and partnerships, all but one of the interviewees from the central government and all but one of the researchers (KMCST1, KMCST3, KMCST4, ICACC, RES1, RES2, RES3, RES5, RES6) pointed out that there was an uncooperative attitude and unrelenting resistance of local organizations to developing sites of importance to the local democratic heritage, particularly associated with personal feelings in relation to family involvement in the Democratic Uprising on May 18, 1980, as well as inefficiency and inflexibility in the central government. In contrast, members in the municipal government emphasized that central government seemed to make policy decisions and implement the related programs without a sufficient discussion with GMC and local communities (CULTREG3) and criticized central government for not taking into sufficient consideration the attraction of voluntary participation from local communities (CULTREG1). One person working on culture-led urban regeneration in GMC stated:

“Collaboration between OHCAC and GMC was satisfactory, but partnerships with

other organizations and communities related to the project were lacking. The main reason is that there is no concern and interest on partnerships in the policy process” (CULTREG1).

In addition, COY pointed to a lack of evidence of detailed and feasible plans regarding participation in the relative programs, as well as concurring with the problems related to the system driven by central government. Furthermore, six interviewees, including at least one person from each category (ICACC, CULTREG1, CULTREG2, RES5, ARTS, RESID) perceived that there existed unfair distribution and discriminative treatment of power within the participation and partnership schemes, with reference to a committed few well-known individuals. In particular these people were local representatives, who were appointed by the President and had more control over the distribution and redistribution of both power and resources (KMCST1 and ARTS). In addition, some interviewees from both central and municipal government plus one researcher (ICACC, CULTREG1, CULTREG2, RES5) expressed the negative viewpoint that various stakeholders or partners from private sectors had disguised the intention of pursuing undue self-interest by becoming involved in covert and hidden partnerships. It was believed that the impact and outcomes of such working partnerships would impact negatively on culture-led urban regeneration projects and the efficacy of stakeholder involvement. In contrast, CULTREG3, indicated that the partnership process was dominated by the professionals and central government policy makers who followed a particular agenda that might not be reflective of the partnership as a whole.

6. Discussion and contribution of the case

The Gwangju case study has focused on the role culture can play in urban regeneration and ways in which government can lead to encourage participation and partnerships among the multiple stakeholders. However, it remains to be seen whether positive outcomes for the national economy and the communities (cf. Wang, 2009) will arise. The findings point to a need for closer working relationships between central-municipal governments and public-private/voluntary sectors to better understand the process of regeneration and culture’s contribution to regeneration (KMCST, 2007a, 2007b; Roberts & Sykes, 2000), and to implement and deliver effectively and efficiently culture-led urban regeneration programs. Moreover, the evidence, based on culture’s role and the outcomes of stakeholders’ partnerships in regeneration, needs to be optimized, particularly in the light of the perceived long-term impact (cf. Garcia, 2004). For several years, the Master Plan of the Gwangju Project was evaluated alongside doubts over the viability of the HCAC, resulting in a lack of

communities' confidence due to policy consistency in the political context (cf. Sasaki, 2010; Wang, 2009). Although the ACC is considered to be at the forefront of planned cultural/tourism industry development, the evaluation of the ACC and the Gwangju Project itself in the Initial Phase tends to be weak and superficial due to there being only limited evidence of economic validity and cultural impacts, as recommended by Evans and Shaw (2004). This case study of Gwangju project contributes to the knowledge gaps: (i) in the area of micro-level interactions among stakeholders during the initial stage of a large scale of government initiated culture-led urban regeneration project in Korea; and (ii) regarding strategic implementation of the potential outcomes of collaboration involving central/municipal governments and local communities and residents.

As with many such qualitative studies, it may be argued that there are limitations associated with the size and representativeness of the sample, which was purposive with limited participation. The counterargument is that the findings are rich and informative; they not only support some previous studies but also provide some innovative Asian cultural dimensional perspectives. The authors were fortunate in that the connections of one of them allowed access to key stakeholders in the central and municipal government, some of whom were local residents so could respond also from this perspective. However, the views of the private sector, in particular of those local residents who were not involved directly in the project, were not evident as the main focus was to examine the perceptions of stakeholders who were directly involved in Gwangju project on culture's contribution, the micro-dynamics of stakeholder collaboration and the long-term implementation of collaborative outcomes from the perspective of government. Furthermore, local residents who were not directly involved in the project would not have been sufficiently informed to respond to all the interview questions. However, no other case studies on culture-led urban regeneration in Korea were located, and only very few from Asia so there is only limited evidence for comparative purposes. Thus, when generalizing the results, great caution must be taken. Furthermore, the semi-structured interview method is limited in its ability to identify and measure the quantitative effectiveness of the related stakeholders' participation and partnerships in the Gwangju project. Therefore, it would be of value to conduct a quantitative study to elicit their opinions, followed by a qualitative study to explore their views in depth. In addition, as the focus is on short-term, qualitative measurement, studies set in different contexts may yield different results.

It is recommended that there should be a more integrated approach to exploring participation and partnerships. There needs to be: a critical review of the Master Plan to

address a number of crucial problems and to facilitate more participation and partnerships amongst the potential stakeholders in the regeneration programs; improved quality of evidence and impact measurement; and a long-term perspective on the implementation of collaborative outcomes must be taken with social consensus on the fact that socio-economic and environmental effectiveness will take time to emerge. In particular, as this is a longitudinal study, both qualitative and quantitative approaches could be considered in future in order to develop a methodology for measuring and demonstrating the effectiveness of participation and partnerships as a driver for culture-led urban regeneration. The former should extend the interview base to include more representation from the local residents and the private sector whilst the latter could possibly incorporate statistical time-series analysis to measure the changing perceptions and attitudes of stakeholders and economic benefits of culture-led urban regeneration project. In addition, there is growing interest from external stakeholders including the Gwangju project co-ordinator, UNESCO, international cultural organizations and cultural policy makers in other Asian cities so external stakeholder analysis in relation to Gwangju project would be of value in the future.

7. Conclusions

In conclusion, the present study has identified, elicited and analyzed stakeholders' perceptions and views on their collaboration, participation and partnerships in a real culture-led urban regeneration project in Asia and in Gwangju city in South Korea. Regarding achievement of the aim of the present study, the literature suggested a lack of discussion of the reality of culture-led urban regeneration, in particular in an Eastern/Asian context, and a need to address the long-term implementation of collaborative outcomes. The present study examined the contribution of culture to a real large government led and initiated urban regeneration project. It is apparent that the concept of Western culture-led urban regeneration cannot be mapped directly onto Eastern/Asian cities due to their cultural and political differences. With respect to urban policy and planning, such projects require long-term implementation, necessitating an anticipation of needs by both central and municipal government from the outset. Therefore, longitudinal and structured strategic planning is essential to their successful progress and implementation. While other EU regeneration projects developed through voluntary participation and active partnerships between government and local communities, the Gwangju Project faced a lack of such partnership opportunities. In order to facilitate participation and partnerships, any inefficiency in existing systems in relation to organization, legal considerations, budgets and staffing should be taken

into consideration. The establishment of a related committee or joint task force, composed of representatives from stakeholder organizations and bodies, to plan promotional campaigns based on customer relationship marketing, encourage close collaboration with the private sector, create new governance between the public and the private sector, not forgetting the important role of voluntary organisations, and to introduce a local funding system as a partnership model is advised. Furthermore, such representatives need to provide useful and acceptable evidence to support their decisions in the future. Finally, it was pointed out that the government should consider how voluntary and community-led organizations, as major players, can play a vital role in the planning and implementation of the Gwangju Project.

On examining the micro-level interactions amongst stakeholders in this Asian culture-led urban regeneration project, it was clear that some stakeholders lacked opportunities for active participation, especially at the outset. Hence, close working relationships between central-municipal government and public-private/voluntary sectors and local communities/residents, with involvement of all key stakeholders are needed during the early stages of collaboration with equal and transparent distribution of power and resources. The establishment of a social agreement to ensure the responsibility of local community, re-enforced by networking with other Asian cities would also reap benefits such as increased tourism demand so enhancing brand value and stimulating the national economy.

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