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The political culture of university students in South Korea:

A comparison of before the democratic transition and today

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A dissertation submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

to the department of Politics and International Studies at the

University of Warwick

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Declaration

This thesis is submitted to the University of Warwick in support of my application for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. It has been composed by myself and has not been submitted in any previous application for any degree.

Abstract

This thesis compares the political culture of university students in South Korea before and after the democratic transition in 1987. It identifies the changes in the following: the attitudes to politics, government and media; the political socialization process; the experience of political participation; and the reasons for political participation and non-participation. Qualitative analysis was used to analyse the data collected from interviews and surveys conducted on respondents who were university students in the 1980s and current university students. It was found that compared to university students in the 1980s, current university students held less intensely negative attitudes towards the government. However, although current university students were interested in politics, they were still distrustful of politicians, did not have a political party they supported and had low levels of perceived political efficacy and political participation.

Based on these findings, this thesis examined three different types of theories to explain the changes in the political culture of university students. First, demand-side theories that focus on underlying socioeconomic changes to explain changes in the political culture were used to analyse the changes in the reasons for political participation and the changes in the political socialization process. Second, intermediary-side theories that emphasise the role of media were used to examine the changes in the attitudes towards the media and the experience of latent political participation. Finally, supply-side theories that focus on the supply of politics and governance were used to explain the changes in the other elements of political culture. Close examination into the workings of democracy in South Korea since the democratic transition in 1987 revealed that there were indications of cartelisation of the political party system, which explains the low levels of political trust and perceived political efficacy reported by current university students.

List of Abbreviations

KOSTAT: Statistics Korea

NL: National Liberation

PD: People's Democratic Liberation

PR: Proportional Representation

SMC: Single Member Constituency

SNS: Social Networking Sites

UK: United Kingdom

US: United States of America

Map of South Korea

Figure 1. Map of the regions of South Korea[1]
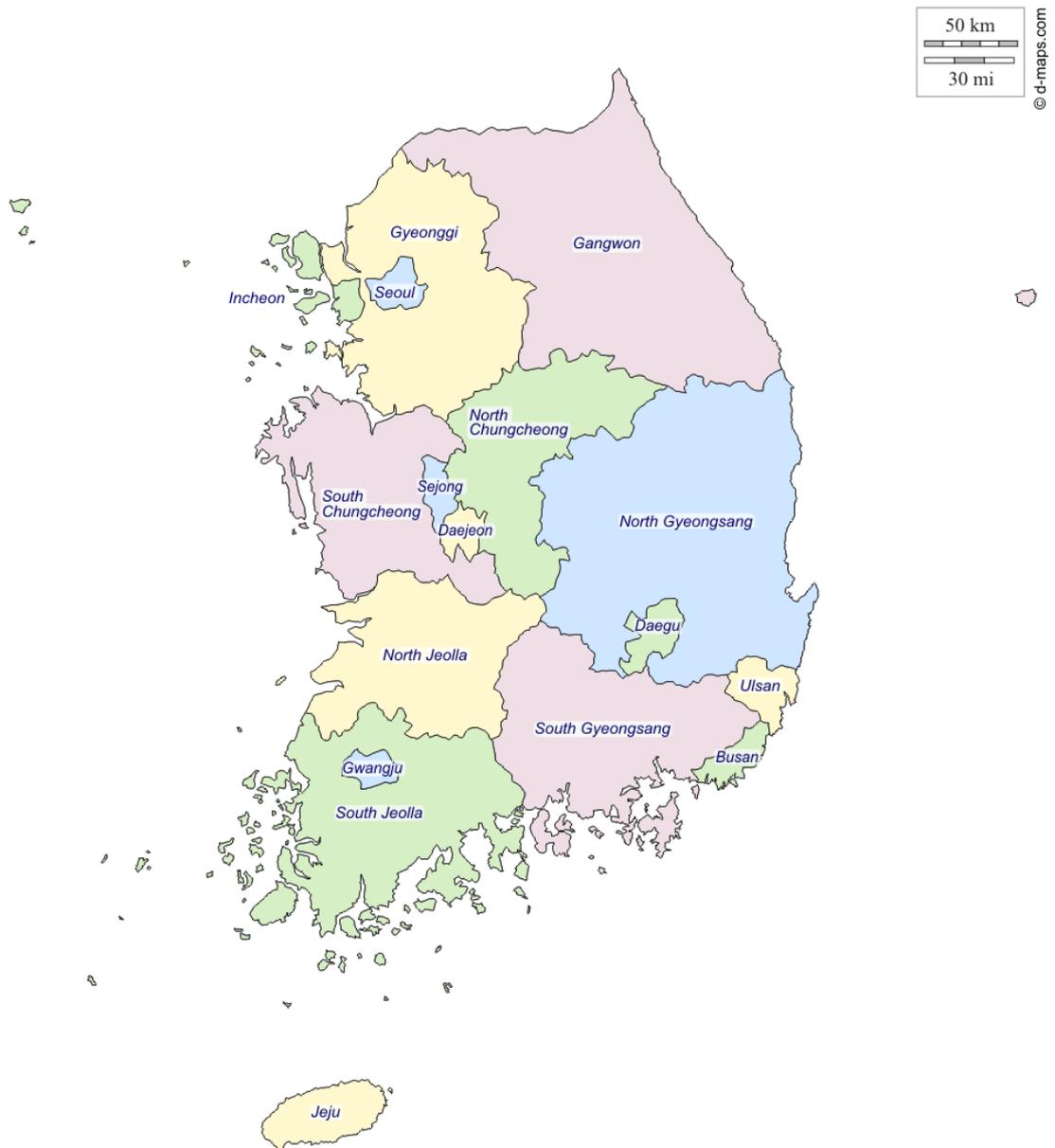
(Source: http://d-maps.com/carte.php?num_car=50445&lang=en)

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[1] The map shows the provinces of South Korea. There are also wider regions in Korea, each encompassing several provinces. The most prominent of these regions are Yeongnam and Honam. Yeongnam consists of the North and South Gyeongsang, Daegu, and Busan areas in the southeast of the country. Honam consists of the North and South Jeolla and Gwangju in the southwest of the country.

I   Introduction

1 Introduction

On 26 June 1987, over one million citizens in 33 cities and four districts poured out onto the streets of South Korea demanding democracy and direct elections. By 29 June 1987, the dictatorial Chun Doo-hwan regime had succumbed to popular will and announced that it would discard the authoritarian constitution and hold direct presidential elections. Since the establishment of South Korea as an independent country in 1948 following Japanese colonial rule (1910-1945) and U.S. Army Military Government (1945-1948), Korea had been ruled by three successive dictatorships led by Rhee Syng-man (1948-1960), Park Chung-hee (1962-1979) and Chun Doo-hwan (1980-1987). In between these dictatorial regimes there had been short, ill-fated attempts at democratic rule that were soon cut short by military coup d'état. However, unlike earlier attempts at the same, the democratic transition in 1987 was successful and enduring. Today, South Korea is cited as one of the most successful cases of political, social and economic development amongst the Third Wave democracies.

One of the key social groups that led Korea's successful democratic transition were university students. Traditionally, university students had been very active in the protests against oppressive regimes since the beginning of the twentieth century (Park, M., 2012: 125). Universities served as an important political socialization institution for young citizens to learn about politics, democracy and civic engagement. They also served as an arena for ideological debates, which served as the intellectual basis for the rest of the democratic movement (Cho, H. Y., 1988). University student activist

groups also served as important non-governmental organisations that negotiated with and supported opposition political parties to challenge the incumbent Chun regime (Lee, G. H., 2010). In addition, the self-sacrificial political participation demonstrated by university students served as catalysts to motivate the mass public to participate in the protests (Seo, J. S., 2010). In the 1980s, university students in South Korea were highly engaged in politics and played an important role in the democratic transition.

Yet, nearly three decades since the democratic transition in 1987, student activism is much less prominent on university campuses. Koreans in their 20s have the lowest rate of electoral participation and party membership compared to other age groups. Studies find that Korean university students are generally apathetic and uninterested in politics (Noh, H. H., Song, J. M. and Kang, W. T., 2013; Lee, Y. M., 2010; Jung, H. G., 2010). Studies also find that young people in Korea have low levels of political efficacy and low levels of trust in political actors (Park, J. S., 2012; Lee, Y. M., 2010). Political efficacy relates to the belief that one can understand political affairs and effectively participate and that the political system will be responsive to such participation (Park, J. S., 2012).

In other established democracies in Western Europe and the US, the so-called 'youth in crisis' phenomenon has long been observed (Lerner, 1954; Larkin, 1979; Davis and Matza, 1999; Quinnan, 2002; Childers, 2012). Some researchers such as Milbrath and Goel (1977) explain this in terms of the life cycle effect, observing that 'participation increases steadily with age until it reaches a peak in the middle years, and then gradually declines with old age'. They say that as young people marry, find steady employment and begin a family, their level of political participation increases.

However, other scholars are concerned about the disaffection and apathy they observe in the so-called 'Generation X' and the slightly younger 'Generation Y' (Mattson, 2003; Levine, 2007). In fact, this withdrawal from political participation has not been confined to the demographic of young people. Wider political culture studies have expressed concern at the growing political apathy and voter disaffection in established democracies in Western Europe and the US (Abramson and Aldrich, 1981; Putnam, 2000; Dalton and Wattenberg, 2000; Kitschelt, 2000; Heath, 2007).

Whether the decline in political participation is a symptom of an underlying problem with the workings of modern democracies or whether it is something more benign depends on the causes of this change. For instance, citizens may not participate in politics because they are generally satisfied with politics. Citizens may perceive no serious problems with politics and choose to focus on other priorities in their lives. If this is the cause, low political participation may not necessarily be detrimental to the functioning of democracy (Theiss-Morse and Hibbing 2005; Norris, 1999; Schudson, 1996, 1998). However, the decline in political participation may instead be caused by a decline in the quality of democratic governance, which in turn leads to low levels of political trust and low political efficacy. This may indicate an erosion of democracy from the inside (Putnam, 2000). By investigating the explanations for the changes in political culture, it becomes possible to identify further implications for both theory and policy.

The purpose of this thesis is to compare the political culture of university students in South Korea in the 1980s before the democratic transition and the political culture of university students today and find explanations for this change. It is hoped that an in-

depth qualitative analysis into the political culture of university students in South Korea may reveal findings that shed light on the wider issue of declining political participation in other democracies.

1.1   Purpose and contribution of research

The purpose of this research is two-fold: first, to compare the political culture of university students in the 1980s to that of current university students; and second, to investigate the explanations for the changes.

In the Korean context, the particular sub-culture of university students is important because university students have traditionally been important political actors. University students often acted as the intellectual vanguards against oppressive and unjust political regimes in anti-colonialism and anti-dictatorship movements (Park, M., 2012). Yet, today many commentators and academics note that Korean university students have become apathetic towards and uninterested in politics (Noh, H. H., Song, J. M. and Kang, W. T., 2013; Lee, Y. M., 2010; Jung, H. G., 2010). The first objective of this thesis is to ascertain whether these observations are true, and if so, to what extent.

The second objective of this research is to identify explanations for the changes in the political culture of university students in Korea since the democratic transition in 1987. By comparing the political culture of university students today to the political culture of university students in the 1980s, this study will be able to identify both what factors motivated student activism in the 1980s and what factors discourage political

participation for university students today. It is hoped that this research will reveal findings that can identify further agendas for research and policy development.

1.2   Scope of research

This research will focus on the case of South Korea. South Korea is a meaningful case study because it is one of the few countries that have been able to successfully overcome the legacy of colonialism, civil war, and military dictatorship in a relatively short period of time. Studying the political culture of South Korea before the democratic transition and during the period of democratic consolidation may assist in identifying further research agendas for both new and advanced democracies.

This research will focus on the university students of South Korea as the primary subject. I have chosen to focus on this specific sub-culture because university students have great potential as political actors. University students are uniquely placed to experience 'the pull of modern ideas' (Altbach, 1982: 174). They are often socioeconomically positioned to be the future elites of society, particularly in post-colonial and modernising countries (Weiss and Aspinall, 2012: 5). In the case of South Korea, as in many developing nations, student-led uprisings proved critical in igniting social change to facilitate the transition from authoritarian rule (Park, M., 2012: 125). Yet, in the subsequent phase of democratic consolidation, the influence of university students in politics has decreased significantly. By identifying the changes in the political culture of university students and the reasons for the change, this research aims to find out what motivates or demotivates political participation.

This study will focus on the time periods of the 1980s and the 2010s. The 1980s in South Korea was a period of transition from authoritarian rule with President Chun stepping down and direct presidential elections being introduced in 1987. The 1990s saw a transition period in which the political elite from the Chun regime was gradually replaced by new elites. The 2000s was a period of democratic consolidation, with the election of the first liberal President Kim Dae-jung in 1998 and the election of the first non-dictatorship era President Roh Moo-hyun in 2003. In the years 2008-2015, there has been a continued period of conservative party rule in the presidency. It is this period that this research focuses on when references to 'university students today' or 'current university students' are made.

The scope of this study does not include a detailed investigation into how the role of university students in wider Korean society has changed. Such a study will require data collection from other social groups and age groups in wider Korean society so that meaningful comparisons may be made. In addition, such a study will require evaluation of how individual and collective participation by university students impact Korean politics. Though such a study would be interesting and informative, this issue is reserved as a further research topic.

The scope of this study also does not include a normative evaluation of whether the changes in the political culture of university students have good or bad consequences on the Korean political system. Such an assessment requires several assumptions: (1) that the political culture of university students has a causal effect on political outcomes; (2) that there is an ideal political culture that leads to good political outcomes; (3) that there are objectively good political outcomes. These assumptions

are beyond the scope of this thesis because they require a more theoretical investigation of the concepts of democracy and political culture. Yet, it is hoped that the empirical findings in this thesis would inform the development of political theory on these assumptions and the relationship between political culture and democratisation.

1.3   Outline of thesis

This thesis begins with a discussion of the literature review and research design. The literature review introduces the existing literature on the changes in the political culture of university students in Korea and more generally in other democracies. It also discusses the concept of political culture and political participation and sets out the theoretical and conceptual basis for the empirical analysis of this thesis. The research design chapter describes the data collection and analysis methods of empirical evidence.

The next substantive chapters in this thesis proceed to present the empirical findings on the political culture of university students. The first set of chapters examines the political culture of university students in the 1980s and the second set of chapters examines the political culture of university students today. The two sets of chapters on each period have similar structures with seven chapters each. Each set of chapters starts with an introductory chapter, which includes a brief historical overview of the political environment of each period. They then proceed to discuss the empirical findings on the attitudes towards government and politics, attitudes towards media, the

political socialization process, the experience of political participation and the reasons for political participation and non-participation.

This thesis then proceeds to compare the political culture of university students in the 1980s and the political culture of university students today. We analyse potential explanations for the changes in the political culture of university students based on the empirical findings. Demand-side, intermediary and supply-side explanations are applied to the Korean case study with reference to statistical data and findings from primary and secondary sources. Demand-side theories explain changes in political culture by reference to underlying social, economic and cultural shifts in the society. Intermediary theories focus on the impact of media coverage of politics on political culture. Supply-side theories explain changes in political culture by reference to changes in the political system and the quality of governance (Norris, 1999).

Finally, the conclusion sums up the findings and discusses the theoretical and policy implications of the research. It also includes a discussion of the limitations of the thesis as well as the agenda for further research.

2 Literature review

2.1 Introduction

In the literature review, we will review the existing literature that this thesis aims to expand on. We begin with a discussion of the significance of political culture studies and the concepts of political culture and political participation. These concepts are important for outlining which aspects of political culture and political participation will be examined in the empirical findings of this thesis.

We proceed to examine the literature on the political culture of young people in democracies in advanced Western democracies. There is a general consensus in the literature that there has been a decline in voter participation and support for political parties amongst young people. Though other forms of civic engagement such as volunteering have become more popular, these forms of participation are not necessarily 'political' and studies find that young people are generally apathetic towards politics and uninterested in politics.

The decline in voter participation and falling support for political parties is not confined to the demographic of young people. Indeed, this is not even a new phenomenon. The so-called 'crisis of democracy' has been posited since the 1970s and has experienced periods of popularity as well as decline. However, there has been a growing consensus in the recent literature that there is a lack of political trust, lack of support for political parties, and the rise of 'critical citizens'. The literature is divided

on whether the effects of the withdrawal of the ordinary citizens from politics in democracies should be a cause for concern.

However, the consequences and implications of this change in political culture depend on the inherent causes of the change in the political culture. Therefore we proceed to examine the key explanations for the changes in the political culture of democracies. There are broadly three categories of explanations: demand-side explanations, intermediary explanations, and supply-side explanations (Norris, 1999). Each of these types of explanations is introduced in the literature review and will be used to explain the changes in the political culture of university students in Korea.

We then proceed to examine the existing studies on the political culture of university students in South Korea. Historically, university students played an active role in the political development of South Korea. However, since the democratic transition, student activism has declined. There is a general consensus in Korean academia that young people exhibit political apathy and are uninterested in politics, have low levels of political efficacy, low levels of political trust, and low levels of political participation. Many studies in the Korean literature focus on the generational, age and period effects to explain the political culture of young people in Korea.

Finally, the literature review concludes with a discussion of the contribution that this thesis aims to make to the existing literature.

2.2   Political culture

2.2.1   The importance of political culture

It is widely accepted in the literature that mass political orientations are crucial for democratic transitions and democratic consolidation (Dalton, 1999, 2004; Diamond, 1999; Inglehart and Welzel, 2005; Mattes and Bratton, 2007; Qi and Shin, D. C., 2011; Shin, D. C., 2007; Welzel, 2007). In particular, it has been argued that new democracies become fully consolidated liberal democracies only when an overwhelming majority of the mass citizenry embraces democratic governance as 'the only game in town' (Diamond, 1999, 2008; Linz and Stepan, 1996; Shin, D. C., 2007). This is because political activity is the result of not only physical resources but also psychological engagement with the political world (Verba, Schlozman and Brady, 1995: 354). A great deal of empirical research has demonstrated that various attitudes and orientations towards politics substantially contribute to the tendency of citizens to participate in politics (Bean, 1989).

For this reason, how ordinary citizens view democracy and react to its institutions and processes has recently become a key issue in research and theory on the legitimatisation of democratic rule (Booth and Seligson, 2009; Dalton, 2004; Fails and Pierce, 2008; Gibson, Caldeira and Spence, 2003; Kuan and Lau, 2002; Nathan, 2007; McDonough, Barnes and Pina, 1986, 1998; Norris, 1999, 2011; Shin, D. C. and Wells, 2005; Tyler, 2006). As stated by Inglehart and Welzel (2005: 300):

> Democracy is not simply the result of clever elite bargaining and constitutional engineering. It depends on deep-rooted orientations among the people themselves. These

orientations motivate them to press for freedom, effective civil and political rights, and genuinely responsive government – and to exert continual vigilance to ensure that the governing elites remain responsive to them.

Political culture is important not only because it helps to explain the process of transition to democracy, but can also be employed to study the process of democratic consolidation. 'Democratic consolidation' refers to the process of making new democracies stable and protecting them from regressing to authoritarianism (Schedler, 1998: 91). The idea behind this concept is that there are two main phases of transition in the democratization process: 'transition from authoritarian rule' and 'democratic consolidation' (Mainwaring, O'Donnell and Valenzuela, 1992). While the first transition focuses on undermining the authoritarian regime and is more 'anti-authoritarian than pre-democratic', the second transition consists of a broader and more complex process associated with the institutionalization of a new, democratic set of political rules (Munck, 1994: 356). While the 'transition from authoritarian rule' is more easily determined through assessing the existence of fair and free elections and the toppling of the dictatorial regime, 'democratic consolidation' is less easily defined. Due to the teleological and imprecise nature of this latter concept of 'democratic consolidation', the 'conditions of democratic consolidation' have come to include such divergent terms as:

popular legitimation, the diffusion of democratic values, the neutralization of anti-system actors, civilian supremacy over the military, the elimination of authoritarian enclaves, party building, the organization of functional interests, the stabilization of electoral rules, the routinization of politics, the decentralization of state power, the introduction of mechanisms of direct democracy, judicial reform, the alleviation of poverty, and economic stabilization (Schedler, 1998: 91-92).

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In fact, there is no consensus in the literature on what democratic consolidation entails and how it can be measured. However, the 'conditions of democratic consolidation' that Schedler notes above are the very things that are measured in a study of political culture. In this way, political culture can be a useful way for measuring the extent of democratic consolidation of a new democracy. For instance, findings on the political culture of a new democracy that citizens are supportive of the democratic political system, satisfied with political outcomes and perceive their political participation to be effective would be strong indicators of a successful consolidation of democracy.

2.2.2   What is political culture?

According to Almond, 'every political system is embedded with a particular pattern of orientations to political action' and this pattern is the 'political culture' of that society (Almond, 1956: 396). Political culture includes: (1) 'cognitive orientation', or knowledge of and beliefs about the structure and functions of the political system; (2) 'affective orientation', or feelings about the political system, its roles and personnel; and (3) 'evaluative orientation', the judgements and opinions about the performance of the political system and other political objects (Almond and Verba, 1963: 15). Political culture is essentially 'a set of attitudes – cognitions, value standards, and feelings – toward the political system, its various roles, and its role incumbents' (Kim, Y. C., 1964).

In particular, the elements of political culture that will be the focus of the empirical findings of this thesis are:

- attitudes towards government and politics;

- attitudes towards the media;

- the political socialization process;

- the experience of political participation; and

- reasons for political participation and non-participation.

Firstly, the attitudes towards government and politics reveal all of the cognitive, affective and evaluative orientations towards the political system. Through the interviewees' responses on attitudes towards the presidential administration and the political situation, it is possible to observe how well they know about the structure and functions of the political system. It is also possible to learn about their opinions about the political system, its personnel and the performance of the political system.

Secondly, the attitudes towards media is an important element of political culture. The media are the main conduit of information between the political elite and the public. The media shape the cognitive orientation of the public towards politics and also have a significant impact on their affective and evaluative orientation.

Thirdly, the political socialization process is an important element of political culture because it is the process through which people come to hold the political views they do.

Fourthly, the experience of political participation is the element of political culture that is linked to the actions directed to affect politics. As will be discussed further below, there are latent and manifest forms of political participation. Non-participation

is also an important element of political participation. All of these forms of political participation are the output of the cognitive, affective and evaluative orientations that people hold towards politics.

Fifthly, reasons for political participation and non-participation are important elements of political culture because they indicate the role that citizens perceive themselves to play in the political system. Changes in the reasons for political participation and non-participation reflect changes in the political system and the socioeconomic structure of society and can have important policy implications.

The discussion of the five elements of political culture above are essentially designed to provide a comprehensive examination of the attitudes the respondents hold towards politics, how they came to hold those views and how these views affected their political actions.

2.2.3   What is political participation?

Political participation is an important element of political culture. According to Verba, Nie and Kim (1978: 1) political participation refers to 'those legal acts by private citizens that are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of governmental personnel and/or the actions that they take'. The problem with this definition for our purposes is that the main form of political participation amongst university students in the 1980s was participating in protests, which was an illegal activity under the Chun administration. A wider definition that we therefore adopt is that of Kasse and Marsch (1979: 42), which defines political participation as 'all

voluntary activities by individual citizens intended to influence either directly or indirectly political choices at various levels of the political system'.

There are different types of political participation. In our analysis of the political participation of university students in South Korea, we will use the following typology of political participation.

Table 1. Typology of Political Participation

Type	Activity category	Examples of activities
Manifest Political Participation	Voting	Voting in local, parliamentary and presidential elections
	Campaign activity	Volunteering for campaigns, giving money to particular political parties
	Contacting political parties or groups	Writing to public officials, becoming a member of a political party
	Protest activity	Participating in demonstrations, protests, strikes, candlelight vigils
Latent Political Participation	Keeping informed of political issues	Reading books on political issues or newspapers, watching televised debates
	Discussing political issues with family, friends and peers	Discussing political issues with others in societies, debating political issues with others online or offline
Non-Participation	Anti-political non-participation	No manifest political participation
	Apolitical non-participation	No latent political participation

(Source: Modified from Ekman and Amna, 2012)

Broadly, there are three types of political participation: latent political participation, manifest political participation and non-participation. Latent political participation includes keeping informed of political issues and discussing these issues with others. Manifest political participation includes formal participation and extra-parliamentary

participation, which can be legal or illegal. Non-participation can be either anti-political, which is actively choosing not to participate, or apolitical, which is passively not participating (Ekman and Amna, 2012).

Within manifest political participation, there can also be many different dimensions. Verba and Nie (1972: 56-63) identify four dimensions: (1) voting; (2) campaign activity; (3) contacting public officials; and (4) cooperative or communal activities. To this analysis, Teorell, Torcal and Montero (2007) adds protest activity, which includes participation in demonstrations and strikes. Of the four dimensions of political participation that Verba and Nie (1972) identified, cooperative or communal activities were not included in the typology. This is because a distinction has to be made between 'political participation' and 'civic engagement'.

Following Robert Putnam's *Bowling Alone* (2000), there has been a lot of research on 'civic engagement'. Yet, after reviewing the existing definitions of the term, Adler and Goggin (2005) concluded that there was no single agreed-upon meaning of civic engagement. Their own definition was that civic engagement is basically about 'how an active citizen participates in the life of a community in order to improve conditions for others or to help shape the community's future' (2005: 241). Civic engagement is usually operationalized as a list of variables. Scott Keeter and associates (2002) designed a large-scale survey of civic engagement, using questions that emerged from focus group interviews. The 19 Core Indicators of Engagement they developed include:

- indicators of community participation including membership in various types of non-profit voluntary associations, regular volunteering and fundraising, and community problem-solving;

- indicators of political engagement including registering to vote, voting, and various activities that might influence other people's votes, including volunteering for campaigns, displaying political stickers and signs and giving money to parties and campaigns; and

- indicators of political voice including protesting, canvassing, signing petitions, contacting the mass media, contacting elected officials, boycotting products, and 'buycotting' products or companies (purchasing something because you like the social or political values of the company).

In the literature on civic engagement, the concept of 'politics' is broadened to include things like the political-ethical based patterns of consumption at local markets (Micheletti, 2003) and food preferences (Micheletti and Stolle, 2009).

The increase in academic interest on such a wide-encompassing term like civic engagement may be because people are moving away from political participation aimed at changing public policy and moving towards influencing companies, lifestyles, charities and the media as governments are ceasing to be the main arbiters of public activity. However, civic engagement does not equal political participation (Theiss-Morse and Hibbing, 2005). Since the focus of this thesis is on 'political' participation, we have not included civic engagement in the scope of the research.

2.3 Young people in democracy today

Young people possess the potential to challenge the existing norms of society. Historically, young people have often been at the forefront of challenging non-democratic regimes and once a democratic transition has taken place, have the potential to play an influential role in the consolidation of that democracy in the coming years. However, this potential may remain unrealised if they become uninterested in political participation or lack the capacity to contribute to democratic citizenship.

According to Finlay, Wray-Lake and Flanagan (2010), there is considerable evidence that if civic engagement begins in adolescence, it can continue throughout the life course. During adolescence, young people 'chart a course for their future and take stock of the values they live by and the world they want to be part of' (Flanagan and Levine, 2010: 160). Political participation by young people is important for them to grow into active, engaged citizens. It has been argued that: '[c]itizens in a democracy need to be taught to know and value what it means to participate in and be responsible for the care and improvement of our common and collective life' (Woolin, 1989: 139).

However, within the literature on young people in established democracies in Western Europe and North America today, there has been a growing concern over what has been termed the 'youth in crisis' (Lerner, 1954; Larkin, 1979; Quinnan, 2002; Childers, 2012). Studies have found that young people have become less likely to vote over time (Fieldhouse, Tramner and Russell, 2007; Norris, 2002; Phelps, 2005; Wattenberg, 2002) and that the current generation of young people have a weaker

sense of duty and are less likely to see voting as an obligation (Blais, Gidengil and Nevitte, 2004: 229). Others have identified that not only are younger individuals less likely to vote but also are less likely to engage in campaign activities and join a political party than older cohorts (Dalton, 2008; Franklin, 2004; Esser and de Vrees, 2007; Mycock and Tonge, 2012). Along the same lines, Henn and Weinstein (2006: 525) found a low level of party identification among young people. Similarly, Wattenberg (2002: 90) finds that young people in the US do not believe that political parties represent their interests. Some scholars have explained this phenomenon by reference to the life-cycle effect. For instance, Milbrath and Goel (1977) observed that 'participation increases steadily with age until it reaches a peak in the middle years, and then gradually declines with old age'. Somewhat similarly, Rosenstone and Hansen (1993: 136-137) write: 'In general, as people grow older, their involvement in politics deepens.'

Yet, some studies have found that young people today are less likely to participate in politics than young people several decades ago. For instance, Flanagan and Levine (2010) find that young adults today are less likely than their counterparts in the 1970s to belong to a union, read newspapers at least once a week, vote, be contacted by a political party, work on a community project, attend club meetings and believe that people are trustworthy. Volunteering was the only indicator that has seen an increase since the 1970s. Depending on the circumstances, Fiorina (2002) argues, voluntarism can be political. Although Putnam (2000) writes that young people being more interested in volunteering is a good thing, Mattson (2003) points out that at the same time, these young people are more apathetic towards politics. Volunteering is not the same as political participation, and the fact remains that young people today are not as

actively engaged in politics as their counterparts in previous generations. This interpretation of the increasing political apathy or alienation of young people has been referred to as 'dissenting citizenship' (O'Loughlin and Gillespie, 2012) or 'partisan dealignment' (Phelps, 2012).

On the other hand, some scholars have argued that forms of civic engagement are changing, rather than declining (Sherrod, Flannagan and Youniss, 2002). Stolle and Hooghe (2011: 119) argue that young people have become involved 'in emerging forms of civic engagement that take place outside the institutionalised sphere of politics'. Sherrod, Flanagan and Youniss (2002) found that young people are more likely to engage in informal networks and online communities than read newspapers or join political parties or trade unions. Social networking sites provide a forum for ordinary young people to engage with others and express themselves in an 'intimate, social, unregulated youth space' (Harris, Wyn and Younes, 2010: 27). Some studies find that social networking sites are being utilised in existing forms of engagement and have a positive impact on civic and political action for young adults (Gil de Zuniga, Jung and Valenzuela, 2012; Valenzuela, 2013). However, no research has yet shown precisely the extent to which new forms of political activity have compensated for the decline of old ones (Phelps, 2012).

2.4   The historical evolution of the crisis of democracy theory

The perceived decline of political participation in Western Europe and the US has not been restricted to young people. In fact, over the past several decades, there has been a growing academic interest in the rise and fall of political participation among ordinary

citizens in the established democracies. Much of this research was driven by the concern about declining levels of voter turnout and party membership accompanied by deteriorating public confidence and increased public weariness, scepticism, cynicism and lack of trust in political parties and politicians (Ekman and Amna, 2012).

The seminal work that sparked this academic debate was *The Crisis of Democracy* by Crozier, Huntington and Watanuki (1975). Crozier, Huntington and Watanuki argued that weakening confidence in politicians and political institutions in Western Europe, the US and Japan was caused by increasing demands from interest groups and new social movements, the increase of mass protests and civil disobedience, greater polarisation of ideologies and issues and the apparent inability of governments to deal with the international economic recession produced by the OPEC oil shocks. The social backdrop of this analysis was the violent protests over the Vietnam War and the civil rights riots in the US and the student radicalism and industrial strife in Western Europe in the 1970s (Norris, 1999).

In the 1960s and 1970s, new democracies in Latin America were struggling with internal conflicts between rising public demands and weak economic development resulting in violent reversions to authoritarian rule (O'Donnell and Schmitter, 1986). Nascent democracies collapsed throughout Latin America in a succession of military coups: Peru (1962), Brazil and Bolivia (1964), Argentine (1966), Chile and Uruguay (1973). Elsewhere in the world, dictatorships maintained firm strongholds: Greece, Turkey, Nigeria, Pakistan, Indonesia, the Philippines, India and South Korea. Some of these countries had been democracies that had collapsed; others had just been decolonised. The diversity of historical legacies that resulted in the failed democratic

outcomes fuelled the concern about the future stability of democracy and its suitability to developing nations (Norris, 1999).

However, in the 1980s, the 'crisis' theories tended to fall out of intellectual fashion. The third wave of democratisation kicked off with the restoration of elected civilian administrations in Greece, Spain and Portugal (Morlino and Montero, 1995). This was followed by successful democratic transitions across Latin America and Asia, culminating in the establishment of electoral democracies in many former Soviet-dominated nations in Central and Eastern Europe. These historic developments brought a heady mood of optimism in the West. Huntington described this wave of democracy as follows:

> Although obviously there were resistance and setbacks, as in China in 1989, the movement towards democracy seemed to take on the character of an almost irreversible global tide moving on from one triumph to the next (Huntington, 1991: 21).

By the 1980s in the US and Western Europe, democracy adapted to the challenges it had faced in the 1960s and 1970s. Protests became part of the conventional repertoire of middle-class political participation (Barnes and Kasse, 1979; Topf, 1995). Conservatism led by Reagan in the US and Thatcher in the UK reduced public services and lowered public expectations (Hoover and Plant, 1989; Krieger, 1986; Norporth, 1992). New social movements like feminism and environmentalism became incorporated into the mainstream policy process (Dalton and Kuechler, 1990; McAdam, McCarthy and Zald, 1996).

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The evidence for the 'crisis' thesis came under strong challenge from a group of scholars studying the trends of political support and participation. The five-volume 'Beliefs in Government' research project (Klingemann and Fuchs, 1995; Niedermayer and Sinnott, 1995; Borre and Scarborough, 1995; van Deth and Scarborough, 1995; Kaase and Newton, 1995) thoroughly examined public opinion of democratic governments, institutions and politicians based on the series of Eurobarometer surveys from 1973 to 1990. The wide range of contributors to this project found little evidence for widespread signs of growing 'malaise of democracy' during these decades. Instead, diverse patterns of political support were found in different European societies, measured by satisfaction with the workings of the democratic process (Fuchs, 1995), voter turnout (Topf, 1995), and trust in politicians and institutional confidence (Listhaug and Wilberg, 1995). The only evidence consistent with the 'crisis' thesis was a general cross-national decline in the attachment of the electorate to political parties. As summarised by Budge and Newton (1997: 132):

> There is little evidence to support the various theories of crisis, contradiction and catastrophe. There are few signs of a general decline in trust, confidence in public institutions, political interest, or faith in democracy; nor is there much evidence of an increase in apathy, alienation or faith in democracy.

Yet, by the 1990s, many commentators sensed a more diffused mood of angst and self-doubt in democracies, particularly in the US. American voters were described as 'ready to revolt', 'angry', 'disgusted' and 'frustrated' (Dionne, 1991; Tolchin, 1996) with deep mistrust of the government (Nye, Zelikow and King, 1997). Studies confirmed a decline in the public trust for federal government and major institutions in America (Nye et al., 1997) with the US Congress held in especially low regard

(Hibbing and Theiss-Morse, 2001). In the seminal work *Bowling Alone* (2000), Robert Putnam found that young Americans were less likely to engage in politics and community life and also less likely to trust their fellow citizens.

In Western Europe, scholars have raised similar concerns, finding that public disaffection with politics has spread (Torcal and Montero, 2006; Dogan, 2005) and that people hate politics (Hay, 2007). The electorate has become more sceptical (Curtis and Jowell, 1997) and there has been an erosion of trust in politicians (Holmberg, 1999). There has been evidence of lower voter turnout (Franklin, 2004) and declining party membership (Biesen, Mair and Poguntke, 2009), with political parties losing loyal voters (Franklin, Mackie and Valen, 1991; Dalton and Wattenberg, 2000) as well as grassroots members (Mair and Biezen, 2001). This trend that has been apparent since the mid 1990s has been termed the era of 'post-democracy' (Crouch, 2004) and even the 'death of democracy' (Keane, 2009).

In advanced Western democracies, it has recently been found that a growing number of citizens report having lost the 'sense that they can influence decisions and that the political system is responsive to them and well-functioning' (Stoker, 2010: 51). Dalton (2004: 191) finds that by almost any measure, 'public confidence and trust in, and support, for politicians, political parties and political institutions have eroded over the past generation'. Dalton (2004) concludes that although citizens in established Western societies remain staunchly committed to democratic principles, they have gradually become more distrustful of politicians, detached from political parties and sceptical about public institutions. Similarly, Norris (1999, 2011) identifies the rise of the 'critical citizens' in democracies today. 'Critical citizens' aspire to democracy as

their ideal form of government, but still remain deeply doubtful about the actual workings of the core institutions of democracy, especially political parties, parliaments and governments.

2.5   Consequences and interpretations

Whether the trend of decline of political participation is interpreted pessimistically or optimistically depends on which normative concept of democracy is adopted. For instance, if the participatory democracy model as described by Pateman (1980) is adopted, political passivity may be interpreted to be detrimental to democracy. On the other hand, if the minimalist model of democracy described by Przeworski (1999) is adopted, democracy does not require mass participation, except at the ballot box. The intermediate position is that of the representative democracy model as espoused by Almond and Verba (1963). Almond and Verba (1963: 346) argued that the ideal political culture was a combination of political interest and a sense of civic duty with some level of passivity, giving the incumbent government leaders the freedom to decide on most issues on their own.

Pessimistic interpretations argue that the decline in social capital results in the erosion of democracy from the inside (Putnam, 2000). Growing voter scepticism and cynicism may contribute to the rise of protest politics and radical anti-state parties (Craig and Maggiotto, 1981; Muller, 1979; Muller, Jukam and Seligson, 1982; Cheles, Ferguson and Vaughan, 1995). At the elite level it may also perhaps deter the best and brightest from entering public service (Nye, Zelikow and King, 1997; Norris, 1997). The fall of political trust may limit the discretion of policymakers and restrict voluntary

compliance with government authority (Hetherington, 1998). In the democratisation literature, it has been long assumed that a democratic political culture was a necessary condition for democratic consolidation (Lipset, 1959; Almond and Verba, 1963; Dahl, 1971; Linz 1978; O'Donnell and Schmitter, 1986; Diamond, Linz and Lipset, 1995; Linz and Stephan 1996). In addition, low political trust and participation have been thought to jeopardise regime legitimacy and threaten the stability of new democracies (Crozier, Huntington and Watanuki, 1975).

Optimistic interpretations have argued that the fall of civic engagement and political participation is premature (Klingemann and Fuchs, 1995) and 'critical citizens' or 'monitorial citizens' still remain committed to democratic governance but are simply choosing not to participate (Norris, 1999; Schudson, 1996; 1998). Theiss-Morse and Hibbing (2005) write that many people are not participating in politics because they are busy, and that they are rational in choosing not to participate.

> The demands of job and family, not to mention the appeal of sports, movies, TV, and a host of other things that compete with politics for the public's attention, all tend to make politics a fairly low priority for the average voter (Donovan and Bowler, 2004: 35).

Support for particular politicians or for specific parties and governments in office can be expected to ebb and flow as part of the normal process of democratic politics. It has even been pointed out that political inactivity 'can be a sign of confidence as well as alienation. Or it may simply be a sign of irrelevance of politics and government for many people much of the time' (Gamson, 1968: 48).

In addition, it has been argued that citizen disenchantment with the performance of democracy may catalyse activism and spark progressive reform movements, therefore serving ultimately to strengthen and adapt democratic institutions (Cain, Dalton and Scarrow, 2003; Dalton, 2004; Norris, 2005; Booth and Seligson, 2009). In Latin America, it has been observed that citizens who are dissatisfied with government performance do not drop out of politics or resort to protest politics, but participate at high rates in conventional and alternative political arenas (Booth and Seligson, 2009).

Whether the consequences of the general trend of decline for political participation is negative or positive may vary upon the level (Easton, 1965). Also, perhaps more importantly, the consequences will depend on the causes of the decline of political participation. For instance, consequences will differ depending on whether, on the one hand, the causes of the decline in political participation are enduring cultural shifts and technological changes, or on the other hand, due to the deterioration of the quality of democratic performance of governments and democratic institutions.

2.6   Explanations

According to Norris (2011:7), there are broadly three types of explanations for the decline of political participation in democracies today: (1) demand-side theories; (2) intermediary theories; and (3) supply-side theories.

Demand-side theories explain the increasing voter disaffection and decline of political participation with reference to enduring cultural shifts and socioeconomic changes. This explanation has its intellectual roots in the modernization theories of Lipset

(1959), Lerner (1958) and Moore (1966). It puts heavy emphasis on factors such as levels of socioeconomic development, literacy and education and post-materialism to explain rising democratic expectations and falling satisfaction with the actual workings of democracy. It is exemplified by the works of Dalton (2004, 2005) and Inglehart and Welzel (2005). After examining the social status and generational patterns of political support, Dalton (2005) concludes that trends of decreasing trust are linked to the process of modernization and that scepticism of the political process has grown more rapidly among the young and better-educated. From this analysis, he concludes that: 'We have entered a new period when governments must confront a public sceptical of their motivations, doubtful about the institutions of representative democracy, and willing to challenge political elites' (Dalton, 2005: 150).

Intermediary theories focus on the role of political communications in how people learn about democracy and government performance. Negative coverage of politics and elections has been found to reduce political trust (Cappella and Jamieson, 1997) and political efficacy, leading to voter disaffection (Pinkleton, Austin and Forman, 1998). It has also been argued that excessively negative news about sexual scandals and financial corruption are damaging to the reputation of the political actors and institutions, leading to broader disillusionment with the way democracy works (Germent, 1991; Orren, 1997).

However, within the literature, intermediary explanations have been criticised on two issues. Firstly, the purported negative effects of intermediary theories lack empirical basis. Cross-national empirical studies have shown that there is not a systemic connection between media coverage of scandals and corruption and subsequent levels

of trust and confidence in government or satisfaction with democracy (Chanley, Rudolph and Rahn, 2000; Anderson and Tverdova, 2003; Moreno, 2002). In addition, frequent uses of some types of media, such as social networking sites, are associated with comparatively lower levels of political cynicism (Hanson et al., 2010). In fact, Norris (2011) concludes that exposure to the news media actually strengthens democratic orientations and encourages civic engagement.

Perhaps the biggest problem with intermediary accounts is that it may not be the media coverage of corruption and scandals that lower political trust and efficacy but the corruption and scandals themselves that lead to voter disaffection. In other words, the problem may lie in the deterioration of the quality of democratic performance.

Supply-side theories lay the blame for public dissatisfaction with the policy performance and institutional arrangements of democratic governments. Supply-side theories posit that public satisfaction with politics is strongly influenced by the way in which the government implements policy (Norris, 2011: 15). Yet, due to globalisation, internationalisation of capital markets, privatisation, deregulation and the increasing importance of supranational institutions like the EU, IMF and WTO, the traditional scope and autonomy of the modern state has diminished (Hay, 2007). In addition, the professionalization of legislatures and low levels of incumbency turnover have insulated politicians from electoral defeat (Norris, 1997) and the lack of influence of minor 'protest parties' have failed to provide a channel for disaffected voters (Miller and Listhaug, 1990). It has also been argued that intermediary institutions such as political parties, interest groups and parliament have weakened, making government less accountable and responsive to the citizenry (Hayward, 1996). Citizens may

become disillusioned with the political system if they perceive elected representatives to be corrupt and unresponsive (Gamson, 1968). All of these problems with the supply of politics are therefore more likely to be the ultimate cause of voter disaffection rather than the broadcasting of these issues. It is therefore hypothesised in this thesis that supply-side explanations would provide the most comprehensive account of the changes in the political culture of university students in South Korea.

2.7   Study of the political culture of university students in South Korea

The apparent decline of political participation and interest in politics amongst young people has also been observed in South Korea. University students played an important role in the democratic transition of South Korea in 1987. Historically, university students in South Korea have led protests against oppressive regimes since the beginning of the twentieth century. Student activism has a long history in Korea that began with the anti-colonial struggles against Japanese colonialism in 1919-1945 and continued since then as a force opposing the successive authoritarian regimes that followed (Park, M., 2012: 125). However, many Korean academics today express concern at the apparent political apathy and lack of interest in politics among university students today (Noh, H. H., Song, J. M. and Kang, W. T., 2013; Lee, Y. M., 2010; Jung, H. G., 2010). Studies also find that young people in Korea have low levels of political efficacy and low levels of trust in political actors (Park, J. S., 2012; Lee, Y. M., 2010) and that student activism has become virtually non-existent (Kim, K. K., 2008). Meanwhile, there have been several sporadic instances of peaceful mass mobilisations of young people participating in candlelight vigils, which has been the

subject of much discussion in Korean academia (Han, M. R., 2011; Yoon, S. Y., 2009; Jeon, H. G., 2008).

According to studies conducted before or contemporaneously with the democratic transition, the major characteristics of South Korean political culture included: authoritarianism, collectivism, alienation, factionalism, nationalism and anti-communism (Han, B. H. and Auh, S. Y., 1987: 29; Shin, M. S., 1986: 272-275). Many of these traits could be attributed to the legacy of the pre-industrial traditional Korean society. Before the twentieth century, Korea was ruled by a series of dynasties, the last of which was the Chosun dynasty. In the Chosun dynasty, most citizens belonged to a largely agricultural class that had no opportunities of social mobility and no access to political participation. In particular, the Confucian ideology that permeated society emphasised such values as obedience, hierarchical order, collectivism and stability, effectively excluding the masses from having any political voice (Sohn, B. S., 1987: 48).

These traditional values have supported the authoritarianism that persisted for most of the twentieth century (Lee, S. G., 1984: 208). The presence of traditional values such as obedience, elitism and collectivism in the pre-democratic transition Korean culture was confirmed in a survey conducted by Han Bae-ho and Auh Soo-young in 1984. However, this study also found that a majority of Koreans at the time also subscribed to values such as equality, tolerance and respect for individual rights (Han, B. H. and Auh, S. Y., 1987: 58-69). Similarly, Pye observed that though there was a preference for a strong state, there was also a desire for the fulfilment of democratic ideals and responsiveness (Pye, 1985: 216).

In a study of the political culture of university students in Korea based on 2000 survey respondents in three rounds of surveys in 1986, it was found that university students in 1986 were extremely dissatisfied with the political situation. An overwhelming majority of the survey respondents said that the interests of the public were not reflected in politics (79.4%) and that there was no stable sense of social justice (84.2%) (Lee, H. G., 1987: 37). The study also found that university students at the time were generally supportive of the student activist movement and recognized that the objective of the student activist movement was to achieve democracy (Lee, H. G., 1987: 38-41).

After the democratic transition in 1987, there were several important studies on the political culture of Koreans in general. In 1995, a study by Lee Jeong-bok found that a majority of Koreans were aware of current political affairs and found politics to be relevant to their everyday lives. Electoral participation was high, but other areas of political participation such as joining political parties and participating in rallies, campaigns or lobbying were relatively low. A majority of respondents reported low levels of political efficacy and expressed the feeling that their opinions were not reflected in government policies. Yet, these feelings were to be expected in a country that had just undergone a transition from an authoritarian regime.

Following up on their study in 1984, Auh Soo-young and Han Bae-ho published an article in 1996 identifying the changes and continuities in the political culture of South Korea since the democratic transition. They found that the traits of obedience and respect for authority had become much less significant since the democratic transition, especially in urban areas and amongst the highly educated citizens. A similar study

that sought to identify the changes in continuities in the political culture since the establishment of the Republic of Korea to the late 1990s found that authoritarian tendencies have declined. However, collectivism and factionalism were still found to be prominent features of Korean political culture (Kim, H. N., 1998: 109-110). Meanwhile, another study found that in the 1990s, a post-materialist generation which held socially tolerant values that respected diversity and emphasised personal freedom but distrusted political institutions was coming of age, particularly amongst the Koreans in their 20s (Auh S. Y., 1999: 129).

A study in 2004 specifically examined the changes in the political participation of Koreans since the democratic transition. This study found that in 2002 compared to 1987, there were many changes in the forms of political participation of Korean citizens. Voting became an important form of political participation and there has been a decrease in participation in violent protests. Citizens have adopted more diverse types of political participation including contacting public officials and engaging with civil society groups. Citizens have also become more interested in post-materialist issues such as human rights or environmentalism. However, the study found that there was still a generally low level of political participation (Lee, H. W., 2004: 192-194). In a further more recent study, Lee Hyun-woo found that though there was a general trend of decline in electoral participation, there was an increase in other forms of political participation, in particular signing petitions and contacting politicians (Lee, H. W., 2009: 12-14). However, this study noted that there was a very low level of trust in political institutions, in particular towards the National Assembly and political parties (Lee, H. W., 2009: 7).

This general trend of distrust of political actors has been widely observed particularly in studies of the political culture of young people today. In a 2012 study of Korean high school students, it was found that young people had a low level of both internal and external political efficacy (Park, J. S., 2012: 189). Internal political efficacy relates to the belief that the subject understands politics and can effectively participate in politics; external political efficacy relates to the belief that the government and the political system will be responsive to their political participation (Park, J. S., 2012: 191). According to this study, external political efficacy was relatively lower than internal political efficacy and could be explained by the very low levels of trust. The study found that young people had a very low level of trust for politics in general, politicians and political institutions, with the lowest level of trust for politicians (Park, J. S., 2012: 208). In another study based on a survey of 754 university students in the Busan region, it was found that most university students did not have a political party they supported and that they exhibited a general lack of interest in politics and lack of knowledge of political issues (Jeon, Y. J., Cha, J. K. and Kim, E. M., 2007: 116, 126).

Many political culture studies on Korean young people and university students in Korean academia frame the discussion in terms of the generational, period and age effects to explain the political culture of young people in Korea (Lee, Y. M., 2010: 13). Age effects, or life cycle effects, are the changes in political attitudes and values that people go through as they age. The traditional age effect that is observed is that people tend to become more conservative as they age (Coale, 1964; Berelson and Steiner, 1964). It is also observed that citizens come to support political parties and participate in voting in higher numbers as they age (Crittenden, 1962; Barnes, 1989). In contrast, young people tend to be more rebellious against authority (Braungart, 1975) and have

greater protest potential (Watts, 1999). Generational effects relate to the lasting effect that the shared pre-adult socialization has on a particular cohort (Lambert, 1972; Abramson, 1975; Rintala, 1979). The underlying assumption of generational theory is that the shared experience of significant events such as war or social movement in the formative years has a lasting impact on the political views of a cohort. In contrast, period effects move away from assuming the importance of the formative years and instead posits that historically significant events affect every individual regardless of age or generation. For instance, Beck and Jennings (1979) find that there is a liberal bias among both younger and older respondents in the late 1960s and early 1970s in America in the context of the Vietnam War.

In a study of the age and generational effects in Korea from 1997 to 2012, both age and generational effects were observed. This study examined six generations in six birth cohorts and found that the age effect of increasing conservatism was found in the 'Korean War generation' (born before 1942), the 'pre-industrial generation' (born 1942-1951) and the 'Yushin generation' (born 1952-1959). However, it was observed that the '386 generation'[2] (born 1960-1969) had a distinctively consistent liberal political bias. This exhibited the generational effect of a cohort that had experienced the democratic transition of 1987 as young people in their 20s and early 30s (Noh, H. H., Song, J. M. and Kang, W. T., 2013: 133-134). Meanwhile, it was observed that the 'candlelight generation' (born 1988-1993), who are currently in their 20s, exhibited the lowest level of support for any political party and the lowest level of electoral participation (Noh, H. H., Song, J. M. and Kang, W. T., 2013: 114, 133).

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[2] The term '386 generation' was coined in the 1990s to refer to the generation in their 30s, who were university students in the 1980s and born in the 1960s.

The reference to the 'candlelight generation' refers to the mass mobilization of young people in Korea in 2008 against the Korea-U.S. Free Trade Agreement. Over 60% of the initial participants were teenagers and the peaceful protests, which took the form of candlelight vigils, lasted for over two months. As a result of the protests, the government renegotiated the terms of the Korea-U.S. Free Trade Agreement so that beef aged over 30 months or containing harmful materials that may cause Mad Cow Disease were banned from being imported to Korea (Han, M. R., 2011: 100). This event showed that young people could not be ignored in political decision-making and could be a potent political force. It has also been argued that the candlelight vigils showed that young people in Korea were not apathetic or uninterested in politics but are actually monitorial citizens (Yoon, S. Y., 2009: 317). Although there has been a decline of voting and support of political parties, Korean citizens, particularly young people, have been found to seek to engage with politics through online social media and unconventional forms of political participation such as the candlelight vigils (Yoon, S. Y., 2009: 329).

The political culture of university students today can, to some extent, be explained by age, generational and period effects. Koreans in their 20s are in their formative years as young people in their life cycles. As such it can be expected that they would have lower levels of political participation. As a cohort, they experienced the IMF financial crisis of 1997-1998 as children and face entering the workforce in the wake of the global financial crisis of 2008. They are also affected by the period of economic instability that affects people of all generations today (Lee, Y. M., 2010: 17). These effects can, to some extent, explain the political culture of university students today. Lee Young-min argued that Koreans in their 20s today had lower levels of political

efficacy, political trust and political participation than other generations because of their experience of economic instability, which strengthened individualistic tendencies (Lee, Y. M., 2010: 38).

However, in this thesis, age, generational and period effects are not considered in further detail for several reasons. For one thing, the political culture of university students today are not being compared to the political culture of other age groups. Age, generational and period effects are particularly significant when the political cultures of different age groups at a certain period of time are being compared. Instead, the political culture of university students today are compared to the political culture of university students in the 1980s, who were of the same age group at the time.

Yet, the consequence of examining historical events in the context of the demand, intermediary and supply side theories without reference to generational and period effects are that the impact of individual significant events are not analysed in detail. The impact of having experienced a historically significant event while a university student would affect the general culture and inform the worldview of those who experienced it. Admittedly, some of the compelling narrative power of exploring certain significant events in detail is lost by not adopting to examine the data with the generational and period effects in mind. The explanatory power of the generational and period effects comes from the premise that underlying socioeconomic developments or historically significant events cause changes in the political culture. For instance, generational effects and period effects emphasise the impact of the experience of the Korean War, the 1987 democratic transition or the IMF financial

crisis on the political culture of a generation or particular demographic. Yet, the political culture of a society is not affected only by historically significant events but also underlying socioeconomic changes, changes in the role of political communications and the supply of governance. Significant historical events form part of the explanation of these overarching changes. For this reason, this thesis explains the changes in the political culture of university students by reference to demand-side, intermediary and supply-side theories. As will be discussed in the analysis of the findings, these explanations take into account the historically significant events that inform the attitudes and experiences of university students in the 1980s and today. In addition, this thesis does discuss several significant events and issues, such as the Gwangju Massacre, the 1987 democratic transition, the candlelight vigils against Korea-US Free Trade Agreement and the Sewol Ferry Incident, which were raised by the interviewees.

2.8 Contribution of this thesis

The main contribution of this thesis to the existing literature is that it provides an empirical case study on the changes in the political culture of university students in South Korea. In the current literature in Korean academia, there have been some studies focusing on student activist movements in the 1980s or the political apathy of university students today. However, there have not been many studies that compare the political culture of Korea before the democratic transition and after the democratic transition. By comparing the political culture of university students in the 1980s and that of university students today, this study presents a unique contribution to the existing literature.

Another contributions of this thesis will be to present a systematic study of the political culture of university students before the democratic transition. Most studies on the political culture of university students before the democratic transition adopt a historical narrative of major events. In contrast, this thesis undertakes systematic semi-structured interviews of ordinary university students to uncover aspects of political culture that are usually not the focus of existing historical narratives, such as political socialization or the reasons for political participation.

As for the political culture of university students today, existing studies have been focused on specific elements of the political culture, such as media use, political cleavages in recent elections or political orientations. Existing studies tend to focus on binary relationships between these elements. Such studies usually use survey data and statistical analysis to uncover correlative relationships from which causation may be inferred. Although these studies are valuable, such focused studies fail to capture the wider picture of political culture. One contribution of this study is that it uses not only survey methods but also qualitative interviews to present a more comprehensive and in-depth study of the political culture of university students today.

In addition, this thesis adds to a currently small body of literature focused on the political culture of university students in Korea. Although there have been some studies on the political culture of university students in Korea, this has usually been part of a more general survey on values or part of a narrow study on a particular aspect of political culture like political trust or political communications. In contrast, this

thesis examines all elements of the political culture of university students in Korea to provide a comprehensive and in-depth analysis.

The findings from this research also provides a framework for understanding how democratic transition and consolidation, in parallel with socioeconomic changes, technological advances, and other societal changes, affect the political culture of a newly democratised country. By examining the changes in the political culture of university students in South Korea and explaining these changes through the demand-side, intermediary, and supply-side theories, this thesis presents a new theoretical perspective for analysing democratic transition and consolidation. The issues and problems in the democratic consolidation process that will be discussed in this thesis can also inform research and policy development for other newly democratized countries.

This study also contributes to the wider debate on the rise of voter disaffection particularly among young people in Western democracies. The findings in this thesis raise the question of whether a similar phenomenon can be observed in other new democracies. In particular, this thesis applies the cartel party theory as part of the supply-side explanation for the changes in the political culture of university students in Korea. This demonstrates how changes in the political system, such as cartelisation, can affect political culture. The findings in this thesis about how the attitudes towards politics, political efficacy, and political participation of university students today are impacted by political developments may present further insights into the voter disaffection that many academics observe in young people and the wider public in established democracies.

3 Research design

In this chapter, we will discuss the research design used to collect and analyse the empirical data presented in Parts II and III of the thesis. The purpose of this thesis is to discuss and compare the political culture of university students in South Korea in the 1980s before the democratic transition and the political culture of university students today. The methodology employed to collect the data aims to obtain qualitative data through in-depth interviews supported by survey data and secondary sources where available.

We first present the research questions and outlines the hypotheses of this thesis. Secondly, we discuss the primary data collection methods and sampling of the interview and survey respondents. Thirdly, we discuss the interview methods used to carry out the interviews through which the bulk of the primary empirical evidence was collected. Fourthly, we present the survey methodology used to collect data on the political culture of university students today. Finally, we discuss the analysis methods employed to analyse the empirical evidence.

3.1 Research questions and hypotheses

The research topic of this study is to compare and explain the political culture of university students in South Korea before and after the democratic transition in 1987. There are three main research questions that this thesis aims to answer:

(1) What was the political culture of university students in the 1980s before the 1987 democratic transition?

(2) What is the political culture of university students today?

(3) What are the explanations for the changes in the political culture of university students between these two periods?

The first two research questions aim to find out the political culture of university students in the 1980s before the democratic transition and the political culture of university students today. The third research question aims to find out why the political culture of university students in South Korea has changed since the democratic transition in 1987.

The elements of political culture that we will focus on are:

- the attitudes towards politics and government;

- the attitudes towards media;

- the political socialization process;

- the experience of political participation; and

- the reasons for political participation or non-participation.

The hypotheses that will be tested in this thesis in relation to the research questions above are as follows.

Firstly, it is hypothesised that university students in the 1980s held very negative attitudes towards the Chun administration. It is also hypothesised that university

students in the 1980s welcomed the 1987 democratic transition. This is because the Chun administration (1979-1987) implemented harsh and oppressive policies against any form of political opposition. In contrast, university students today live in a democracy that has been continuing since 1987 and have much greater personal and political freedom. It is hypothesised that university students today would have less intensely negative attitudes towards the presidential administration. However, based on the literature, it is hypothesised that university students today are generally dissatisfied in the current political situation. It is also hypothesised that university students today have low levels of trust for politicians and do not have a political party they support. These hypotheses are based on the study by Lee Young-min (2010).

Secondly, it is also hypothesised that university students today would trust the media more than university students in the 1980s for objective and reliable information about politics. The media were strictly controlled by the Chun administration in the 1980s. It is therefore hypothesised that university students in the 1980s did not trust mainstream media. However, there are no longer these formal state controls on the media, and a diverse range of opinions can now be observed in Korean mainstream media.

Thirdly, on political socialization, it is hypothesised that both university students today and university students in the 1980s would state that university is the environment that had the greatest effect on their political socialization process.

Fourthly, on the experience of political participation, it is hypothesised that university students in the 1980s are likely to have had more covert experiences of latent political participation. This is because of the oppressive policies against political participation

enforced by the Chun administration. It is hypothesised that university students today would have low levels of latent political participation and a low level of interest in politics. It is also hypothesised that online social media would be an important method of latent political participation for university students today.

On the experience of manifest political participation, it is hypothesised that protest activity would have been the primary method of manifest political participation for university students in the 1980s. It is also hypothesised that their experiences are likely to have been violent. In contrast, it is hypothesised that university students today would have access to diverse ways of participating in politics through voting and engaging with political parties and civil society groups. Yet, based on the literature it is hypothesised that university students today are likely to have low levels of political participation in general.

Fifthly, on the reasons for and against political participation, it is hypothesised that the main reason for non-participation amongst university students in the 1980s was the fear of the oppressive methods used by the Chun administration. It is hypothesised that the main reason university students in the 1980s participated in politics despite the high personal costs of doing so was because of the injustices carried out by the dictatorial Chun administration. In contrast, it is hypothesised that university students today do not participate in politics because they do not feel the need to do so.

Finally, it is hypothesised that the main reason for the changes in the political culture of university students is due to the changes in the structure of the political system from a dictatorship to a democracy.

3.2   Data collection and sampling

To collect data on the political culture of university in South Korea in the 1980s and today, I have primarily utilised my own survey and interview data. For this thesis, I have conducted in-depth interviews of 27 interviewees who were university students in the 1980s and 34 interviewees who are currently university students. The interviews were conducted in two rounds, in February to March 2013 and June to August 2014. The following table shows the numbers of the interviews conducted during these two periods:

Table 2. Interview Rounds

Round	Periods	University Students in the 1980s	University Students Today
1	February – March 2013	20	27
2	June – August 2014	7	7

The first round of interviews conducted in February to March 2013 were all face-to-face interviews of approximately one hour each. The second round of interviews conducted in June to August 2014 were all telephone interviews of approximately one hour each. All interviews were semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions aimed at trying to allow as much freedom in the responses as possible. Although different sets of interview questions were used for the two groups, each interviewee in the same group were asked the same questions to allow for comparison. The interview guide outlining the questions that were asked is appended in Appendix I.

After conducting the first round of interviews in February to March 2013 and reviewing the results, it became apparent that in order to have a more representative

set of data to determine the political culture of university students today, a survey would be needed. So in December 2013 to January 2014, an online survey was conducted with the questions formulated around the key findings through the interviews. There were a total of 199 respondents to the survey. The survey questionnaire is appended in Appendix II.

A survey was not carried out on university students in the 1980s. There were several reasons for this decision. Firstly, the attitudes and experiences of the interviewees who were university students in the 1980s were much less diverse than the attitudes and experiences of the university students today, which were more varied and nuanced. Secondly, data collection on the political culture of university students in the 1980s is inherently difficult because respondents are forced to recollect past attitudes and experiences, nearly three decades after the relevant events. It was possible to collect data despite this problem through interviews by thoroughly explaining the questions and observing the context of the answers. However, in a survey format, this is much more difficult to do. Thirdly, though this thesis seeks to compare the political culture of university students in the two different time periods, the emphasis of study is necessarily on the university students today. This is because the findings on the university students today are likely to have greater policy and theoretical implications. It was therefore decided that a survey would not be necessary for analysing the political culture of university students in the 1980s.

The target number of interviewees was 60 (30 university students in the 1980s and 30 current university students) and the target survey respondents were 250. These targets were set so that I would be able to effectively collect and analyse the data without

being overly challenged while also being able to represent regional proportions discussed further below.

I mainly used publicly available contact information and personal connections in South Korea to contact interview and survey respondents. When conducting the interviews, I focused on the following five major regional universities: Seoul National University, Yonsei University, Korea University, Pusan National University, Jeonnam University. Seoul National University, Yonsei University and Korea University are the three top universities in the Korean higher education system and are all based in Seoul. Students from these universities have historically been heavily involved in political demonstrations and rallies. Pusan National University and Jeonnam University are top regional universities in Yeongnam and Honam, respectively. Students from these universities have also historically been active in politics.

In order to find interviewees from these targeted universities, I first contacted leaders of student councils and student unions who were easier to contact. By contacting student leaders, I was able to interview students who were more likely to be interested in politics. They were also useful for being introduced other potential interviewees and contacting alumni who had attended university in the 1980s. Although I wanted to interview students in leadership positions, I also wanted to interview ordinary students who are not in leadership positions and therefore may be less interested in politics or have political ambitions. For these interviewees, I used my personal connections of people I met when I was studying in Korea, attending church or serving in the military. This mix of sources meant that there were varying levels of interest in politics and political participation.

A key issue I had in mind when selecting interview and survey respondents was to have balanced regional representation. Regionalism is a very important social cleavage in South Korea with strong regional biases present in the party competiton structure (Kim, Y. H., 2002; Kwack, J. Y., 2006: 123; Choi, J. Y., 2007; Park, C. W., 2008). In order to ensure that the research results are not affected by regional biases, the composition of the interviewees and survey respondents were monitored to reflect actual university student numbers. As the figures below show, in South Korea, in both 1990 and 2014, around 40% of university students attended universities in the Seoul, Incheon and Gyeonggi region. The Yeongnam region had the next largest portion of university students at just below 30%. There was less than half the number of university students in the Honam region than in the Yeongnam region.

Table 3. Number of university students by region

Region	Number of university students in 1990	Percentage 1990	Number of university students in 2014	Percentage 2014
Seoul, Incheon, Gyeonggi	561,000	39.2%	1,131,481	38.3%
Yeongnam	424,000	29.6%	790,013	26.8%
Honam	196,000	13.6%	331,434	11.2%
Chungcheong	176,000	12.2%	525,824	17.8%
Gangwon	60,000	4.1%	138,504	4.6%
Jeju	14,000	0.9%	30,239	1.0%
Total:	**1,431,000**	-	**2,947,495**	-

(Source: Korea Higher Education Research Institute Statistics)

Though the sampling was not precisely in these same proportions, I made an effort to ensure that sufficient numbers of students from the Seoul, Yeongnam and Honam regions were interviewed and surveyed. In fact, the sample sizes of this study were set

so that the rough proportions of the regions could be reflected. The following table shows the list of universities attended by interviewees who were university students in the 1980s and the region of each university.

Table 4. List of universities attended by interview and survey responses

University	Region	1980s	Current	
			Interview	Survey
Seoul National University	Seoul	3	9	-
Yonsei University	Seoul	-	4	-
Korea University	Seoul	2	3	-
Hanyang University	Seoul	2	1	-
Kyeonghee University	Seoul	-	1	-
Incheon University	Incheon	1	-	-
Inha University	Incheon	2	-	-
	Gyeonggi Total	**10**	**18**	**139**
Pusan National University	Yeongnam	5	6	-
Busan University of Foreign Studies	Yeongnam	-	1	-
Busan Women's University	Yeongnam	1	-	-
Busan Dongyi University	Yeongnam	1	-	-
Gyeongbuk University	Yeongnam	3	1	-
Goshin University	Yeongnam	2	-	-
Handong University	Yeongnam	-	1	-
	Yeongnam Total	**12**	**9**	**29**
Jeonnam University	Honam	2	7	**-**
Jeonbuk University	Honam	1	-	-
Josun University	Honam	2	-	-
	Honam Total	**5**	**7**	**20**
	Chungcheong Total	**-**	**-**	**5**
	Gangwon	**-**	**-**	**1**
	Other	**-**	**-**	**5**
Total		**27**	**34**	**198**

As for the gender of the interviewees and respondents, there were more male students who were interviewed in both the 1980s and current university student groups. The following table shows the proportions.

Table 5. Gender of interviewees and respondents

	1980s	Current	
	Interview	Interview	Survey
Male	22	22	88
Female	5	12	108
Percentage of Female students	18.5%	35.2%	54.2%
NA	-	-	3
Total	**27**	**34**	**199**

There are several explanations for this. For one thing, according to national statistics, there have been and still are a larger proportion of male students. In particular, in 1979, the percentage of female university students in Seoul was only 28.5%. It was therefore difficult to contact female respondents who were university students in the 1980s. The following table shows the percentages of female students in university in Seoul from 1979 to 2013.

Table 6. Percentage of female students in university in Seoul

Year	Percentage of female students
1979	28.5%
1990	33.2%
2000	41.6%
2010	46.2%
2013	46.8%

(Source: Korea Higher Education Research Institute Statistics)

However, these figures do not explain why for current university students, a much lower proportion of the interviewees were female but a higher proportion of the online survey respondents were female. Although I made an effort to contact female current university students for the interviews, this was harder to arrange. Although the exact

reason for this is unclear, I suspect that female students may have felt less comfortable meeting in person a male interviewer they do not know for hour-long face-to-face interviews. This explains why female students were more willing to participate on the online survey, where they could make their responses remotely. Yet, this difficulty in arranging interviews with female students may mean that the data collected for this research may lack gender representation. Given the resources, the reliability and representativeness of the data would have been improved if more female interviewees from both the 1980s and todays could have been interviewed.

The main advantage of using student union networks and personal connections at the major universities in each region of South Korea to collect data was that it had a randomising effect and a wide variety of different interviewees participated in the interviews and surveys. However, since the interview and survey participation was voluntary and the size of the sample limited, there may be reflected in the data a bias for students more likely to be interested in politics. Students who are more interested in politics are more likely in general to respond to requests to participate in an interview or survey on politics. In fact, as will be discussed further in Section III, the percentage of interviewees and respondents who said they vote is higher than the average percentage of voter participation amongst people in their 20s according to official figures. This is an inherent issue of selection bias which would have occurred even had the data collection channels were through different means, such as official university networks or media based surveys. However I made an effort to interview even students who said they were not interested in politics at all or did not participate in politics to give different perspectives.

Another data collection problem was finding university students in the 1980s who were supportive of the dictatorial Chun regime. Although it can be reasonably assumed that there would have been some students in the 1980s in favour of the Chun regime, I was not able to contact anyone who would openly admit to this and talk about it. On the other hand, it was relatively easy to contact people who were university students in the 1980s who were very willing to share their experiences as a student activist. This issue means that one limitation of this study is that in the discussion of the political culture of university students in the 1980s, the perspective of those who supported the regime were not dealt with.

One issue that became apparent only after the data analysis had been complete was that amongst the interviewees who are current university students, there were fewer student activists compared to that of interviewees who were university students in the 1980s. Although most current university student interviewees said that they voted and some interviewees had participated in candelight vigils, none of the interviewees identified themselves as being a student activist. In fact, many interviewees held negative attitudes towards student activists. There was only one interviewee who participated in politics by engaging with civil society organisations. This student participated in a campaign for expanding proportional representation in the assembly. Due to this issue, the findings in this study on the political culture of university students today may be limited to university students whose political participation is passive. Yet, this issue may also illustrate the reality of the political culture of university students today that they are less likely to resort to student activism as a mode of political participation for the various reasons that will be further explored in this thesis.

Another difficulty with the data collection methods used for this study was that limited resources meant that a wider pool of university students could not be interviewed or surveyed from a practical perspective. This may affect the representativeness of the data. However, it is hoped that this limitation is mitigated by in-depth qualitative analysis, which reveals insights that may then be tested in larger-scale surveys in the future.

Finally, an interesting issue I experienced was that some interviewees, both those who were university students in the 1980s and university students today, were quite reluctant to voice their attitudes about politics, particularly if those attitudes were negative. They would ask multiple times whether their answers would be anonymised, and were worried that they would be identified and disadvantaged in some way. Even though South Korea is a functioning democracy, it appeared that there was still a lack of confidence in the protection of civil rights.

3.3 Interview methods

The primary method of interviewing that I have chosen is the semi-structured interview. According to Bryman (2008), a semi-structured interview is one in which the researcher has a list of questions or fairly specific topics to be covered but the interviewee has a great deal of leeway in how to reply. Questions do not have to follow in exactly in the same way as outlined, and the researcher may ask questions that are not listed in the guide as the interview progresses. However, by and large, all the questions will be asked and similar wording will be used from interview to

interview. This type of semi-structured interview is to be distinguished from the structured interview, which aims for all interviewees to be given exactly the same context of questioning, so that each interviewee receives exactly the same interview stimulus as any other. The goal of the structured interviewing is to maximise the validity and reliability of the measurement of key concepts.

In studying the changes in the political culture of university students in South Korea, semi-structured interviews were more appropriate for three reasons. Firstly, semi-structured interviews allow for more flexibility. Secondly, semi-structured interviews allow for the interviewees to go off at different tangents, which may be relevant and important. Thirdly, semi-structured interviews allow for an interviewee to be interviewed on more than one and sometimes even several occasions if needed. The general flexibility of the semi-structured interview is helpful for studying political culture because political attitudes and behaviours differ greatly from person to person. Giving the interviewees greater leeway for going off at tangents may yield interesting and relevant insights. This is especially important because there may be components of political attitude and political behaviour that had not been initially accounted for when formulating the interview questions.

In my interview guide, which is included in Appendix I, I have included introducing questions, specifying questions, interpreting questions, and indirect questions. During some of the interviews, I used follow-up questions and probing questions when necessary. I have tried not to use direct questions or vignette questions. Direct questions are questions like 'Are you happy with your current lack of interest in politics'. These have an underlying assumption that may be leading and influence the

direction of the interview (Kvale, 1996). Vignette questions are questions that present a hypothetical situation. In the context of the current study, these may be questions like 'If you were a university student today who was in a particular situation (e.g. low in funds, too busy with work, facing unemployment, etc.), would you participate in politics?' Mason (2002) counsels against using such vignette questions, arguing that, when they are used, the interviewee usually asks the researcher to clarify the question and may lead to the interviewer's bias being reflected. Though vignette questions can be employed to help ground interviewees' views and accounts of behaviour in particular situations (Barter and Renold, 1999), this was unlikely to be necessary in the current study.

The general focus of the interview process was to uncover the attitudes, feelings, values, experiences and reasons for actions related to politics of the interviewees. Therefore, although the interviews all followed the shared structure set out in the interview guide, each interview was unique and provided different accounts of the political culture in the relevant period. Yet, an inherent problem with interviewing to collect data about attitudes and experiences is that the data are only as accurate as the responses provided. Interviewees may express contradictory views and may lie, on purpose or not, to project a certain image that may not be true. For instance, some university students today said that they kept up-to-date about political affairs. However, when asked about their attitudes on political parties, they said that they did not know enough to comment. Similarly, many current university students said that regionalism does not affect their political preferences, but upon further discussion displayed clear regional biases. Other university students would identify themselves as liberal or conservative, but their views on specific policy topics revealed

contradictions. Although these contradictions present a challenge to a straightforward analysis of the findings, they reveal interesting insights into the gap between the ideals that the interviewees wish to project and the reality of their attitudes. Where these contradictions were apparent, I noted them in the analysis of the findings.

3.4   Survey methods

Surveys were conducted on university students today after the first round of interviews through an online survey website. The main objective of the survey on university students today was to corroborate and verify interview findings. The survey questionnaire distributed to the survey respondents is attached in Appendix II. The survey asks the respondents to rate on a scale of 0 to 5 various elements such as levels of satisfaction with politics, interest in politics, political participation, identification with a particular party and political efficacy. It also asks respondents to say whether they agree, partly agree, partly disagree or disagree with specific statements made by interviewees. The responses to these direct questions enabled analysis on whether a particular view expressed by the interviewees was shared by other current university students and how widespread these views were. The survey also made use of open-ended questions that the interviewees had the option of answering to allow them to provide comments that had not been expressed in the other more restricted parts of the survey.

The key advantage of the online survey was that it allowed the testing of the trends and statements made by the interviewees. Since only a limited pool of university students today was interviewed, the survey conducted on a much larger pool helped to validate the representativeness of the interview findings. The survey data was also

more easily analysed, through statistical methods that calculated the percentages and averages of specific responses. However, the key disadvantage of the online survey was that without face-to-face interaction and the direct questions with limited options, it was not possible to obtain the full range of in-depth data. Yet, the interview and survey methods were complementary when used together.

3.5   Analysis methods

The main method for analysing the data collected through the surveys and interviews was qualitative analysis. This is because in-depth interviews are more suited to a narrative presentation of the findings. However, where available and necessary, I used the survey findings and secondary sources to verify and further explain the interview findings.

The starting point for the analysis was to prepare transcripts of all of the interviews and go through each transcript based on key themes to identify particular trends and insights. Where a majority of interviewees gave a similar response, this was noted along with the reasons for the attitude or experiences. Minority responses were also noted and unique anecdotes and opinions were also taken into account. Then, based on these findings, further research was done using official statistics, data from other studies and journal articles and books from both Korean and Western sources to explain or corroborate these findings. For university students today, the survey responses were used to identify whether a particular view was widespread. One limitation of the analysis methods used for this thesis was the issue of language. All of the interviews and surveys were conducted in Korean, but the results had to be

presented in English. I have translated from Korean to English and tried to reflect the closest meaning possible.

The main benefit of using this predominantly qualitative method of analysis is that it facilitates an in-depth understanding of the reasons and motivations of individuals and allows the construction of a fuller picture of the political culture of university students in South Korea. It assists in discovering how and why university students hold certain views and attitudes towards politics and participate in politics. It also helps to identify unique perspectives that may be different from the general trend that may reveal particular aspects of political culture that quantitative analysis methods may overlook.

Yet, the key disadvantage of using qualitative methods is that it is unsuitable for obtaining generalisations about the entire population based on a sample. However, for the purposes of this thesis, which aims to discover how and why the political culture of university students in South Korea have changed before and after the democratic transition, qualitative analysis was determined to be more suitable. It is hoped that the findings of this thesis will assist in identifying further potential variables and relationships between variables that may be the subject of further quantitative research.

II   Political culture of university students in the 1980s

1 Introduction

The following chapters discuss the political culture of university students in South Korea before the 1987 democratic transition. It presents the empirical evidence gathered in the interviews of respondents who were university students in the 1980s. The political environment at the time inevitably shaped the political culture of university students in the 1980s. We begin with a brief overview of the political situation in the 1980s and the policies of the Chun Doo-hwan administration, which was in power from 1979 to 1987. We then proceed to discuss the findings from the interviews conducted on the 27 interviewees who were university students in the 1980s. Surveys were not conducted on university students in the 1980s for the reasons discussed earlier in the research design.

We then discuss the attitudes towards government and politics held by university students in the 1980s by focusing on the attitudes towards the presidential administration. This chapter discusses the attitudes towards the Chun administration (1979-1987) and the attitudes towards the 1987 democratic transition. We hypothesise that before the democratic transition in 1987, university students in the 1980s held very negative attitudes towards the Chun administration and greatly welcomed the 1987 democratic transition.

Next, we discuss the attitudes of the university students in the 1980s towards the media. It is hypothesised that university students in the 1980s did not trust the mainstream media. This is because the mainstream media were under the control of the Chun administration in the 1980s. This chapter will also discuss the alternative forms of media that university students relied on in the absence of reliable sources of information about politics.

We also discuss the political socialization process that interviewees who were university students in the 1980s experienced. It is hypothesised that the university setting would have had the greatest influence on their political socialization process. However, this section also discusses the influence, if any, of parents and primary and secondary education on the political socialization process of university students in the 1980s.

We then proceed to discuss the experiences of political participation. As discussed in the literature review, political participation can be categorised into three distinct types: latent participation, manifest participation and non-participation. It is hypothesised that university students in the 1980s would have had covert experiences of latent political participation because of the oppressive policies against political participation. This section on the experience of latent political participation discusses how university students in the 1980s became involved in latent forms of political participation and their experiences in covert student organisations.

After a discussion of latent political participation in the 1980s, we proceed to examine the main forms of manifest political participation. There are three types of manifest

political participation that this study focuses on: voting, contacting politicians and protest activity. The discussion of voting and contacting politicians by university students in the 1980s is mainly based on secondary sources. This is because secondary sources reveal the role of voting in the 1980s and explain why many interviewees did not even discuss voting as an effective way of political participation at the time. In relation to contacting politicians, only a few interviewees were able to recount their experiences in contacting politicians in great detail. However, because the sample is so small, this is unlikely to be the full story. Secondary sources reveal in greater detail the relationship between university students in the 1980s and politicians at the time.

As for protest activity, it is hypothesised that protest activity would have been the primary method of manifest political participation for university students in the 1980s. It is also hypothesised that the experiences of protest activity are likely to have been violent. This is because the Chun administration enforced oppressive tactics against democratic protestors and student activists alike. Finally, it is hypothesised that the main reason for non-participation amongst university students in the 1980s was the fear of the oppressive methods used by the Chun administration.

We will then discuss the reasons that the interviewees gave for participating in politics. It is hypothesised that the main reason university students in the 1980s participated in politics despite the high personal costs of doing so was because of the injustices carried out by the dictatorial Chun administration.

Finally, we will conclude with a brief summary of the key findings about the political culture of university students in the 1980s. This conclusion will serve as the

foundation for the comparison of the political culture of university students in the 1980s and the political culture of university students today.

1.1   The political environment of the 1980s

Students have historically been a prominent and crucial force for change in South Korea since their role in the nationalist movements against the Japanese colonial rule in the early twentieth century. When the Rhee Syng-man administration rigged elections to stay in office, students led mass protests that culminated in the 19 April 1960 revolution, which resulted in President Rhee's resignation. Students formed an important opposition force protesting against the authoritarian Park Chung-hee administration's oppressive policies, which included press censorship, the implementation of national curfews and harsh punishments for political dissenters (Park, M., 2012: 125). After the assassination of President Park in 1979 by the head of the security service, students once again led the public movement for democracy (Jeong H. G., 2011: 24).

After the assassination of President Park, the then Prime Minister Choi Kyu-ha stepped in as the acting president. He announced on 10 November 1979 that after the next president was elected under the Yushin constitution,[3] it would consult the public for amendments to the constitution (Korea Democracy Foundation Vol.1, 2007: 50). In response, the opposition political elite led by Kim Young-sam and Kim Dae-jung[4] organised themselves in preparation for direct presidential elections and university

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[3] The Yushin constitution was the authoritarian constitution introduced by the Park Chung-hee administration in 1972.
[4] Both would later become presidents in 1993-1998 and 1998-2003, respectively.

students led a series of mass protests in the so-called 'Seoul Spring of 1980' (Jung, H. G., 2011: 30-47; Korea Democracy Foundation Vol.1, 2007: 59-67).

However, on 12 December 1979, Chun Doo-hwan had gained control of the military in an internal coup, and on 17 May 1980, Chun Doo-hwan effectively took control of the government by declaring emergency martial law citing threats by North Korea and social unrest. This sidelined major opposition forces and the political elite that had favoured greater liberalization, defeating hopes for democracy. Military troops were posted at major universities all over South Korea, with a particular focus on the Honam region. (Jung, H. G., 2011: 50-53). Clashes with military troops at the campus gates soon escalated into full-scale demonstrations. On 18 May 1980, the army and the Special Forces were sent in to control the demonstrations using all force necessary under operation code name 'Fantastic Holiday' (The May 18 Memorial Foundation, 2008: 96). Events escalated when the army started firing live bullets into the crowds, causing deaths of several protestors, mostly students. Groups of angered students in Gwangju Province raided local armouries to fight the army. The Chun administration responded by sending in paratroopers and tanks, killing civilians indiscriminately. The movement lasted ten days and over one million citizens participated in the protests in Gwangju and the neighbouring cities. Later referred to as the Gwangju Massacre, the incident led to 154 deaths, 74 missing and 3,310 wounded (Korea Democracy Foundation Vol.1, 2007: 114). The events of the Gwangju Massacre would be a significant event informing the minds of the university students throughout the 1980s. It was against this backdrop that Chun Doo-hwan came into power. He was officially inaugurated to the presidency on 1 September 1980.

In 1983, the Chun administration announced appeasement policies towards political opponents and student protestors due to the pressure of the upcoming general elections in 1985, the upcoming presidential elections in 1987 and increasing international scrutiny in the run up to the Seoul Olympics in 1988 (Jung, H. G., 2011: 104-107). As a result, the political opposition leaders released from prison created a new opposition party, the New Democratic Party led by Kim Young-sam and Kim Dae-jung. In need of support from the public, this newly created opposition party joined forces with university student organisations and was elected to be the largest opposition party in the National Assembly. Once in the National Assembly, the New Democratic Party held negotiations with the governing party to reform the constitution (Lee, Y. S., 2010: 117-120).

However, by 1986, the New Democratic Party grew apart from the popular student movement as the leaders of the party made public statements condemning student demonstrations despite the fact that the same student groups had helped to elect them in the previous year. This resulted in students crashing a New Democratic Party event in on 3 May 1986, rallying the party to remain faithful to the promises that the opinions of the youth be included in the negotiations. As constitutional reform remained in limbo in the negotiations between the dictatorial Chun regime and the New Democratic Party, public dissent spread from student movements to the wider civil society. In response, the Chun administration started to crack down on the political opposition. This culminated in a government announcement on 13 April 1987 repealing the appeasement policy of 1983 and reinstating strict military control of all demonstrations. All negotiations between the government and the New Korea

Democratic Party were stopped and the nomination of Roh Tae-woo as the next president was announced (Lee, Y. S., 2010: 123-132).

It was against this political backdrop that the death of Park Jong-chul, a Seoul National University student, was announced in January 1987. Following revelations that his death was due to the torture implemented by the police who were interrogating him to find out the names of the other student activists, the public took to the streets. It had been no secret that the Chun administration used torture on student protestors; many had lived to tell the tale. However, the general atmosphere of political discontent was fuelled by this incident and led to an explosion of public sentiment at yet another atrocity committed by the Chun administration (Korea Democracy Foundation Vol.3, 2007: 64-70).

The Chun administration responded to the 7 February memorial services held for Park Jong-chul with drastic measures. Policemen were ordered to conduct confiscatory investigations in university campuses and protest offices all over Seoul. From the morning of 6 February, access was prohibited near the Seoul Myungdong Cathedral. Major opposition leaders including Kim Dae-jung and Kim Young-sam were put under house arrest. On 7 February, 50,000 policemen (i.e. 41.6% of the total police force) were deployed to take control of the streets. In the Myungdong area alone, 8,000 riot policemen stood guard and prohibited public access. However, the public took to the streets in Seoul and other major cities. The protests on 7 February were notable in that students, citizens and politicians alike all protested peacefully in an organised manner (Seo, J. S., 2010: 286-290).

When the Park Jong-chul torture incident had relatively calmed down, another incident occurred in April. During the public presidential address on 13 April 1987, President Chun announced that constitutional reform would not occur during his term and that it would be delayed until after the 1988 Seoul Olympics and implemented by his successor. In response to this declaration, protests were started on the day of the speech and continued, gaining momentum. On 18 May 1987, over 22,000 students from 62 universities nationwide held mass demonstrations demanding the withdrawal of the 13 April declaration (Seo, J. S., 2010: 292-298).

Betrayed by the government's previous pledge for constitutional reform, the opposition political elites again rekindled their relationship with the student movement. Kim Dae-jung and Kim Young-sam created a party under a new name: the Reunification Democratic Party. On 20 May 1987, fifteen representatives consisting of the opposition political elite, student activists, labour union leaders and religious figures established the 'Protest Headquarters for a Democratic Constitution', the organisation which would become the foundation for the June Democratic Movement. This consolidated opposition force weakened the regime, and most cabinet members of the Chun administration resigned on 26 May 1987 (Seo, J. S., 2010: 297-301).

On 10 June 1987, President Chun announced his official successor to be Roh Tae-woo. The Protest Headquarters for a Democratic Constitution planned nationwide rallies to coincide with the announcement day. These rallies escalated when the public learned of the injury of another university student, Lee Han-yeol. While participating in a protest on 9 June 1987, Lee Han-yeol was hit in the back of the head by a tear gas grenade and fell into a coma. The photograph of this Yonsei University student being

carried away by his friends, bloody, made headlines on the front page of the Joongang Ilbo and The New York Times, showing the violent and repressive tactics used by the Chun administration. Lee Han-yeol would later pass away on 9 July 1987. The Lee Han-yeol and Park Jong-chul incidents fuelled the public rage at the Chun administration even further (Korea Democracy Foundation Vol.3, 2007: 194-211).

Mass demonstrations started on 10 June and lasted for more than 20 days, with major rallies such as the 18 June 'Rally to abolish the tear gas grenade' and the 26 June 'Peace March' (Hwang, I. S., 1997: 51). Finally, on 29 June 1987, the Chun administration gave in to the demands for democracy and announced that direct presidential elections would be held. Yet, in the direct elections that followed, Roh Tae-woo, who had been previously appointed to be the successor of former President Chun, was elected to the presidency, allowing the remnants of the former dictatorial regime to remain in government. It was this political context in which university students found themselves in the 1980s.

2 Attitudes towards government and politics

This chapter discusses the attitudes that interviewees who were university students in the 1980s held towards the Chun administration and the 1987 democratic transition. It is hypothesised that before the democratic transition in 1987, university students in the 1980s held very negative attitudes towards the Chun administration and greatly welcomed the 1987 democratic transition.

2.1 Attitudes towards the presidential administration

Almost all interviewees who were university students in the 1980s held strongly negative attitudes towards the Chun administration. These attitudes were largely characterised by strong emotions of fear and anger.

There were broadly two reasons for the strongly negative attitudes towards the Chun administration. For one thing, interviewees expressed fear and anger towards the Chun administration because of the violent oppression of democratic protestors as exemplified in significant events such as the Gwangju Democratic Movement of 1980. Secondly, interviewees expressed even stronger emotions of fear and anger based on the oppressive policies enforced on campus against university students and the treatment of student activists.

In particular, the most significant event that informed the minds of university students in the 1980s was the Gwangju Democratic Movement of 1980. As discussed earlier, the Gwangju Democratic Movement, also called the Gwangju Massacre, was the

incident during which President Chun deployed the military to violently oppress mass protestors demanding democracy in the province of Gwangju. One interviewee who said he had been a high school student in Gwangju during the incident said:

> I saw the Gwangju Massacre with my own eyes. It was happening on the streets. They were arresting and beating up people in the streets for no reason at all. At the time we were so scared they would just kill us all. They shut down all the roads so no one could go in or out of Gwangju. We were sealed in. (A08)[5]

Similarly, another interviewee who was also a high school student in Gwangju said:

> I saw Gwangju with my own eyes in 1980 when I was a high school student in Gwangju. The incident was the root cause of my hatred towards the dictatorship. (A03)[6]

Another interviewee who was in Busan at the time, described how she learned about the Gwangju Democratic Movement and how she felt:

> I learned about it when I was in my last year of high school. I was in Busan at the time and I didn't know anything abut Gwangju. But on that Wednesday, as I was coming down after the church service, I noticed that the door [to the common room] was shut tight. When I looked inside, I saw that all the older boys and girls were watching television. It showed how people were being beaten, and how bloody the streets were. I asked them what it was, and they said that it was Gwangju. I was so shocked it was happening in our country. (A10)[7]

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[5] Male, Chosun University, 1984, Honam. For the first instance of an interview extract from a particular interviewee, socio-demographic information is provided in footnotes in the following format: [gender, university attended, year of entry to university, region of origin].
[6] Male, Korea University, 1983, Honam
[7] Female, Busan Women's College, 1981, Yeongnam

She went on to explain that this particular broadcast was on Japanese television and that it was possible to watch Japanese channels in Busan, which is the southernmost city in Korea and closest to Japan. At the time, Gwangju was completely shut down and all communications cut off. None of the Korean broadcasters or newspapers covered the incident and the government tried to carry on as if nothing significant had happened.

However, people who had been there, people who had family there and people who had learned about the event through international media knew about it and spread the news through non-mainstream channels. Especially in universities, students shared information about the Gwangju Massacre in the form of booklets and presentations held in secret meetings. By the mid-1980s, the facts of the Gwangju Massacre were widely known and the major universities even held photograph exhibitions on the event. Many interviewees said that these photograph exhibitions shocked them and had a strong influence on their decision to participate in protests against the Chun administration.

Another interviewee, who was very involved in the student activist movement throughout the 1980s, explained in further detail the impact that the Gwangju Massacre had on university students in the 1980s:

> In the beginning of the 1980s, we wanted to just remain blind to it all. We were scared. Back then, it was a certainty that participating in student activism would land you in jail. However, what forced us out of this coma was the Gwangju Massacre. The truth of what happened in

Gwangju was only revealed by 1985, 1986. In some ways, the root of the June Uprising in 1987 was the Gwangju Massacre. (A04)[8]

Aside from the violent oppression of the Gwangju Democratic Movement, the Chun administration's oppressive policies against smaller scale protests and intervention into student affairs caused many students to feel threatened. The oppressive policies of the Chun administration directly impacted the every day lives of university students. During most of the Chun administration, all student organizations were strictly banned and regularly disbanded. Many interviewees reported that there were security officers on campus to police any political activity. One interviewee said that he was always very cautious of saying anything critical about the government. He said:

> The times back then were very scary. It was hard to even imagine criticising the government. It was a time when I had to look around to see if anyone was watching if I wanted to say anything. (A02)[9]

He also said that:

> There were always police around on campus. You know how university students today gather around the lawn to debate about issues? Well, back then we had to constantly look around for police officers in civilian clothing. (A02)

According to the interviewees, tanks and security officers could often be found around the gates of campus and tear gas would be sprayed to disperse even the smallest

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[8] Male, Hanyang University, 1989, Honam
[9] Male, Seoul National University, 1982, Yeongnam

protests. One interviewee who attended a women's university in Busan close to Pusan National University, which had a regionally prominent student activism presence, said that:

> Student activism was a big thing at Pusan National University. Sometimes my friends and I would go around there to meet boys and other friends, but whenever we went there, the smell of tear gas just filled the place all the time. (A10)

The consequences of being politically active on campus were also very severe. If students were caught protesting, distributing political flyers, debating about politics, in possession of illegal texts or even congregating in small numbers, they could be expelled, suspended, drafted into the military for 'political education' or imprisoned. Sometimes, the university itself would be suspended. One interviewee described the situation on campus at the time:

> We weren't allowed to distribute flyers, and street protests might flash up for five minutes or so before everyone would be rounded up and arrested. (A08)

Once imprisoned, the treatment of student activists was incredibly harsh. One interviewee, who had served two prison terms as a political criminal reported:

> Prison life at the time was terribly harsh. It was a different experience for everyone. Initially, if you were quiet, you'd be fine, but if you yelled in the prison or rebelled in any way, you would be severely punished. They would tie people up kneeling with their arms behind their backs, wrap them up in blankets and then trample on them. I went through that too. But worse was the water torture they put me through to get me to give the names of the other activists when I was

locked up for breaking the Emergency Law after the Gwangju Movement. They would lay you

down with your head back and pour water in your nose with a kettle. (A06)[10]

In fact, the violence of the oppressive tactics used by the Chun administration was so severe that some interviewees reported to suffering from long-term effects such as post-traumatic stress syndrome. One interviewee observed of former activists:

Those who were caught were beaten and their bodies severely scarred. Because of the trauma, the suicide rates are very high. Many suffer from mental illnesses. Even though there is now some support provided through various centres, back then, there was no such support. (A08)

Indeed, one of the interviewees confirmed this statement that some student activists still suffered from the effects of the severe punishments. This interviewee had been politically active since the mid-1970s during the Park administration and had continued to participate in protests in the 1980s. He was arrested and imprisoned for two months after participating in the Buma Democratic Movement of 1979, which took place one week before the assassination of President Park Chung-hee. He recounted how he was arrested pre-emptively before the Gwangju Democratic Movement in 1980 even though he had not done anything. He said:

I was arrested even though I hadn't done anything. I was arrested because I had participated in the Buma protests several years earlier. They beat me up until I fainted for about two weeks before they let me out again. I still have difficulties because of the injuries. (A09)[11]

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[10] Male, Korea University, 1975, Seoul and Gyeonggi
[11] Male, Kosin University, 1974, Yeongnam

Many interviewees related tales of how their friends and family would be brought into police stations and tortured to give information about their whereabouts. Some interviewees spoke about how even now, they would run into old classmates, and the acquaintance would say something along the lines of:

> Hey, do you know how much trouble I had to go through for you? The police took me in and beat me up to get me to tell them your name. I never told them your name though, and they had me for three days! Your name is [Kim Young-hee], right? (A06)

Often though, the old acquaintance would not have known the correct name; many student activists would use fake names when joining in student protest activities.

Although almost all of the interviewees who were university students in the 1980s reported having strongly negative feelings towards the Chun administration, there was one interviewee who did not agree that he felt that the Chun administration needed to be taken down. He said:

> I did not think that the Chun administration was a dictatorial regime at the time. Looking back, there are some perspectives that say that it was, but there are people who see it differently. (A17)[12]

Yet, when I asked him to further clarify how he then perceived the Chun administration, he said:

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[12] Male, Kosin University, 1983, Yeongnam

The Chun administration was not a dictatorial regime but just the military regime before democratization. I thought it was wrong that it had been set up from a coup d'état, but I did not think that it needed to be taken down for that. (A17)

This interviewee further expressed the thought that though the Chun administration was undemocratic and had illegitimately come into power, this was not enough to motivate him to participate in politics because he did not think that the Chun administration was oppressive enough to be a dictatorship. This interviewee was the only one that was interviewed for this study that expressed this view.

2.2   Attitudes towards the 1987 democratic transition

On 29 June 1987, after months of a series of mass protests, the Chun administration announced that direct elections would take place. In the direct elections that followed, Roh Tae-woo, who had previously been nominated to be President Chun's successor was elected. The attitudes towards the democratic transition are important because it shows whether university students at the time were supportive of democracy, and also their attitudes on the way in which the democratic transition took place.

All respondents said that they supported the democratic transition. Most respondents said that Korea became a better place to live after the democratic transition. One interviewee said:

A better world had come…the world changed after the 29 June Declaration and the direct election of the president was a big milestone for our country's democracy. (A02)

Similarly, another interviewee elaborated by saying that after the democratic transition, they were able to enjoy far more freedoms. He said:

> Of course, it depends on the standard, but the important thing for me was the range of freedoms we were able to enjoy. I think that I am able to enjoy almost all freedoms. I can say whatever I want to say, and I can write whatever I want to say in the press…it is incomparable to the past. (A09)

Though all of the respondents welcomed the democratic transition, many were dissatisfied with the fact that Roh Tae-woo, who had been the right-hand man to President Chun Doo-hwan and had been the nominated successor, was elected to the presidency. For instance, one interviewee said that:

> We weren't happy about Roh being elected at all. The democracy we had brought about was being tainted by the military and dictatorial mentality of Roh Tae-woo – who had been the named successor to Chun Doo-hwan. (A05)[13]

Nevertheless, the respondents said that though they felt disappointed that President Roh was elected, it did not detract from their support for the democratic transition. One interviewee summed up this position by saying:

> The fact that there were direct elections was so much more historically significant. Though Roh Tae-woo becoming president was not ideal, the direct elections made the nation's hope for democracy a reality and facilitated the election of the civilian government of Kim Young-sam just five years later. It had been a necessary incubatory period. (A10)

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[13] Male, Inha University, 1985, Seoul and Gyeonggi

In sum, the interviewees who were university students in the 1980s welcomed the democratic transition. They especially welcomed the freedom that they were able to enjoy after the democratic transition, and many said that South Korea became a much better place. It was clear to see that all of the interviewees supported the concept of democratic governance and saw it as a preferable alternative to the military dictatorship of the Chun administration. Even though many interviewees were dissatisfied with the fact that Roh Tae-woo was elected to be the president, they recognised his legitimacy as a democratically elected leader and saw his election as a step towards democracy.

3 Attitudes towards the media in the 1980s

The media play an important role in informing the minds of the public on political and current affairs. They are the main source through which people obtain information and form attitudes about politics. However, in the 1980s, the media in South Korea were not an independent source of information that provided comprehensive and unbiased coverage of events. In fact, the Chun administration had wide-ranging powers over all of the major broadcasters and newspapers. The government issued 'broadcast guidelines' for the mainstream media companies to follow when producing and broadcasting. The Chun administration also had a large role in the recruitment and promotion of individual journalists and managers in mainstream media companies and would sometimes personally instruct key personnel (Kang, J. M., 2007).

All of the interviewees who were university students in the 1980s unanimously said that they did not trust mainstream media sources like television or newspapers to provide a reliable account of political affairs. The main reason for this distrust was because the media were censored and controlled by the Chun administration. One interviewee said:

> At the time all forms of media like broadcasts through radio or newspapers were controlled. Television broadcasters in particular were puppets of the administration, and publicised policies only to support the government. (A03)

The interviewee who had been present as a high school student in Gwangju during the Gwangju Democratic Movement confirmed that this was the case. He said that the full facts of the incident were not broadcast on Korean media. He said:

> The media completely distorted the facts. At the time, the media were strictly controlled by the government, and everything was censored and deleted. (A08)

Since mainstream media sources were considered to be untrustworthy, I asked the interviewees what they relied on for information on current affairs. Many interviewees said that they were able to obtain information about current affairs through foreign media, particularly from Japan. This was especially the case for interviewees who lived in Busan. One interviewee who lived and studied in Busan, which is the southernmost city in Korea and close to Japan, said that many people relied on the Japanese television and radio broadcasts. She said:

> Busan is close to Japan, so we used to watch Japanese news broadcasts. Its news coverage of Korean affairs was more objective than the Korean broadcasts because back then all Korean media were strictly controlled. Many of the university students relied on the Japanese media for information. (A10)

One interviewee described further how information was obtained through Japan and what effect it had. He said:

> Why did people in Busan have a large role in the democratic movement? I think the answer is because we were able to get information from abroad. Even when the government censored all of the media, ships from abroad came into the ports in Busan carrying news that other citizens did not have access to. Also in Busan, we were able to see Japanese broadcasts on our

television sets and listen to Japanese programmes on the radio. Older people who spoke Japanese[14] would translate Japanese newspaper articles about Korean political affairs. These foreign news sources were very important to democratic movement. (A09)

The information from Japanese media accessed through Busan was a significant source of information for student activists. Aside from the two interviewees who are quoted above, many other interviewees, particularly those who lived in Busan corroborated this finding. Although the information from foreign media was a valuable source of information, not all people had access to this source. Most interviewees said that the main source of their information was from fellow university students. Student activists distributed information in a variety of ways. A common method was through self-published booklets. One interviewee explained how this was done. She said:

Sometimes after a church service, the university students would secretly hand out booklets and let us know what we really needed to know about the government and current affairs. Of course, they would then take the booklets back. You couldn't have those things going around. (A10)

There were also more public forms of disseminating information, through distributing flyers, posters and loudspeakers. Other sources included word of mouth and discussions in study groups where students would secretly gather to study and debate about current affairs. These methods of learning more about politics will be discussed further in the section on latent political participation.

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[14] Since Korea had been a Japanese colony from 1910 to 1945, many of the older generation who had been educated during this period were taught Japanese in school.

When asked whether he trusted these alternative sources of information about politics more than mainstream media, one interviewee said:

> Yes, I believed that the underground sources of information were more reliable and that they gave a more accurate picture of what was happening. (A04)

However, even these alternative sources of information had their limitations. For one thing, although students in Busan had access to foreign media sources, particularly from Japan, much of the information would have been incomplete, as the Japanese media had limited means of generating the content. It is also unlikely that students had full access to the information available. In addition, the bias of the student activist groups would affect the interpretation of the information from the foreign media sources and affect the content of the information included in booklets, flyers, posters or announcements. Even the interviewee above said:

> Although I felt that the underground information had more truth to it, some of it was undeniably biased and some of it was incorrect. (A04)

Many interviewees said that these problems with obtaining reliable and comprehensive coverage of current affairs in Korea in the 1980s were very frustrating for them. They said that they could not fully trust information from both the mainstream media and alternative sources. One interviewee said:

> I could not trust the media. All of the information from mainstream media were contradictory, and we all suspected that the facts were fabricated. The government censored all of the news and we knew that all of the broadcasters and journalists were on the government's side. The only way to obtain alternative information was through other university students. My friends

and I would discuss what information we could piece together and try to figure out what was true. It was very frustrating. We could not know what was true or false. (A12)[15]

Similarly, another interviewee said that the only option available to him was to collect information from multiple sources and interpret the information the best he could. He said:

> There were not many ways for us to learn about what was really happening. So back then, I read the extremely polarised views of both sides and just thought about all of it on my own. (A13)[16]

Some interviewees said that even now, it is hard to know what actually happened. One interviewee said:

> Because broadcasts were so controlled, we never knew what was true or not. We got some news from foreign media sources, but even then we could not know what was really going on. Only when many years have passed can we see everything from a historical perspective to see what happened. (A17)

The dominant attitude that university students of the 1980s had towards the mainstream media was distrust. Instead of relying on mainstream media, they relied on foreign media and on flyers and pamphlets distributed on campus by students who participated in underground organisations. A more in-depth discussion of how university students in the 1980s kept informed about politics will follow in the section discussing latent political participation. Despite the alternative sources of information

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[15] Male, Pusan National University, 1981, Yeongnam
[16] Female, Pusan National University, 1990, Yeongnam

available, the interviewees said that due to the incompleteness of the information and the bias inherent in the sources, it was difficult for them to feel fully informed about political affairs.

4 Political socialization

The experience of political participation necessarily starts with political socialization. Political socialization is the process by which an individual's attitudes towards politics and political participation are formed (Almond and Verba, 1963). In this chapter, we discuss the political socialization experienced by university students in the 1980s. We begin with a discussion of political socialization in the family setting. Then we proceed to discuss the impact of school and schoolteachers on the political socialization process. Finally, we briefly discuss political socialization in university. A more thorough discussion about how university students in the 1980s learned about and kept informed on political issues follows in the next chapter on latent political participation. This chapter concludes with a discussion of political socialization in the mandatory military service for young men. It is hypothesised that the university setting would have had the greatest effect on the political socialization process of university students in the 1980s.

Most of the interviewees who were university students in the 1980s said that their parents were not influential in the formation of their political views. All of the interviewees reported that their parents had not been politically active or interested in politics. One interviewee commented that:

> Before 1970, it was a hungry time and back then, people were not sensitive about politics. In my parents' generation, they were more concerned about putting food on the table than about politics. (A05)

Similarly, another interviewee said that:

> My parents were not very interested in politics. They were farmers in the countryside and they sent us to Seoul to study. Most parents in the countryside thought that even if they were not educated, their children should be sent to Seoul to be educated. Our parents were no exception. (A04)

However, there were several interviewees who said that their parents influenced their political views, albeit indirectly. Although none of the interviewees said that their parents directly educated them about politics, one interviewee said that his father, who had been a veteran in the Korean War, had taught him the values of patriotism and courage. He said:

> My father used to take me on walks to the park in the early morning to hold silence in front of the statute of Yi Sun-sin.[17] My father was a man of principle with a strong sense of justice. I learned the importance of patriotism and courage from him, and I think that these traits that I inherited and learned from him were part of why I chose to become involved in student activism. (A09)

Most interviewees who were university students in the 1980s said that their parents were opposed to them being active in politics. This was the case for those who came from poorer backgrounds as well as wealthier backgrounds. One interviewee, whose parents had been labour workers, said that:

> At the time, if you were a student activist, you'd be sent to jail or prison. So obviously, my parents were against it. (A08)

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[17] Yi Sun-sin was a Korean naval commander in the sixteenth century, famed for defeating the Japanese navy. He is commemorated as a national hero with great courage and integrity.

Similarly, another interviewee, whose father was an executive at a small company and came from a relatively affluent family, said that his parents were strongly opposed to his participation in student activism. This was especially so because of the government's pressure on his family due to his student activism. He said:

> At the time, my father ran a small business, but as the police kept coming and going, the business failed. My father suffered a lot because of me. All parents of student activists suffered, especially after the emergency mandate to arrest everyone on the 'blacklist' was declared after the 1980 Gwangju Movement…I was on the run for about three months…the police detectives would round up all of my family and even my primary school classmates to get information on my whereabouts. My brother and my parents were all beaten up. (A06)

Others said that they did not even tell their parents of their activism, and that their parents did not find out about it until they were sent to prison. For the interviewees who were university students in the 1980s, it was clear that parental influence was not a big factor in the political socialization process.

In addition, all of the interviewees who were university students in the 1980s said that their schoolteachers did not at all influence their political views. When asked if civil education was part of their pre-university education or if teachers would speak to them about politics, all of the interviewees answered 'no' to both questions.

For instance, one interviewee said that even in the Gwangju area where he grew up, in which there was a greater sense of general political activism:

> Teachers did not make any comments about the government. It was not possible for a school to have a political bias, and educational institutions were quite closely aligned with the government. (A05)

Similarly, another interviewee said:

> It was not possible back then for schoolteachers to hold or express political views. The education sector itself was very close to the government, and the teachers never criticised the government or the military dictatorship. (A03)

In fact, most of the interviewees said that they were not very interested in politics during their school years. One interviewee said that even if she had been interested in politics, there was no time or resources to learn more or become involved. She said:

> Even if I had been interested in politics, I was too busy to become involved in politics. I spent all of my time studying. It was only when I got into university and the pressure of admissions were off my shoulders that I had the free time and energy to look around and become interested in the world around me. (A15)[18]

All of the interviewees who were university students in the 1980s said that their interest and knowledge of politics began in their university years. Those who actively participated in student activist movements said that the influence of upperclassmen and networks cultivated through various societies were particularly important. These societies were 'under' organizations (secret societies set up to avoid the government ban on student groups), churches, and study groups. For instance, one interviewee said:

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[18] Female, Pusan National University, 1984, Yeongnam

The only way I learned about politics was through going to church and listening to what the older boys talked about. There was no other way for us to find out about politics because we only focused on our studies at school. However, when I went to university, I learned much more about politics through friends who became active in study groups that read the banned books and attended demonstrations. (A10)

Many interviewees said there was a general atmosphere of political activism on university campuses in the 1980s. One interviewee said that though he was not initially interested in politics, he became more involved in politics due to the general atmosphere of political activism on campus. He said:

When I first came to university, I chose to do a degree in chemical engineering and wanted to become a researcher. I wasn't very outgoing, and I enjoyed mathematics and science. However, back then, there was a general atmosphere of joining the democratic movement. Everyone was participating, and so I did too. (A04)

This interviewee would later become very active in student activism and was even elected to be the president in one of the largest student political organisations. Even interviewees who were not as actively involved in student activism said that there was a general political consciousness on campus. One interviewee who had not participated in any manifest forms of political participation but supported the democratic movement said:

There was a general atmosphere that if you weren't liberal-minded and anti-government, you weren't cool, that you weren't a real university student. Having that type of attitude brought students together, it was admired, and it was the life for many students who participated. (A12)

The observation that this general trend of political activism existed and motivated students to participate was shared even by an interviewee who did not participate in political participation and disagreed with the attitudes of those who did. This interviewee, who is quoted above as saying that he did not think that the Chun administration was a dictatorial government, said:

> There were many fellow students who became involved in student activism at university. There was just a general consensus that if you did not participate in the democratic movement, you were a coward and stupid. (A17)

The political socialization process that university students in the 1980s experienced at university in their peer groups was closely connected to latent political participation because much of the socialization took place in the context of keeping informed of political issues and discussing political issues.

For male university students, the military is also another important environment for political socialization. In South Korea, since 1951, all men over the age of 18 who are physically fit are drafted into military service to serve for around 2 years. One of the punishments for student activism in the 1980s was to draft activists into mandatory military service at very short notice and assign them to particularly difficult posts. The interviewees who were university students in the 1980s said that the government made an effort to politically socialize young men during the mandatory military service. One interviewee described how this was done:

> Of course there were videos and such to teach us about how we needed to obey the
> government. But the worst of all was how difficult and gruelling military service was back
> then. There were a lot of people who committed suicide because it was so tough. Training was
> particularly harsh. There were many beatings. You could never speak your own opinions on
> anything. They emphasised in the training that we were not civilians and that we had to be
> patriotic and always loyal to our orders and command without question, and if we ever
> disobeyed orders, we would be killed. They taught us that the threats posed by North Korea
> were real and imminent, and that was why the government policies were so tough. (A12)

Yet, despite these methods, the interviewee said that this did not necessarily affect the political views of the young men subjected to it as the government intended. Although some were discouraged from political participation after their experience in the military service, others strengthened their resolve. Another interviewee who did not go to military service because he had served a prison term but observed many others who did described the influence of military service on political socialization:

> Some students were sent to their mandatory military service with only several days notice.
> Those that went suffered greatly and some even died. I heard that in the military service, they
> all had to undergo some sort of political socialization programme. The effect that military
> service had was different for people. For some, it made their resolve to protest the oppressive
> regime even stronger. Others just went back to ordinary life and distanced themselves from
> politics. However, I think those who became politically active would have done so even had
> they not gone through military service, and the same for those who were not politically active.
> I don't think that type of propaganda in the military service made a big impact. (A06)

For university students in the 1980s, the university setting was by far the most influential in their political socialization process. Part of the reason for this was that in the 1980s, there was a general atmosphere that university students should be interested

and involved in politics. For the most part, parents and school did not play a large role in the political socialization process of university students in the 1980s. The interviews also reveal that though the government made an effort to influence the political socialization of young men in the mandatory military service, the interviewees thought that this was largely ineffective.

5 The experience of political participation

5.1 Latent political participation

Latent political participation involves citizens being interested in political issues, keeping informed of political issues and discussing these issues with others. It is different from manifest political participation, which has as its aim to effect change in the external political situation; latent political participation focuses on an internal understanding of the political situation (Ekman and Amna, 2012).

In this section, we discuss the latent political participation experienced by university students in the 1980s. It is hypothesised that university students in the 1980s would have had covert experiences of latent political participation because of the oppressive policies against political participation. We begin with a discussion about the various forms of latent political participation experienced by university students in the 1980s. These include reading political texts, discussing politics with peers and learning from upperclassmen. We also examine the role of ideology in the student democratic movement. We then conclude with a discussion of the blurred boundary between latent and manifest forms of political participation for university students in the 1980s.

The first step for learning more about politics for most university students was through the information that student activists distributed on campus. All interviewees, even those who did not join student organisations or participated in protests said that they were interested in politics and obtained information about politics through the information distributed on campus about politics by the other students. One

interviewee described how ordinary university students were able to learn about political affairs. He said:

> There would be daily announcements on the walls posted by the university students. It would set out any news broadcasted by the government media and then analyse the news to describe how the coverage was wrong and misleading. We would be able to confirm from the posters how oppressive the dictatorial government was and why we needed to act to bring about democracy. Also, some student political organisations would distribute flyers and booklets. (A03)

Once university students learned about politics on their own through the information available, the next step was to join a student organisation. Many interviewees said that they joined a student organisation despite the costs of doing so to learn more about politics. Most interviewees who chose to become involved in a student organisation said that they started by joining book clubs or study groups. One interviewee described what went on in these underground student organisations and how he came to join one:

> I joined what was called an 'under' organization. It's where small groups of students get together to read books and discuss them. An upperclassman said that there were these weekly book-reading meetings, and that we should try it once, so that's how I started going…we still used pseudonyms though. (A07)[19]

A key activity for these student organisations was to study and discuss political theory and ideological issues based on books about political ideology. In the 1980s, there was a list of books that were banned by the government. On 3 May 1985, the government issued a list of 50 'unwholesome books' and 298 'illegal periodicals'. Immediately

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[19] Male, Hanyang University, 1989, Seoul and Gyeonggi

afterwards, the government cracked down on publishers, bookstores, political and student organisations and universities to confiscate and destroy the publications. The official reason for doing so was that the books were deemed to be serving as the academic and ideological basis for the social unrest caused by student activists. When university students and the publishing industry protested these measures, the government released a further statement stating that publishers were supporting and encouraging communism, criticising capitalism and inciting violent revolutionary forces. Although the government made an effort to destroy the banned books, copies of the books and periodicals were made, hidden and distributed through university student networks (Kang, J. M., 2007). One interviewee described what he read:

> There were banned books that the government designated as being 'unwholesome'. Works by Karl Marx or Kim Il-sung were on the list, but there were also some autobiographies and editorial works by opposition political leaders. I read several of these books and many students who wanted to find out more about politics read them too. (A09)

Many interviewees said that they read some of the banned books to learn more about politics, mostly through the recommendation of their peers. One interviewee said:

> I read books that the university upperclassmen recommended to me. I listened to the discussions that my peers had about the books we read together. And I thought hard about whether I agreed with what they said and what I had read. (A16)[20]

Interviewees who had been senior members of student organisations said that they used book reading and study sessions to teach recruits about politics and orient them for political participation. One interviewee described the process:

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[20] Male, Kyungpook National University, 1982, Yeongnam

Upperclassmen would recruit and teach lowerclassmen, particularly those with strong critical thinking skills. Most of the books we used were history, economics and political theory books with a leftist ideology. The lowerclassmen would be taken to camps where they could eat and sleep with the upperclassmen and learn about these things in intensive sessions. I guess looking back, this was a form of brainwashing. However, back then, as university students learning about all of these things was completely new as we had not been taught anything about political or economic theory in school. We learned about different perspectives to look at modern Korean history and how we should view Japan and the U.S. We spent a lot of time discussing our role as the educated elite of society and what we should aspire to in order to make Korea a better society. (A06)

Since a lot of these organisations were rooted in an intellectual understanding of political issues, there was naturally a theoretical exploration of governance and societal problems, leading to a focus on ideology. During the 1980s, there were two main streams of ideological thought in the Korean student protest movement. One school of thought, known as National Liberation, or 'NL', focused on nationalism, independence and freedom. On the other hand, People's Democratic Liberation, 'PD', focused on class conflict and labour rights (Kang, J. M., 2003).

There was a widely varying evaluation amongst the interviewees of their perception of ideology. Some interviewees held negative attitudes towards the liberal ideology associated with the student activist movement and said that it turned them off from getting involved. One interviewee said:

The student democratic movement in the 1980s was dominated by Marxism, socialism and communism and I did not agree with these ideas. I think a lot of students became involved just because they were emotionally swept up by it all. (A15)

Another interviewee who had initially been compelled into getting involved in student activism because of ideology said that it later caused him to be disillusioned with student activism. He said that:

> In the beginning, I started out with a yearning to fight for social justice. But as you know, student activism became so ideological, especially with the outgrowth of [the North Korean brand of] communism…as time went by, we became increasingly fragmented, and activists would fight one another, saying that one was good and the other evil, one was right and the other wrong…Seeing all of these divisions made me realize that it wasn't society or its institutions that cause suffering as I previously believed, but that it was the human condition. I became quite disillusioned when I realised this. I now believe that instead of seeking radical change, we must live our lives the best we can, and each in our positions work to make the world a better place, however incrementally. (A04)

Although ideological division was clearly a turn-off for some, other interviewees said that ideological divisions were not detrimental to the democratization movement. One interviewee specifically said that ideological conflicts within student activists did not detract from the student movement. He said:

> At the time, the large ideological groupings that came about were the NL and PD. NL emphasized nationalism and PD focused on class conflict. But these were not necessarily conflicting but rather complementary for the development of the movement. It was through the competitive ideological debates that we were able to consolidate our resolve. (A05)

Similarly, another interviewee said of the ideological differences between NL and PD:

> There wasn't really a sense of tension or conflict between the two sides. (A10)

As we discussed in the chapter on political socialization above, part of the reason why university students in the 1980s became interested in politics at university was because there was a general atmosphere on campus of student activism and political participation. However, this does not explain why certain students became more interested in politics than others. Interviewees who were more heavily involved in political participation said that a large part of why they became interested in politics was because of a desire to make sense of events happening around them. Since the media were not perceived to be a reliable source of information, as discussed above, the only way for ordinary students to access information about politics was through other students. For instance, one interviewee said that he joined the student activist scene by signing up to a book club that discussed political issues because he could not understand what was going on around him:

> While I was attending [my first year at university] in 1986, I was frustrated. The world was so chaotic, but I felt isolated as if I was alone on an island. (A04)

Once he joined the secret society, he reported that the things he read and studied with the upperclassmen made it easier for him to interpret what was going on in the world around him, which compelled him to join the student movement to secure class equality and bring down the oppressive government. Because learning about and keeping informed about politics often required joining banned secret student organisations, the personal costs of latent political participation were very high. If caught, even membership in an organisation or simply association with a known student activist could result in serious punishments. However, once informed about political issues and once relationships had been formed with student activists, it was

then only a short step to participate in protests and become involved in manifest forms of political participation as well. One interviewee described how the initially passive learning-oriented form of participation soon evolved into a full-fledged participation in protests and demonstrations:

> In the beginning, I was very confused because the upperclassman demanded so much. I didn't join in the protests at first. I was scared, and I thought I'd do it after I learned a bit more. But the upperclassman told me, that knowledge is like a bowl that gets bigger and bigger so you can't ever fill it completely. The more you know, the larger the bowl becomes, and if you keep waiting for it to be filled, you'll never do anything. You need to act on what you know. So I did. I acted on what I knew. (A08)

The survey and interview results show that for university students in the 1980s, latent political participation was more than simply learning about current affairs or having an academic understanding of politics. Because many forms of latent political participation were outlawed by the Chun administration, even seemingly innocuous university student activities such as participating in student groups or gathering for discussions and presentations carried considerable personal risk. Therefore, the line between latent political participation and manifest political participation was blurred for university students in the 1980s.

One interviewee who was quite active on the student activist scene described how he came to be involved in a university student association and how it was organised:

> Because of personal security you were recruited by one upperclassman. You can't just walk in to find it. You don't know its real identity. As for me, one upperclassman recommended it to

me, so I joined. I only knew that upperclassman, and I didn't know many of the others. This was so that even if I was tortured, I couldn't give much away. (A05)

In sum, since there were not many reliable sources of information about political affairs in the 1980s through mainstream media, many university students in the 1980s learned about politics through information from other university students. Even university students who did not actively join in the protests or student organisations were able to keep informed through wall posters and booklets and flyers distributed by the other students. Many interviewees in this study chose to join student organisations despite the high personal costs to learn more about politics. In these secret organisations, university students would read banned books about politics, economics and history and debate amongst themselves. Though ideology featured heavily in student organisations, the interviewees were divided on the impact and significance of ideological differences. Senior members of these organisations used intensive teaching and discussion sessions as a way for politically socializing lowerclassmen and preparing them for more manifest forms of political participation. In fact, the boundary between latent and manifest forms of political participation was blurred in the 1980s, and being involved in the former often led to the latter.

5.2   Manifest political participation

In this section, we will discuss the experience of manifest political participation experienced by university students in the 1980s. Manifest political participation is different from latent political participation in that manifest political participation goes beyond keeping informed on political issues and discussing issues with others. As discussed in the literature review, there are three forms of manifest political

participation: voting, contacting politicians and participating in campaign activity. Each of these types of manifest political participation is discussed in detail in the following sections.

In this thesis, the discussion of voting and contacting politicians by university students in the 1980s is mainly based on secondary sources. This is because secondary sources explain why many interviewees did not even mention voting as an effective way of political participation at the time. In relation to contacting politicians, only a few interviewees were able to recount their experiences in contacting politicians in great detail. However, because the sample is so small, this is unlikely to be the full story. Secondary sources reveal in greater detail the relationship between university students in the 1980s and politicians at the time.

It is hypothesised that protest activity would have been the primary method of manifest political participation for university students in the 1980s. It is also hypothesised that their experiences are likely to have been violent. We conclude with a discussion on whether these hypotheses were true for university students in the 1980s.

5.2.1   Voting

Although the 1987 presidential election marked the first truly democratic elections, the history of the Korean electoral system goes back to 1948. After the US Military Government declared that South Korea to be an independent nation, the National Assembly was directly elected in May 1948. The National Assembly elected Rhee Syng-man as the first president of South Korea. Since 1948, there have been six

republics and nine constitutional reforms. The following table details the six republics, presidents and constitutions in South Korea since 1948.

Table 6. Republics, Presidents, and Constitutions (1948 – present)

Republic	Presidents	Constitution
1st Republic (1948-1960)	Rhee Syng-man	Enacted Constitution
		1st Amended Constitution
		2nd Amended Constitution
2nd Republic (1960-1963)	Yoon Bo-sun (interim)	3rd Amended Constitution
		4th Amended Constitution
3rd Republic (1963-1972)	Park Chung-hee	5th Amended Constitution
		6th Amended Constitution
4th Republic (1972-1980)	Park Chung-hee Choi Kyu-ha (Interim)	7th Amended Constitution
5th Republic (1981-1988)	Chun Doo-hwan	8th Amended Constitution
6th Republic (1988-present)	Roh Tae-woo Kim Young-sam Kim Dae-jung Roh Moo-hyun Lee Myung-bak Park Geun-hye	9th Amended Constitution

Since 1948 until the democratic transition in 1987, almost all presidential elections were indirect except for the three elections of President Rhee Syng-man in the years 1952-1960 and the three elections of President Park Chung-hee in the years 1963-1971, which were direct. However, these direct elections were little more than efforts to legitimise the presidential office for the authoritarian leader while simultaneously maintaining a façade of democracy. Yet, if maintaining even that façade risked losing office, the authoritarian leaders did not hesitate to resort to vote manipulation or to change electoral rules to their favour. It was only after 1987 that direct presidential elections were permanently established (Croissant, 2002: 236-237). The following

table details the dates, methods of election, the winning candidate and runner-up candidates in the presidential elections in Korea from 1948 to 1981.

Table 7. Presidential Elections in Korea (1948-1981)

No	Date	Method of Election	Winning Candidate	Runner-up Candidate
1	20 Jul 1948	National Assembly	Rhee Syng-man 92.3%	Kim Gu 6.7%
2	5 Aug 1952	Direct popular vote	Rhee Syng-man 74.6%	Cho Bong-am 11.4%
3	15 May 1956	Direct popular vote	Rhee Syng-man 70.0%	Cho Bong-am 30.0%
4	15 Mar 1960*	Direct popular vote	Rhee Syng-man 100.0%	Cho Byeong-ok (Died)
5	12 Aug 1960	National Assembly	Yun Bo-sun 82.2 %	-
6	15 Oct 1963	Direct popular vote	Park Chung-hee 46.6%	Yun Bo-sun 45.1%
7	3 May 1967	Direct popular vote	Park Chung-hee 51.4%	Yun Bo-sun 45.1%
8	27 Apr 1971	Direct popular vote	Park Chung-hee 53.2%	Kim Dae-jung 45.3%
9	23 Dec 1972	Electoral College	Park Chung-hee 100%	-
10	6 Jul 1978	Electoral College	Park Chung-hee 100%	-
11	6 Dec 1979	Electoral College	Choi Kyu-ha 100%	-
12	27 Aug 1980	Electoral College	Chun Doo-hwan 100%	-
13	25 Feb 1981	Electoral College	Chun Doo-hwan 100%	-

* Election was declared null and void.
(Source: Choi, J. J., 2010; Croissant, 2002)

Unlike in other countries in the region, South Korea has held direct parliamentary elections under authoritarian regimes as well as democratic ones (Croissant, 2002).

The National Assembly was directly elected, and universal, equal and secret suffrage was granted to all citizens.

During the authoritarian period between the years 1948-1987, there were 12 parliamentary elections and five republics. In the First Republic (1948-1960), the National Assembly was elected by a plurality system in single member constituencies (SMC). In the Second Republic (1960-1963), when the bicameral legislature was temporarily instituted, the House of Representatives was elected by a plurality system in single member constituencies; the House of Councillors was elected by proportional representation in one nation-wide constituency.

In the Third Republic (1963-1972), two-thirds of the seats were allocated by plurality system in single member constituencies; and one-third proportional representation. The party with the most votes received half of the proportional representation seats if it received less than 50% of the votes in the single national district; and it received 2/3 of the proportional representation seats if it received more than 50% of the votes in the single national district. The party with the second most votes received two-thirds of the remaining seats. All other parties received the proportion of the then remaining seats corresponding to the votes they won in the single national district. Parties that did not receive 5% or 3 seats (5 seats for the 8th National Assembly) did not get allocated proportional representation seats (Chung, T. I. and Kim, I. S., 2010: 218).

In the Fourth Republic under the Yushin Constitution, President Park Chung-hee appointed 1/3 of the seats. In the Fifth Republic, two-thirds of the National Assembly was elected by a binomial system in which two representatives were selected in

medium-sized districts. One-third of the National Assembly was selected by proportional representation. Here, the party with the most votes in the single national district was allocated two-thirds of the seats in the National Assembly; the remaining one-third of the seats were allocated to the remaining parties in accordance with the proportion of votes won in the single national district. Parties that won less than five seats in the plurality single member constituencies did not get any seats allocated by proportional representation (Chung, T. I. and Kim, I. S., 2010: 218). The following table summarises the electoral system for parliamentary elections by republic before the democratic transition in 1987.

Table 8. Electoral system for parliamentary elections by Republic (1948 – 1988)

Republic	National Assemblies	Electoral System
1st Republic (1948-1960)	1st - 4th	- Plurality system in Single Member Constituencies (SMC)
2nd Republic (1960-1963)	5th (bicameral)	- **House of Representatives:** Plurality system in SMCs - **House of Councillors:** Proportional representation (PR)
3rd Republic (1963-1972)	6th - 8th	- 2/3 of seats by plurality system in SMCs - 1/3 by PR
4th Republic (1972-1980)	9th - 10th	- 2/3 of seats by binomial system - 1/3 appointed by president
5th Republic (1981-1988)	11th - 12th	- 2/3 of seats by binomial system - 1/3 PR

(Source: Chung, T. I. and Kim, I. S., 2010: 218; Croissant, 2002: 238)

The parliamentary electoral laws in the First to the Fifth Republics were constantly changed to ensure that the ruling parties dominated the parliament. The disproportional effects of this system is evident in the difference in the percentage of the vote earned by the governing party and the percentage of seats earned by the governing party.

Table 9. Difference in the Percentage of Votes and Seats received by the Governing Party (1954-1987)

	Percentage of Votes received by Governing Party	Percentage of Seats received by Governing Party	Bonus Rate[21]
First Republic (1948-1960)			
3rd National Assembly	36.8	56.2	19.4
4th National Assembly	42.1	54.1	12.0
Second Republic (1960-1963)			
5th National Assembly	41.7	75.1	33.4
Third Republic (1963-1972)			
6th National Assembly	33.5	62.9	29.4
7th National Assembly	50.6	73.7	23.1
8th National Assembly	48.8	55.4	6.6
Fourth Republic (1972-1980)			
9th National Assembly	38.7	66.7	28.0
10th National Assembly	31.7	62.7	31.0
Fifth Republic (1981-1988)			
11th National Assembly	35.6	54.7	19.1
12th National Assembly	35.2	53.6	18.4

(Source: Extracted from Croissant, 2002: 240)

As can be seen, the electoral system in the authoritarian First to Fifth Republic had been extremely distortionary and heavily favoured the governing party. The governing party had been able to earn a much larger proportion of the seats than the proportion of votes under this system; on average the bonus rate was 22.04%. It was only in the Sixth Republic that changes to the parliamentary electoral system were made.

Despite elections taking place, most of the time, elections held before 1987 were neither free nor fair. Abuse of the National Security Law, unfair party laws, the manipulation of the electoral system, censorship and control of the media and vote-

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[21] The 'Bonus Rate' is the difference between the percentage of seats received by the governing party with the percentage of votes received by the governing party.

buying ensured that the regime was in no danger of losing the elections to the opposition. However, they were politically relevant. The popular vote granted legitimacy to the ruling coalition and allowed the government to present to the Korea public and the international community that South Korea was a functioning democracy and part of the 'free' world. In effect, elections and the electoral system were not means of representation or competition, but a means to securing the regime's power base (Croissant, 2002: 239).

Despite the fact that university students in the 1980s were able to vote in the parliamentary elections, due to the distortionary effects of the electoral system and the vote manipulation tactics of the governing party, voting was not perceived to be an effective means of political participation. In addition, even when opposition parties like the New Korea Democratic party gained seats in the National Assembly, they were unable to implement constitutional reform or meaningfully influence policy-making.

Given this background, most interviewees did not even mention voting when asked about political participation in the 1980s. One interviewee described the view towards voting that many other interviewees also expressed:

> Voting was meaningless. The Electoral College elected the president. Anyone with money could be elected to be a member of the Electoral College or a member of the National Assembly. (A09)

Although voting was available as a form of political participation, university students in the 1980s did not perceive it as a meaningful form of political participation due to

the circumstances that made elections neither free nor fair. This was why free, fair and direct presidential elections was one of the key demands of the student activists in the lead up to the 1987 democratic transition.

5.2.2   Contacting politicians

Although university students in the 1980s did not perceive voting as an effective means of political participation, they had contact with and often cooperated with opposition politicians. Sometimes, university students and opposition political elite cooperated to obtain common goals.

For instance, university students supported the New Democratic Party[22] by forming working groups that included the 'Special Committee on the General Election', 'Union for the Prevention of the Re-election of the Governing Party', and the 'Union for the Democratic Takeover of the General Election'. During January 1985, the students conducted street demonstrations and disseminated material on democracy in the campaign rallies for the General Election. This cooperation of the students and the opposition party resulted in an astounding electoral success. In the 1985 General Election, the New Democratic Party won 42.7% of the votes, beating the governing Democratic Justice Party that only won 27% of the votes (Lee, Y. S., 2000). This electoral success was a direct result of the cooperation between the student protestors and the opposition political elite.

University students and opposition politicians also cooperated on the 'One Million Signatures for Constitutional Reform' project, initially launched by Kim Young-sam

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[22] The New Democratic Party was created by Kim Young-sam and Kim Dae-jung.

and Kim Dae-jung. On 4 February 1986, over 1,000 students from 14 universities in Seoul gathered at Seoul National University to create a working group to launch the signature rally. Among their demands for constitutional reform included autonomous local governing bodies; freedom of speech, publication, expression, and assembly; liberalisation of the university and freedom of political activity for students; the independence of the judiciary; and the guarantee of the basic rights of labour (Jung, H. G., 2011: 124-125).

However, the cooperation between university students and the opposition political elite was not enduring. On 30 April 1986, President Chun announced that constitutional reform might be implemented if a compromise could be made between the government and the opposition parties. When this was finally announced, the New Democratic Party devoted itself to making compromises with the government party. In the process, it abandoned its ties with the student organisation and labour organisations. The then leader of the New Democratic Party Lee Min-woo announced that the New Democratic Party would split with the radical student organisations. The student organisations and labour organisations saw this as an opportunistic betrayal and strongly criticised the New Democratic Party (Jung, H. G., 2011: 125-127). However, the cooperative relationship between the students and the political elite would be renewed in 1987 in the lead up to the June Democratic Movement.

Although the relationship between university students and the opposition political elite were not always cooperative, contacting politicians and participating in campaign activity was an important form of manifest political participation for university students in the 1980s. Many interviewees who were university students in the 1980s

said that they attended seminars and talks by opposition political leaders, and participated in rallies to support them. One interviewee said that such events hosted by the student council gave him the opportunity to learn more about politics. He said:

> During one of the university festivals, the student council invited one of the democratic movement speakers to speak about democracy and politics. He told us about the self-immolation of Jeon Tae-il,[23] what happened in Gwangju. He told us that we needed to participate to change politics. (A12)

Similarly, another interviewee said that he attended similar talks by opposition political elite and that it influenced his political views. He said:

> I attended a talk by Baek Gi-wan,[24] and I was really impressed. Even without any notes, he gave such a great speech, and I remember feeling really motivated to learn more about politics afterwards. (A16)

Other interviewees who had been more actively involved in student councils and organisations said that some of the activities of student organisations involved cooperating with the opposition politicians to assist in the campaigns and rallies and raise awareness of political issues.

5.2.3 Protest activity

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[23] Jeon Tae-il was a labour worker and labour rights protestor who set himself on fire and ran across the Pyong-hwa Market in Seoul and later died of his burns in November 1970. His death led to the expansion of the labour rights movement.
[24] Baek Gi-wan was a pro-democracy protestor and orator who gave many talks on democratic reform in the 1980s. He was a candidate in the 14th presidential elections.

Most interviewees identified protests as the only method of political participation available to them. When asked if there was anything else the university students in the 1980s could have done to participate in politics besides protesting, all of the interviewees said that there was none. One interviewee said:

> There was absolutely no way for us to participate in politics legally. Back then there were no direct elections. You could write something, but there was no way the newspapers would print it. The only thing that could be done was to take to the streets and protest, but then you would be immediately arrested. There was really nothing we could do. It was bleak. (A02)

Many interviewees reported that there was a general atmosphere of participating in protests. One interviewee who had been in his final year at high school in 1987 said:

> Everyone back then had a strong aversion to the government. I participated in the protests in 1987 just like everyone else. Even if I didn't throw rocks or Molotov cocktails, I was there, and the times were such that everyone else was there too. (A01)[25]

Although, protests were sometimes meticulously planned and executed by student activists, some were more spontaneous. One interviewee related how he came to lead a protest without planning to do so:

> I came out of the American Council library in Busan where I went often to read English books and saw these students sitting in the streets and drinking. I asked them why they were not demonstrating, and they said that someone would start it soon. So I watched a while longer, but nothing was happening, so I said we should all stand up and sing the national anthem. Then thousands of students started singing along, and that's how it all started. (A09)

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[25] Male, Chonnam National University, 1988, Honam

He continued to explain how the demonstration escalated through the evening and into the night. He described how the police buses were knocked over and set on fire and how in the end, the police rounded up all of the student activists. He spent two months in prison after the incident.

Other interviewees related similar accounts of participating in violent protests. One interviewee, who was a leading member of the student union, described the situation when protesting against the military dictatorship:

> During the protests, all of us – friends, upperclassmen and lowerclassmen – would fight with shields and throw Molotov cocktails. Our comrades would fall, and it was also heart-breaking that some among the riot police getting hit by our Molotov cocktails were actually our friends and classmates. Later, some of my friends would get caught and then go to court to be tried and sentenced to prison. It was terribly painful. (A01)

Riot police forces were often made up of young men serving in the mandatory military service. This meant that sometimes, riot policemen were peers of the student activists. One interviewee who had not participated in the student activist movements but had been sympathetic to the democratic movement said that he had been deployed to control student riots during his military service and found it incredibly difficult to carry out his duties. As the democratic movement gained momentum leading up to the June 1987 Democratic Uprising, groups of mothers would go up to the riot police lines and put flowers in the young men's button-holes, telling them not to shoot.

Among the students that actually participated in the activist movements, some reported that continued participation and the oppressive government policies strengthened their

resolve. When asked whether serving his one-year prison sentence had changed his political views, one interviewee answered confidently: 'Yes, I became stronger' (A06).

Similarly, when asked whether he observed any effects of de-politicization in the student activists around him who had undergone the 'socialization process' during the mandatory military service another interviewee answered:

> Do you know the saying that the dawn will come even if you strangle the rooster? I believe that even if you people undergo severe physical suffering or are cut off from all information, the process will only deepen their desire for and understanding of democracy gained by introspection. (A05)

In sum, as hypothesised, protesting was the main form of political participation for university students in the 1980s. The experience of protest activity was often violent and involved high personal costs. However, contributing to the campaigns of opposition politicians and cooperating with them was another important form of political participation, albeit not always effective. Voting was not an effective form of political participation for university students in the 1980s.

5.3 Non-participation

Not all university students were at the forefront of the student activist movement. The hypothesis that the main reason for non-participation amongst university students in the 1980s was the fear of the oppressive methods used by the Chun administration was largely confirmed by the interviews. Most interviewees who did not participate said that though they were interested in politics, they were fearful of the consequences and

only later joined in the protests during the peak times in 1987. One interviewee said that he did not dare participate before then because:

> When only the minority were doing it, I could only do so with my heart because if it's the minority and I stand out, it would be too dangerous. (A02)

He continued:

> Back then, if you were caught, you could be drafted into the military within a matter of days. Or worse, you could be imprisoned, and that would affect your family, your studies and your career. (A02)

For many interviewees, this fear of the personal consequences of participation was a strong deterrent against getting involved. Another interviewee went into further detail about the personal consequences of being involved in student activism:

> The main issue was financial. In Korean society the most difficult educational status to have is to be a university drop-out. If you are a high school graduate, you can get a job in any factory. If you are a university graduate, you can take an entrance exam and interview for jobs. However, if you are a university drop-out, you can't work in a factory because the employers would be suspicious; they wouldn't want to recruit an activist who could cause trouble. Yet, at the same time, if you were not a university graduate, you wouldn't be qualified for the office jobs. (A07)

Because of the personal risks involved in being a student activist, those who did become involved said that it took a great deal of self-determination and commitment to be fully involved. One interviewee said:

Because you could be imprisoned and beaten up, it took a lot of self-determination to be a student activist. You couldn't be a student activist without really committing yourself to it. Even though we were all young, we all knew right away the great dangers we faced. (A05)

Although there were many interviewees who said they did not choose to participate in student activism before the peak periods in June 1987, almost all interviewees expressed a sense of respect for those who did. One interviewee, who was not involved in any demonstrations or student activism at all said:

I was very much a bystander. However, every day, there would be posters on the campus walls with information about issues of the day. It would tell us what the government has kept from us through its control of the media and the atrocities committed by the dictatorial government. So even people like me who were quieter and just focused on our studies shared the desire for democracy and change. (A03)

However, there was one interviewee who said that he did not participate in politics because he disagreed with some of the violent methods used by the student activists. He said:

I was of course very angry and sad when I saw some of my peers arrested. However, I could not fully agree with some of the violent methods that were used by the student activists. I sympathised with what they stood for, but I could not agree with the way they carried out their objectives. So I did not participate (A16)

Similarly, another interviewee said that he did not participate because he did not agree with the reasons for the student democratic movement. He said that he thought that the

Chun administration was not a dictatorial regime, and did think that it should be toppled (A17). Though this interviewee was the only interviewee to argue this, it indicates that some university students in the 1980s were not wholly convinced that the Chun administration was a dictatorship.

Some interviewees said that some university students in the 1980s were just not very interested in politics. One female interviewee who said that though she had been very interested and moderately involved in the student activist movements, many of her friends were not. She said:

> For people who were interested in politics, politics was their life. However, there were others who were not interested at all in politics and just focused on studying. I think amongst the female students only about a quarter were really interested in politics. There were more girls who just wanted to dress nicely and study. (A15)

In sum, as hypothesised, fear of the consequences of participation was one of the key reasons for non-participation amongst university students in the 1980s. However, other reasons for non-participation included disagreement with the methods used by the student activists, disagreement with the assumption that the Chun administration was a dictatorial government and a lack of interest. Yet, even amongst university students who did not participate in the student democratic movement, most expressed sympathy and support for those who did.

6 Reasons for political participation

This chapter discusses the reasons for political participation by university students in the 1980s. It was hypothesised that the main reason university students in the 1980s did participate despite the high personal costs of doing so was because of the direct effects of the oppressive policies of the dictatorial Chun administration. Although this was part of the reason, the interviews revealed more complex motivations for the decision to participate in politics despite the high personal costs of doing so.

6.1   Social injustice

For some interviewees, social injustice, economic hardship and inequality motivated them to become involved in the student activist movement. For instance, one interviewee said:

> My parents were labour workers. I had no choice but to become a student activist after reading the banners because of the fact that even though my parents left for work at the crack of dawn and returned very late at night, we were always so poor. I knew that there was something wrong with society, and because what was said on the banners was so close to my life, I naturally participated in student activism. (A05)

Similarly, another interviewee said that he began participating in the student activism because of an interest in labour rights. He said:

> In the beginning, I did not have political aspirations, but I observed the lives of people in the industrial quarters. There were no protection of labour rights back then, and I began to

participate because of a sense of injustice for the exploitation of the labour workers who lead such harsh lives. (A06)

Other interviewees said that they became involved after studying political ideology and realising the deep social injustices apparent in Korean society. One interviewee said:

As I studied politics and learned more about current affairs, I realised that there were fundamental problems in Korean society: the problem of reunification and the problem of class conflict. I was more interested in class conflict and labour rights, and that's what drove me further into activism. (A07)

However, for some interviewees, coming from a lower socioeconomic class restricted their ability to become involved in student activist movements. One interviewee said that the economic hardship faced by his family was the greatest barrier to his getting involved in student activism. He said:

I was the eldest son in my family and because things were so tough for my family, it would have caused serious problems if I was sent to prison. I thought I really needed to get involved in student activism, but it was hard to do so knowing the consequences. (A12)

Yet, many university students in the 1980s, even more so than now, came from middle or upper class households. For this majority of students, social injustice, economic hardship and inequality were not the key reasons for their negative attitudes towards the dictatorial regime.

6.2 Injustice against protestors

The most common reason for participating in politics was the injustice carried out by the Chun regime against protestors. The interviewee who experienced the Gwangju Democratic Movement as a high school student said that the experience directly caused him to participate in the student movement. He said:

> Before the incident, I disliked the military dictatorship, but I never felt motivated enough to express it. However, after seeing what I saw, I had no choice but to participate. The soldiers who were supposed to protect us came and started beating up and indiscriminately shooting the civilians. It was wrong. We had to fight against injustice. Even a worm twists when stepped on. We had to do something. (A08)

A major source of the fear and anger at the government expressed by the interviewees who were university students in the 1980s were caused by the continued violent oppression of protestors and their fellow student activists. One interviewee said:

> The reason university students participated was because there was just so much injustice. All they did was speak freely about politics, but the police would arrest them and torture them. Even if there were only a few who disagreed with the government, they would oppress them and make them out to be traitors. University students were enraged to see their close friends harmed in this way. (A10)

Even interviewees who did not participate very much in student activism recognised that the violent oppression of protestors was a strong motivator for his peers. He said:

Do you know the Park Jong-chul incident? He was a Seoul National University student who died from water boarding torture methods. I was in the same class with him during high school. He got into Seoul National University and became involved in student activism. My friends who went to study in Seoul said that when they saw their friends like him get tortured, hit with tear gas canisters and beaten up, they became so angry, they had no choice but to participate. (A17)

It was clear from the responses that the direct injustice on the democratic protestors played a role in motivating university students in the 1980s to participate despite the high personal risks posed by doing so.

6.3   Duty

In addition to the injustice in the society and injustice against democratic protestors, it was clear from the interviews that many university students in the 1980s who participated felt a strong sense of duty to do so because they were university students. One female interviewee said:

Most of my friends were from above average backgrounds, and we felt that as part of the educated elite, we had a duty to society to participate and make a difference. Of course, there were some people in my class who did not participate and focused on their studies. They said that they were preparing for their future to enter society. However, I did not want to just sit in the library and study like I did in school. I thought that at university, I should look for the truth and make a difference. (A15)

Another interviewee who had been very active in the student democratic movement explained further that he felt duty-bound to do so as the privileged elite of society and the tradition of student activism in Korean modern history. He said:

Usually in the democratic movements of other countries, class conflict plays a large role and it is the labour movement that leads the democratization process. However, why is it that university students played such a large role in the democratization process in Korea? Why did they participate with such energy for such a long time despite the drawbacks? At the end of the day, I think it comes down to tradition. University students are the privileged elite. In Korean society, there has been a tradition of student activism since the independence movement against Japanese colonial rule. This tradition of student activism helped to bring independence, the fall of the Yushin constitution and finally democracy. (A04)

When speaking about his role as the president in a national university student association, he explained further that duty compelled him to continue in the role despite the difficulties he faced. He said:

I was surprised when I was elected to lead the national student association. It was not a coveted role, and it was burdensome. However, in the end the sense of duty led me to pull through. (A04)

Similarly, another interviewee said:

In the 1980s, there was the sense that university students had the responsibility to participate in politics. There was a sense that as the privileged elite, we had a duty to society. (A13)

An interviewee who did not participate but observed his peers and now works as a professor at a university made an observation about the difference between the duty felt by university students in the 1980s and university students today. He said:

It is not as if in the 1980s, the educational system was such that it raised more creative and critical thinkers than now. Back then, we didn't study philosophy or modern Korean history, and the educational environment was worse than it is now. However, back then university students used to think and debate about politics, more so than university students do today. This isn't because of the educational system or the individual students themselves. I think this difference is due to the general culture in the university student body. In the 1980s, there was the general consensus that university students had the duty to contribute to the nation and society, and that action had to be taken against injustice. There were values that everyone agreed with, and that it was worth the sacrifice and hardship. However, there are no longer such values today. Today, it is about a cost-benefit analysis, and individualism. (A16)

7 Conclusion

Finally, we will discuss the main elements of the political culture of university students in the 1980s by summarising the key empirical findings. Each of the following elements of political culture were examined:

- the attitudes towards politics and government;

- the attitudes towards media;

- the political socialization process;

- the experience of political participation; and

- the reasons for political participation or non-participation.

Firstly, it was hypothesised that university students in the 1980s held very negative attitudes towards the Chun administration and welcomed the 1987 democratic transition. The empirical findings indeed revealed that the general attitude towards the Chun administration was very negative, characterised by fear and anger. Much of this fear and anger was caused by the violent and oppressive practices of the Chun administration towards university students and democratic protestors. Events such as the Gwangju Democratic Movement particularly affected the interviewees' attitudes towards the Chun administration. The violent and oppressive policies used against university student activists were also a significant factor in causing the negative attitudes towards the Chun administration. Many interviewees recounted their own experience of the harsh treatment of student activists.

It was also hypothesised that university students in the 1980s would have welcomed the 1987 democratic transition. The empirical findings confirmed this. However, the interviews revealed that some university students in the 1980s were disappointed with the outcome that Roh Tae-woo, who was President Chun's right-hand man, was elected in the direct elections. However all respondents said that they welcomed the announcement to allow direct elections and that the democratic transition was a historical achievement. All interviewees who were university students in the 1980s said that the political situation improved dramatically after the democratic transition in 1987. The responses showed that university students in the 1980s were supportive of the concept of democratic governance.

Secondly, it was hypothesised that university students in the 1980s did not trust the mainstream media. This was confirmed in the interviews. All interviewees said that mainstream media at the time was untrustworthy because it was under the complete control of the government. Instead of relying on mainstream media, interviewees reported that the main sources of information were through foreign news broadcasts, word of mouth and information distributed by student activists. Many respondents said that they felt that they were not fully informed about current affairs at the time, and the desire to learn more about what was going on motivated some of them to join clubs and societies at university.

Thirdly, it was hypothesised that the university setting would have had the greatest effect on the political socialization process of university students in the 1980s. As hypothesised, all interviewees said that their interest and participation in politics increased dramatically at university. Their upperclassmen and peers primarily

influenced their political views. Many interviewees said that there was a general atmosphere of student activism on campus, which influenced them to learn about and become involved in politics. For the most part, interviewees said that parents and school education did not influence the formation of their political views.

Fourthly, the hypothesis that university students in the 1980s would have had covert experiences of latent political participation because of the oppressive policies against political participation was largely confirmed. Many interviewees said that they learned about political affairs through books and booklets and other material distributed by the student activists on campus, and some said that they joined secret reading clubs and debating societies to learn more. However, in the 1980s, the boundary between latent political participation and manifest political participation was blurred because the government had banned any organisations with the potential of organising political opposition, even university reading clubs and debating societies. Therefore, it was risky to participate even in these latent forms of political participation and often latent political participation led to more manifest forms of political participation such as participation in rallies, demonstrations, and even violent protests.

After a discussion of latent political participation in the 1980s, we proceeded to examine the main forms of manifest political participation. The three types of manifest political participation that were discussed were: voting, contacting politicians and protest activity. With respect to voting, close examination of the presidential elections and parliamentary elections before the 1987 democratic transition revealed that electoral rules were heavily skewed to favour the governing party. This explained why most interviewees did not even mention voting as a method of political participation.

In the discussion of contacting politicians, the relationship between university student organisations in the 1980s and opposition politicians were examined in more detail. This revealed that though university student organisations and opposition politicians often cooperated, they had different interests. Nevertheless, contacting politicians was part of the experience of political participation for university students in the 1980s.

As for protest activity, it was hypothesised that protest activity would have been the primary method of manifest political participation for university students in the 1980s. This was confirmed in the interviews. Many interviewees said that they participated in peaceful protests and some said that they participated in violent protests. It was also hypothesised that their experiences are likely to have been violent. This was also confirmed by the interviews. Most interviewees who said they participated in politics in any form said that they faced severe consequences ranging from suspension or expulsion from university to mandatory drafting into military service or imprisonment. During police interrogations or in the military barracks or in prison, the interviewees said that they were subject to beatings and torture. For some interviewees, these consequences discouraged them from further political participation, but for others, experiencing and seeing peers being subject to these injustices strengthened their resolve.

It was hypothesised that the main reason for non-participation amongst university students in the 1980s was the fear of the oppressive methods used by the Chun administration. The interviews confirmed this hypothesis. The dominant reason for non-participation was that many university students were afraid of the consequences. Other reasons included simply not being interested in politics and disagreeing with the

methods or the purpose of the student activist movement. Yet, even interviewees who said they did not participate themselves expressed respect and sympathy for those who did.

Finally, it was hypothesised that the main reason university students in the 1980s did participate despite the high personal costs of doing so was because of the direct effects of the oppressive policies of the dictatorial Chun administration. As hypothesised, the most significant reason for political participation that most interviewees gave was the perceived injustice of the Chun administration in its treatment of citizens and democratic protestors. Closely related was the fear and anger that many interviewees felt when their peers were subject to violent oppression. Many interviewees said that before the democratic transition in 1987, the desire to bring down the Chun administration gave a focus for the political activists and allowed them to cooperate despite differences in interests or ideology. Another significant reason for political participation was that university students in the 1980s felt a sense of duty arising from their perceived position of the intellectual elite and the historical tradition of student activism.

For the most part, the hypotheses were confirmed through the empirical evidence. However, the interviews revealed that there were often more dimensions to the specific aspects to political culture than initially hypothesised. The interviews also revealed more complex reasons for political participation.

III   Political culture of university students today

1   Introduction

In the following chapters, we discuss the political culture of university students today based on the interview and survey results conducted for this study. Since the democratic transition in 1987, South Korea has had a democratic political system with direct presidential elections and single five-year terms for the presidency. The next section in this introductory chapter discusses the political developments since the democratic transition to introduce the issues and events that university students today discussed in the interviews.

We then proceed to discuss the findings from 34 interviews and 199 survey responses from current university students. The purpose of the survey was to verify some of the trends that were identified in the interviews.   The main source of the empirical evidence is therefore the information collected through the interviews.

We then proceed to discuss the attitudes that university students today hold towards government and politics. One key difference between the political system in the 1980s and today is that whereas the Chun administration was the single-most significant political actor before the democratic transition, there are now more political actors in the democratic political system. Therefore, this chapter examines the attitudes that university students hold towards three elements of government and politics: the presidential administration, politicians and political parties.

It is hypothesised that university students today would have less intensely negative attitudes towards the presidential administration than university students in the 1980s. However, based on the literature, it is hypothesised that university students today are not interested in politics. It is also hypothesised that university students today have low levels of trust for politicians and do not have a political party they support.

Next, we discuss the attitudes that university students today hold towards the media. It is hypothesised that university students today would have higher levels of trust for the media as a source of information about politics than their counterparts in the 1980s.

This is then followed by a discussion of the political socialization process of university students today. It is hypothesised that like university students in the 1980s, university students today would say that the university setting had the most significant impact on the development of their political views.

We then proceed to discuss the experience of political participation by university students today by examining their experience of latent political participation and manifest political participation. Latent political participation includes being interested in politics, learning about politics and discussing politics with others (Ekman and Amna, 2012). It is hypothesised that university students today would show low levels of latent political participation. It is also hypothesised that online social media would be an important method of latent political participation for university students today. As discussed in the literature review, there are three forms of manifest political participation that this study focuses on: voting, contacting politicians and protest activity. It is hypothesised that university students today would have access to diverse

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ways of participating in politics through voting and engaging with political parties and civil society groups. Yet, based on the literature it is hypothesised that university students today are likely to have low levels of manifest political participation in general.

Next, we examine the reasons for non-participation amongst university students today. It is hypothesised that university students today do not participate in politics because they do not feel the need to do so.

Finally, we conclude with a summary of the findings on the political culture of university students today. This final chapter will serve as the basis for the comparison of the political culture of university students in the 1980s and the political culture of university students today.

1.1 The political environment since the democratic transition in 1987

In the direct elections that followed the 29 June Declaration, Roh Tae-woo, who was President Chun's right-hand man, was elected to the presidency, allowing remnants of the former dictatorial regime to remain in power. Nevertheless, since 1987, South Korea has been a democratic state. Since the election of Roh Tae-woo in 1987, there have been four more democratically elected presidents: Kim Young-sam (1993-1998), Kim Dae-jung (1998-2003), Roh Moo-hyun (2003-2008), Lee Myung-bak (2008-2013) and Park Geun-hye (2013-current).

President Kim Young-sam was the first civilian president to be elected after the military-based administrations led by Park Chung-hee, Chun Doo-hwan and Roh Tae-woo. Kim Young-sam, along with Kim Dae-jung, had been a prominent opposition leader in the anti-authoritarian opposition since the mid-twentieth century (Bailey, 2010: 37). The election of Kim Young-sam in 1992 seemed to signal the end of the era of military dictatorial rule for South Korea. Yet, the political background in which President Kim Young-sam was elected revealed a less than triumphant win for democracy. In preparation for the 1992 elections, Kim Young-sam distanced himself from Kim Dae-jung, with whom he had cooperated in the pro-democracy opposition, and instead aligned himself with Roh Tae-woo and Kim Jong-pil. This so-called 'Three Party Merger' saw the merging of an unlikely trio: Roh Tae-woo had been the right-hand man during the Chun regime; Kim Jong-pil had been the right-hand man during the Park Chung-hee regime; and Kim Young-sam had been a vocal pro-democracy opposition leader against the authoritarian regimes (Kang, W. T., 2012). Yet, during his presidency, Kim Young-sam put on trial and convicted the former Presidents Chun Doo-hwan and Roh Tae-woo and depoliticised the military. He stimulated the growth of the middle class and implemented policies to support the expansion of civil society though he suppressed activist groups (Heo and Roehrig, 2010: 45-50).

After the presidency of Kim Young-sam, Kim Dae-jung was elected in 1998, signalling the first turnover in Korean politics. He led a liberal administration that saw an easing of tensions between South Korea and North Korea. His liberal conciliatory policies toward North Korea won him the Nobel Peace Prize. His relationship with civil society was also much more relaxed and his policies sought to establish a

democratic relationship between the government and the citizens (Kim, Y. B., 2003).
However, issues such as wiretapping, corruption and passing laws in secret without
informing the opposition beleaguered his administration (Heo and Roehrig, 2010: 57)

Following President Kim Dae-jung, President Roh Moo-hyun was elected in 2003. He
came from a new generation of politicians, not associated with the '3-Kim Generation'
(Kim Young-sam, Kim Dae-jung, Kim Jong-pil) and was genuinely popular among
the younger generation (Heo and Roehrig, 2010: 61-65). Yet, economic growth was
low during his term and his lack of support among the existing political elite meant
that he did not have the political capacity to implement meaningful policies during his
term (Heo and Roehrig, 2010: 66).

In March 2004, President Roh Moo-hyun became the first Korean president to be
impeached. He was impeached on the grounds that his vocal support of one of the
parties, the Opened Our Party, in the run-up to the parliamentary elections violated his
duty to remain neutral; that his presidential aides had accepted bribes and that his
campaign was funded by illegal funds; and that he had failed to implement proper
economic policy as evidenced by the financial crisis (Kim, J. C., 2004: 2-3). However,
in response to President Roh's impeachment, some 50,000 to 100,000 citizens held
candlelight vigils for two weeks to protest the impeachment. In the 17th parliamentary
elections that followed, the Opened Our Party won the most votes, becoming the
majority party, and the Korean Constitutional Court dismissed the impeachment case
against President Roh (Choi, H. S., 2006: 114). Though President Roh used much of
his political capital during the presidency to combat corruption, it was later revealed in
2008 that his wife and children had accepted bribes during his presidential term (The

Hankyoreh, 2 December 2008). At the height of the investigations, President Roh committed suicide in May 2009 (Chosun Ilbo, 24 May 2009).

The election of President Lee Myung-bak in 2008 represented the second turnover in Korean politics as a conservative president following two liberal presidents. President Lee was heavily criticised for passing laws allowing the censorship of the media and the internet (Jeong, Y. W., 2008). The overly submissive attitude of the government to the Korea-U.S. Free Trade Agreement coupled with greater infringements on civil rights and a considerably more hostile relationship with North Korea lead to public dissatisfaction. This was demonstrated in the two-month-long 2008 candlelight vigils against the import of sub-standard beef from the U.S. As a result of the protests, the government renegotiated the terms of the Korea-U.S. Free Trade Agreement so that beef aged over 30 months or containing harmful materials that may cause Mad Cow Disease were banned from being imported to Korea (Han, M. R., 2011: 100).

One of the most controversial issues during the President Lee administration was the Four Rivers Project. The Four Rivers Project was a large-scale infrastructure project in which 14 trillion won (approximately US$ 12.5 billion) was invested with the initial objective of restoring natural habitats, building small and medium-sized dams, the construction of flood protection systems, creation of riverside cycle routes, construction of reservoirs, and job creation (Chosun Ilbo, 11 July 2013). The Four Rivers Project was planned to lay the groundwork for the Grand Korean Waterway Project, which had been a major campaign promise by Lee Myung-bak when he ran for the presidency in 2007. However, both projects were heavily criticised by the public. The public dissent against the project was due to the possibility of the

contamination of two major rivers that serve as drinking water sources, the mountainous geology of Korea that would make such a system very costly to build, environmental degradation, lack of clear benefits, and the ineffective and inefficient use of public funds (Kwon, K. J., 2 April 2011, Kyunghyang Shinmun).

In the 2012 presidential elections, the major conservative candidate was Park Geun-hye; the main liberal candidate was Moon Jae-in. However, just months before the election, a dark horse candidate joined the race: Ahn Chul-soo. Ahn Chul-soo was an independent candidate that ran for president in the 2012 presidential elections. A former medical doctor who studied vaccination, he became a self-taught computer programmer and created the V3 computer vaccination programme that he distributed for free while still working as a medical doctor. After quitting his job as a doctor, he founded Ahn Labs, which focused on computer vaccination, and in 2011 led the Advanced Institute of Convergence Technology at the Seoul National University. From mid-2011, Ahn Chul-soo showed an interest in politics as he ran the so-called 'Youth Concert', which was a ten-day long seminar on political affairs that invited leading liberal-leaning politicians to speak on issues relevant to young people today. Ahn Chul-soo announced his decision to run for the presidency on 19 September 2012, and gained wide popular support but pulled out of the running on 23 November 2012 after prolonged discussions about consolidating the opposition with candidate Moon Jae-in. In the 2012 elections, Park Geun-hye was ultimately elected, and Ahn Chul-soo won the 2013 congressional vacancy election as an independent candidate (Kim, H. G., 2014).

Ahn Chul-soo was wildly popular as someone who represented a non-career politician accomplished in other fields, unaffiliated with any pre-existing political organizations, and seen to be responsive and communicative with young people. This led journalists to coin the term 'Ahn Chul-soo Syndrome' and the 'Ahn Chul-soo Phenomenon' to describe his widespread support. Ultimately, Ahn was not considered to be a viable presidential candidate by many people who thought his inexperience in politics was problematic. However, the surge in interest in his candidacy, especially among young people could be construed as a signal of the public disillusionment with the existing generation of politicians and the major political parties (Kim, H. G., 2014).

Park Geun-hye, the main conservative candidate, won the 2012 election and came into office in February 2013. Park Geun-hye was the eldest daughter of President Park Chung-hee, the military dictator who had ruled from 1963 to 1979. The interviews and surveys for the empirical findings in this thesis were mostly conducted in the beginning of President Park Geun-hye's administration.

2   Attitudes towards government and politics

In this chapter we will discuss the attitudes of university students today towards government and politics. The hypotheses that are relevant to this chapter are as follows:

- that university students today would have less intensely negative attitudes towards the presidential administration than university students in the 1980s;
- that university students today would be generally dissatisfied with politics;
- that university students today have low levels of trust for politicians; and
- that university students today do not have a political party they support.

The first section of this chapter examines some general attitudes that university students today hold towards politics. We examine the overall level of satisfaction with the government as well as the interest in politics and the perceived relevance of politics to everyday life.

The second section of this chapter then proceeds to examine the attitudes towards the presidential administration. We discuss the attitudes that university students today hold towards the Lee administration (2008-2013) and the expectations they have towards the Park administration (2013- present).

The third section of this chapter discusses the attitudes towards politicians. We discuss the attitudes that university students today hold towards politicians in general.

The fourth section of this chapter examines the attitudes towards political parties. We will discuss the level of support that university students have for political parties. It will also discuss whether university students today perceive ideological and policy differences between the major political parties and their attitudes towards regionalism.

We then conclude with a short summary of the key findings on the attitudes of university students today towards government and politics.

2.1   Overall level of satisfaction with the political situation

Survey respondents and interviewees who are university students today expressed a generally low overall level of satisfaction with the current political situation. On a scale of 0 to 5, 0 being low and 5 being high, the mean level of satisfaction was 1.43 (standard deviation = 1.044). The following table shows the results.

Table 10. Overall level of satisfaction with the current political situation of university students today (%)

	0	1	2	3	4	5
Satisfaction with the current situation (N = 191)	19.4	36.6	28.3	13.1	2.1	0.5

5 High; 0 Low

These results showed that despite the fact that the Korean political system is currently a democracy, the general level of satisfaction with the current political situation amongst university students today was quite low. An overwhelming majority (84.3%) of the survey respondents gave a score of 2 or below on their overall level of satisfaction with the current political situation. The following sections of this chapter

will examine the attitudes of university students today towards different aspects of the political system to investigate what constitutes this low level of satisfaction.

2.2   Attitudes towards the presidential administration

This section discusses the attitudes that university students today hold towards the presidential administration based on the interview and survey responses. The online survey was collected approximately one year after the inauguration of the Park administration and so reflects the views that current university students held about the Park administration at the time. However, since the interviews took place in March 2013, less than a month into the Park administration, not much interview data was collected about the Park administration.

The level of satisfaction with the current political situation was strongly and significantly correlated with the level of satisfaction with the previous Lee administration and the current Park administration. University students who gave higher ratings for the overall level of satisfaction with the current political situation were more likely to report higher levels of satisfaction with the presidential administration. Yet, just as the level of satisfaction with the current political situation was generally quite low, the levels of satisfaction with the Lee and the Park administrations were also generally quite low. The mean level of satisfaction with the Lee administration was 1.59 (standard deviation = 1.236) and the mean level of satisfaction with the Park administration was also 1.59 (standard deviation = 1.302). The following table shows the results.

Table 11. Satisfaction with the Lee and the Park administrations (%)

	0	1	2	3	4	5
Satisfaction with the Lee administration (2008-2013) (N = 191)	22.0	29.8	22.5	19.9	4.2	1.6
Satisfaction with the Park administration (2013-present) (N = 191)	24.1	29.3	18.8	21.5	3.7	2.6

5High; 0 Low

Like the overall level of satisfaction with the current political situation, a cleary majority (74.3% for the Lee administraton; 72.2% for the Park administration) of the online survey respondents gave a score of 2 or below on their satisfaction with the presidential administrations. The generally low level of satisfaction was reflected in the interview responses. On the previous administration led by Lee Myung-bak (2008-2013), many university students today expressed generally negative attitudes, although most were unable to present cogent explanations for why they felt this way. The only policy issue that the interviewees consistently mentioned in criticism of the Lee administration was the Four Rivers Project. One interviewee said that the Four Rivers Project was the biggest mistake of the Lee administration. He said:

> I cannot remember anything the Lee administration did well, but the biggest mistake was the Four Rivers Project. I felt so strongly about it that I wanted to participate in a petition. (B22)[26]

Many interviewees were concerned with the environmental impact of the Four Rivers Project. One student studying geology at university said:

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[26] Female, Chonnam National University, 2011, Honam

I am quite interested in the environment. I think that the Four Rivers Project or large-scale construction projects of that type need to be evaluated to take into account the long-term impact. We need to be really careful and consider all possibilities when changing the environment, but because the presidential term is so short, they just built it all, and didn't take the necessary amount of time to conduct proper research. (B12)[27]

Other interviewees were concerned with the financial implications of the Four Rivers Project. One interviewee said:

The Four Rivers Project was such a large-scale project and it is unclear who it really benefits. I really could not comprehend why the government poured trillions of won into the project when it could have been used for other more necessary and widely beneficial policies. (B14)[28]

However, aside from the Four Rivers Project, interviewees could not come up with other more specific criticisms of the Lee administration despite the fact that they expressed a low level of satisfaction. Many expressed a sense of mistrust and a vague sense of disapproval with the way things were done. One interviewee said the main problem was with a lack of communication. He said:

There was a general lack of communication. There was also a bit of a problem with democratic rights. As for the economy, it's not something I can feel and I don't really know what they are talking about nowadays. (B02)[29]

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[27] Male, Yonsei University, 2007, Seoul and Gyeonggi
[28] Male, Seoul National University, 2007, Seoul and Gyeonggi
[29] Male, Seoul National University, 2009, Honam

Another interviewee specifically criticized the government management of the budget, but used only generalized terms and did not support his views with any established facts or figures. He said:

> It's about the budget. They don't reduce their expenditure, but collect way too little in taxes. So now, what happens is that as the situation progresses, ultimately there is a hole in the budget, so they reduce other aspects, but now they need to keep their popularity, so they increase welfare and continue to dig the land up for the Four Rivers Project. He said he would be an 'economic president' but what does he think economics is? He used to be the CEO, but instead of being sensible about finances, he seems to think that because it is not his money, he can just spend it all. (B14)

In fact, one respondent noted that many of his peers were critical of the Lee administration without providing much evidence. He said:

> I heard a lot that the Lee administration was not very good. So I just thought so too. However, I think in truth, I don't really know enough to judge. I think many of my peers also do not know enough to judge objectively. (B04)[30]

Another interviewee even said that it was a good thing that he did not know very much about what the Lee administration actually had done. He said:

> I think the most important thing for politicians is that we don't actually know what they do. When people really know what's going on, that means there is something that has gone horribly wrong. There's even a saying that in times of peace, the people do not know who the

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[30] Male, Yonsei University, 2012, Seoul and Gyeonggi

king is. I think the same about the Lee administration. Aside from a few issues, it was a quiet administration, and that was good. (B07)[31]

However, it was contradictory that this interviewee went on to say that he was not satisfied with the quality of democracy in Korea currently and the main reason for this was a lack of communication. He said:

I think that the best form of democracy is where there is transparency so we can be fully informed about what is going on and rationally judge what's going on. In that respect, I was disappointed with the Lee administration because of the lack of communication and issues with information availability. (B07)

In sum, the interviews revealed that university students today had low levels of satisfaction with the Lee administration and in particular disapproved of the Four Rivers Project. Many interviewees expressed the perception that the administration lacked communication. However, aside from these issues, they were largely unable to give a more comprehensive criticism of the regime, and some even admitted that they did not know enough. This suggests that at least some part of the distrust in the administration is due to a lack of reliable sources of information about politics. This problem will be discussed further in the section about attitudes towards the media.

Not much interview data was collected about the Park administration because the interviews were conducted only one month into the administration. However, interviewees were asked about their hopes for the Park administration.

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[31] Male, Seoul National University, 2005, Chungcheong

Some respondents, in particular female students, said that they supported President Park Geun-hye because she was a woman and they hoped that the election of the first female president would be a step forward for women's rights and gender equality. One interviewee said:

> The only reason I voted for Park Geun-hye was because she was a woman. I am hoping that it will be a better society for women by the time I enter the workforce. (B05)[32]

Some male interviewees also expressed a similar view. He said:

> I think it is significant that a female president was elected. I hope the Park administration implements some policies that helps women in the workplace, although I hope it doesn't cause reverse discrimination. (B04)

Other respondents hoped for policies that would help university students specifically. In particular, many respondents said that they wanted lower tuition rates and more scholarship opportunities, both of which were promised by the Park Geun-hye campaign in the lead up to the 2012 elections. However, most respondents did not have very high expectations. One interviewee who said she hoped for lower tuition rates said:

> I don't expect much. They say that the tuition rates will be halved but I'm sceptical that it will happen. (B22)

Yet, an interesting finding from the interviews on the Park administration was that none of the interviewees who are university students today commented on the fact that

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[32] Female, Kyunghee University, 2010, Seoul and Gyeonggi

President Park Geun-hye was the daughter of the authoritarian President Park Chung-hee or commented on the implications of this on the state of Korea's democracy. This was in direct contrast to some of the interviewees who were university students in the 1980s who specifically pointed out the election of President Park Geun-hye as a reason for having a low level of satisfaction with the current political situation. For instance, when asked how he would rate the state of Korean politics today from a scale of 0 to 10, one interviewee answered:

> For me, it would be below zero. This last presidential election is a good example of why. I mean, I have nothing personal against Park Geun-hye, but the foreign press refer to her as the daughter of a dictator, and Park Geun-hye still refuses to say that the 16 May was wrong. She said it was a necessary decision, but she didn't say that it was wrong even though we now say that 16 May was a military coup d'état. When I was in prison, a big issue was direct elections. I went to prison demanding constitutional reform to include direct elections. But do you know what Park Geun-hye says? That with the Yushin constitution of the 70s, that there were direct elections. But in fact, Park Chung-hee had gotten rid of the direct elections with the Yushin constitution, and Chun Doo-hwan did the same. And here comes the daughter of the dictator that had taken away the political rights to direct elections, and instead of thinking that this was a mistake on her father's part, she says that it was a necessary decision. And the public votes for her as a reincarnation of Park Chung-hee. It's like being returned to the 1970s. (A08)[33]

For interviewees like A08, the current state of affairs in which the daughter of a dictator whose regime he had fought against came to be elected the president of Korea was clearly unsatisfactory.

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[33] Male, Chosun University, 1984, Honam

Returning to the attitudes that university students today have towards the presidential administration, it is clear from the survey responses that university students today are generally dissatisfied with the current and previous presidential administrations. However, the interviews revealed that university students were actually not very well informed about policies and could not provide comprehensive explanations for their dissatisfaction and distrust. Interviewees generally held the view that the Lee administration had been uncommunicative and disapproved of the Four Rivers Project. Of the Park administration, university students today felt that the election of the first female president was significant, but largely did not express high expectations and were silent on the connection between the current President Park Geun-hye and the authoritarian President Park Chung-hee. However, in general, the negative attitudes that university students today held towards the presidential administrations were much less intense than the attitudes held by their counterparts in the 1980s towards the Chun administration. This confirmed the hypothesis that university students today would have less intensely negative attitudes towards the presidential administration than university students in the 1980s.

2.3 Attitudes towards politicians

This section discusses the attitudes that university students today have towards politicians. The attitudes towards politicians are significant because politicians are the representatives in a democracy. In an ideal democratic system, the democratically elected representatives would be trusted to act for the good of the whole society and have good communication with the citizens. However, interview and survey responses revealed that in Korea, perceptions of university students today towards politicians

were the opposite of this ideal. Politicians were perceived to act only for their own personal interests and not for the good of the citizens. They were also perceived to lack communication with the citizens and untrustworthy.

In the survey responses, there were significant correlations between the level of satisfaction with the current political situation and the views towards politicians. Respondents who reported a high level of satisfaction with the current political situation were also more likely to think that politicians act for the good of the public and disagree with the statement that politicians act for their own interests. Two questions were asked in the survey to assess the attitudes towards politicians. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they agreed with the following statements: 'I think politicians work for the good of the citizens' and 'politicians act for their own interests'. The following chart shows the results for these questions.

Figure 2. Trust of politicians (%)
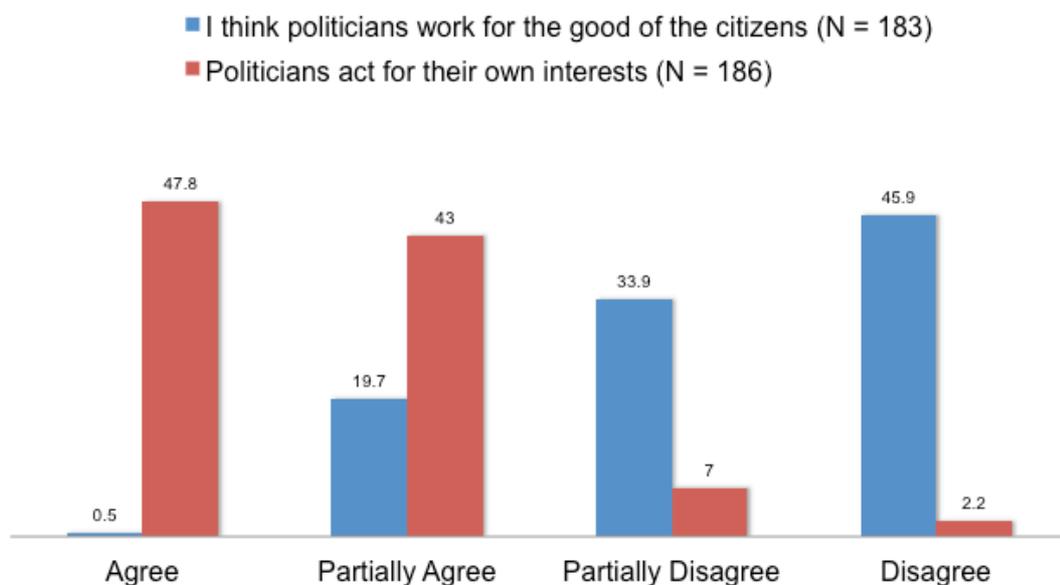
As shown in the results, a clear majority (79.8%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement that politicians work for the good of the citizens. A clear majority (90.8%) agreed with the statement that politicians act for their own interests. This general attitude of distrust of politicians was confirmed in the interviews. Many interviewees said that they thought politicians acted only for their personal interests instead of for the good of the citizens. One interviewee said:

> I think politicians should have concrete values and act by them. However, most politicians in Korea today are only interested in taking care of themselves and dividing themselves into groups to get the most power. That's the crux of the problem. I really hope people with correct worldviews lead the country, but would those people want to be involved in politics? I think not. At the end of the day, they are motivated by money. For politicians, politics is a way to make a living, and I guess that's more important than political ideology or integrity. (B11)[34]

Similarly, another interviewee said that she thought politicians did not make rational decisions based on what was good for the general public but only focused on their own interests. She said:

> All politicians should try to make the right decisions for the whole country. However, they don't do that and instead look after their own interests. They should make rational decisions based on serious reasoning and investigation, but instead, they are only self-interested. (B22)

Another interviewee elaborated on this point on politicians:

> I wish they would be more realistic and practical but they aren't like that. In some sense, in a country, the congressmen are elected to represent the country. But if you look at the National

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[34] Female, Yonsei University, 2010, Chungcheong

Assembly, instead of vouching for our country's interests, these politicians are just advocating their own interests. They only speak for themselves or their party. (B13)[35]

In fact, the survey results revealed that a majority (69.4%) of respondents agreed with the statement that even if politicians are in different parties they ultimately act like a cartel, as shown in the table below.

Table 12. Perceived cartelisation of political parties (%)

	Agree	Partially Agree	Partially Disagree	Disagree
Even if politicians are in different parties they ultimately act like a cartel. (N = 170)	23.5	45.9	21.2	9.4

One interviewee also expressed the same view. He said:

My father works in a weapons manufacturing company and he goes to the National Assembly from time to time. But he told me that the congressmen don't actually work and just put on a show. They only pretend to be arguing when the camera is on, and when the camera is off, they are all in the same boat. (B11)

In a follow-up interview in 2014 after the Sewol Ferry Incident[36], one interviewee discussed the incident as an example in which the self-interested nature of politicians was revealed. He said:

Do politicians act for the citizens? No. Just look at the way they dealt with this incident. All they did was try to somehow shift responsibility away from themselves and take care of each

[35] Male, Seoul National University, 2009, Chungcheong
[36] On 16 April 2014, the Sewol Ferry carrying 476 people sank and 276 people were confirmed dead and 23 missing. Most of the deaths were high school students on a field trip and the incident was one of the worst maritime disasters in South Korea (BBC, 16 May 2014).

other. They should have set up proper regulatory bodies and enforced the regulations. Instead, they didn't do anything properly, and caused accidents like this to happen. And when accidents like this happen, they don't deal with it competently and don't investigate it properly. (B27)[37]

Similarly, another interviewee said during a follow-up interview:

In the recent Sewol Ferry Incident, it really struck me that there was a dire need for political reform. However, all of the politicians were just laying low, doing nothing and busy covering their own backs. (B19)[38]

In addition to being perceived as self-serving, politicians were viewed as being untrustworthy because they do not keep their campaign promises. For instance, one respondent said:

There seems to be a problem with the political structure itself. Politicians say they will do things before they are elected and then when they are elected, they don't do anything. Lack of trust is the main issue… For instance, they always say they are going to get university students to participate more. But instead of just saying so, they should really pay more attention to educational programmes. (B27)

More specifically, one respondent cited President Park's 'half-tuition' campaign promise as an example of politicians reneging on their promises. One respondent said:

The half-tuition reform promises were not fulfilled. I knew at the outset it wouldn't happen…They must have done it just to get our interest. Politicians don't care about the long-

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[37] Male, Pusan National University, 2010, Yeongnam
[38] Male, Pusan National University, 2010, Yeongnam

term. They are only interested in winning the election and do not care about the interests of the country or the citizens. (B21)[39]

These perceptions that politicians were untrustworthy and self-interested had a direct impact on the interviewee's motivation to participate in politics. One interviewee said:

> The politicians that we've elected to represent us in the National Assembly should represent our views and interests, but they only use their position for their personal gain or the gain of their political party. They are simply full of empty rhetoric, and after watching them do that year after year, it feels like it isn't worth it to be interested in politics. Being too busy to participate in politics is one reason, but feeling disillusioned because of politicians is definitely another key reason for not participating further. (B13)

Another related complaint that interviewees expressed was that politicians today lacked communication. One view that some interviewees expressed was that politicians did not communicate effectively amongst themselves. One interviewee said:

> I think there is a lack of communication amongst the politicians themselves. Even those that were highly educated don't seem to actually talk to each other. Instead, they just try to overrule the ideas of others through a majority or physically fight to take over the chairman's seat. They do say they will negotiate, but it is hard to see whether it is actually working. (B06)[40]

Similarly, another interviewee said that instead of communicating effectively, politicians were overly emotional and lacked rational discussions on policy. She said:

> There is just a lack of communication. Both sides are just really emotionally driven. I wish they would engage in rational conversation, accept their own mistakes, recognise what the

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[39] Male, Pusan National University, 2011, Honam
[40] Male, Korea University, 2008, Seoul and Gyeonggi

other side has done correctly and negotiate on policies. However, they always say that their

own side is right and the other is always wrong, which is not true. (B01)[41]

For other interviewees, the perceived lack of communication was not limited to interactions between politicians, but extended to the communication between politicians and society. One interviewee said:

I am campaigning for proportional representation to be expanded in the electoral system because I don't think that the opinions of a diverse range of people are communicated to the National Assembly. I think it is the lack of diversity of opinions that really turns young people off from politics. (B08)[42]

Many interviewees also said that there was a lack of communication between politicians and university students. Many interviewees said that they did not think politicians made an effort to connect with university students. One interviewee said:

I think there is a lack of effort to connect with university students. They only try to communicate to the public using old methods that work on older generations. I think politicians could make more of an effort to communicate with us. If they did, I think university students would be more interested in politics. (B04)

Many interviewees said that they did not perceive politicians to be approachable, which made politics much less interesting. Some interviewees said that the general lack of humour in Korean politics made politics less interesting. One interviewee said:

I think Korean politicians take themselves much too seriously and feel like they need to be really authoritative and serious. For instance, when I watch clips on YouTube, President

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[41] Male, Seoul National University, 2007, Yeongnam
[42] Female, Korea University, 2009, Yeongnam

Obama makes a lot of jokes in his speeches and acknowledges the parodies that people make of him, which makes him seem so much more approachable. However, Korean politicians just don't have that sense of wit or humour. In the presidential debates between Park Geun-hye and Moon Jae-in, for instance, the closest thing they had to humour was say 'Let's have a fight today' which was really not funny at all. I think using humour can be a way for politicians to connect with young people. (B14)

Similarly, another interviewee who said she was not very interested in Korean politics but was interested in U.S. politics explained why this was the case. She said:

A lot of my friends and I actually follow U.S. presidential elections much more closely, reading dozens of newspapers and watching the debates over and over again. It's simply because there is a lot of interesting information that is easily accessible. All the major news websites make the information easily accessible with chronologies and questions and answers pages and videos. It's like watching a sporting event and all of the candidates make really convincing and sometimes humorous speeches. I would definitely follow Korean politics more closely if it was fun and accessible in the same way. (B15)[43]

Another interviewee said that he became more interested in a political issue after he watched a comedy programme that parodied a politician. She said:

I think university students are not really interested in politics because it's not fun. When things are funny or become an issue, we look it up to find out more. For instance, there was a candidate who said, 'I'm sorry, daughter!' in a really exaggerated way and was parodied in comedy programmes. I didn't know it was a political reference at first, but after seeing the comedy, I became interested in searched for it online and found out more. If politics was more fun and accessible, I think I would be more interested in it. (B19)

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[43] Female, Yonsei University, 2009, Seoul and Gyeonggi

In sum, the surveys and the interviews confirmed the hypothesis that university students today do not trust politicians. Most respondents thought that politicians were self-interested and did not act for the public good. Interviewees also said that they did not trust politicians because they broke promises. These perceptions that politicians were self-interested and did not keep promises had a direct impact on the interviewee's motivation to participate in politics. In addition to these perceptions, university students today perceived Korean politicians to lack effective communication skills amongst themselves, with the wider society and with university students. An interesting finding in the interviews was that university students today felt that politics would be more fun and interesting if politicians were more humorous and approachable.

2.4 Attitudes towards political parties

In a representative democracy, political parties perform the function of forming and controlling government as well as the function of representing the interests and values of the citizens (Ware, 1987). Despite its central role in democracy, in the case of South Korea, parties are viewed with deep-seated distrust by the public due to the lack of representativeness and responsibility, the display of overt power games, the continuing revelations of corruption, and the unending series of arbitrary realignments (Kim, Y. T., 2009: 198). In particular, the lack of ideological and policy differences between the parties poses a significant barrier for the development of a genuinely representative and competitive party system (Choi, J. J., Park, C. P. and Park, S. H., 2007).

Unlike in Western European democracies where party competition closely resembles underlying social cleavage structures such as class (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967), party competition in South Korea is based on regionalism (Kim, Y. H., 2002; Kwack, J. Y., 2006: 123; Choi, J. Y., 2007; Park, C. W., 2008). In addition, Korean political parties have often been used as instruments for the personal ambition of certain key political leaders, further making it difficult for parties to develop their own ideological and policy identity (Kim, Y. H., 2001).

This section examines the attitudes that university students today hold towards political parties. It begins with a discussion of whether university students today have a political party they support. It then examines the perception that there is a lack of ideological and policy differences between the political parties. Finally, we discuss the attitudes towards regionalism, which plays a key role in the political party system of South Korea.

2.4.1   Support for political parties

Even though 89.1% of the survey respondents said that they vote, over half said that they do not have a political party they actively support. In fact, 81.6% of the respondents disagreed or partially disagreed with the statement that they feel a strong connection with the political party they support. In addition, only 2.8% fully agreed that they feel a strong connection with the political party they support. These findings confirm the hypothesis that university students today do not have a political party they support.

Figure 3. Support for political parties (%)
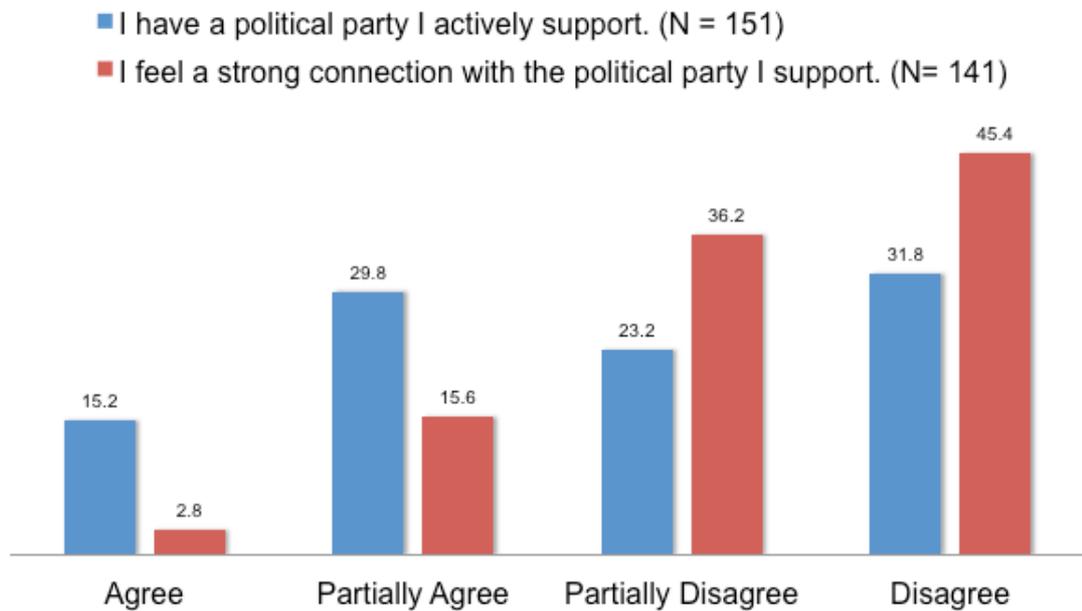
From these findings, current university students do not feel a high level of engagement with politics as evidenced by the lack of connectedness with existing political parties. In fact, there has been increasing support for anti-party-system candidates in recent years. In the 26 October 2011 Seoul Mayor by-elections, an independent candidate Park Won-soon won the office after winning the opposition primaries (Park, M. H., 2012). As a former human rights lawyer, Park Won-soon proved to be more popular than any of the other established party candidates.

A similar phenomenon was observed in the presidential elections in what has subsequently been dubbed the 'Ahn Chul-soo phenomenon' discussed earlier. In the six democratic direct presidential elections that have taken place from 1987 to 2012, all of the presidents elected have been from the two major parties. Though the party names have often changed, the two major parties were all descendants from either the Yeongnam-based 'Roh Tae-woo / Kim Young-sam' party or the Honam-based 'Kim

Dae-jung / Roh Moo-hyun' party (Choi, J. S., 2013: 89). But in the 2012 elections, it was the first time that a third candidate, Ahn Chul-soo, had become a serious contender for office polling 47.2% of the votes in August 2012, just months before the election (Kim, D. H., 26 August 2012, Views&news; Lim, J. Y., 26 August 2012, Asiatoday). Although he later pulled out of the presidential election, Ahn Chul-soo was elected to the National Assembly in the 2013 by-elections, signalling his continued popularity.

According to American theorists Rosenstone, Behr and Lazarus (1996: 126-139), there are three reasons for independent candidates becoming popular: first, the tendency of more voters feeling a lack of party identification; second, dissatisfaction with the existing political elite; and third, the emergence of an attractive independent candidate. Ahn himself stated that his number one purpose of participating in politics was 'political reform', and this matched the hopes of the public as well. As a former doctor made computer software programmer and entrepreneur, Ahn Chul-soo was an already well-known and highly-respected independent candidate. His success story made him especially popular with university students and the highly educated middle-class demographic (Choi, J. S., 2013). According to the polling data conducted in March 2012, these were the demographics supporting Ahn Chul-soo, in comparison to the demographics supporting New World Party's Park Guen-hye and Democratic Party's Moon Jae-in.

Table 13. Demographics of the public supporting the candidates in the 18th Presidential Election in March 2012 (%)

		Park	**Moon**	**Ahn**
Age	20s	25.1	27.7	47.1

		24.5	29.7	45.8
	30s	24.5	29.7	45.8
	40s	33.6	27.9	38.4
	50s	51.6	20.2	28.2
	Over 60s	66.5	13.1	20.4
Education	Middle School or lower	63.0	14.1	23.0
	High School	50.0	18.2	31.8
	University or higher	30.9	28.4	40.7
Income per month	2 Million KRW or lower	43.8	22.1	34.1
	2 Million – 4 Million KRW	36.4	24.8	38.9
	4 Million KRW or over	42.1	24.0	38.9
Total		40.1	23.9	36.1

(Source: Choi, J. S., 2013: 100)

As can be seen, 40.7% of the respondents who were university level educated or higher supported Ahn Chul-soo, and 47.1% of people in their 20s, 45.8% of people in their 30s, and 38.4% of people in their 40s supported Ahn. This shows clearly the desire for new political leaders amongst young people and university students. In fact, many interviewees expressed this view. One interviewee said that he did not fully agree with the views of any of the existing parties or politicians. He said:

> None of the existing political parties or politicians hold views I can fully support. I don't like any of the existing politicians. Even if one comes out that I like initially, it always turns out that he's just like all the others. (B18)[44]

Similarly, another interviewee recognised that the rise of the independent candidate Ahn Chul-soo signalled that there was a problem with the representativeness of the current political party system. He said:

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[44] Male, Seoul National University, 2008, Yeongnam

> The Ahn Chul-soo phenomenon really showed that the current political party system does not
> effectively represent the views of everyone. I believe the same type of thing will happen again.
> (B14)

In sum, an overwhelming majority of university students did not have a particular political party they supported. The rise of independent candidate Ahn Chul-soo in the 2012 presidential elections amongst young people signalled that university students today did not feel that their views were adequately represented through existing political parties or politicians.

2.4.2 Ideological and policy differences between political parties

The survey also asked current university students several questions about their perception of political parties. A slight majority (54.1%) of the respondents indicated that they did not perceive a clear difference between the major political parties. On whether they thought it would make a difference if another political party were in power, the respondents were evenly divided. The following table shows the results.

Table 14. Attitudes about political parties (%)

	Agree	Partially Agree	Partially Disagree	Disagree
There is a clear difference between the major political parties (N = 183)	14.2	39.9	26.2	19.7
Even if another political party were in power, it wouldn't make a big difference (N = 183)	15.3	33.3	33.9	17.5

The interviews largely confirmed these findings. Though some interviewees said that they observed a difference between the major political parties, over half of the interviewees said that they did not. One respondent said that one of the key problems with Korean politics was the lack of differentiation between the policies of the major parties. He said:

> The big issue is that our political parties are not very different from one another. All of them try to occupy the middle on policy. At the end of the day, instead of focusing on policy, they focus on who's prettier, who's cleaner, who's corrupt, and who has personal issues. It all turns into a mudslinging match and it just turns people off. (B14)

Similarly, another interviewee said that things would not have been very different even if another candidate had been elected in the 2012 presidential elections. She said:

> Things would not have been different even if Moon Jae-in was elected to the presidency in 2012. People think it will be different, but it isn't as if all the campaign promises will be kept. (B05)

A student studying political science alluded specifically to the cartelization of political parties as he discussed his interest in policies and electoral campaign practice:

> I don't know how it is in other countries, but in Korea, no matter which party gets elected, no matter who gets elected, it will all be the same, at least in terms of policy…It shouldn't be this way, but you know in public choice models, the median is the direction to go? Well, Korean parties seem to really like that. They never position themselves this way or that with a firm ideological foundation but rather just do whatever people like. With the rise of Ahn Chul-soo before the last elections, they say that our party system had failed. (B04)

2.4.3 Attitudes towards regionalism

Some interviewees who are university students held the view that regionalism was a serious problem in Korean politics. One interviewee said:

> I think regionalism is the biggest problem with Korean politics. However, politicians would prefer to entrench regionalism. They use it to their advantage, and do not do much to change it. (B23)[45]

Yet, many interviewees who are university students today had the view that regionalism did not have a big impact on their political views and was becoming less relevant to their generation. One interviewee said:

> Regionalism may affect politics at large, but it is becoming less salient in the younger generations. I think perhaps it may be a problem that could be fixed in our generation. (B20)[46]

The survey responses of university students today largely confirm this finding. The majority of survey responses said that their region of origin or residence had no or low effect on their political preferences. The table below shows the percentages of the survey responses on the effect of region on political preferences.

Table 15. Effect of region on political preferences (%)

	0	1	2	3	4	5
Effect of region of origin on political preferences (N = 191)	34	15	18	15	14	4

5 High; 0 Low

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[45] Female, Chonnam National University, 2012, Honam
[46] Male, Pusan National University, 2013, Yeongnam

Yet, this does not mean that regionalism is irrelevant to university students today. An interesting finding in the interviews was that although respondents may initially say that regionalism does not have a big impact on their political views, their responses to further questioning sometimes suggest otherwise. For instance, one interviewee from the Chungcheong region said that her region of origin did not influence her political views. However, in giving the reason for this, she said:

> I'm from Chungcheong Province. People from Chungcheong are generally not interested in politics. It's not like people from Honam or Yeongnam who have clear biases for or against the governing party. Chungcheong does not have a particular political bias. (B11)

Although she said her region of origin did not influence her political views, it was clear that she observed clear regional biases. Similarly, an interviewee from Daegu (Yeongnam region) who supported the Green Party said that his region of origin did not have a big influence on his political views. However when asked how he came to hold these views, he specifically started with a reference to regionalism. He said:

> I was interested in politics because I'm from Daegu. You know how people from Daegu are. I remember when I was in primary school, there was a presidential election. When you are in primary school, you don't know anything about politics. But even then, I remember one of my classmates saying that his parents supported the liberal candidate, Kim Dae-jung, and all of the kids made fun of him. When I was young, I thought that was correct; that if you're from Daegu, you have to support the conservative party. (B08)

This interviewee said that he later came to form his own views about politics when he came to university and studied further about political issues. However, he admitted

that as he learned more about politics, he began to feel a strong aversion to everything he had taken for granted about the conservative party and even felt guilty because his views were different from that of his parents and grandparents. It was clear that though his region of origin did not directly dictate his political views, he was heavily influenced by regionalism.

The interviews also revealed that many students perceived clear regional biases amongst their peers. For instance, one interviewee said:

> All of my friends from Jeolla definitely support the liberal Democratic party. It must be because of their upbringing. (B18)

Similarly, another interviewee said:

> It is absolutely clear that there is a Honam-Yeongnam divide in politics. Especially during elections, its clear to see. (B19)

One interviewee who admitted that regionalism has an impact on his political views gave an explanation for why this was so. He said:

> I don't think I should say this, but I think when candidates from my region are elected, it really makes a difference in the development of the region. I'm from Pohang, like the last President,[47] and when he was elected, all of the development projects that had been on hold or delayed suddenly came through very quickly. When officials from my region are elected, I think it will be much better for me to find jobs and the regional economy will be much better. This issue of regional development is why it is such a big consideration for me. (B27)

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[47] President Lee Myung-bak was originally from Pohang, a city near Busan in the Yeongnam region.

Regionalism is a significant element of the Korean political system. It becomes particularly apparent in elections, and is reinforced by the policies and rhetoric of the politicians. It is perceived even amongst university students today, and though many interviewees were reluctant to admit it, continues to have a strong influence in the formation of their political views.

2.5   Key Findings

In this chapter we discussed the attitudes of university students today towards government and politics. It was hypothesised that university students today are not interested in politics. The survey responses showed that this was incorrect. In addition, it was hypothesised that university students today would have less intensely negative attitudes towards the presidential administration than university students in the 1980s. The survey and interview responses confirmed this hypothesis, but showed that university students today had a low level of satisfaction in the current political situation and of the Lee administration and the Park administration. Many interviewees criticised the Four Rivers Project, which was implemented by the Lee administration. However, other than that, the interviewees were unable to give comprehensive explanations backed up by evidence for their dissatisfaction with the Lee administration. In fact, some interviewees said that they did not feel confident that they knew enough to comment.

It was also hypothesised that university students today have low levels of trust for politicians. This hypothesis was confirmed by the survey and interview data.

University students today perceived politicians to be self-serving and acting in their own interests rather than for the public good. University students today also perceived politicians to lack communication with themselves, with the public, and with university students.

Finally, it was hypothesised that university students today do not have a political party they support. This was shown to be correct. A majority of the survey respondents said that they did not have a political party they supported. The Ahn Chul-soo phenomenon among young people also indicated that current political parties were failing to adequately represent the interests of university students today. Survey and interview results revealed that university students today perceived a lack of ideological and policy differences between the parties. University students also perceived that party competition was mainly based on regionalism and image. This lack of trust in political parties and politicians lowered the perceived political efficacy of university students today, and was a cause of their non-participation in politics.

3 Attitudes towards the media

This chapter discusses the attitudes that university students today hold towards the media based on survey and interview findings. It was hypothesised that university students today would have higher levels of trust for the media as a source of information about politics than their counterparts in the 1980s. However, a significant majority (84.1%) of the respondents disagreed or partially disagreed with the statement that they trust the public information available on politics. The following table shows the results.

Table 16. Trustworthiness of publicly available information about politics (%)

	Agree	Partially Agree	Partially Disagree	Disagree
I trust publicly available information about politics. (N = 182)	1.6	14.3	42.9	41.2

The interview responses largely mirrored this finding. Most interviewees said that they did not trust the media to provide an objective and even-handed coverage of political affairs. One of the key reasons that the interviewees gave for the lack of trust in the media as a source of information about politics was the disparity in the coverage of current events by the major media sources. One interviewee said:

> Political bias is so strong in many media sources. Even on the same event, different
> newspapers and broadcasters report very different accounts. I'm sometimes shocked by the

differences, and think that unless people are reading all of these different sources, they may really get it wrong. Also it makes it very hard for me to know what to believe. (B16)[48]

Other interviewees identified the lack of independence of the media as a cause for not trusting the publicly available information on politics. One interviewee said:

How can I trust publicly available information about politics when the government has such a large role in the media companies? Journalists who say the truth are fired and the government appoints its supporters in the top positions of media companies. (B27)

For many interviewees, the lack of trust in the media directly affected their motivation to participate in politics. One interviewee said that he did not feel confident enough to discuss politics with his peers because he did not know if he could trust the facts he learned through the media. He said:

I sometimes talk about politics with my brother. We have different views about politics. However, I find it really difficult to persuade him about my views because I don't know if I can fully trust what I have learned through the media. All of the newspapers and news broadcasts are biased and I can't trust that what they say is actually true. So I end up saying nothing when my family and friends discuss politics. (B01)

Another interviewee said that he does not trust the media and instead look to primary sources to learn about political affairs. He said:

I don't trust the media at all. When I want to learn about politics or write up a report, I don't use media sources. Instead I watch the live television broadcasts of what is actually happening

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[48] Female, Hanyang University, 2010, Seoul and Gyeonggi

or read the full transcripts of speeches. When journalists write articles using these primary sources, there is inevitably their personal bias and the bias of the media company shaping the interpretation of the facts. (B14)

Because of these differences of perspective between different sources of media, many respondents said that they tried to develop a balanced view by reading different newspapers. One interviewee said:

I make an effort to find the differences between the rightist newspapers like Chosun, Joong-Ang and Dong-A and leftist newspapers like Hankyoreh. However, it is hard to do this every day for every event, and I still don't feel satisfied that I am getting the full picture. (B20)

Other interviewees said that the hassle of having to read from multiple sources to find out the truth of what was happening discouraged him from learning more. He said:

I have both Joong-Ang and Hankyoreh newspapers on my phone so I try to read the coverage of both newspapers on a certain incident. However, in the end I just end up reading one and losing interest. I don't read the news very often because of that. (B01)

Despite the general mistrust of the media, for most respondents, it was the main source of information about politics, and many said that they trusted the media more than politicians. One respondent said:

I trust the media more than the politicians. Although the media are not completely trustworthy, I think journalists can be more objective than politicians and the variety of sources means that I can read from a lot of different sources and decide for myself what I think is right. (B03)[49]

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[49] Female, Korea University, 2012, Seoul and Gyeonggi

University students today reported low levels of trust on the media coverage of political news even though there are no overt controls on the media as was the case in the 1980s before the democratic transition. The interviews revealed that university students today perceived the media to lack independence. University students also perceived political bias in mainstream media sources, which led to the attitude that the media were not an objective and reliable source of information on politics. Some university students made an effort to gain a more objective understanding of political affairs by reading several different sources and accessing primary or secondary sources of information. However, the lack of a reliable source of information about politics caused university students to be less motivated to participate in politics.

4 Political socialization

On political socialization, it was hypothesised that like university students in the 1980s, university students today would say that the university setting had the most significant impact on the development of their political views. However, the survey and interview findings revealed that the political socialization process that university students today experienced differed in many key respects from that of university students in the 1980s. Current university students were more likely to have been influenced by their parents' political views and also more likely to be influenced by their schoolteachers. Yet, they were less likely to have been influenced by their university peers. The following table shows the results of the survey conducted on current university students.

Table 17. Political socialization of current university students (%)

	Agree	Partially Agree	Partially Disagree	Disagree
My parents had a big influence on my political views. (N = 164)	17.1	43.3	12.8	26.8
My schoolteachers did not have a big impact on the formation of my political views. (N = 180)	32.2	28.9	20.6	18.3
My university peers had a big impact on the formation of my political views. (N = 164)	8.5	42.1	20.7	28.7

As the data suggests, a clear majority (60.4%) of the respondents either agreed or partially agreed with the statement that their parents had a big impact on the formation

of their political views. In comparison, a clear majority (61.1%) of the respondents reported that their primary and secondary education schoolteachers did not have a big impact on the formation of their political views. About half of the respondents (50.6%) of the respondents agreed or partially agreed with the statement that their university peers had a big impact on the formation of their political views. A greater percentage of survey respondents said that their parents had a big influence on their political views than those that said that their university peers had a big impact on the formation of their political views.

On the other hand, a clear majority of the survey respondents who were university students today reported that their parents had a big influence in their political socialization process. Amongst the interviewees, there was a wide spectrum of how parents influenced the political socialization process of current university students.

Some interviewees said that their parents tried to foster in them a neutral yet informed view of politics. One interviewee said that his parents encouraged him to read about politics from a broad range of sources, and this has helped him form a neutral perspective on politics. He said:

When I was in high school, most of my peers were always reading Dong-A Ilbo, so I asked my parents why people always read Dong-A Ilbo. My father told me that we shouldn't read only Dong-A Ilbo and he gave me advice on how to be more politically neutral. Because of hearing these things, I was able to learn that reading only one newspaper can present a certain bias. From this influence of my parents, I myself am quite neutral when it comes to politics. (B02)

Similarly, another interviewee said:

I was greatly influenced by my father, who was a police officer and majored in Labour Law…He dealt with a lot of people who were socially marginalized and so he always advised me to look widely and gave me books on different views… He said that even if it was not economical, the minimum wage should be high and taxes should be low…and I agree with him. (B04)

There were also some students who reported having completely different views from their parents. One interviewee said that:

I feel kind of guilty when I say this. My parents and especially my grandmother don't really seem to understand democracy. They say that we have to vote for Park Geun-hye or else the country wouldn't be saved because of all the selfish young people making the wrong decisions…so I just lied about who I really voted for to keep the peace in the family. (B19)

It was interesting to see that some interviewees who were university students in the 1980s revealed the same, but reversed, frustrations with their own university student children. One interviewee who was a university student in the 1980s and now has a son in university said:

My son is extremely conservative. For instance, his views on North Korea and the [liberal] Democratic Party and the nationwide teacher's union are strictly conservative. He is emotionally against anyone with progressive attitudes. I do try to influence him. I mean it wasn't easy for me to make money as a pastor, and it was very difficult for our family to get by. It's not like my son is from an affluent family. I am very much for liberalism. Of course I do not judge and I detest attempts to oppress people based on their ideologies. But I would like to persuade my son to try to understand why other people may have different perspectives. (A04)[50]

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[50] Male, Hanyang University, 1989, Honam

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In general, university students today exhibit a greater diversity in their experience of the family environment as a setting for political socialization. However, an interesting finding was that many interviewees said that their parents discouraged them from participating in politics. For instance, one interviewee said that:

> I don't participate in political groups or societies because my mother tells me its wrong to do so…she used to support congressmen and did lots of campaigning and was active in a political party, but she said that it was all useless in the end. (B21)

An interesting thing about this interviewee was that her mother had been very active in student activism and political participation. However, she told her daughter that it was futile to participate in politics, and this interviewee consequently reported a very low level of political efficacy. Part of this may be caused by the fact that people who were university students in the 1980s, who are now the parents of university students today, are not satisfied with the current political situation. In fact, when interviewees who were university students in the 1980s were asked to rate the level of satisfaction with the current political situation on a scale of 0 to 5, 5 being high and 0 being low, the mean level of satisfaction was only 1.704 (standard deviation = 0.9533). The following table shows the results.

Table 18. Satisfaction with the current political situation evaluated by interviewees who were university students in the 1980s

	0	1	2	3	4	5
Satisfaction with the current political situation (N = 27)	7.4	40.7	25.9	25.9	0	0

5 High; 0 Low

Parents of university students today may therefore discourage university students today from participating in politics because even though they had actively participated in student activism, they are now disillusioned with the workings of democracy.

Primary and secondary education was not perceived to have been an important part of the political socialization process of university students today or in the 1980s. However, the findings suggest that primary and secondary education was a greater influencing factor for university students today.

A clear majority (61.1%) of the survey respondents who are current university students reported that their primary or secondary education schoolteachers did not have a big impact on the formation of their political views. Yet, this was a lesser proportion than all the interviewees who were university students in the 1980s who said that their primary or secondary education had no impact on their political views. Among university students today, there were some interviewees who said that their teachers in school sometimes spoke about politics. One interviewee reported that one of her teachers had tried to educate her class about the political system and encouraged civic mindedness. Yet, she said that she did not take much interest in what was said. She said:

> When the National Assembly was talking about impeachment, our Korean Language teacher turned on the television saying that we needed to be interested in this sort of stuff…She told us what happens when impeachment occurs and the procedure for what happens when a top government official leaves office suddenly…At the time, I just thought, well, I guess the president is important. (B10)[51]

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[51] Male, Seoul National University, 2008, Seoul and Gyeonggi

Other respondents said that teachers would sometimes make biased comments about politics in class. He said:

> There were quite a few teachers who discussed politics in school…but they either unilaterally criticized the presidential administration or just made personal comments about politics…I don't think I was really affected by it. I just listened. (B02)

In sum, a larger proportion of current university students felt that their primary and secondary education had an influence on the formation of their political views than their 1980s counterparts. However, our findings suggest that the influence of primary and secondary education on the formation of political attitudes is not very significant even for university students today.

Like university students of the 1980s, almost all interviewees who are currently university students said that their interest in and knowledge of politics increased dramatically after entering university. For instance, one respondent said:

> After coming to university, my political views have been affected quite a bit by those around me. At university, there are definitely more conversations about politics, and there are some professors who have very different political views from myself. After listening to them, I sometimes feel a bit rebellious. Also, when I was starting university, there was an atmosphere of opposition to the government, and there were quite a few candlelight vigils, so there was an element of peer pressure. (B03)

Aside from learning about politics at university through peer groups and studying, another factor that affects the political socialization process at university for current university students was the experience of student government. He said:

> When I came to university and started participating in groups, I began to think about whether the things I learn from others are really the truth. Sometimes it could be the case that someone's biased opinion was just coming through to me…I would think about how to get things done in groups and I came to realise that leading people to do things is really what politics is about. (B29)[52]

Although university students today did not observe a pervasive atmosphere of student activism as was the case for university students in the 1980s, the university setting was still an important part of the political socialization process.

4.1 Political socialization in the military

Military service is mandatory for all men in South Korea. Most men do their two-year service during their university years. Not many respondents who were university students in the 1980s were able to report on their experiences in the military because many of them had been exempt due to personal reasons or because they had served prison terms as student activists.

As for current male university students, the perception of how their time in the military changed their political views was diverse. Some said that there was not a great impact. One interviewee said of his experiences in the mandatory military service:

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[52] Male, Chonnam National University, 2007, Honam

It did not really affect my political views, but I sort of learned that politics was closely related to my life. I guess it heightened my sensitivity to politics. (B02)

When asked whether he thinks the military's security education affected him, he answered:

It was the military, so I already knew that this was in the military setting…I did not of course accept everything that they said as being all true though there was some truth to it…But in the military, the troop information and education sessions were really nothing more than for gossip. (B02)

Yet, this lack of perceived influence of political socialization in the military was not due to the lack of effort by the institution. One student reported that a change in the promotion policies within the military at the end of 2011 in the run-up to the 2012 presidential elections reflected an effort to indoctrinate more conservative political views in the servicemen. He said:

These days, promotion is not about seniority. In order to be promoted, we need to pass the physical and mental exams…As part of the mental exam, we needed to complete a written exam with about thirty questions, and you need to score above 70 to be promoted. (B08)

He continued:

Aside from the exams, every week on Wednesday, if there was nothing special, we would just sit in the common room to watch videos for our 'mental education'… This would be all morning for about three hours. We then had to write reviews about it, and if you presented it

well, you would get permits to go out… The content of course had a very conservative bias. (B08)

When asked whether he thought this had an effect on the political views of the servicemen, he answered that though he himself was not very much affected because he was based in the situation room and did not have much time to participate in the activities, he could understand how others may be more susceptible.

Not many people go into military service knowing that the military is indoctrinating them to have a more conservative bias. So they just go without thinking and just do as they are told… It is easy to become influenced. (B08)

In fact, some respondents exhibited the signs of having been affected by the national security education of the military:

When I was in the military, there were a lot of incidents such as the ROKS Cheonan sinking and the Yeon-pyeong island incident. I entered the army in 2009 and came out in July 2011, and so there were these orders for more security education, and when Yeon-pyeong island was hit, I really thought there would be a war…But my views didn't change due to military service. To get into the air force, you need to do an interview, and there's always the question: 'who do you think is the main enemy of the state?' Recently, many people say that it is the US or Japan, but I never liked North Korea, so…I always liked history as a child, and in the books it says that North Korea started the war and sent a bunch of spies over to kill people, and on the news North Korea acts aggressively and shoots missiles, so in the end, I came to have a very bad view of North Korea. In the Kim Dae-jung or the Roh Moo-hyun administration, there were the appeasement policies, and I never approved of that. (B12)

Even female students reported observing some trends in fellow male students who had served in the military. One respondent said:

> When I was watching this election, I felt that the guys who'd gone through military considered national security as the number one issue. I've heard lots of guys say that if the national security policies of a given politician or political party is solid, then that politician or party is wrong even if everything else is perfect; however, if their policies on national security are solid, then they are fine even if they get everything else wrong. (B17)[53]

The fact that the military is educating young men to believe that national security is the one and only important political issue is troubling. But aside from that issue, it seems that serving in some departments of the military can heighten aversion to politics. One respondent who served as a riot control officer during his mandatory military service said that his experience increased his negative perception towards politics in general:

> Before, I merely thought of politics as something that had no influence on me. But after my term as a riot control officer, I began to think that politics is bad… politics is only about self-interest. (B10)

In sum, the Korean military is an influential institution for the political socialization of young male university students. However, whether the effect of this political socialization is positive is debatable.

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[53] Female, Busan University of Foreign Studies, 2011, Seoul and Gyeonggi

5 The experience of political participation

This chapter discusses the experiences of political participation amongst university students today. The first section examines the experience of latent political participation. Latent political participation includes activities such as discussing politics with others and learning about political affairs (Ekman and Amna, 2012). We examine the interview and survey responses by university students today on the experience of discussing politics and studying about politics. It is hypothesised that university students today would have low levels of latent political participation based on the existing literature. It is also hypothesised that online social media would be an important method of latent political participation for university students today. The section on latent political participation also includes a discussion of online social media as a method of latent political participation.

The second section of this chapter examines the experience of manifest political participation. There are three types of manifest political participation this thesis examines: voting, contacting politicians and participating in protest activity. We examine the survey and interview findings relevant to each of the three types of manifest political participation. It is hypothesised that university students today would have access to diverse ways of participating in politics through voting and engaging with political parties and civil society groups. Yet, based on the literature it is hypothesised that university students today are likely to have low levels of manifest political participation in general.

5.1 Latent political participation

It was hypothesised that university students today are not interested in politics. However, the survey results showed that this was not correct. The following table shows the reported level of interest in politics and the perceived relevance of politics to everyday life among the survey respondents who are currently university students with 5 being high and 0 being low.

Figure 4. Level of interest in politics and the perceived relevance of politics to everyday life of current university students (%)
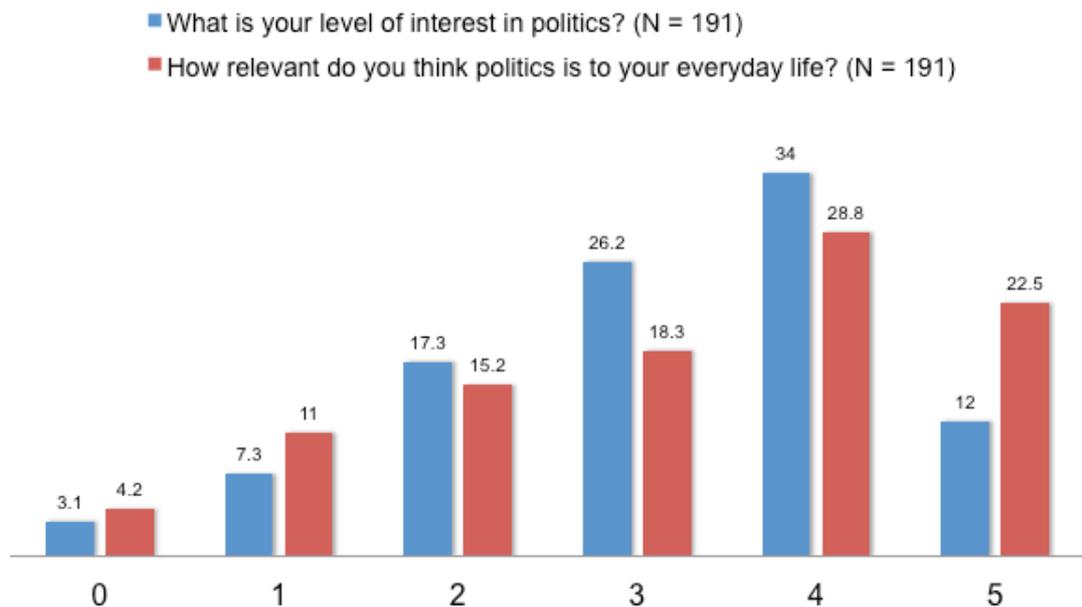
5 High; 0 Low

The survey results suggest that university students today generally have high levels of interest in politics, and that many perceive politics to be relevant to their everyday lives. The mean of the level of interest in politics was 3.17 with the standard deviation of 1.245; the mean of the level of perceived relevance of politics to everyday life was 3.24 with the standard deviation of 1.453. Of those surveyed, 72.2% said that they had

a 3 or higher level of interest in politics. Nearly half (46%) said that they had a 4 or higher level of interest in politics. According to these self-assessment values, university students today are interested in politics and perceive politics to be relevant to their everyday lives.

5.1.1   Discussing politics

One element of latent political participation is discussing politics with others. In the survey, the respondents were asked whether they discuss politics regularly and with whom they discuss politics. A majority of the respondents said that they discussed politics regularly, and most of them discussed politics with friends. Over half said that they discussed politics with classmates and other colleagues; less than half said that they discussed politics with family members. The following table shows the results.

Table 19. Discussing politics

Discuss politics regularly with (N=197)	Count
Family	90
Friends	127
Classmates and colleagues	106
Do not discuss politics regularly	33

In the interviews, I tried to find out more about what types of discussions university students today had with their peers and family about politics. Most interviewees said that they discussed politics with their peers about two or three times a week, but there was a wide variety of experiences. Some students said that they would listen and join in on the discussions about politics because there was a general culture of being interested in politics. One student at Seoul National University said:

I think Seoul National University students are particularly interested in politics. Everyone around me is interested, and we talk a lot about the different candidates and different campaigns. Even though some people are not actually very interested or well informed, they all have something to say. (B18)

One respondent said that she would try to play the devil's advocate in discussions about politics with her peers to gauge how well they actually knew about the things they were saying. She said:

Even though we are in medical school, medical issues are not the only things we discuss. We usually discuss what's been on the news recently. Whenever we discuss politics, I tell them what I've read on the opposite side of what they are saying to try to see how they respond. As university students, the best way for us to be involved in politics is to study it and be fully informed about what's going on, so I try to do that in my discussions with my friends. (B01)

Yet other respondents said that they rarely discussed substantial issues like policy but focused on the image of the different politicians and superficial issues. One respondent said:

I discuss politics with my friends and classmates about three times a week. However, I think in reality we usually talk about image and superficial issues and not about policy. I guess we should really be talking about the visions and ideologies of the political parties and the politicians, but in reality we hardly ever talk about those things. (B02)

Other respondents said that their experience of discussing politics with their peers was not always positive. One respondent said:

> My classmates discussed politics often in the lead up to the presidential elections. However, things could get rather heated in some of the discussions and it would sometimes get ugly. I don't get why they get so involved. It's not like fighting is going to make a difference. They should just vote for who they want to vote for and let others do what they want. (B03)

Similarly another respondent said:

> I tried to talk to a lot of people about political issues particularly before the elections. However, I ended up talking the most with the same group of people, and at the end of the day, I'm not sure if it was worth the effort. A lot of people had the view that it is quite useless to get too deeply engaged and most just didn't care or know enough. (B08)

In sum, though university students today often discuss politics with family, friends, colleagues and classmates, the experience was not necessarily a positive one. Many interviewees said that their discussions were often superficial or led to conflicts with peers.

5.1.2   Studying about politics

Another form of latent political participation is learning about politics and keeping up to date about political affairs. Yet, in the survey, a majority (62.8%) of the respondents agreed or partially agreed with the statement that they actually did not know much about the policies of the major political parties. The following table shows the responses.

Table 20. Information about politics (%)

	Agree	Partially Agree	Partially Disagree	Disagree
I actually don't know much about the policies of the major political parties (N = 183)	20.2	42.6	25.1	12

Although current university students said that they had a high interest in politics, a majority said that they do not actually know much about the policies of the major political parties. The interviews revealed a similar trend. One respondent said that although he studies current events in preparation for civil service exams, he does not try to develop independent views about what is going on or learn about the different political parties. He said:

> I need to know current affairs to prepare for the civil service exams, so I read the news and learn about political affairs. However, I just focus on the facts so I know what is going on, but I don't actually develop my own views about it. It is how it is and I don't want to waste time thinking too much about it. (B18)

Yet, a lack of interest in politics was not the most common reason for why current university students thought they did not know much about the policies of the political parties. In fact, many respondents said that they watched televised debates between politicians and listened to podcasts about politics. In particular, many interviewees mentioned a podcast named 'Naneun Ggomsuda'[54], which means 'I am a petty-minded creep'. According to a survey conducted by Hankook Ilbo (20 April 2012) on the first anniversary of the podcast, of the 1,328 people surveyed, 85.1% said that they listened

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[54] The podcast, which ran from 27 April 2011 to 18 December 2012 was well known for the sarcastic yet incisive and often caustic coverage of the events and people surrounding the Lee administration. It focuses on the various ploys used by the government to control the media and was widely popular amongst young people.

to the podcast because it deals with issues that are not addressed by other existing forms of media. One respondent said that:

> When listening to the podcast 'I am a petty-minded creep' was a trend, I thought I should get more involved in politics. I also attended a seminar on the 18 May [Gwangju Democratic Movement]. From that I thought, democracy is a hard thing to attain. (B24)[55]

The main cause of why university students today thought they were not fully informed about politics was the quality of the available information about politics beyond this one podcast. One respondent said:

> I just don't trust what is being said about politics. Everyone has a specific bias and no one is ever telling the whole truth. (B01)

Another respondent who said that she spends a lot of time learning about politics and trying to read different sources to get a fuller picture of political affairs elaborated further:

> I think being interested in politics is in itself a form of political participation. Taking the time to learn about political issues and being interested and discussing politics with others is an important form of political participation. Adults say that you should never talk about religion or politics because it will always lead to a fight. However, I think we need to talk about politics. People fight because they do not know how to debate; it is not because of the content of the debate. I heard that in developed democracies like the US or UK people debate about politics and encourage students to do so too at a young age. But I think in Korea, everyone tries to avoid talking about politics and the media does not provide sufficiently balanced and

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[55] Female, Chonnam National University, 2010, Honam

comprehensive information to allow for meaningful discussion. I think that needs to change. (B11)

Another student who had spent most of her childhood in the US before returning to attend high school and university in Korea compared the quality of the media coverage of politics in the US and Korea. She said:

I find myself being much more interested in the US elections than the Korean elections even though I live in Korea and I can only vote in the Korean elections. I spend much more time watching the US political debates and reading the news that deals with US politics. The main reason for this is that there is much more good quality information about US politics. The media coverage of the main issues are much more comprehensive and balanced and the different sides do not write off the opposition as simply being 'communist' or being a 'traitor' just because one side is campaigning for more social funding. There is a real debate, and the media companies package this really well with interesting videos and chronologies. I think if they did something similar for Korean politics, I would be much more interested. But I guess the media companies just do not invest in it because there is a lack of interest; and there is a lack of interest because there is this lack of good quality coverage. It is a vicious circle. (B15)

Though many university students made an effort to learn more about politics, a majority of the survey respondents said that they did not know the policies of the major political parties. From the survey and interview responses, it was clear that the quality of publicly available information about politics was negatively affecting the experience of latent political participation amongst university students today.

5.1.3 Online social media

The percentage of the South Korean population using the Internet is at 82.1% as of 2013 (Korea Internet & Security Agency) with 65.4% of the population using the Internet for current affairs news coverage. There is a strong generational difference in the use of the Internet for current affairs news coverage. While 93.5% of the respondents in the age 19-29 group reported using the Internet for current affairs news coverage, this percentage falls to 52.9% for the respondents in their 50s. The following chart shows these differences (Korea Press Foundation, 2013: 30).

Figure 5. SNS usage rates by age group (%)
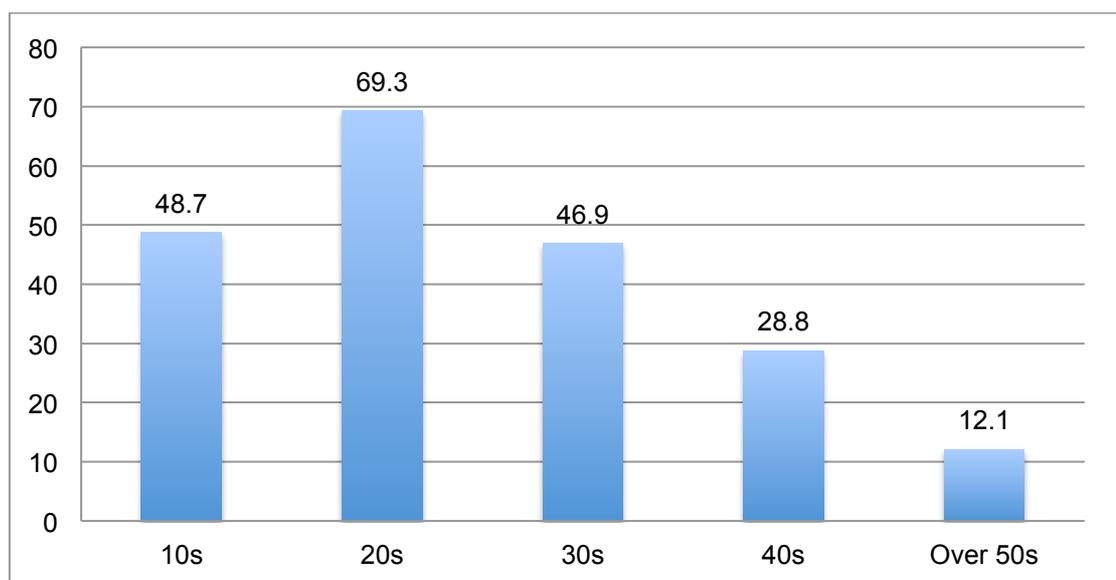
(Source: Korea Information Society Development Institute, 2013: 2)

Since the 1980s, there have been significant developments in the media used by Koreans. The most notable development has been the increase in the use of the Internet, and for young people, the use of social media. As of 2013, 31.3% of the respondents in the national survey conducted by the Korea Information Society Development Institute reported using social network service (SNS). There are clear

generational differences in the usage of social networking sites, with respondents in their 20s reporting a 69.3% usage rate compared to 28.8% of respondents in their 40s and 12.1% for those over the age of 50 as shown in the chart below.

Figure 6. Internet news usage rates by age group (%)
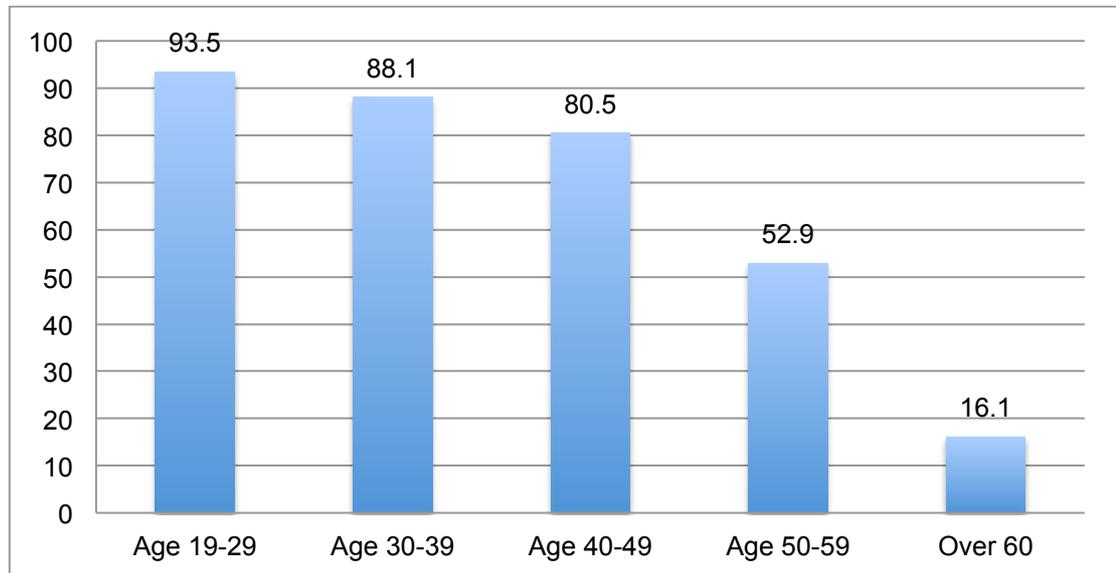
(Source: Korea Press Foundation, 2013: 31)

Online social media did not exist in the 1980s. Instead, the main method of communication was through banners, notice boards, and flyers, which presented opinion articles, announcements, and messages. In some sense, this paper media can be considered the analogue hard copy version of online social media. Yet, in the context of the dictatorial regime, this material, despite being banned, were widely read, supported, and utilized for political participation among university students in the 1980s. In contrast, interviews and surveys revealed many university students today said that they did not utilise online social media as a major forum for discussing politics, contrary to the hypothesis that online social media would be an important form of latent political participation for university students today.

An interesting finding from the survey on current university students was that there was a significant correlation between the responses 'university peers had a big impact on the formation of my political views' and 'I discuss politics regularly with friends on online social media'. The Pearson r was .266, which is a weak correlation, but the correlation was significant at the 0.02 level. The former statement also showed a correlation with 'I enjoy sharing my political views on online social media' (Pearson r = .222; Significance = 0.08).

This indicates that university students who say that their peers had a big impact on their political socialization process are more likely to discuss and enjoy sharing their views on politics on online social media. However, in general, many university students did not use online social media as a regular outlet for discussing politics, as the following table shows.

Table 21. How often do you discuss politics on online social media? (%)

	Very Often	Often	Sometimes	Almost Never	Never
How often do you discuss politics on online social media? (N=189)	3.5	20.7	23.2	32.8	19.7

Nearly one-fifth of the respondents said that they never discuss politics on online social media, and more than half said that they almost never or only sometimes do so. Only 24.2% of the respondents said that they very often or often discuss politics on online social media. This largely corresponds with the responses for the other two questions on the survey that asked about the use of online social media as a forum for political discussion. The following table shows the results.

Table 22. Attitudes about online social media use (%)

	Agree	Partially Agree	Partially Disagree	Disagree
I enjoy sharing my political views on online social media. (N = 159)	8.8	18.9	22.6	49.7
I discuss politics regularly with friends on online social media. (N = 146)	2.1	19.2	23.3	55.5
I think that people who like to share their views on politics on online social media like to show off. (N = 176)	11.9	36.9	26.7	24.4

As the table above demonstrates, a clear majority of the respondents disagreed that they enjoy sharing their political views on online social media and that they discuss politics regularly with friends on online social media. This finding was largely corroborated by the interview responses.

For instance, one respondent said that he sometimes talks about politics on online social media such as Facebook or Twitter. However, he said that he only does so for major events or issues, and that he did not think social media had a big impact on real politics. He said:

> I don't really do anything else [aside from commenting on major issues] though. I just go in once a while and some people talk about politics in general, but it doesn't seem to really affect real politics or anything real. (B08)

Some respondents held outright negative views towards peers who discuss politics on social networking sites. One respondent said:

> I really hate it. They are just showing off their biases. They just say that Lee Myung-bak sucks and everything, and it is supposed to influence me. I just think, 'Is that the only way to do it?'…It is not like they are open to rational discussion either. (B22)

Another respondent similarly said:

> I sometimes come across people talking about politics online, but I'd never look for it. I don't want to be interested in it. I think that people who find that fun are pathetic… They talk about politics and criticise it, but it's all just noise. I thought I don't want to be a part of that pathetic crowd. (B21)

However, there were some students who thought that online social media was a useful forum for encouraging friends to be more involved in politics. One respondent said:

> I've written something about encouraging people to vote. I said that even if I have exams tomorrow, I was going to vote, and that others should practice their political rights…Many people were very encouraging and said that people like us deserve half-rate tuition and that they were going to vote too. (B17)

In sum, though some current university students use online social media today to discuss politics, it is not a particularly popular method for students to do so.

5.2 Manifest political participation

5.2.1 Voting

Despite the low self-evaluation scores of political participation among university students today, 88.1% of the survey respondents reported that they vote in at least the presidential elections. 46.3% said that they also vote in the parliamentary elections and 41.7% said that they also vote in other elections. (N=194)

According to the report published by the Korean National Electoral Commission, 68.5% of the citizens in their 20s voted in the 18th presidential elections in 2012. 71.1% of the citizens in their early 20s voted and 65.7% of the citizens in their late 20s voted. Comparing this to the data gathered from our survey on current university students, we can infer that among the citizens in their 20s, a higher proportion of university students vote than their non-university counterparts.

A majority of the survey respondents (74.1%) agreed with the statement that their electoral participation might change Korean politics. In fact, the majority of survey respondents rated the level of effectiveness of voting to be high. The average level of the perceived efficacy of voting was 3.63 and 63% of the survey respondents reported a level 4 or higher on a scale of 0 being low and 5 being high. The following table shows the results.

Table 23. Level of perceived efficacy of voting (%)

	0	1	2	3	4	5
Level of perceived efficacy of voting (N = 191)	1	8	12	16	33	30

5 High; 0 Low

In the interviews, many university students indicated that they thought voting was important. One interviewee said:

> If we want to change the world or make Korean politics better, the only way to do so is through voting. (B08)

Another interviewee said:

> Even if the candidate I voted for does not get elected, it shows how much support was received. Votes show the opinion of the citizens, even the opinion of those citizens whose candidates were not elected. That is why voting is important. (B06)

Nevertheless, many other interviewees expressed a resigned attitude to even electoral participation. For instance, one interviewee said:

> In politics, the politicians make promises they never keep…so votes really have no effect. They say that they respect the opinions and judgements of the people, but if you observe them, they don't really…even if we participate, what's the point? (B12)

Similarly, another interviewee said that she did not think voting had a real impact on her life and therefore did not put much effort into finding out about who to vote for. She said:

> Most of my friends vote and I do too. But in all honesty, I am not sure whether voting really changes politics or whether it would have a real impact on my life. So I don't tend to put too much effort into trying to decide whom to vote for. (B03)

Some interviewees said that they participated in campaigns to encourage people to vote. One interviewee described her participation in voting encouragement programmes. She said:

> I have done some voluntary work in encouraging people to vote and voter registration. However I have never supported a political party or campaigned for a particular candidate. (B01)

5.2.2 Contacting politicians

Aside from voting, another form of manifest political participation is to contact politicians. This may involve working for campaigns or contacting public officials. When university students today were asked how they thought university students today could become involved in politics, almost all of them said that they could contact politicians to express their views. For instance, one interviewee said:

> I think we could write to the city mayor on the Seoul City Facebook page or Twitter. I guess we could also get involved in some sort of political party activity for young people. I don't know anyone who actually does those things though. (B18)

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Similarly, another interviewee said that aside from voting, volunteering for campaigns or civil society organisations would be a better method of political participation for university students than protest activity. He said:

> The obvious way to be involved is through voting. Aside from that, some students get involved in protests and demonstrations, but I really think there are better ways than that to make a difference. Perhaps students could donate to or volunteer at campaigns or civil society organisations. (B10)

Another respondent said that he was considering getting involved in a non-governmental organisation or doing an internship at the National Assembly to learn more about politics. He said:

> I am considering getting involved in an NGO that supports social entrepreneurs. An alternative may also be to volunteer for a group that helps North Korean defectors. Also, I think I might try to get an internship at the National Assembly. I think all of these would be a good way to learn more about politics. (B09)[56]

However, almost none of the interviewees said that they had experience of actually participating in any of these ways. One interviewee explained why he did not participate in these ways even though he was aware of these methods. He said he was discouraged from participating in politics by getting in contact with politicians and political parties because it may impact his reputation. He said:

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[56] Male, Seoul National University, 2006, Yeongnam

There are many ways for university students to be involved in politics. You could join a student activist organisation, volunteer for a candidate's campaign or do an internship at a political organisation. However, in reality it is really hard to get involved. There are a lot of bad impressions about students who become involved in politics in that way. I'm also wary of affiliating myself with a political party or an interest group and getting in line with the wrong people, as that political reputation is bound to follow me around. (B14)

In fact, the perception that politicians are predominantly self-interested was not only confined to politicians. One respondent commented on how even major civil society organizations were also perceived to be self-interested and unresponsive:

Even though there are currently many civil society organizations, they are mostly already well connected to politicians or have great wealth, and only seem to be self-interested, so that ordinary people and their opinions are excluded. (B22)

There was an interviewee who tried to participate in a labour trade union by working at a factory. However, he said that this attempt failed and made him realise that there was very little he could do as a university student. He said:

I tried to join a trade union by working at a factory packaging boxes. A friend and I went there to work there and find out more about the reality of the labour rights movement. But after one day of working there, the factory suddenly closed down without any warning. All of the other men who had been working there were suddenly just unemployed and had nothing they could do. Seeing the reality of things made me realise how powerless we were as university students. But even if I were to get a job at an office somewhere, it isn't like there is more I could do. (B13)

Yet, there was one interviewee who did participate by volunteering for and doing an internship for a political organisation that campaigns for the expansion of proportional representation in the National Assembly. She explained how she came to be involved with this organisation. This interviewee showed that if university students have a cause that they support, they could find a way to participate in political organisations. She said:

> I decided to become involved because I have a diverse range of interests. I support animal rights and I also believe in feminism. I'm not completely liberal but that doesn't mean I am conservative either. So when I first thought about how to become involved in politics, I wasn't sure which group to support. After thinking and talking about it with many people, I decided to participate by supporting proportional representation. By expanding the proportional representation seats in the National Assembly, a more diverse range of interests can be represented. So I researched the proportional representation forum and joined. (B08)

In sum, university students today recognised that volunteering in campaigns, contacting politicians and becoming involved in civil society organisations were a method of political participation. However, very few university students were successful in actually getting involved.

5.2.3   Protest activity

This section examines the experiences of protest activity amongst university students today. In contrast to university students in the 1980s, interviewees who were university students today expressed a much more negative attitude towards participating in protests. We begin with a discussion of the experiences and attitudes

of university students today in student activism on campus. We will then proceed to examine their experiences and attitudes towards candlelight vigils, which is a more common form of protest activity seen in recent years.

Almost none of the interviewees described being involved in student activism on campus. However, there was one interviewee who described his experiences with the College of Education Singing Club, which held politically themed events and at one point even took over the university chairman's office building. He said:

> We discuss politics a lot. We sometimes hold seminars. Every November, we have annual concerts, and we choose the theme of the concerts. To choose the theme, we look into what's up and coming in political and educational topics, because we are in the College of Education after all. So we need to know about these issues, so before the concerts, we hold seminars to investigate problems, find our stance on it, research songs to express our stance, and if there are no appropriate songs, we decide whether to write a new song. So we've written songs, and that's how we address societal problems…I'm also quite interested in the labour movement, so when they were doing a cultural event to fight for talent management, we went and did a concert for them…Also even if I couldn't take part because I was doing my military service, our Singing Club, in affiliation with the school-wide and intercollegiate Singing Club took over the Seoul National University building that had the Chairman's office in May and June of 2011 to protest. (B13)

Yet, he said that he actually thought that his activism would disadvantage him in finding employment. He said:

> Of course, I don't write about it on my resume. If I were to write about it, I think I would be disadvantaged. When I was doing my military service, I talked about being in the Singing Club, and I was put under surveillance. (B13)

Like university students in the 1980s, a few interviewees who are university students today said that they admired student activists on campus. One interviewee said:

> I admire them for their courage. But I never had the same courage to participate. (B23)

Another interviewee said that he was thankful for the student activists on campus because he was able to learn about political issues through their activities. He said:

> Although student activism on campus is not as active as it used to be, there are still some students who participate. They put posters and banners on campus and sometimes hold protests. When I see them, I actually feel thankful because I learn new things from them. I can see they make a real effort to make different voices heard. There are a lot of prejudices against student activism, but if you actually look closely and listen to what they have to say, it is really helpful. (B02)

However, this view was in the minority. In fact, most of the interviewees held negative views towards student activists. Some interviewees expressed the view that they thought student activists acted out of a false sense of heroism. One interviewee said:

> I would sometimes see posters or banners with really provocative or strong messages written on them around campus, and seeing those things actually turns me off from getting involved in student activism. I sometimes think that those student activists are too radical and may be acting out of a false sense of heroism. (B08)

Others expressed the view that the actions of the student activists were not necessary. One interviewee said:

It all looks a bit weird. I mean, I've seen people sit on chairs in front of the campus and cut their hair and do the walk three steps and bow once ritual, but I just think, is that really necessary? (B03)

Many interviewees shared this view. In fact, the general perception of student activists among the respondents was rather negative. For instance, one respondent said that:

Even though we study politics and international relations, we students aren't really interested in politics. Upon entering university, we've developed an allergy against student activists. (B17)

She continued to say that her parents actively discouraged her from any political activities and treated politics as taboo. She thought that this was because:

The adult generation had tried it [political activism] and told us that it didn't really change anything, so I learned that it was a pointless thing to do. (B17)

Other interviewees also said that they were taught not to be involved in student activism. One interviewee said that her mother told her that student activists were dangerous and discouraged her from participating. She said:

When I see student activists or people active in student councils, I don't actually care much about them. They can do what they want. My mother told me that student activists are dangerous people, and that they are rebelling against society. Some students use it as a method for career advancement, and that's not good to see. I think what they do is pointless and meaningless. (B05)

Other interviewees shared the perception that student activists had their own agenda and were involved in politics for the advancement of their own careers. One interviewee said:

> I have a strongly negative perception of those who do [political activity] on campus. In the end, those who do that type of activities do so just to make it look good on their resumes when applying for jobs…They seem to think that they have some sort of belief or integrity, but really they do it as if it was some sort of career. (B15)

In recent years, many young people in South Korea have participated in candlelight vigils for various issues. Some of the interviewees reported to having participated in the candlelight vigils with their friends. However, all of them said that after being involved in the candlelight vigils, they became disillusioned and no longer participate. One interviewee explained that though he participated in many candlelight vigils, he no longer does so after feeling like the protest was being used for the political gain of other actors and seeing irrational actions by some of his fellow protestors. He said:

> I participated in the candlelight vigils because many of my friends were going. A lot of my high school friends went, so I thought I should try, and it was the same in university when many of my university friends went, I went as well. Initially, it was kind of fun. However, the more I participated, I felt like we were being used. It felt like we were being incited and our actions being misinterpreted. On the streets, I could see rational people suddenly change and make irrational and emotional decisions. I realised how things could go wrong quickly, and decided I would no longer participate. (B18)

Another interviewee who also participated in the candlelight vigils said that he was turned off from further participation after the movement turned more violent. He said:

I participated in the candlelight vigils…I went to almost all of them, at least the whole of one semester, but I quit later because I hated the fact that it was getting so extreme…It's not like those guys drafted in to be riot police want to stop us, and I couldn't get my head around why we needed to hit them. I mean that's why we were holding candles, to signal peace, and not spears. (B14)

This sense of disillusionment extended to interviewees who did not participate but observed the candlelight vigils. One interviewee said that though he initially admired the protestors who participated in the candlelight vigils, he became less supportive when he saw the movement being led away from its original objective and become more violent. He said:

I did not participate in the candlelight vigils. Midway through the movement, it became quite violent. Initially, I admired the people participating in the candlelight vigils, but later, the whole thing moved in a direction that was very different from the initial objective, and I did not want to become involved. (B10)

Like the attitudes towards student activism on campus, some interviewees expressed the view that candlelight vigils were pointless and unnecessary. One interviewee said:

I could see why people participated in the candlelight vigils but my friends and I did not participate. Sure, the government lacked proper communication, but I didn't think the issue of beef imports was something that we needed to hold a candlelight vigil for. It was just an event of sorts, and I felt no need to participate. (B07)

In sum, though some university students today do participate in protest activity as a way of manifest political participation, this was not very common. Though there were

some university students today who admired and felt thankful towards student activists, this was a minority view. An overwhelming majority of university students today reported negative attitudes towards student activism and participation in candlelight vigils. This was due to university students learning from the older generation that student activism was pointless, the perception of student activists to be acting out of a false sense of heroism or self-interest and the perception that the efforts of student activists were pointless.

5.3   Attitudes towards political participation

The average self-evaluated level of political participation was 2.67; the average satisfaction with current level of political participation was 2.37; and the average perceived efficacy of political participation was 1.97. These are lower than the mean level of interest in politics, which was 3.17 and the mean level of perceived relevance of politics to everyday life, which were 3.24.

These survey results showed that though university students today find politics to be relevant to their everyday lives and are interested in politics, their levels of political participation are, in comparison, lower, and their satisfaction in their current level of political participation and perceived efficacy of political participation even lower. In fact, even among those respondents who reported the highest level (5) of political participation, the mean level of political efficacy was only 2.3.

The interviews affirmed that many university students today found their current levels of political participation unsatisfactory. Many interviewees said something along the following lines:

> I am not satisfied with my current level of political participation. I think I should take a greater interest. (B12)

Similarly, another interviewee said that though he was initially dissatisfied with his low level of political participation, he no longer cares very much about it. He said:

> I used to think that it was a problem that I wasn't participating aside from voting. As a university student, I thought I should take a greater interest in the world. But I am really busy, and I am not that bothered anymore. (B02)

Despite the fact that they were generally dissatisfied with their level of political participation, most did not make an effort to be more involved in politics. There were many different reasons that university students today provided for their low levels of political participation. These reasons will be discussed in further detail in the next chapter.

6   Reasons for non-participation

In order to find out the reasons for why university students were discouraged from participating in politics, the survey contained a long form question that asked respondents about what discourages them from further political participation. The following table lists the results.

Table 24. Reasons for not participating further in politics

Reason	Count
Lack of efficacy of political participation	12
Negative news about politics	11
Dissatisfaction with current government	7
Corruption	5
Self-serving politicians	5
Aversion to politics in general	3
Busy	3
Distrust of politicians	3
Lack of interest	3
Suspicions of electoral fraud in the 2012 presidential election	3
Conflict with family	2
Participating in politics will ruin my social life	2
Too much political in-fighting	2
Alienation from the political elite	1
No difference between political parties	1
No relevance of politics to my life	1
Regionalism	1

(N=68)

As can be seen, the lack of efficacy of political participation and the negative news about politics were cited as the top two reasons for not participating in politics. Other respondents were more specific and cited corruption, self-serving politicians, distrust of politicians, suspicions of electoral fraud and too much political in-fighting as reasons for not participating in politics. Dissatisfaction with the current government,

aversion to politics in general and the negative impact of politics on social life were cited as other reasons. Lack of interest and being too busy to participate were also reported, but these were not the most common reasons for not participating in politics.

Although these survey results provide a general indication of the reasons for the low level of political participation amongst university students today, it does not provide a full picture. The following sections examine these reasons in further detail through the interview responses. Firstly, we look at the lack of political efficacy as a reason for the low level of political participation. Secondly, we examine the related lack of trust in the political elite. Thirdly, we then proceed to discuss the lack of resources. Fourthly, we discuss the lack of necessity to participate in politics.

6.1.1   Lack of political efficacy

One of the most common reasons that university students today said was the reason for their low levels of political participation despite thinking that they should participate more was the lack of political efficacy. For some interviewees this was a structural issue. One interviewee said that since Korea has become a democracy, there have been more diverse interests seeking to achieve different objectives, and this has reduced the efficacy of participating to support a specific cause. He said:

> In Korean society today, there are so many diverse interests. In the past, it was either democracy or authoritarianism, and it was much more clear-cut. However, nowadays, everyone has something different to say, and there is that much more conflict. It seems like there is no point trying to support a particular interest because it would just not be effective. That's what turns me off from being more involved. (B02)

Yet, the more common view was that there was a problem with the political system that made it so that political participation of an individual had little effect on political outcomes. One interviewee said:

> I don't make an effort to participate in politics because I don't think it will make a big difference. I've studied political affairs and political theory and I've come to the conclusion that even if the most perfect candidate became elected, there is very little he would be able to implement to make politics better. (B15)

Similarly, another interviewee said that there was a lack of ways in which university students could experience political efficacy and this caused the low levels of political participation among university students today. She said:

> I think [the lack of participation] is because there is no efficacy. I think if I experienced something that showed me that things could be achieved through politics, there would be more interest. In the Korean political system, there is little room for young people to experience political efficacy. (B08)

The survey results confirmed the general perception amongst university students today that they perceived a low level of political efficacy. The following table shows the results. A majority (73%) of the survey respondents perceived a low level of efficacy, giving a rating between 0 and 2.

Table 25. Level of perceived efficacy of political participation (%)

	0	1	2	3	4	5
Level of perceived efficacy of political participation (N = 199)	12	23	34	19	8	4

5 High; 0 Low

6.1.2 Lack of trust in the political elite

So what causes university students today to perceive low levels of political efficacy? The interview responses revealed that the cause of the low levels of political efficacy was the lack of trust in the political elite. There was no trust that political participation would translate into political outcomes. One interviewee said:

> It is hard to feel that voting makes a real difference in our every day lives. There are many layers between the people we elect and the policies that affect our every day lives and so many factors affect the outcome. Yet, it doesn't mean our participation is meaningless; but if the processes were more transparent, I think I would feel like our participation made a difference. (B10)

Similarly, another interviewee said that though he thought it was understandable that university students today had lower levels of political participation than university students in the 1980s. However, he said that the lack of transparency in the Korean political system was a problem that discouraged political participation. He said.

> I think it is understandable that political participation is not as high as it used to be under the authoritarian regime. However it is troubling that I don't feel like my votes really affect what's going on in politics. There are so many layers between my one vote and the decision-making

that goes on in politics, and this lack of transparency is really worrying and it discourages people from participating in politics. (B10)

Other interviewees said that disappointment with politicians was the direct reason for losing interest in politics. One interviewee said:

I am not satisfied with our current levels of political participation. However, I think it is the fault of the politicians. I think the politicians prefer that we don't participate. From the perspective of the citizens, we are really disappointed and disgusted by the way the politicians act. So we just take the attitude that politicians can do whatever they want, we don't care anymore. (B06)

Similarly, another interviewee said that the distrust of the politicians was a direct reason for the low levels of political participation because it made political participation less effective. He said:

Lack of trust in the politicians is an important reason for the low level of political participation. If the politicians who were elected actually did what they promised and it brought about real change, we would be interested. However, what they do hardly ever affects our lives. (B21)

Yet, this interviewee said that the more significant reason that caused university students today to have low levels of political participation was the lack of resources. He said:

However, the bigger reason is just that for university students like me, we're just too busy with trying to keep up with the competition, in terms of exams, extracurricular activities and finding employment. (B21)

This reason will be discussed further in the next section.

6.1.3   Lack of resources

Aside from the lack of political efficacy, another common reason that interviewees gave for their low political participation was the lack of resources. Some of these were external resources, like available opportunities in the political system for university students to participate. For instance, one of the interviewees said that her low level of political participation was due to the high barriers to learning about and participating in politics. She said:

> The barriers to participation are just too high. I think the barriers to entry for people who are interested are too high. We are strongly affected by what the older generations tell us about politics, and to get rid of those prejudices, there needs to be more ways for us to learn about politics and develop our own political values and participate in politics in effective ways. (B17)

Similarly, other interviewees said that they did not participate in politics because they do not know enough about politics. This point was discussed earlier in relation to attitudes towards media and the lack of trust in publicly available sources of information about politics. For instance, one interviewee said:

> I think one of the reasons I did not participate very much in politics was because I didn't know enough about political affairs. (B09)

Although a lack of external resources like ways to learn about politics and participate in politics was part of the issue, the more common reason that university students

today gave for the low levels of political participation was the lack of internal resources such as time and energy. Many university students said that they simply do not have the time to participate because of other priorities. One interviewee said:

> I don't have enough time to participate. If I were to take an interest and participate, I think it would take up a lot of my valuable time. I don't think I have enough time to devote to politics. We need to be realistic. So now, I read about politics in the newspaper just to know the facts of what is going on so I can prepare for my civil service exams. I don't bother thinking critically about what is going on. (B18)

The interviewees expressed the view that the reason they had no time to participate in politics is because of societal pressures and the difficult job market. Interviewees said that society does not expect university students to participate in politics. This is in line with the discussions earlier on older generations discouraging university students today from participating in politics. The interviewees said that unlike university students in the 1980s, societal pressures on university students today restrict the time and energy they can spend on political participation. One interviewee said:

> Society requires university students to have a good CV so that they can get jobs and become successful. It does not expect university students to be interested in politics or carry out our duty as citizens. University students in the past had a sense of duty as the educated elite, but that is no longer the case. There are just so many universities and university students. Professors tell us that back in their day, they would miss classes and participate in protests. But we can't do that now. We need to study for exams to get good grades and do extracurricular activities for our resumes. University is now a place to get credentials, and so there is no time as a university student to be involved in politics. (B11)

Another interviewee put it more bluntly and said that it was the competition for jobs for a larger number of university students that restricted the time that university students today have for participating in politics. He said:

> I think the biggest reason university students today don't participate in politics is money. We need to earn money. We have part-time jobs to go to, we have to study to get good grades, and politics is just not a priority. Politics has little relevance to our busy lives. In the 1980s, there were fewer university students and less competition. Now we face much greater competition, and to eat and live we need to beat the competition. We have no time or resources to devote to political participation. (B14)

Yet, what was inherent in the responses that cited the lack of time and energy to participate in politics was that politics had a lower priority when students were deciding how to spend their resources.

6.1.4   No need to participate

Some interviewees simply said that they did not feel a strong need to participate in politics. One interviewee said that the perceived lack of time and resources to spend on politics was actually simply due to the fact that the political problems were not serious enough to warrant sacrificing limited resources for. She said:

> Some people say that they don't participate because of the lack of time and resources, but I wonder if that is the real reason. I think the real reason is simply that they are satisfied with the way things are now, and are complacent. There is just no need for us to participate in politics because there are no serious problems with politics. (B22)

Several other interviewees said that they did not think politics was relevant enough to their every day lives to sacrifice time that they could spend doing other things for. One interviewee said:

> It doesn't feel like politics is actually relevant to my life. Theoretically, I know it is, but it doesn't actually feel like it. It's not very fun, and I have my own studies and life that keeps me busy, so I don't participate. (B01)

Similarly, another interviewee said:

> I don't feel any need to lessen the time I spend on doing things I enjoy to participate in politics…I know there are problems with Korean politics, but it isn't as bad as it was before. We have a lot of freedom to do what we want, and there is no need to protest to get what we want, so there's no need to participate. (B09)

Other interviewees said that from a societal perspective, it was not necessary for everyone to have high levels of political participation, particularly now that there were no serious problems with politics like those that existed during the dictatorial regimes. He said:

> They say that in times of peace, the people don't know who the king is. I think this applies to South Korea. In the 1970s and 1980s, there were clear injustices being carried out by the dictatorships, and a lot of sacrificial political participation was needed to fix that. However, now, there is no such visible enemy for us to topple. Even if only a few people make the effort to raise an issue, that's enough to let the others know, so I don't think there is a need for everyone to be politically active. (B07)

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7 Conclusion

In the chapters above, we discussed the main elements of the political culture of university students today by summarising the key empirical findings. Each of the following elements of political culture were examined:

- the attitudes towards politics and government;

- the attitudes towards media;

- the political socialization process;

- the experience of political participation; and

- the reasons for political participation or non-participation.

Firstly, it was hypothesised that university students today are not interested in politics. This hypothesis was shown to be incorrect. The survey responses showed that 72.2% of those surveyed reported a level 3 or higher on their interest in politics on a range of 0 to 5, 5 being high. A majority of the survey respondents also said that they were interested in politics and felt that politics was relevant to their lives. It was also hypothesised that university students today would have less intensely negative attitudes towards the presidential administration than university students in the 1980s. The interview and survey results confirmed this hypothesis. However, the survey and interview results showed that university students today were generally dissatisfied with the Lee administration and did not have high expectations of the Park administration. Many interviewees criticised the Four Rivers Project, which was implemented by the Lee administration. However, other than that, the interviewees were unable to give comprehensive explanations backed up by evidence for their

dissatisfaction with the Lee administration. In fact, some interviewees said that they did not feel confident that they knew enough to comment.

However, the hypothesis that university students today do not trust politicians was shown to be correct. Survey and interview results revealed that there is a general distrust of politicians and that the pervasive view is that politicians are self-serving and break promises. University students today perceived politicians today are failing engage and communicate with the public, and that this was frustrating for them.

The hypothesis that university students do not have a political party they support was also shown to be correct. Over half of all the survey respondents said that they did not have a political party they supported. In addition, 81.6% of the respondents disagreed or partially disagreed with the statement that they feel a strong connection with the political party they support. The Ahn Chul-soo phenomenon among young people also indicated that current political parties were failing to adequately represent the interests of university students today. Survey and interview results revealed that university students today perceived a lack of ideological and policy differences between the parties. University students also perceived that party competition was mainly based on regionalism and image. Some interviewees identified this lack of genuine competition as the cartelisation of political parties. This lack of trust in political parties and politicians lowered the perceived political efficacy of university students today, and was a cause of their non-participation in politics.

It was hypothesised that university students today would have higher levels of trust for the media as a source of information about politics than their counterparts in the

1980s. This was partly true. Whereas none of the interviewees who were university students in the 1980s said that they trusted the media as a source of information about politics, 15.9% agreed or partially agreed with the statement that they trust publicly available information about politics. However, a significant majority (84.1%) of the respondents partially disagreed or disagreed with the statement that they trusted publicly available information about politics. Interviews revealed that there was a perceived lack of independence of the media. Although there were no overt controls on the media as in the 1980s, many university students reported the perception that the major newspapers and broadcasters were biased and failed to provide a neutral and comprehensive account of current affairs. Many university students said that they rely on a range of media sources with different biases to find out the truth about current and political affairs. However, they said that they wished there was a more objective and reliable source of information and that a lack of such information discouraged them from political participation.

On political socialization, like university students in the 1980s, most university students today said that the university setting had the most significant impact on the development of their political views, as hypothesised. Yet, the survey data showed that slightly more respondents said that their parents had a big influence on their political views than respondents who said that their university peers had a big influence on their political views. Unlike university students in the 1980s, university students today said that their parents had a strong influence on the formation of their political views. They also said that their schoolteachers discussed politics in school, but the impact this had on political socialization was perceived to be low. An interesting finding from the interviews was that the mandatory military service had a significant impact on the

political socialization of male university students today. The interview results showed that the political education in the military service socialized young men to believe that national security and foreign policy towards North Korea was of great importance. However, others reported developing a strong aversion through the experience.

We then proceeded to discuss the experience of political participation by university students today by examining their experience of latent political participation and manifest political participation. It was hypothesised that university students today would have low levels of latent political participation. Survey and interview data showed that this hypothesis was partially correct. About two-thirds (127 out of 197) of survey respondents said that they discussed politics regularly with friends. Over half (106 out of 197) of the survey respondents said that they discussed politics with colleagues and classmates. The interviewees also said that they discussed politics regularly with their peers. However, not all interviewees said that they enjoyed the experience and that many of the discussions were quite superficial. Many interviewees also said that political discussions sometimes led to conflict. Others said that they were not confident that they knew enough about political issues to comment. In fact, a majority (62.8%) of the survey respondents agreed or partially agreed with the statement that they did not actually know much about the policies of the major political parties. Many interviewees reported frustration that the quality of publicly available information about politics was not comprehensive enough to be fully informed about key issues and policy.

It was also hypothesised that online social media would be an important method of latent political participation for university students today. The survey and interview

findings revealed that though the usage of online social media is widespread amongst university students today, many did not actively use this tool to regularly discuss politics.

On manifest political participation, it was hypothesised that university students today would have access to diverse ways of participating in politics through voting and engaging with political parties and civil society groups. Yet, based on the literature it was also hypothesised that university students today are likely to have low levels of political participation in general. A large majority of the survey and interview respondents said that they voted and many said that voting was the only way to impact political affairs. Many respondents indicated that voting was the only way to effect long-term change and said that they planned to continue to vote. However, some interviewees expressed scepticism that voting would make a real difference, reflecting the pervasive attitude of a lack of perceived political efficacy.

Many interviewees identified engaging with politicians, current political parties and civil society organisations as a viable method for political participation. However, not many interviewees actually took part in such activities and most of those who did so expressed feelings of disillusionment afterwards.

Finally, this section discussed the experience of protest activity, including participation in candlelight vigils. Though some university students said that they participated in candlelight vigils, most questioned the efficacy of such participation. Most of the interviewees said that they did not participate in protest activity and had negative attitudes towards university students who did. It was clear that protest activity

is no longer the only way of participation for university students. In general, there was a low level of manifest political participation, despite high levels of latent political participation. When asked whether they were satisfied with their current level of political participation, most respondents said that they were not satisfied. These findings indicated that though university students today supported democratic governance, they might be dissatisfied with the actual workings of the current political situation.

It was hypothesised that university students today do not participate in politics because they do not feel the need to do so. This was partly correct, but there were more complex reasons for non-participation. One of the most common reasons for non-participation was a lack of political efficacy. The perceived lack of political efficacy was caused by several reasons. Some interviewees said that the diversification of political interests and objectives has meant that there is no longer a single objective people can agree on. This has made participation for a particular cause less effective. The competition and conflicts between diverse political interests also have been cited to lower perceived political efficacy.

Yet, the more common cause of the perceived lack of political efficacy was the lack of trust that the current political system would effectively translate political participation by university students into change. This is closely related to the second reason that interviewees who are university students today gave for their non-participation: a lack of trust in the political elite. The perceived lack of transparency in the Korean political system and the lack of trust in politicians have caused many university students today

to perceive low levels of political efficacy, which in turn leads to low political participation.

Another reason that many interviewees gave for their non-participation was a lack of resources. Some of these were external resources. For instance, some of the interviewees said that they did not have the resources to learn about politics and this in turn made them less confident about participating. Others said that there was a lack of available opportunities in the political system for university students to be involved. However, others were internal resources, like time and energy. Many interviewees said that due to the highly competitive job market, they did not have time to be involved in politics. Many interviewees said that unlike in the past when university graduates were a minority and valued by employers, university students today must compete against greater numbers of other university graduates. They also thought learning about and getting involved in politics would be time-consuming and spending too much time on political participation would disadvantage them when applying for jobs. They said that society expected university students today to spend time on getting good grades and extracurricular activities rather than be involved in politics. Yet inherent in these responses was the reason that politics was simply not a priority for university students today.

Finally, many interviewees said that they simply did not feel a need to participate in politics. Interviewees said that the political situation was not dire enough to warrant active political participation. Some interviewees said that they did not feel politics was very relevant to their lives or found politics to be interesting or fun. They said that they had other priorities over spending time on political participation. They thought

that though Korean politics had its problems, it was not serious enough to warrant ordinary university students becoming involved in politics.

Many of the hypotheses on the political culture of university students today were confirmed. It was correct that university students today exhibited lower levels of political participation and felt alienated from politics. However, this did not mean that university students today were not interested in politics. Rather, though they were interested in politics, many university students felt that they were not fully informed on political issues. They also perceived low levels of political efficacy caused by many different factors, which demotivated them from participating in politics.

IV Comparison & Analysis

1 Introduction

The following chapters discuss the explanations for the changes in the political culture of university students in Korea between the 1980s and today.

According to Norris (2012), there are broadly three types of explanations for the decline of political participation in democracies today: (1) demand-side theories; (2) intermediary theories; and (3) supply-side theories. Demand-side theories explain changes in political culture by reference to underlying social, economic and cultural shifts in the society. Intermediary theories focus on the impact of media coverage of politics on political culture. Supply-side theories explain changes in political culture by reference to changes in the political system and the quality of governance.

As will be discussed further, demand-side theories are particularly useful for explaining some of the changes in the reasons for political participation part of the changes in the political socialization process. In particular, demand-side theories can explain why university students no longer perceive themselves to be the educated elite charged with a duty to participate in politics. Demand-side theories also help to explain why parents have become more important in the political socialization process.

We then proceed to discuss how intermediary theories can explain the changes in the attitudes towards the media and the experience of latent political participation.

However, the biggest problem with intermediary theories is that it is difficult to separate the effects of media on political culture with the effects of the supply of politics, which is reflected through the media.

It was hypothesised that the changes in the political system of Korea would explain the changes in the political culture of university students. We will discuss the applicability of supply-side theories for explaining the changes in the political culture of university students. Supply-side explanations are useful for explaining the changes in the attitudes towards government and politics, the experience of manifest political participation, the reasons for political participation, non-participation and some elements of political socialization.

Although each of these types of theories cannot be a standalone explanation of the changes in the political culture of university students in Korea, they are complementary and interrelated. When all three explanations are examined together, the changes in the political culture of university students can be more fully explained.

2 Demand-side explanations

2.1 Introduction

The basic premise of demand-side explanations is that social, economic and cultural shifts cause changes in the political culture of a society. The most prominent contemporary demand-side explanations of political culture have been in the work of Inglehart. Based on the cross-national data collected in the World Values Surveys and European Values Surveys, Inglehart identifies parallel developments on both socioeconomic indicators and political culture indicators when a society undergoes the shift from agrarian to industrial society (1997). In more recent work, Inglehart and Welzel have also identified shifts in political culture towards greater emphasis on 'self-expression' or 'emancipative' values as a society develops from an industrial to post-industrial society (2005). Similarly, Dalton (2005) identified a trend of a rapid decline of political trust among the young and better educated. He concluded that: 'We have entered a new period when governments must confront a public sceptical of their motivations, doubtful about the institutions of representative democracy, and willing to challenge political elites' (Dalton, 2005: 150).

However, these theories based on the experience of advanced Western democracies are not entirely applicable to the Korean case for two reasons. Firstly, Korea has undergone rapid modernisation, urbanisation and economic development, which created unique conditions different from the more gradual socioeconomic development that can be observed in Western democracies. Secondly, unlike the advanced Western democracies, Korea experienced a turbulent political history,

including being under colonial rule, experiencing a civil war and being ruled by successive dictatorships. These differences in the socioeconomic development trajectory means that the Korean case does not neatly fit the theories developed based on Western democracies.

Although theories based on developed Western democracies are not entirely applicable to the Korean case, this section discusses potential demand-side explanations for the changes in the political culture of university students. In the Korean case, demand-side explanations are particularly useful in explaining changes in the reasons for political participation and non-participation and one of the elements of the political socialization process. More specifically, demand-side explanations effectively explain why university students today no longer perceive themselves as the educated elite charged with the duty to participate in politics and say that they have no time to devote to political participation. Demand-side explanations also explain why parents play a larger role in the political socialization process of university students today. Nevertheless, as will be discussed further, there are inherent limitations of demand-side theories in explaining the changes in all elements of political culture.

2.2 Reasons for political participation and non-participation

Despite the high personal risks of participation, many interviewees who were university students in the 1980s said that they participated because they felt a duty to do so. University students in the 1980s perceived themselves to be part of a privileged elite charged with the duty to participate in politics despite the sacrifice required. In contrast, university students today no longer perceive themselves to be the privileged

educated elite with a duty to contribute to society. University students today are instead concerned with finding employment in an increasingly competitive job market. Many interviewees said that they had no time to devote to political participation as they had other priorities that they felt were either more useful for developing their job prospects or found more enjoyable. This change in the reason for political participation can be explained through demand-side theories that link changes in the socioeconomic structure of society to changes in the political culture.

Some explanations of student activism in Asia and other developing countries emphasise the sense of social responsibility that students felt as a minority privileged elite in predominantly uneducated peasant societies (Lyonette, 1966; Lipset, 1967; Kelliher, 1993). Particularly, educational systems in which middle-class children are admitted into universities based on merit have been observed to generate what may be termed '*etudiant oblige*'. This is the belief that students, as the educated elite, have a duty to lead their country and speak out on behalf of the powerless against injustice and oppression (Aspinall and Weiss, 2012: 283).

Indeed, one of the reasons that many interviewees who were university students in the 1980s cited for being involved in student activism was that they felt a duty to do so as the educated elite. Yet, the socioeconomic status of Korea in the 1980s was not what could be called a 'predominantly uneducated peasant society'. By the 1980s, South Korea had undergone rapid economic development. The Korean War (1945-1950) had devastated the Korean economy and destroyed most of its industrial infrastructure. However, a state-led economic development programme that began under the President Park Chung-hee administration facilitated rapid industrialisation and

economic development (Heo and Roehrig, 2010: 78). By 1985, Korea's GDP had increased to US$103 billion and GDP per capita of US$2,542. This was a rapid increase from GDP of only US$3.9 billion and GDP per capita of US$155 in 1960 (The World Bank, World Development Indicators). By the 1980s, Korea had also become a modernised country as reflected in the high levels of primary and secondary education. In 1985, 99.2% of Koreans in the relevant age group obtained at least a middle school diploma; 90.7% obtained at least a high school diploma; and 36.4% went on to obtain a university degree. (E-Narajipyo. Educational attainment).

Nevertheless, in the 1980s, university students were still a minority and had significantly more formal education than previous generations. For instance, in 1985, the average years of schooling for people in the 20-29 age group was 11 years, which was significantly higher than the average of all age groups of only 8.6 years (E-Narajipyo. Mean years of schooling). University students in the 1980s were also likely to be from wealthier and more highly educated families (Kim, K. U., et al., 2003). The interviews of university students in the 1980s confirmed that university students perceived themselves to be the educated elite with a duty to contribute to the public good even if that required self-sacrifice.

However, today, things have changed. One of the key reasons that university students today gave for non-participation in politics was that the socioeconomic status of university students has changed. One interviewee who was very active in the student activist movement in the 1980s and is currently a member of the National Assembly said that non-participation by university students today is caused by socioeconomic changes. He said:

I don't think we can blame university students today for not participating in politics. It is so difficult for them to get the jobs they want these days. Back in 1987-1990, the Korean economy was booming. Anyone who wanted a job could get one back then. Even if you were a student activist, you could get a job at a good company if you went to a good enough university. However, nowadays, university students face so much competition. (A04)[57]

One interviewee who is currently a university student explained how the society today has changed and how that affects the time and energy he had available for political participation. He said:

There is just too much pressure. There is no time to spend on politics. Even if I wanted to think freely and participate in politics, everyone tells me that I shouldn't and instead spend that time and energy on getting a job. Before, if you graduated Seoul National University, you had your pick of jobs and had the time to participate in politics and still get a good job. However, after the IMF crisis, we university students no longer have that luxury. (B10)[58]

Similarly, another interviewee said:

Back then in the 1980s, university students were clearly part of a privileged elite, so they felt a duty to participate. Now, everyone goes to university. We can't afford to spend time doing other things because we need to compete. There are only so many jobs. (B22)[59]

As discussed in the empirical findings of this thesis, many interviewees who are currently university students held similar views. The socioeconomic status of university students today is very different from that of university students in the 1980s.

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[57] Male, Hanyang University, 1989, Honam
[58] Male, Seoul National University, 2008, Seoul and Gyeonggi
[59] Female, Chonnam National University, 2011, Honam

For one thing, they face greater competition. The percentage of young people going to study at university increased from 27.2% to 70.7% from 1980 to 2013, peaking at 83.8% in 2008 (Korean Educational Development Institute). Whereas university students formed a minority in the 1980s, this is no longer the case with the majority of young people obtaining a university education.

Despite the very high levels of education attained by young Koreans today, university education does not necessarily translate into employment (Oh, H. Y., Song, C. Y. and Song, G. M., 2012: 3-5). In fact, evidence shows a clear disparity between the types of jobs university students prefer and the types of jobs young people actually obtain. Although 65.9% of university graduates want to work at large corporations, only 13% of people in the age group of 20-29 actually work at large corporations (Oh, H. Y., Song, C. Y. and Song, G. M., 2012: 97-99). This disparity increases the intensity of the competition felt by young people today for a limited number of coveted job opportunities.

In addition, university students spend a lot of time and energy trying to obtain the credentials necessary to get the competitive job positions. According to KOSTAT (2012: 6), 78.8% of male university students and 19.8% of female university students reported taking gap semesters or gap years during their university degree. While 95.8% of male students cited the mandatory military service as the reason for taking a gap year; 47.9% of female students cited preparing for employment and qualifications as the reason for taking a gap year, followed by 32.4% citing participation in foreign exchange programmes, internships or apprenticeships (KOSTAT, 2012: 6). In 2012,

the average length of time it took for university graduates to find jobs was 11 months (KOSTAT, 2012: 11).

These difficulties faced by young people today reflect the slowing growth of the Korean economy in recent decades. After peaking at 14.78% in 1974, the economic growth rate has been steadily declining, with deeper and deeper troughs. In 1997-1998, the Asian Financial Crisis had a serious impact on the Korean economy and required the Bank of Korea to request support from the International Monetary Fund (the IMF financial crisis). Since then, the rate of annual growth has for the most part remained in single figures.

In addition to the slowing growth of the economy, a bigger problem has been the widening gap of inequality. Since the IMF financial crisis, there has been a steady increase in socioeconomic inequality as measured by the Gini coefficient of urban household income distribution in the three decades between 1993 and 2013 (Korean Statistical Information Service, 2015). In 1996 just before the IMF financial crisis, the top 20% earned 4.74 times the income of the lowest 20%; however, this increased to 6.75 times in 2000, 8.22 times in 2005, and 8.41 times in 2008 (Choi, J. J., 2010: 27). Another indicator of increasing inequality is the steadily widening wage gap between employees at large companies and those at small companies. In the early 1980s, the average wage for employees at small companies with 10-29 employees was at nearly the same level as for employees at large companies with more than 500 employees. However, the relative average wage at small companies has steadily decreased since the 1980s and is now less than 60% of the average wage at large companies (Korea Labor Institute, 2015: 61).

University students today face greater competition with more young people obtaining university education. Previously, a university degree meant job security; however, now, university students face greater competition and there is a disparity between the jobs that they want and the jobs that they actually get. Amongst university graduates, there is a disparity between the types of employment that the students want and the types of employment that are available to them. It has become common practice for young people to take gap years and spend longer time in education to obtain the credentials necessary to get the coveted jobs. In a slowing economy, obtaining employment is harder and the consequences of failure more dire with increasing levels of inequality.

These socioeconomic changes have resulted in changes in the political culture of university students. University students no longer perceive themselves as part of a privileged elite of society. The problems of increasing inequality and difficulties in obtaining desirable employment compel university students to focus on competing for jobs rather than spending time on political participation.

2.3 Political socialization

One of the elements of the political culture of university students that has changed the most is the influence of parents on the political socialization process. Almost all interviewees who were university students in the 1980s said that their parents did not have a significant impact on the formation of their political views. In contrast, a clear majority (60.4%) of the survey respondents who are currently university students said

that their parents had a big influence on their political views. Many interviewees said that their parents gave them guidance on learning about politics and sometimes even told them which political party to support. In contrast, interviewees who were university students in the 1980s said that their parents were not interested in politics and generally discouraged them from getting involved in politics.

Demand-side explanations can provide a partial explanation for this greater influence that parents have on the political socialization process of university students today. Socioeconomic development has meant that Korea has become a more developed and highly educated country since the 1980s. The parents of university students today are likely to be more highly educated than the parents of university students in the 1980s. In fact, in the 1980s, only 50% of the fathers of university students admitted to Seoul National University had at least university level education; and less than 20% of the mothers of those admitted had university level education (Kim, K. U., et al., 2003: 88). In contrast, according to the 2014 press release by the Seoul National University Centre for Campus Life & Culture, 86.9% of the fathers of university students admitted to Seoul National University in 2014 had at least university level education; and 77.3% of the mothers had at least university level education.

Many interviewees who were university students in the 1980s said that their parents were more concerned about food on the table than politics. In contrast, the parents of university students today were more likely to have had higher levels of education and have the resources to teach their children about politics. In addition, the parents of university students today are in the generation that had been university students in the 1980s. The generational effect of the common experience of the democratic transition

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of 1987 has meant that the parents of university students today are more likely to have a greater interest in politics and activism.

However, an interesting finding was that some university students today said that their parents actively discouraged them from getting involved in politics. The parents of university students discouraged their children from being involved in politics telling them it was futile to do so based on their own experiences of student activism or political participation. This in turn lowered the political efficacy of university students today.

In conclusion, demand-side explanations are useful for explaining certain aspects of the changes in the political culture of university students in Korea. It is particularly useful for explaining the changes in the perception of the role of university students in society as the educated elite as well as the changes in the role of parents in the political socialization process. It is also able to explain the reasons for the non-participation of university students today to the extent that the non-participation is caused by the lack of internal resources such as time and energy to devote to political participation.

However, it is unable to fully explain the changes in other aspects of the political socialization process, such as the changes in the role of school, university and military in the political socialization process. It is also unable to explain the changes in the forms of latent political participation of university students. Finally, demand-side explanations are poorly suited to explaining the changes in the attitudes that university students hold towards politics and government. These other elements of political culture are better explained by intermediary or supply-side explanations.

3 Intermediary explanations

3.1 Introduction

The basic premise of intermediary explanations is that media coverage of political affairs cause changes in the political culture of a society. There are many different types of intermediary explanations for changes in a political culture. One type of intermediary explanation posits that negative coverage of political events and elections reduces political trust (Cappella and Jamieson, 1997). Such negative coverage lowers political efficacy, leading to voter disaffection (Pinkleton, Austin and Fortman, 1998). Related studies have also argued that excessively negative news about sexual scandals and financial corruption are damaging to the reputation of the political actors and institutions, leading to broader disillusionment with the way democracy works (Germent, 1991; Orren, 1997). In the Korean context, it has been argued that the so-called 'racehorse journalism' of electoral media coverage causes political distrust and cynicism (Kang, N. W., 2004). Past studies have found that university students who use the media to learn about politics more often have lower levels of perceived political efficacy and are less likely to vote (Kim, G. G., 2008: 214).

Yet, not all studies concur that the media have such a negative effect on political participation. Especially in more recent research based on the Korean case, it has been argued that the key variable is not the length of time spent on using media but the purpose of using the media (Kim, C. S., 2012; Lee, J. G. and Keum, H. S., 2012; Shah, Kwak and Holbert, 2001). Studies based on psychology have found that regardless of the length of time spent on using media, if this time is spent on watching films or

similar entertainment, this lowers civic engagement; however, if this time is spent on reading the news or participating in online debates, it is linked to increased civic engagement (Zuniga and Valenzuela, 2011; Scheufele and Nisbet, 2002). In fact, cross-national studies have revealed that there is little evidence to support the connection between media coverage of scandals and corruption and subsequent levels of trust and confidence in government or satisfaction with democracy (Norris, 2012; Chanley, Rudolph and Rahn, 2000; Anderson and Tverdova, 2003; Moreno, 2002).

Yet, as discussed in the literature review, there are some problems with relying on intermediary explanations for changes in political culture. The biggest problem with intermediary accounts is that it may not be the media coverage of corruption and scandals that lower political trust and efficacy but the corruption and scandals themselves that lead to voter disaffection. In other words, the problem may lie in the deterioration of the quality of democratic performance. As such, it may be the case that intermediary theories that emphasise political communication do not provide an adequate standalone explanation for the changes in the political culture of university students in South Korea.

In fact, as will be further discussed, the perception that the media is not an independent, reliable source of information about politics has a negative impact on political trust and political efficacy. In the Korean context, because the media is not perceived to be an independent actor and is perceived to act in the interests of government and business, intermediary theories only explain a part of the issue. Nevertheless, examining the role of the media does yield useful explanations to some of the changes in the political culture of university students. In particular, the changes

in the media may explain the changes in the experience of latent political participation and the attitudes towards the media. In this chapter we will examine intermediary explanations for the changes in these elements of political culture.

3.2   Attitudes towards media and latent political participation

Latent political participation involves citizens being interested, keeping informed and discussing political issues with others (Ekman and Amna, 2012). In a political system, media plays an important role in informing the minds of the public on political and current affairs. The experience of latent political participation is therefore largely shaped by the role of the media.

However, in the 1980s, the media were not an independent source of information that provided objective coverage of political and current affairs. The mainstream media in the 1980s were strictly controlled by the Chun administration that had wide-ranging powers over all of the major broadcasters and newspapers. The government issued 'broadcast guidelines' for the media companies to follow. The Chun administration also had a large role in the recruitment and promotion of individual journalists and managers in mainstream media companies (Kang, J. M., 2007).

All interviewees who were university students in the 1980s recognised that the Chun administration controlled the media. They were also able to see that what they experienced on the streets and learned through foreign media were very different from what was broadcast on mainstream Korean media. They were therefore very sceptical of the media as a source of reliable information about political affairs. University

students in the 1980s said that they did not trust mainstream television broadcasts or newspapers because these mainstream media outlets were strictly controlled by the Chun administration in the 1980s.

Instead, they learned about political issues through the information that student activists distributed on campus through booklets, flyers and posters. They joined secret student groups and societies to discuss politics and learn more about political affairs and political theory. Due to the high costs of being involved in any form of student activism, the experience of latent political participation in the 1980s was organised and covert. Even latent political participation had high personal costs, and latent political participation often led to manifest political participation.

In contrast, the experience of latent political participation for university students today was much more loosely organised and less intense. Many interviewees listened to 'Naneun Ggomsuda', a popular podcast on politics, and read various sources to learn more about politics. Almost all university students today said that they discussed politics with family, friends, classmates and colleagues. However, many interviewees said that they sometimes did not enjoy the experience and wondered whether they knew enough about politics to discuss political issues. In general, though university students today attempted to engage in latent political participation, many interviewees expressed frustration at the lack of reliable information about politics to learn about and discuss politics. In fact, a significant majority (84.1%) of the respondents disagreed or partially disagreed with the statement that they trust the publicly available information about politics. In fact, a clear majority (62.6%) of university students today said that they actually did not know very much about the policies of major

political parties. This was largely supported by a wider study conducted on Korean voters in 2012 in which 73.6% of the respondents said that they did not know about the policy manifestos published by the parties. The results of this study are shown below (Jeong, H. O., 2012: 138).

Table 26. Voter Awareness of Manifestos

Answer	Percentage of Voters
I know it very well.	4.8%
I know it somewhat well.	21.6%
I don't really know about it.	35.4%
I don't know about it at all.	38.2%

(Source: Jeong, H. O., 2012: 138)

The general distrust that university students today hold towards the media are largely caused by the perception that the media are not fully independent from the government. In fact, according to the 2013 Freedom of the Press Index by Freedom House, South Korea ranks 64 and has the status of 'partly free'. It has a score of 31, with 0 being the best and 100 being the worst. One of the restrictions on the freedom of the press in South Korea is through informal methods, such as the appointment of top positions in the major broadcasters. It is still customary in Korea that each incoming President appoints new chairmen and directors in the key mainstream broadcasters, such as KBS and MBC (Cha, J. H. and Lee, C. H., 2009: 190). When the Lee Myung-bak administration came to power, former presidential campaign aides and advisers were appointed to key positions at a number of private media companies, despite the objections of journalists seeking to maintain the broadcaster's editorial

independence.[60] Because the government has such a direct influence on the livelihoods and careers of the journalists themselves, it is hard to expect impartiality.

The informal restrictions on the freedom of press are further reinforced by more formal controls on freedom of press through the operation of defamation law, national security law and electoral law. Defamation is a criminal offence in South Korea, and charges are occasionally threatened or brought against journalists who criticise the government.[61] Another area of law that restricts the freedom of press and expression is the National Security Law. According to Article 7 of the National Security Law, expressing sympathy for North Korea is an imprisonable offence. This broad remit of the offence has meant that even those members of the public who express their opinion or disseminate information on North Korea may be at risk of prosecution and censorship.[62]

Finally, the Public Election Law itself impedes freedom of expression. Under the Public Election Law, any political activity that supports one candidate over another outside of the 'Electoral Campaign Period' is considered to be pre-electioneering and

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[60] In January 2012, over 700 employees from MBC went on strike, claiming that the network president, who had been appointed by the government, had interfered with fair reporting. The strike expanded to other networks with similar management issues, including about 650 employees at KBS, the largest network in Korea (Freedom House South Korea Profile). According to the opposition Democratic Party, over 450 journalists have been penalized and 19 fired at KBS, MBC, YTN, and Yonhap News for objecting to presidential appointments into the media industry during the five years of the Lee Myung-bak administration (Kim, J. G., 18 June 2013, Sisa Jeju).

[61] A recently controversial case was that of Chung Bong-ju, a prominent political commentator, who served a one-year prison sentence in late 2011 on the charge of defamation for spreading false rumours about President Lee Myung-bak's connection to alleged stock market fraud (Cho, M. D., 26 Dec 2011, Kyunghyang Shinmun).

[62] For instance, in 2012, Park Jung-geun, a member of the public who re-tweeted messages from the North Korean government's twitter account, was found guilty of an offence against Article 7(1) of the National Security Law (Kim, Y. N. Y., 22 Aug 2013, Pressian News). Aside from prosecutions, according to the Korea Communications Standards Commission (KCSC), in 2011, an official body responsible for monitoring online content, 304 websites and accounts were shut down and about 67,000 web posts were deleted by the police for 'threatening national security by praising North Korea, and denouncing the U.S. and the (South Korean) government' (Freedom House Profile on South Korea).

thus prohibited. This means that much of what may be considered political commentary and not strictly campaigning could potentially be caught as pre-electioneering.[63]

The restrictions on the media make it difficult for university students to gain access to impartial and trustworthy information about politics. These restrictions not only makes it difficult for new political entrants to reach the public, but also disadvantages the non-governing party or commentators challenging the government as it opens them up to criminal prosecution. These shortcomings in the role of the media as a reliable source of political information affect the perceived political efficacy of university students today. Indeed, many interviewees who are currently university students said that they did not feel confident about participating in politics or discussing politics with others because they did not think they were adequately informed to do so. Negative news about politics was also one of the most commonly cited reasons for non-participation according to the surveys conducted on current university students.

The main difference between university students in the 1980s and university students today was the effect that the distrust of the media had on the motivation to participate in politics. University students in the 1980s said that they were partly motivated to join student activist groups to find out more about political affairs. University students in the 1980s turned to covert, organised efforts to learn about politics and discuss political affairs with one another, despite the high personal risks of doing so. In contrast, university students today said that the general lack of reliable sources of information about politics directly affected their motivation to participate in politics.

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[63] In the run up to the 18th National Assembly Elections, the National Electoral Commission deleted 10,581 web posts and websites for slander, false propaganda, and pre-electioneering, with 89.2% of the cases involving pre-electioneering.

University students today remained frustrated at the lack of reliable publicly available resources about politics. One of the reasons that university students today gave for their lack of participation was the lack of confidence that they knew enough to become involved in politics. Although many interviewees said that they looked at primary sources or multiple secondary sources to learn about politics, they said they found the process time-consuming, frustrating and ultimately demotivating.

This difference in the effect of the distrust of the media on university students in the 1980s and university students today is something that the intermediary explanation cannot fully explain. The intermediary explanation is useful for examining why even after the democratic transition university students are sceptical and distrustful of media and publicly available information about politics. However, it cannot explain why, under similar circumstances, university students in the 1980s tried to learn more about politics through covert organised forms of latent participation; and university students today simply remain frustrated. This disparity may be caused by the changes in the perceived duty to learn about and be involved in politics or the changes in the seriousness of political problems. These factors are analysed through the demand-side and supply-side explanations. In the South Korean case study, the perception of the media as not being an independent actor means that there are limitations with the explanatory power of the intermediary theory.

4 Supply-side explanations

4.1 Introduction

The basic premise of supply-side explanations is that the supply of governance and political systems affect the political culture of a society. Within the literature based on the experience of Western democracies, it has been argued that public satisfaction is a product of the government's public policy performance, especially economic policies (Clarke, et al., 1992; Anderson, 1995). Yet, due to globalisation, internationalisation of capital markets, privatisation, deregulation and the increasing importance of supranational institutions like the EU, IMF and WTO, the traditional scope and autonomy of the modern state has diminished (Hay, 2007). In addition, the professionalization of legislatures and low levels of incumbency turnover have insulated politicians from electoral defeat (Norris, 1997) and the lack of influence of minor 'protest parties' has failed to provide a channel for disaffected voters (Miller and Listhaug, 1990). It has also been pointed out that intermediary institutions such as political parties, interest groups and parliament have weakened over time, making government less accountable and responsive to the citizenry (Hayward, 1995; 1996).

The problems in the political system during the dictatorship of the Chun administration caused university students in the 1980s to hold intensely negative views towards the government and politics characterised by fear and anger. The injustices in the social structure and the injustices carried out by the government against democratic protestors and student activists drove university students in the 1980s to participate in politics despite the personal risks of doing so.

Since the democratic transition in 1987, South Korea has undergone significant political change. Direct elections and electoral laws that provide for free and fair elections have meant that university students today perceive voting to be an effective method of manifest political participation. University students today do not hold the same intensely negative attitudes towards the government and politics as their counterparts in the 1980s. One of the reasons that university students today gave for not participating in politics was that the government no longer imposed policies that resulted in severe social injustices or infringements of personal freedom.

However, according to the empirical findings, university students today were not entirely satisfied with politics and government. In fact, university students today held generally negative attitudes towards government and politics. The interviews and surveys revealed that university students today have a deep-seated lack of trust in politicians. They perceived politicians to act for their own self-interest and not for the public good. Both the government and politicians were perceived to lack communication with the public and university students. Although most of the interviewees and survey respondents said that they voted, very few said that they had a political party they actively supported. In addition, many interviewees and survey respondents said that they could not perceive clear policy and ideology differences between the major political parties. All of these perceptions negatively affect the perceived efficacy of political participation amongst university students today. In fact, a lack of political efficacy was one of the most commonly cited reasons for non-participation amongst university students today.

One explanation for these changes in the political culture of university students is that there are problems in the supply of governance in the Korean political system. These problems have caused university students today to have a lack of trust for politicians, a lack of support for political parties and a low level of political efficacy. There is a consensus in the literature that the Korean political party system is failing to adequately aggregate the interests of civil society and translate these into government policy (Kim, Y. H., 2001; Choi, J. J., Park, C. P. and Park, S. H., 2007; Chung, J. M., 2008). Many studies also identify regionalism as having a negative impact on Korean politics (Shin, M. S., 1986, 1994; Kim, M. H., 1994; Lee, G. Y., 1998; Ohn, M. G., 2003; Park, M. H., 2004; Park, S. H., 2006).

In this chapter, we first discuss the issues with the Korean political system that may be a cause for some of the changes in the political culture of university students. This section examines the changes in public funding for political parties, the role of regionalism in Korean politics and the ideology and policy differences between the major political parties. We then discuss how each of these elements of the Korean political system has affected the changes in the political culture of university students.

4.2   Issues with the Korean political system

Unlike university students in the 1980s who expressed intensely negative attitudes towards politics and government characterised by fear and anger, university students today held much less intense and more diffused negative attitudes towards politics and government. Whereas university students in the 1980s were able to clearly identify the oppressive policies of the Chun administration as the reason for their negative attitudes

towards politics and government, not many university students today were able to explain their generally negative attitudes towards politics and government today. The empirical findings show that university students today have a low level of trust for politicians, do not perceive clear differences in the major political parties, do not have a political party they support, perceive a lack of communication with politicians and held the view that even if politicians are in different parties, they ultimately act like a cartel.

These findings indicate that the cartel party thesis, developed by Katz and Mair (1995) may, to some extent, be applicable to the Korean case. In their 1995 article, Katz and Mair put forth the cartel party thesis based on the evidence in Western European countries. The cartel party thesis holds that political parties increasingly function like cartels, employing state resources and limiting political competition to ensure their own electoral success. They argue that the cartelization of the party system means that political parties become instruments of the state, rather than acting as the bridge between the state and civil society. This leads to voter disaffection, reduced voter loyalty, and a decline in party membership, which has been observed in many Western European democracies from the 1970s onwards.

Though not all elements of the cartel party thesis are applicable to the Korean case, there are four features of a cartelised political system that are applicable to Korean politics:

(1) the increase of public funding for political parties;
(2) electoral laws that favour the major political parties;

(3) restriction of ideological and policy competition between the major political parties; and

(4) the role of regionalism as a cleavage in elections.

All of these elements of the Korean political system indicate that a mechanism similar to the cartel party thesis may be at work. Each of these four features of the Korean political system is examined in greater detail in the sections below.

4.2.1 Public funding for political parties

Firstly, increased public funding for political parties takes tax revenue away from other institutions that may benefit citizens and directly benefits the politicians. Public funding can also be used to restrict new entrants. Politicians making favourable public funding laws for political parties may explain why university students today have the perception of politicians being self-interested and acting like a cartel.

Immediately after the democratic transition in 1987, during the negotiations for the choice of political institutions in the beginning of the Sixth Republic (1987 – present), the governing party and the opposition parties argued vigorously over the type of electoral system for the parliamentary elections. In contrast, they failed to debate over such issues as political party laws, campaign laws, and party funding laws, and simply inherited the institutions from the authoritarian era. According to Lee Jung-jae, one of the eight negotiating members, the opposition felt constantly under pressure to finish the negotiations, and therefore was unable to debate any of the more 'peripheral' issues (Jang, H., 2003: 51). One of the key issues that were tabled in the initial

negotiation process was political party funding laws. As the parties in power in the National Assembly passed amendments to the party funding laws in subsequent years, they heavily favoured those parties that were already represented.

Though the first Political Funds Law of 1965 introduced the principle of public subsidies for political parties, it was only in the 1989 amendment of the law that public funding truly expanded. The total amount of money set aside for subsidizing political parties increased from around 1 billion won (US$838,000) in 1988 to over 108 billion won in 2012 (US$90,504,000) (National Election Commission Reports 2006-2012).[64] In addition, the proportion of public subsidies in the total income for the political parties has also substantially increased. In 1988, public subsidies took up 1.3% of the total income of the political parties, but since then, this has risen to 13.13% in 1991, 9.2% in 1994, 31.3% in 1995, and 35.2% in 1998 (Kwak, J. Y., 2001: 44). This trend has roughly remained the same in the 2000s and the percentage of the public funding in the total income of the political parties has remained in the low-to-mid 30% range (National Election Commission Reports 2006-2012).

Although the laws regarding the amount of public subsidies to be provided to the political parties have constantly changed, the principle of distributing the subsidies has not. According to the laws amended in 1991, 40% of the total funds available are distributed to those parties that have created a negotiating bloc in the National Assembly.[65] Of the parties that failed to form a negotiating bloc, those parties with at

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[64] KRW-USD exchange rates calculated based on 26 September 2015 rates.
[65] According to s33 of the National Assembly Law, a negotiating bloc in the National Assembly can be formed with at least 20 members, regardless of party membership. Usually, parties with more than 20 members elected into the National Assembly form a negotiating bloc, but irregularly, members of different parties have created negotiating blocs in order to benefit from the preferred status negotiating

least 5% of the seats are given 5% of the funds; those parties that earned at least 2% of the votes in the parliamentary elections get 2% of the funds (Jang, H., 2003:53).

This distribution law was later amended, but the principle remains the same. Currently, 50% of the funds are distributed among the negotiating blocs formed by the same political party. 5% of the funds are distributed to each political party that has more than 5 seats in the National Assembly but was unable to form a negotiating bloc. 2% of the funds are distributed to each political party that has obtained at least 2% of the votes in the political parties but have secured less than 5 seats or did not participate in the last parliamentary elections (Korean Electoral Funding Law, Regulation No. 11376). The result is that the political parties that benefit are the large, established political parties that have other significant sources of funding. Meanwhile, nascent political parties are left out from receiving a share of the immensely large public subsidies fund or get meagre portions of it. The following chart showing the breakdown of funding by party show the disparity in the public subsidies provided to the two main established parties and the other minor parties.

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blocs have in public subsidies. Yet, according to the current amended party funding laws, it is not possible to get the preferred distribution status by forming negotiating blocs with other parties.

Figure 7. Breakdown of funding by party in 2012 (KRW)
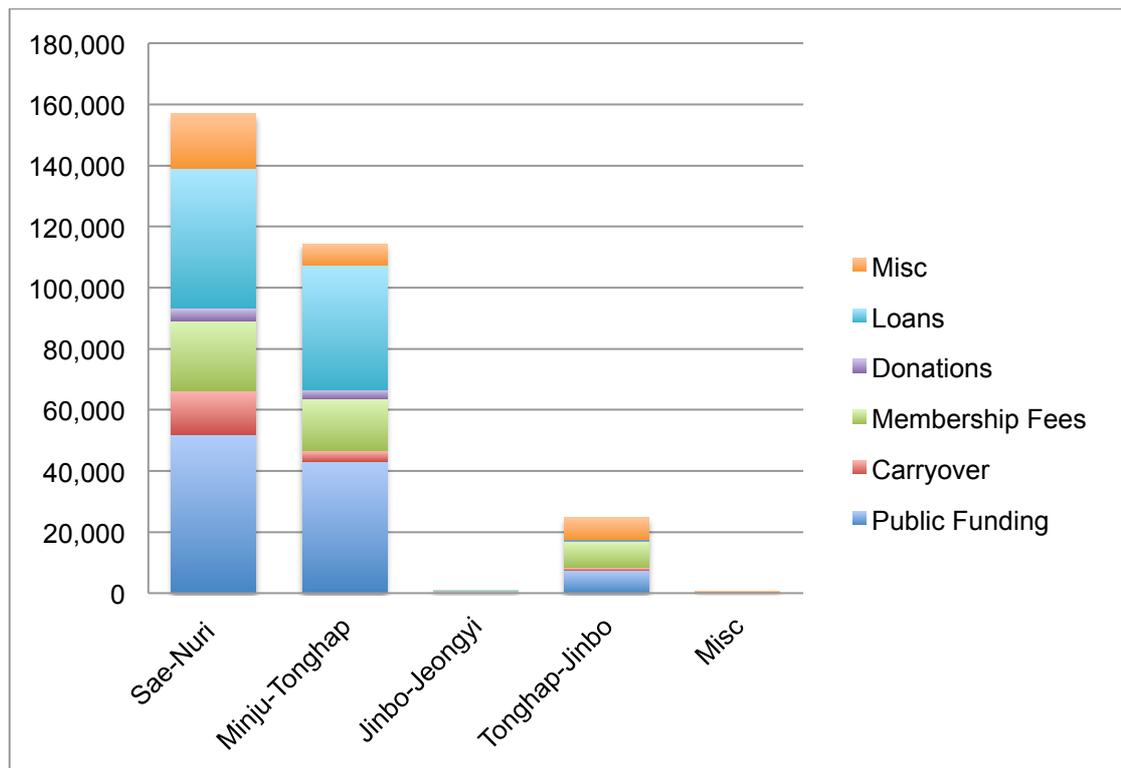
Table 27. Breakdown of funding by party in 2012 (KRW)

Party Name	Public Funding	Carry -over	Membership Fees	Donations	Loans	Misc	Total
New World	51,795	14,439	22,917	4,192	45,738	17,885	156,966
Democratic United	43,150	3,397	17,083	3,035	40,645	7,007	114,317
Progressive Justice	499	0	170	0	142	23	834
Unified Progressive	7,494	814	8,574	541	276	7,054	24,753
Misc	0	0	396	0	34	130	560

(Source: National Election Commission Reports 2006-2012)

In this section, we have examined the public funding available for parties in South Korea. As we have observed, the amount of public funding given to parties have increased tremendously since 1990, and public funding currently makes up over 30%

of the income of the parties. This shows that parties rely on state subsidies, which one of the key indicators of cartelisation. In addition, the public funding distribution system greatly favours the established parties. As a result, public funding acts as an institution that keeps out new competitors.

4.2.2　Electoral laws

Although the 1987 presidential election marked the first truly democratic elections, there have been elections in place in Korea since the 1948. Of the ten presidential elections between 1948 and 1978, six were by direct popular vote. However, these direct elections were little more than efforts to legitimise the presidential office for the authoritarian leader while maintaining a façade of democratic rule. Yet, if maintaining that façade risked losing office, the authoritarian leaders did not hesitate to resort to vote manipulation or change electoral rules to their favour. Korea has also had a parliament called the National Assembly since 1948 whose members were directly elected. Yet, until the democratic transition in 1987, the electoral system had been extremely distortionary and heavily favoured the governing party. The governing party had been able to earn a much larger proportion of the seats than the proportion of votes under this system; on average the bonus rate was 22.04% (Croissant, 2002: 240).

After the democratic transition in 1987, direct presidential elections were introduced with a limit of one five-year term for each president. This law has remained in place since 1987 without change. However, three slightly different types of mixed proportional representation systems were adopted for parliamentary elections (Chung, T. I. and Kim, I. S., 2010). Firstly, for the 13th National Assembly in 1988, 224 out of

299 seats were allocated on a plurality single member constituency system. Half of the remaining 75 seats were allocated to the party that won the most seats in the plurality single member constituency system. The rest of the 37 seats were allocated to the rest of the parties in accordance to the proportion of seats they earned in the plurality single member constituency system. Parties that earned less than five seats in the plurality single member constituencies were not included in the proportional representation system. This mixed system again heavily favoured the governing party because half of the proportional representation seats were reserved for the party that obtained the most seats in the single member constituency system. This acted as a sort of safety mechanism for the governing party (Shin, M. S., 1995: 246). As a result, though this first mixed proportional representation system seemed to lower barriers to entry for smaller parties, it did not do so, and in reverse protected the interests of the governing party (Kim, D. H., 2010: 420-421).

The second mixed proportional representation system adopted for the 14th, 15th and 16th National Assemblies was more representative. For the 14th National Assembly, 224 of the 299 seats were reserved for the plurality single member constituency system; and 75 seats were reserved for the proportional representation system. For the 15th National Assembly, 237 of the 299 seats were reserved for the plurality single member constituency system; and 62 seats were reserved for the proportional representation system. For the 16th National Assembly, 227 of the 273 seats were reserved for the plurality single member constituency system; and 46 seats were reserved for the proportional representation system.

The proportional representation system in each of these National Assemblies was that parties that earned five or more seats in the plurality single member constituency system or 5% or more of the valid votes were allocated seats in the proportion of the seats they won (14th) or the proportion of the votes they earned (15th and 16th). Even for those parties that failed to elect anyone to the plurality single member constituency system, if they had earned more than 3% of the votes, they were granted one seat. Though the electoral system in this second period was less biased in favour of the governing party, the basis of the system was the plurality single member constituency system, and was therefore not conducive to multiple political parties (Choi, T. W., 2011:47-48).

Finally, the third mixed proportional representation system adopted for the 17th, 18th, and the most recent 19th National Assemblies attempted to reform the electoral system. Here, again, 243, 245, and 246 of the 299, 299, and 300 seats, respectively, were allocated on a plurality single member constituency system. For the remaining 56, 54, and 54 seats, respectively, proportional representation applied. For this proportional representation system, each voter casts two votes, one for the candidate they support, and another for the party they support. The objective of this 'One person-Two votes' system was to help those minor parties whose leaders were not very well known. Each party gets the proportion of proportional representation seats in accordance to the proportion of the votes they won. Only those parties that have earned more than 5 seats in the plurality single member constituency system or 3% of the votes get represented in the proportional representation seats (Chung, T. I. and Kim, I. S., 2010: 221).

Table 28. Difference in the votes and seats received by the governing party (1988-present)

		Votes received by Governing Party (%)	Seats received by Governing Party (%)	Bonus Rate
First Mixed System				
13rd National Assembly (1988)		34.0	41.8	7.8
Second Mixed System				
14th National Assembly (1992)		38.5	49.8	11.3
15th National Assembly (1996)		34.5	46.5	12.0
16th National Assembly (2000)		39.0	48.7	9.7
Third Mixed System				
17th National Assembly (2004)	SMC	42.0	53.1	11.1
	PR	38.3	41.1	2.8
18th National Assembly (2008)	SMC	43.4	53.5	10.1
	PR	37.5	40.7	3.2

(Source: Modified from Croissant, 2002; National Election Commission Statistics)

The changes in the electoral system in the Sixth Republic have, to a certain extent, mitigated the disproportionality that existed in the First to the Fifth Republics. The Bonus Rate has been reduced from an average of 22.04% to the 10% range, as can be seen the chart above. In addition, in the recent 17th and 18th National Assemblies under the third mixed electoral system, the bonus rate arising from the proportional representation system was an average of 3%, showing that the proportional representation system was rectifying some of the distortionary effects of the plurality single member constituency system.

Yet, the proportional representation element is quite small in the Korean mixed system. The ratio between the seats allocated by the single member constituency system and the proportional representation system is approximately 4.3:1. In comparison, the ratio in the Japanese mixed system is 1.6:1, and the ratio in the German system is 1:1. In this way, the Korean electoral system is predominantly a single member constituency system, and therefore favours a two-party system. In

addition, the barrier for entry into the National Assembly for minor parties is still high. The thresholds for being allocated proportional representation seats is five seats earned in the plurality single member constituency system or 3% of the total votes in a single national district. This makes it very difficult for new parties and political actors to break into the existing party system.

The reason why such a disproportionate parliamentary electoral system was created can be traced back to the negotiations that took place at the beginning of the Sixth Republic. When the key political actors were debating which type of parliamentary electoral system to adopt, representativeness or accessibility were not key factors to be considered. Instead, they were focused on finding a system that would maximize their individual interests in the party power game (Jang, H., 2003). After the presidential elections had taken place in December 1987, the governing Democratic Justice Party and the two opposition parties – Kim Young-sam's Reunification Democratic Party and Kim Dae-jung's Party for Peace and Democracy – began negotiations on the parliamentary electoral system.

The governing Democratic Justice Party, which had the upper hand in the negotiations, initially suggested an electoral system that would have given some opportunities for new entrants into the political arena. The Democratic Justice Party had demonstrated during the 1987 presidential elections that they were strongly supported in the rural areas, but relatively less so in the urban areas. Therefore, they suggested that a plurality single member constituency system should be maintained in the rural districts while a two or three member per constituency system should be adopted for the urban districts.

On the other hand, the Party for Peace and Democracy led by Kim Dae-jung had confirmed through the presidential election that their support base was in the Honam area. Therefore, they preferred the single member constituency system in order to maximize the number of seats they could earn in the National Assembly. Meanwhile, the other opposition party, Kim Young-sam's Reunification Democratic Party preferred the mixed single and multi-member constituency system suggested by the governing Democratic Justice Party because this would have maximized their share of the seats in the National Assembly. However, because of the opinion within the party that the opposition forces should show solidarity, the Reunification Democratic Party leaned in favour of the single member constituency system, as preferred by the Party for Peace and Democracy (Jang, H., 2003).

Against this context, there were largely two reasons for the Democratic Justice Party subsequently withdrawing its suggestion of the mixed single and multi member constituency system and announcing its support for the single member constituency system. Firstly, the multi-member constituency system, in form of the binomial system, had been first implemented under the Yushin constitution under the dictatorial Park Chung-hee regime. It was therefore unpopular among the public because of the perception that it was a legacy from that era. As a result, the Democratic Justice Party was willing to accept a fully single member constituency system, which had a clearer democratic justification from the US and UK electoral experience, as long as its party interests were sufficiently protected (Brady and Mo, 1992). Secondly, the Democratic Justice Party had the expectation that should the two opposition parties fail to cooperate, that they would be able to gain the plurality in some of the more

contentious constituencies (Jang, H., 2003). So in the end, the electoral system to be thus implemented was one in which 224 seats were to be elected in single member constituencies, 75 seats through a proportional representation system, to elect a total of 299 members to the National Assembly.

As explained above, the first type of proportional representation system to be implemented was one in which half of the proportional representation seats were allocated to the party with the most seats earned through the single member constituency system, and the remaining allocated according to the proportion of seats earned by each party. Though this distortionary system has later been changed, the biggest problem with the proportional representation element of the Korean parliamentary electoral system is the excessively high electoral threshold. The electoral threshold is five seats earned through the single member constituency system; in other words, those parties that won the plurality vote in less than five districts would not be represented through proportional representation. This made it very difficult for new, small parties to gain seats in the National Assembly (Jang, H., 2003: 50). Therefore, the structuring of the electoral system has been dominated by the established parties, and effectively functions to restrict the access of minority parties.

4.2.3   Regionalism

Thirdly, regionalism further contributes to the cartelisation of the Korean political system. Regionalism has been identified by some academics as the 'chronic disease that will be the ruin of the nation' (Park, S. H., 2009: 9-10). The main problem with regionalism is that it does not allow for genuine policy competition. It guarantees

parties and politicians votes from their respective regions, while drawing the attention of the electorate away from other policy issues. Since the outcomes of elections are decided by regionalism, politicians are not incentivised to communicate with the electorate. In effect, regionalism functions as a way for parties to restrict policy competition. This lowers the perceived political efficacy of electoral participation (Sohn, B. C., 1998: 183). The issue of regionalism at least partially explains why university students today feel a low level of political efficacy, even when voting. Some university students today said that their votes felt meaningless because they thought that others, particularly the older generations would simply vote as regionalism dictated.

There are six major provinces in Korea, and these are: Seoul, Yeongnam, Honam, Chungcheong, Gangwon, and Jeju. Dialects in Korean language make it easy for people to identify where others come from, and there exist certain prejudices about people from certain areas on their personality or work ethic. Of the six major areas, Chungcheong, Gangwon, and Jeju do not have key political parties or politicians associated with them, and hence are not seen to exhibit a clear political bias. Chungcheong is located in the centre and west of the country, Gangwon in the northeast bordering North Korea, and Jeju on an island in the Southern coast.

The two clearly politically charged areas are Yeongnam and Honam. Yeongnam consists of the North and South Gyeongsang, Daegu, and Busan areas in the southeast of the country. Honam consists of the North and South Jeolla and Gwangju in the southwest of the country. Seven out of eight Korean presidents have come from the Yeongnam area, and have favoured developing their home region. As a result, people

from the Honam area have deeply held grievances against politicians from the Yeongnam region. This longstanding Honam-Yeongnam provincial divide has often been played out in national politics (Jung, H. G., 2011: 179-182).

The origin of the Honam-Yeongnam provincial divide between the Yeongnam and the Honam areas can be traced back to the authoritarian regime of President Park Chung-hee. President Park, who was from the Gyeongsang province (Yeongnam), awarded lucrative local development projects to his hometown, appointed Yeongnam people into influential positions, and favoured businesses originating from Yeongnam. Because President Chun Doo-hwan was from the Yeongnam region, this regional favouritism for Yeongnam continued during the Chun regime (Jung, H. G., 2011: 179-182).

By the Fifth Republic (1980-1988), regional favouritism had gone to such an extent that of the high-ranking public officials, 43.6% were from the Yeongnam area, whereas only 9.6% were from the Honam area. Amongst the top 50 chaebols during the Fifth Republic, Yeongnam businessmen owned 23, whereas Honam businessmen owned only 4. As for urbanization in the same period, North Gyeongsang and South Gyeongsang reached 57% and 75%, respectively. On the other hand, urbanization reached only 43% and 40% for North Jeolla and South Jeolla, respectively (Dong-A Ilbo, 5 January 1988).

Even after the democratic transition, politicians and political parties exploited regional identities, rivalries and prejudices to garner votes, further exacerbating regionalism in Korea. In the 1987 presidential elections, each of the four major candidates – Kim

Dae-jung, Kim Young-sam, Roh Tae-woo, and Kim Jong-pil – were strongly supported by their home regions. Kim Jong-pil had the support of his native Chungcheong province; Roh Tae-woo had the support of the Daegu and North Gyeongsang province (Yeongnam); Kim Young-sam of the Busan and South Gyeongsang province (Yeongnam); and Kim Dae-jung of the Gwangju and Jeolla area (Lee, Y. S., 2010: 284). This was evident in the electoral statistics: each of the voters won the highest percentage and the majority of the votes in their native regions as displayed in the table below.

Table 29. Votes earned by candidates in the 1987 presidential election by region

Name (Party)	Region of Origin	Region	% of votes
Roh Tae-woo (Democratic Justice)	Daegu and North Gyeongsang	Daegu	70.7%
		North Gyeongsang	66.4%
Kim Yong-sam (Reunification Democratic)	Busan and South Gyeongsang	Busan	56%
		South Gyeongsang	51.3%
Kim Dae-jung (Peace and Democracy)	Gwangju and Jeolla province	Gwangju	94.2%
		North Jeolla	83.8%
		South Jeolla	90.3%
Kim Jong-pil (New Democratic Republican)	Chungcheong province	Chungcheong	18.8%

(Source: Lee, Y. S., 2010: 284)

One of the most illustrative examples of regionalism being played out in national politics was the Cho-won Bok-jip incident in the run-up to the 1992 presidential elections. On 11 December 1992, before the presidential election, Kim Ki-chun, Kim Young-hwan, Park Il-yong, Lee Kyu-gam, Woo Myeong-soo, Jeong Kyeong-shik and Park Nam-su gathered at a restaurant called the 'Cho-won Bok-jip'. These men were, respectively, the Minister of Justice, the Mayor of Busan, the Commissioner of the Busan District Police Agency, the chief of the Busan branch of the National Security

Planning Agency, the superintendent of Education in the Busan District, Director of the Busan District Prosecutor's Office, and the chairman of the Busan Chamber of Commerce. At this meeting, these men discussed strategies for getting Kim Young-sam elected into office and methods of tainting the reputation of the other major candidates Kim Dae-jung and Chung Ju-young. In particular, they said, 'We must incite regional emotions,' 'If another person gets elected, us Busan, Southern Gyeongsang people should just jump from the Yeongdo Bridge and die' (Ohmynews, 30 July 2005).

These statements were secretly recorded with the help of ex-National Security Planning Agency officers and released to the press by candidate Chung Ju-young's United People's Party. However, Kim Young-sam held that this was a conspiracy, and the major newspapers reported the incident with an angle criticizing the immorality and unfairness of wiretapping. As a result, the whole incident backfired on the United People's Party, which suffered a fall in public support, and the ironical result was that the Yeongnam support solidified in favour of Kim Young-sam, who was then elected (Ohmynews, 30 July 2005).

Aside from this incident, the Three Party Merger in the Democratic Liberal Party that got Kim Young-sam elected into office itself was an embodiment of political strategy relying on regionalism. Though the self-interested motivations of each of the key leading figures – Kim Young-sam, Kim Jong-pil, and Roh Tae-woo – were explained in the previous section, regionalism was the key reason that this uneasy union worked. Kim Young-sam brought South Gyeongsang; Roh Tae-woo brought North

Gyeongsang, and Kim Jong-pil brought the swing region, Chungcheong. In effect, the Honam region, which supported Kim Dae-jung, was excluded from the bargain.

When Kim Dae-jung himself was finally elected in 1997, he was also accused of pandering to regional interests. In the April of 1998, he filled 14 of the 25 government-affiliated agency director positions with officials from the Honam region (Maeil Economy, 20 April 1998). When the Financial Supervisory Service was launched in 1999, of the 40 directors and managers, 14 were from the capital, 13 were from Honam, 9 were from Yeongnam, 3 were from Chungcheong, and 1 from Jeju (Maeil Economy, 7 January 1999). In May 2001, the Grand National Party said, 'Of the 35 major positions in the 9 government inspection agencies, 57.1% (20 seats) are taken by officials from the Honam region,' and 'Especially, in the presidential secretariat, the National Tax Service, the Ministry of Defence and the National Police Agency, the 13 major inspector positions are 100% filled by people from the Honam region. In response, Chun Yong-hak, the spokesperson for the Democratic Party said, 'These accusations by the Grand National Party that we are selecting officials only from certain regions is merely mudslinging the government, and they are forgetting what they did when they were in charge of the government in the past' (Noh, J. H., 14 May 2001, JoongAng Ilbo).

Regionalism has also regularly featured in the campaign rhetoric of politicians. In April 2000, ahead of the parliamentary elections, Grand National Party's Huh Tae-yeol MP asked during a speech, 'Can those of you who think your household has improved raise your hands?' To those people who raised their hands, he said, 'Are you from the Jeolla region?' and continued, 'No matter how hard they study and no matter

what business acumen they may have, Busan's children are doomed. Who can say that from now on, our sons and daughters won't need to walk on eggshells to serve the others [Honam people]?' and attempted to incite regionalist emotions (Sisa Focus, 18 February 2013).

It also seems that some politicians take regionalism for granted, and expect public support simply on the basis of regions. In May 2006, ahead of the 13 May regional elections, Moon Jae-in, the former Senior Secretary to the President for Civil Affairs said, 'I can't understand why Busan citizens do not accept the current government to be a 'Busan government' when our president is from Busan himself'. He was frustrated by the lack of support from the Busan region for the Roh Moo-hyun government. He also said, 'Our president has always considered and supported Busan during the APEC Summit, the redevelopment of the new port and the north ports, and personnel appointments, but the citizens are not being loyal at all' (Min, Y. G., 15 May 2006, The Hankyoreh).

President Roh Moo-hyun (2002-2007) was quite unique in the respect that although he was from the Yeongnam (Busan) area, he was elected with the strong support of the Honam region. This was possible because the Millennium Democratic Party, which he was elected in, was of the line of liberal parties supported by the Honam region with the legacy of Kim Dae-jung. Because of the fact that a Yeongnam person was elected with Honam support, many commentators at the time hoped that this was a signal that regionalism was finally becoming less of a priority for the voters (Jeon, S. S., 2010). He ran on a platform of 'reforming politics', and this met with the voter's hopes and desires for a reformed political system. He chose 'overthrowing regionalism' as one of

his key political agendas, and accordingly created his own party, the Opened Our Party, to throw off the image of a Honam-based liberal party and thus appeal to the whole national electorate. Yet, this only created conflicts with the Honam-rooted branch of the liberal party, which created its own Democratic Party, and subsequently supported the impeachment process against President Roh. Though in the end, he was not impeached, President Roh failed to 'overthrow regionalism', despite his efforts.

That regionalism remained a pertinent part of Korean politics could be seen in the recent Lee Myung-bak administration. According to figures released by the Democratic Party's MP Kim Yoon-duk in 2013, a disproportionate amount of the budget for the Lee administration's 'Top 30 Projects' was being spent in the Yeongnam region. Fifteen of the thirty-four projects were located in the Yeongnam region, and 47% of the total budget was being spent on these projects. Meanwhile, in the Honam region, there were only three projects that were allocated 3% of the total budget (Park, Y. M., 5. 11. 2013, Jeonbuk Ilbo). There were also stark differences in resource allocation by region in the research and development funding. According to the parliamentary inspection report of the administration released by Democratic Party's Choi Min-hee MP in 2013, over the five years of the Lee Myung-bak administration, the total R&D investment funds spent in the Yeongnam region was nearly triple the amount spent in the Honam region (Lee, J. H., 29. 10. 2013, MoneyWeek).

That regionalism remains one of the strongest cleavages in the Korean political system is illustrated by the recent presidential election results.

Figure 8. Results of the Presidential Elections by Region (2002-2012)

16th (2002)	17th (2007)	18th (2012)

Roh Moo-hyun 48.9%
(Millennium Democratic)

Chung Dong-young 26.1%
(Democratic)

Moon Jae-in 48.0%
(Democratic)

Lee Hoi-chang 46.6%
(Grand National)

Lee Myung-bak 48.7%
(Grand National)

Park Geun-hye 51.6%
(New World)
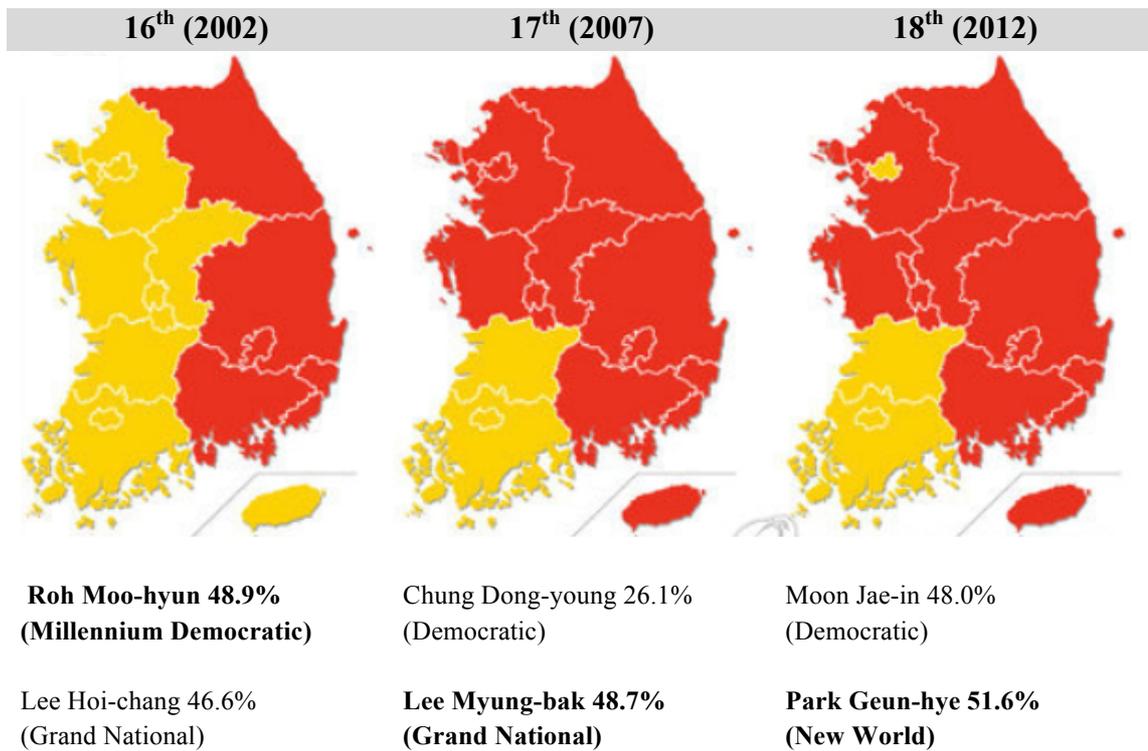
*Red – Conservative; Grand National / New World Party
Yellow – Liberal; Millennium Democratic / Democratic Party

(Source: Shim, I. S., 20 December 2012, Yonhap News)

The yellow-coloured sections show the regions that supported the liberal candidates; the red-coloured sections show the regions that supported the conservative candidates. As can be seen, the Yeongnam region supports the conservative party; the Honam region supports the liberal party.

The interviews of university students today revealed that regionalism was perceived to be a problem in Korean politics. However, a majority of the respondents who are university students today said that their political preferences were not affected by region. Nevertheless, in-depth questioning of interviewees revealed that regionalism did affect the political socialization of university students today and also may affect

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the political views of university students today. This contradiction has been observed in previous studies which find that Koreans identify regionalism as a problem in Korean politics and are reluctant to admit that they are affected by regionalism, yet still take into account regional origins of candidates when voting (Na, E. Y. and Min, K. H., 1998: 84).

4.2.4 Restriction of ideological and policy competition

Fourthly, restriction of ideological and policy competition assists the cooperation of different political parties on certain policy matters. In Korean politics, political parties particularly play up the differences in their security and foreign policy and policies towards North Korea. Yet, as will be discussed below, studies show that citizens are actually more interested in economic policy than security and foreign policy. This explains why a slight majority (54.1%) of survey respondents who are currently university students said that they did not perceive major differences between the major political parties. The lack of ideological and policy competition may also signal that the political parties are failing to represent the diverse interests present in the citizenry. This may contribute to the perception amongst university students today that politicians lack communication. It may also be a reason for why most university students today said that they did not have a political party that they supported.

There have been various studies conducted by Korean academics on the policy and ideological differences between the major political parties. Kang Won-taek (2012) identified that the members of the two major political parties consistently rated themselves on different ends of the ideological scale in the 16th to 19th National

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Assemblies. However, the problem with the self-placement scores for measuring ideological differences is that it lacks objectivity. Because there is no absolute measure by which respondents score themselves, the scores are subjective. Each respondent gives a self-placement score based on their own conception of ideology, which makes objective comparisons between respondents impossible. Since respondents may project their own differing ideological perceptions on the self-placement scores, it is not possible to impose absolute meanings on to the scores (Lee, K. Y. and Lee, H. W., 2008: 146; Yoon, S. Y. and Lee, M. K., 2011: 65). Kang Won-taek (2004, 2012) therefore identified four policy dimensions on which conservative and liberal ideologies may diverge:

(1) Foreign Policy / Security / Anti-Communism

(2) Economy

(3) Society

(4) Post-Modernism / Post-Materialism

Firstly, the Foreign Policy, Security and Anti-Communism dimension is one of the most salient characteristics in the ideological differences between political parties in the South Korean context. Because of the Cold War context in which Korea partitioned into the communist North and capitalist South Koreas, there is a clearly anti-communist rhetoric in South Korean politics. Also, due to the real and perceived threats posed by North Korea and the close cooperation with the US for security, views on foreign policy and security policy is a prominent area of political conflict within South Korea. Before the 1997 election of President Kim Dae-jung, most of the political elite took a very hard-line stance against North Korea, and there was not

much debate about what policy should be adopted on the foreign policy and security front. However, the Kim Dae-jung administration implemented the 'Sunshine Policy' that sought to encourage cooperation with North Korea through increased emergency and development aid, investment, and joint tourist ventures, which was a wholly new direction in the foreign policy of South Korea. Yet, this Sunshine Policy was heavily criticised by the hard-liners in South Korea, who believed that the aid and investment were an unwarranted waste of resources. The liberal-conservative divide on the Foreign Policy, Security and Anti-Communism dimension is therefore primarily concerned with South Korean policy against North Korea, and by extension the US.

Secondly, the Economy dimension relates the issue of the distribution of economic and material goods. It relates to the conflict between equality and efficiency, the state and the market, labour and capital. This left-right divide is what governs the party divide in most Western European democracies, and is reflected in Korean politics as well.

Thirdly, the Social dimension reflects the conflict between authority and libertarianism (Kitschelt, 1994). Here, the conservatives emphasise authority, traditional values, hierarchy, social order, and crime prevention; the liberals emphasise libertarianism, social and political equality for minorities, freedom of expression, political participation, and human rights.

Fourthly, the Post-materialism / Post-modern dimension reflects the conflict between the traditional modern, materialistic values espoused by the conservatives and the post-modern, post-materialistic values supported by the liberals. The importance of

this divide is emphasised by such scholars as Inglehart (1977). He argues that during the peace and prosperity experienced in the West after the Second World War, a new group of interests that could not be explained by economic or social ideological differences began to emerge. These include the environment, animal rights, and anti-nuclear movements and the emergence of parties like the Green Party, and have created new divisions. In South Korea, the controversy surrounding the creation of the Dong-gang dam, the Cheonggyecheon Stream Project, and the Four Rivers Project show the conflict along this dimension.

The following table outlines the key policy issues that lie on each of the four ideological dimensions.

Table 30. Policy Issues relating to the four ideological dimensions

Ideological Dimension	Specific Policy Issues
Foreign Policy / Security / Anti-Communism	• Aid to North Korea • Relations with the US • National Security Laws
Economy (Left-Right)	• Regulation of the Chaebol System • Protection of Non-Regular Workers • Introduction of Wealth Tax • Social Welfare System • Government regulation of the price of necessities
Society (Libertarian-Authority)	• Student Human Rights • Public Electoral Law Reform • Religious abstention from mandatory military service • The right to gather and demonstrate
Post-Modernism / Post-Materialism	• Expansion of nuclear energy • Environmental Policy • Euthanasia • Migrant Worker Policy

(Source: Modified from Kang, W. T., 2005: 198-199, 2012: 9; Park, K. M., Han, J. T. and Lee, J. H., 2012.)

Based on a 2012 survey conducted by SBS and the Korean Association of Party Studies, members of the 19th National Assembly were asked 20 multiple-choice questions on current policy issues. Kang Won-taek (2012) rated each of the four answers to each question on a 0 to 10 liberal-conservative scale. He then classified each of the policy issues according to the four ideological dimensions as above, and found the average ideology scores of the members of each of the major parties based on their policy preferences.

Based on the data collected by Kang Won-taek (2012), it was possible to observe that the policy dimension with the consistently largest difference in the ideological scores between the two major parties was the foreign policy, security, and anti-communism dimension. Although in the 19th National Assembly, the society dimension showed a large divergence between the two parties, the data showed that even within a single party, there was considerable diversity of opinion. In contrast, on the foreign policy, security, and anti-communism dimension, members of the same political party largely held very similar positions. As for economic policy and post-modernism and post-materialism dimensions, the study showed that both parties tended to take a moderate position, with a small gap on the liberal-conservative scale. In other words, the two dimensions with the greatest policy competition were foreign policy, security, and anti-communism and society.

However, an interesting finding in a 2008 study conducted by the Korean Association of Party Studies was that 30.8% of the respondents said that employment was the most important policy issue, followed by 26.2% for economic regulatory reform, 15.2% for

welfare policy, 11.8% for education policy, and finally 10.7% for North Korea relations (Kim, Y. T., 2009: 208). This shows that economic policy issues are the forefront of the voters' concerns in their voting, while foreign policy, security and anti-communism are not as important. The fact that the voters consider economic policy to be the most important when it is an area where the ideological differences between the two parties are not as pronounced, suggests a restriction of policy competition between the major parties. This lack of policy competition on the policy dimensions that voters consider most important explains around half of the university students today surveyed said that they did not observe clear differences between the major political parties.

4.3 Explanation of the changes in the political culture of university students

These issues with the Korean political system can explain many elements of the changes in the political culture of university students in Korea.

Attitudes towards politics and government

For one thing, the changes in the Korean political system explain the changes in the attitudes towards government and politics held by university students. The empirical findings revealed that general attitudes held by university students in the 1980s towards the Chun administration were very negative, characterised by fear and anger. Much of this fear and anger was caused by the violent and oppressive practices of the Chun administration towards university students and democratic protestors. Events

such as the Gwangju Democratic Movement particularly affected the interviewees' attitudes towards the Chun administration. The violent and oppressive policies used against university student activists were also a significant factor in causing the negative attitudes towards the Chun administration.

In contrast, university students today held less intensely negative attitudes towards the presidential administration than university students in the 1980s. However, the survey and interview results showed that university students today were generally dissatisfied with the Lee administration and did not have high expectations of the Park administration. Many interviewees criticised the Four Rivers Project, which was implemented by the Lee administration. However, other than that, the interviewees were unable to give comprehensive explanations backed up by evidence for their dissatisfaction with the Lee administration.

Survey and interview results revealed that university students generally did not trust politicians and that politicians were perceived to be self-serving and break promises. University students today perceived that politicians today are failing to communicate with the public and with university students. In addition, over half of all the survey respondents said that they did not have a political party they supported. In addition, 81.6% of the respondents disagreed or partially disagreed with the statement that they feel a strong connection with the political party they support. The Ahn Chul-soo phenomenon among young people also indicated that current political parties were failing to adequately represent the interests of university students today. Survey and interview results revealed that university students today perceived a lack of ideological and policy differences between the parties. University students also perceived that

party competition was mainly based on regionalism and image. Some interviewees identified this lack of genuine competition as the cartelisation of political parties.

Research into primary and secondary sources revealed that since the democratic transition, there has been a rapid and dramatic increase in the public funding for political parties. Since this public funding comes out of tax revenues and directly benefits politicians, it is possible that this increased public funding may be one reason why university students today think that politicians are self-serving. It was also revealed that this public funding was concentrated on the two major political parties, effectively restricting the resources available to new entrants. When new entrants are restricted from political decision-making, interests not represented by the major political parties are effectively restricted. This may be a cause of why university students perceive politicians to lack communication with the public and university students. It may also be a cause of the perception that even politicians in different political parties act like a cartel. In fact, increased public funding of the major political parties may be just one of the manifestations of a trend of politicians acting out of self-interest.

Since the democratic transition in 1987, there have been important changes in the electoral system of Korea. Most importantly, direct presidential elections were introduced, as demanded by the student activists and democratic protestors in the 1980s. However, a closer examination of the electoral system shows that the single member constituency system in parliamentary elections still gives a bonus rate of over 10% to the governing party. The proportional representation system, which reduces this bonus rate to around 3%, is applied only to slightly over 50 seats in a nearly 300-

seat National Assembly. These distortions in the electoral system that favour the governing political party may explain why some university students said that they had low political efficacy even in relation to voting. This also explains why one of the interviewees actively participates in a civil society organisation to support the expansion of the proportional representation system.

An investigation into the role of regionalism in Korean politics also showed that regionalism has historically been and continues to be a prominent social cleavage in Korean society. Even after the democratic transition, politicians often use regional favouritism as a method of securing votes. Many citizens also vote along regional lines, and the impact of regionalism is evident in the electoral results. The problem with regionalism is that it does not facilitate genuine policy competition because it structures votes for particular parties and politicians. It draws the attention of the electorate away from national policy by focusing their attentions on the benefits for their particular region. Interview and survey results revealed that university students perceived regionalism to be a salient feature of Korean politics. However, most survey respondents who are currently university students said that regionalism did not have a significant impact on their political preferences. Yet, the fact that regionalism has such a significant impact on electoral outcomes may be a reason why university students today report a low level of political efficacy, even when voting. Regionalism may also be part of the reason why university students do not have a particular political party they support. Since university students today say that region is not an important consideration when voting, the fact that the major political parties cater to a particular region may mean that an important distinguishing feature of the major political parties is irrelevant for university students. In fact, the regional favouritism that politicians

show may also be a reason for the perception that politicians are self-serving and do not act for the public good.

A review of secondary sources revealed that there was a restriction of ideology and policy competition. Kang Won-taek's 2012 study showed that the policy dimension with the consistently largest difference in the ideological scores between the two major parties was the foreign policy, security and anti-communism dimension. However, an interesting finding was that only 10.7% of the respondents in a 2008 survey said that relations with North Korea were the most important policy issue. In this study, 30.8% of the respondents said that employment was the most important policy issue, followed by 26.2% for economic regulatory reform (Kim, Y. T., 2009: 208). However, both the major political parties tended to take a moderate position in relation to economic policy (Kang, W. T., 2012). This disparity in the policy dimension that citizens care about and the dimension with the clearest difference in ideology and policy positions between the major political parties suggests that the current political party system may be failing to adequately represent the interests of the society. This may be a cause for why university students today perceive politicians to lack communication with the public and university students. It may also be a reason why university students today do not have a political party they support.

Manifest political participation

One of the most important changes in the Korean political system since the democratic transition in 1987 was the introduction of direct presidential elections. New electoral laws were also adopted for parliamentary elections that have reduced the bonus rate

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for the governing political party. These changes explain why voting is the most commonly used method of political participation amongst university students today and is perceived to be an effective method of political participation.

Interviewees who were university students in the 1980s said that they recognised voting to be meaningless because of the circumstances that made elections neither free nor fair. Most did not even mention voting as a method of political participation they considered. In contrast, the survey and interview results revealed that university students today actively participated in voting. 89.1% of the survey respondents said that they voted in at least the presidential elections. 74.1% of the survey respondents also agreed or partially agreed with the statement that their electoral participation can change Korean politics. Voting was by far the most popular and widely supported method of political participation amongst university students today. Some interviewees said that voting was the only way to change Korean politics.

However, though voting was a form of manifest political participation that university students today participated in more actively than their counterparts in the 1980s, the same could not be said for other forms of manifest political participation such as contacting politicians or participating in protests.

Firstly, in the 1980s, university student organisations often contacted and cooperated with opposition political elite, such as the New Democratic Party led by Kim Dae-jung and Kim Young-sam. Yet, the relationship between the opposition and student activists was not very stable. The opposition elite also at times renounced the violent protests of student activists. In turn, student activists often felt betrayed by the

compromises that the opposition elites made once elected to government. Nevertheless, in the 1980s, supporting political campaigns and contacting politicians was a form of manifest political participation many student activists engaged in. Many university students today also recognised that campaign activity and contacting public officials was a method of political participation they could engage in. However, only a very small minority of the interviewees who are currently university students actually engaged in this form of manifest political participation.

Secondly, almost all interviewees who were university students in the 1980s identified protesting as the only method of political participation available to them at the time and expressed a strong support for university students who engaged in protest activity despite the personal risks. In contrast, university students today expressed generally negative attitudes towards student activists on campus. Fellow students who engaged in protest activity were perceived to be doing something that was unnecessary and meaningless. Some interviewees even held the perception that university students engaging in student activism and protest activity were doing so for their own career advancement. Some of the interviewees who are currently university students said that they had participated in the candlelight vigils. Yet they said that they soon became disillusioned with the way other political actors were using the candlelight vigils and the way the movement later became more violent and radicalised.

There are potentially two explanations for this change in the experience of and attitudes towards contacting politicians and participating in protests as a method of political participation. Firstly, since voting has become available as a method of political participation, university students today may feel that their interests are

adequately represented without having to engage in other forms of manifest political participation. However, the general attitude that there is a lack of communication between politicians and university students and the lack of support by university students of political parties make this explanation unlikely to be the only explanation.

Secondly, the lack of trust for politicians and political parties may be the reason why university students today do not contact politicians, participate in campaign activity or participate in organised protests as a method of political participation. In fact, some interviewees expressly stated that they were wary of being affiliated with political organisations and political parties and associating with politicians or interests they did not fully support. Some university students even expressed distrust for civil society organisations.

Reasons for political participation and non-participation

Aside from voting, university students today showed lower levels of manifest political participation, both in campaign activity and contacting public officials and protest activity. Some university students in the 1980s did not participate in politics because they were simply not interested in politics and focused on their studies and finding employment. Others disagreed with the tactics or ideologies of university student activists. Yet, for university students in the 1980s, the main reason for non-participation was the fear of the consequences of participation. The violent oppression of the Chun administration against student protestors discouraged many university students from participating in politics.

Despite the high personal costs of political participation, university students in the 1980s participated in politics. Some interviewees, particularly those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds said that they became involved in politics because of social injustice. These types of interviewees became involved in student activism through an interest in labour rights and class conflict. Yet, university students in the 1980s, even more so than now came from middle or upper class households.

A more common reason for political participation was anger at the injustices carried out against democratic protestors and student activists. The Gwangju Democratic Movement had a particularly significant influence in motivating university students in the 1980s to participate in politics. It has been argues that the sense of 'indebtedness' and 'survivor's guilt' motivated many students to disseminate information on the Gwangju Democratic Movement, demand rightful compensation and fight for political reform and democracy (Kim, Y. C., 2007: 284-286). In addition, the deaths and injuries of fellow student activists caused by the violent and oppressive measures carried out by the Chun administration further motivated university students in the 1980s to participate in protests. In particular, when fellow classmates were wrongfully detained, tortured, injured or killed, students were compelled to act by emotions like anger, rage and a desire to seek retribution. These responses are in line with psychological work on intergroup emotion theory (Mackie, Devos and Smith, 2000).

On the other hand, none of these reasons were applicable to university students today. In contrast to interviewees in the 1980s who spoke at length about their experiences of manifest political participation, interviewees who are university students today mostly spoke of their experience of latent political participation and non-participation. Many

interviewees said that they simply did not feel a need to participate in politics. Interviewees said that the political situation was not dire enough to warrant active political participation. Some interviewees said that they did not feel politics was very relevant to their lives or found politics to be interesting or fun. They said that they had other priorities over spending time on political participation. They thought that though Korean politics had its problems, it was not serious enough to warrant ordinary university students becoming involved in politics.

Yet, a majority of interviewees who are currently university students stated that they were dissatisfied with their current level of political participation. One of the most common reasons for non-participation was a lack of political efficacy. A majority of the survey respondents (72%) reported a low level of political efficacy, giving a rating between 0 and 2 on a scale from 0 being low to 5 being high. This perceived lack of political efficacy was caused by various reasons. Some interviewees said that the diversification of political interests and objectives since the democratic transition has meant that there is no longer a single objective on which people could focus their efforts. This has made participation for a particular cause less effective. The competition and conflict between diverse political interests also lowered perceived political efficacy.

Yet, the more common cause of the perceived lack of political efficacy was the lack of confidence that the current political system would effectively translate political participation by university students into change. University students today expressed a generally low level of trust for the government, politicians, political parties and the media. The perceived lack of transparency in the Korean political system and the lack

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of trust in politicians have caused many university students today to perceive low levels of political efficacy, which in turn leads to low political participation.

Political socialization

Compared to university students in the 1980s, university students today were more likely to be influenced by their parents in their political socialization process. However, many interviewees also said that their parents discouraged them from getting involved in politics because it was futile to do so.

Also, compared to university students in the 1980s, university students today were less likely to be influenced by university in their political socialization process. All interviewees who were university students in the 1980s said that their interest in politics increased significantly when they entered university. They said that this was because there was a general atmosphere of student activism and political participation on campus in the 1980s. Many interviewees said that there was a general consensus on campus that university students should participate in the democratic movement and take an interest in politics. University students who participated in politics were perceived to be courageous and admired.

Compared to all of the interviewees who were university students in the 1980s who said that political views developed the most in university through interactions with university peers, a relatively smaller   percentage (50.6%) of survey respondents who are currently university students said that their university peers had a big impact on the formation of their political views. Although some interviewees who are currently

university students said that there was an element of peer pressure to be more interested in politics, it was clear from the interviews that there is no longer the same pervasive atmosphere of political participation on university campuses as was the case in the 1980s before the democratic transition.

These changes in the political socialization processes of university students can be explained by the lack of political trust and lack of perceived political efficacy discussed in the section on reasons for non-participation. Due to the lack of perceived political efficacy, university students are discouraged from political participation both by their parents and by their peers at university. Interviews of university students in the 1980s who are now in the generation that are parents of university students today revealed that they were generally dissatisfied with the current political situation. Having participated in student activism but dissatisfied with the current political situation, the generation of university students in the 1980s may be discouraging university students today by telling them it is futile to participate in politics and that they should instead focus on their careers and individual lives. These attitudes of a perceived lack of political efficacy may also then be reflected in the general culture on university campuses.

An interesting change in the political socialization process of male university students since the 1980s was the changing role of the military service. Since 1951, all male Korean citizens over the age of 18 who are physically fit must serve around 2 years in the mandatory military service. In the 1980s, military service was used as a tool to punish and re-educate student activists. Politically active students would be drafted into the military with very short notice and sent to particularly difficult posts with

gruelling regimens. Many interviewees who were university students in the 1980s described the military service as being very harsh. Overt efforts at political socialization were undertaken to depoliticise young men, but the interviewees said that they saw through this and it did not affect their political views.

Since then, the role of military service has somewhat changed. It is no longer used as an oppressive tool to discourage political participation. Overt efforts at political socialization are still undertaken, and some university students see through this and say that knowing that they were being subject to political socialization helped resist being indoctrinated. However, many interviewees said that some of their peers who were not aware that this was going on were more susceptible to political socialization. The interview responses revealed that male university students today learned from the military service that national security, and in particular relations with North Korea, was an important policy issue. It was interesting that the emphasis on national security and North Korean policy in the political socialization efforts in the military coincided with the main policy dimension with the clearest ideology and policy difference between the major political parties.

In conclusion, supply-side explanations are useful for explaining certain aspects of the changes in the political culture of university students in Korea. It is particularly useful for explaining why university students hold negative attitudes about government and politics. In the 1980s, university students held negative attitudes about government and politics because of the Chun administration's oppressive policies. As for university students today, the cartel party thesis, in particular, provided a useful explanation for the attitudes university students today held towards politics. Yet,

despite the problems with Korean politics today, it is clear that these issues are not as prominent or significant as the issues that impressed upon the minds of university students in the 1980s. This explains why some university students today say that they do not feel compelled to participate in politics because there is no need to participate.

5   Conclusion

In the above chapters, we examined the applicability of demand-side, intermediary and supply-side theories to explain the changes in the political culture of university students.

The basic premise of demand-side theories is that underlying socioeconomic changes in the society affect political culture. Demand-side theories were useful for explaining the changes in the perception of the role of university students in society. It provided a partial explanation for the greater influence that parents have on the political socialization of university students today. Compared to university students in the 1980s, university students today were more influenced by their parents in the formation of their political views. One explanation for this is that parents of university students today tended to be more highly educated than parents of university students in the 1980s and therefore more likely to be interested in political education of their children and have the education and resources to do so.

Intermediary explanations focus on the influence of the media on political culture. However, in the South Korean context, the lack of independence of the media made it difficult to ascertain which elements of the changes in the political culture of univesity students were due to the media. Yet, by examining the continuing lack of independence of the media, we were able to observe why university students today are distrustful of the media as a source of reliable political information and how this in turn impacted on their political trust and political efficacy.

Supply-side explanations assume that the supply of governance and political systems affect the political culture of society. The empirical findings of this research indicated that the cartel party thesis may be applicable to the Korean case. There were four elements of Korean politics that were examined in further detail: the increase of public funding for political parties; electoral laws that favour the major political parties; restriction of ideological and policy competition between the major political parties; and the use of regionalism as a cleavage in elections. These characteristics of Korean politics today were useful for explaining the attitudes towards politics and government, experience of manifest political participation, reasons for political participation and non-participation and the role of the military in the political socialization process of university students today.

Taken collectively, demand-side, intermediary and supply-side explanations were able to explain the changes in the political culture of university students today. The variables identified in the three types of explanations such as socioeconomic development, the role of media and issues in the political system were interrelated. Therefore, examining all three types of theories helped to provide a comprehensive explanation of the changes in the political culture of university students in South Korea.

V   Conclusion

1 Research questions and answers

There were three main research questions that this thesis sought to answer:

(1) What was the political culture of university students in the 1980s before the 1987 democratic transition?

(2) What is the political culture of university students today?

(3) What are the explanations for the changes in the political culture of university students between these two periods?

The elements of political culture which were examined in this thesis were:

- the attitudes towards politics and government;

- the attitudes towards media;

- the political socialization process;

- the experience of political participation; and

- the reasons for political participation or non-participation.

Attitudes towards politics and government

As hypothesised, university students in the 1980s before the democratic transition held intensely negative attitudes towards the government characterised by fear and anger. Events such as the violent oppression of the Gwangju Democratic Movement and the

oppressive policies of the Chun administration towards student activists had a significant impact on the attitudes of the university students towards the Chun administration. All of the interviewees who were university students in the 1980s welcomed the democratic transition in 1987.

Although university students today held less intensely negative attitudes towards politics and government, university students today were still generally dissatisfied with politics and government. Many interviewees particularly disapproved of the Four Rivers Project in the Lee administration (2008-2013) and held low expectations of the Park administration (2013-present). An overwhelming majority of survey respondents and most interviewees said that they did not think that politicians acted for the public good and instead acted for their own interests. In addition, politicians were perceived to not keep campaign promises. A related complaint was the politicians lacked communication, amongst themselves, with society and with university students. These findings suggested that there was a perception of the politicians being disconnected from society that contributed to the generally negative attitudes towards government and politics.

Towards political parties, a majority (69.4%) of the survey respondents who are university students today agreed with the statement that even if politicians are in different parties, they ultimately act like a cartel. Some interviewees expressly stated this perception. The survey and interview responses showed that most university students today do not have a political party they support or perceive clear policy differences between the major political parties. An overwhelming majority (81.6%) of survey respondents who are currently university students said that they did not have a

political party they supported. The Ahn Chul-soo phenomenon confirmed that the existing major political parties were failing to fully represent the interests of university students today.

A slight majority (54.1%) of survey respondents who are currently university students said that they did not perceive major differences between the major political parties. Secondary sources confirmed that there were indeed not many major differences in policy or ideology between the two major political parties, except in the foreign policy, security and anti-communism dimension. Interview and survey responses and secondary sources revealed that regionalism was a significant social cleavage in the Korean political system. Regionalism is particularly apparent in elections and is reinforced by the policies and rhetoric of the politicians. Although most survey respondents who are currently university students said that region did not have a significant impact on their political preferences, it was clear through the interviews that many university students perceived regionalism as an important cleavage and was affected by it, though they may not readily admit it.

Attitudes towards the media

As hypothesised, university students in the 1980s did not trust the mainstream media to provide an objective and reliable account of political affairs. However, an unexpected finding was that university students today also do not trust the mainstream media to provide an objective and reliable account of political affairs. In fact, the reasons for these attitudes were very similar. University students in the 1980s said that they did not trust mainstream television broadcasts or newspapers because the media

were strictly controlled by the Chun administration in the 1980s. Although the level of government control over the media are not as overt as it was in the 1980s, secondary sources revealed that the presidential administration still has a significant level of control over recruitment, promotion and sanctions of journalists in the major media companies. In addition to these informal methods of media control, the Korean government also censors the press through restrictive legislation such as the defamation law, the National Security Law, and the Public Election Law. These continuities in the restriction of freedom of press had a direct impact on the low level of trust that university students today had towards the media.

Political socialization

As hypothesised, university students in the 1980s stated that the university setting had the greatest effect on their political socialization process. However, university students today did not report the same general atmosphere of student activism on campus as university students in the 1980s. Compared to all of the interviewees who were university students in the 1980s who said that their political views developed the most in university through interactions with university peers, a relatively smaller percentage (50.6%) of survey respondents who are currently university students said that their university peers had a big impact on the formation of their political views.

One of the elements of the political culture of university students that has changed the most between the 1980s and today was the influence of parents on the political socialization process. Almost all interviewees who were university students in the 1980s said that their parents did not have a significant impact on the formation of their

political views. In contrast, a clear majority (60.4%) of the survey respondents who are currently university students said that their parents had a big influence on their political views. Though some interviewees said that their parents gave them guidance on learning about politics, others said that their parents actively discouraged them from getting involved in politics.

Latent political participation

Due to the high costs of being involved in any form of student activism, even only latent forms of political participation, the experience of latent political participation in the 1980s was organised and covert. Even latent political participation had high personal costs, and latent political participation often led to manifest political participation. In contrast, the experience of latent political participation for university students today was much more loosely organised and less intense. However, university students today had a higher level of interest in politics than hypothesised and almost all university students today said that they discussed politics with family, friends, classmates and colleagues. Yet, a majority (62.6%) of university students today said that they actually did not know very much about the policies of major political parties and many interviewees said that they sometimes did not enjoy discussing politics with others. Though university students today attempted to engage in latent political participation, many interviewees expressed frustration at the lack of reliable information about politics to learn about and discuss politics.

Manifest political participation

As hypothesised, almost all interviewees who were university students in the 1980s identified that protesting was the only method of political participation available to them at the time. Secondary sources revealed that in the 1980s, university student organisations often contacted and cooperated with the opposition political elite, such as the New Democratic Party led by Kim Dae-jung and Kim Young-sam. Yet, the relationship between the opposition and student activists was not very stable. The opposition elite at times renounced the violent protests of student activists. In turn, student activists often felt betrayed by the compromises that the opposition elites made once elected to government. Nevertheless, in the 1980s, supporting political campaigns and contacting politicians was a form of manifest political participation many student activists engaged in. Mentions of contacting and cooperating with opposition politicians in the interviews further confirmed this.

In contrast, voting was by far the most popular and widely supported method of political participation amongst university students today. However, some interviewees expressed some doubt as to the political efficacy of even voting. It was hypothesised that university students today would have more diverse ways of participating in politics through voting and engaging with political parties and civil society groups. However, although many university students today recognised that campaign activity and contacting public officials was a method of political participation they could engage in, only a very small minority of the interviewees actually engaged in this form of manifest political participation. In fact, some interviewees expressed distrust even

for civil society organisations and were wary of being affiliated with organisations and associating with politicians they did not fully support.

An unexpected attitude amongst university students today was the strongly negative attitudes they held towards protest activity. Fellow students who engaged in protest activity were perceived to be doing something that was unnecessary and meaningless. Some interviewees even held the perception that university students engaging in student activism and protest activity were doing so for their own career advancement. Some of the interviewees who are currently university students said that they had participated in the candlelight vigils. Yet they said that they soon became disillusioned with the way other political actors were using the candlelight vigils and the way the movement later became more violent and radicalised.

Reasons for political participation and non-participation

As hypothesised, the main reason university students in the 1980s were discouraged from political participation was the fear of oppressive methods used by the Chun administration. However, many university students in the 1980s participated despite the high personal costs of doing so was because the political situation was very dire and they felt a duty to participate as the educated elite.

In contrast, university students today do not participate in politics because they do not feel the need to do so, as hypothesised. However, there were additional reasons for the non-participation of university students today. These included a lack of political efficacy, a lack of trust in the political elite and a lack of external and internal

resources. University students today said that they were no longer the minority educated elite and that they had other priorities to focus on due to a more competitive job market.

Explanations

Finally, it was hypothesised that the main reason for the changes in the political culture of university students is due to the changes in the structure of the political system from a dictatorship to a democracy. The discussion of the demand-side, intermediary and supply-side explanations revealed this to be the case. However, demand-side and intermediary explanations were able to explain specific elements of the changes in the political culture of university students.

Firstly, demand-side explanations partly explain why university students in the 1980s participated in student activism despite the personal costs of doing so. In the 1980s, university students considered themselves to be part of a minority educated elite charged with the duty to change politics. In contrast, part of the reason why university students today exhibit lower levels of political participation is due to the fact that university students today no longer perceive themselves to be part of a minority political elite. Instead, university students today face greater competition in an economy with a widening inequality gap. These socioeconomic changes have meant that political participation is no longer a priority for university students today. Demand-side theories also explain why university students today were more influenced by their parents in their political socialization process than university students in the 1980s. This was because the socioeconomic development of Korea

since the 1980s meant that the parents of university students today were more likely to be highly educated than the parents of university students in the 1980s.

Secondly, intermediary theories are able to explain the effects of the media on the attitudes towards media and the experience of latent political participation. Both in the 1980s and today, university students perceived the media to be unreliable in providing comprehensive and objective coverage of current and political events. Though this was to be expected in the 1980s during the dictatorial Chun administration, this finding was unexpected for university students today where there are diverse media sources for information on political affairs. However, secondary sources revealed that there are still informal and formal restrictions on the freedom of press in South Korea. This has affected the attitudes that university students today hold towards the media. The role of the media also affects the experience of latent political participation. Due to the distrust of the media, university students in the 1980s participated in covert organisations to learn more about politics and discuss politics with others. In contrast, due to the distrust of the media, university students today say that they are discouraged from discussing politics with others or getting involved in political participation because they are not confident that they are informed enough about political affairs. Whilst intermediary explanations explained these experiences to some extent, it failed to explain this disparity in the political participation of university students in response to similar conditions.

Thirdly, supply-side theories explain the attitudes that university students hold are due to the supply of politics and government. As hypothesised, the political system of oppressive dictatorship in the 1980s was a key reason for the negative attitudes

towards politics held by university students in the 1980s. University students today did not have the same level of intensely negative attitudes about politics and government as their counterparts in the 1980s. However, university students today were largely dissatisfied with politics. They said that: the government lacked communication; politicians were self-interested and collusive; political parties did not have clear policy differences; and they did not have a political party they supported. Many of these attitudes could be explained by the cartelisation of the political party system. Further examination of primary and secondary sources revealed that there had been a rapid and dramatic increase of public funding for political parties in Korea since the democratic transition in 1987; that there was a restriction of ideology and policy competition; and that regionalism was used as a key political cleavage. These issues provided an explanation for the attitudes that university students today held towards politics and government. It also explained why university students today felt a lack of political efficacy.

The findings from this study revealed interesting insights into the role of university students today. In the 1980s, university students acted as an activist social group with the specific goal of attaining direct presidential elections. As only a minority of the population attended university, university students in the 1980s were more likely to perceive themselves as the educated elite of a developing country and a duty to participate despite the high personal risks of doing so. However, today, a majority of young people in South Korea go to university. Even after attaining university education, university students today report that it is difficult to get the jobs they want in an increasingly competitive market. University students today are less likely to see themselves as the educated elite, and feel less of a duty to participate in politics even

though the risks of doing so are much lower than in the 1980s. Current university are dissatisfied with corrupt and self-interested politicians, regionalist political behaviour and the lack of political competition. However, even as they say they are not satisfied with their own levels of political participation, they fail to participate in politics other than through voting. Their reasons for this non-participation include that they do not feel they lack sufficient understanding of politics, lack the resources to participate and lack the confidence that the political system will be responsive to their efforts. These findings suggest that university students today are dissolving into a wider, pressurised and impoverished middle-class. Though the age group and the educational status of university students in the 1980s and university students today remain the same, changes in society, economy and politics may mean that the role of university students has changed. This change in the role of university students in wider Korean society was not examined in detail in this thesis, but would be a very interesting further research topic. In particular, comparing the political culture of university students to other social groups and age groups and evaluating the impact of the political participation by university students on Korean politics would reveal useful insights about the role of university students.

2 Theoretical implications

The main contribution of this thesis is that it provides original empirical data on the political culture of university students in South Korea before and after the democratic transition in 1987. There are also several theoretical implications to the findings in this thesis.

For one thing, this thesis shows that the voter disaffection, particularly amongst young people, is not unique to advanced Western democracies. The findings show that university students today in Korea, a relatively new democracy, also exhibit low levels of political trust, political efficacy and political participation. The analysis of the applicability of the cartel party thesis to the Korean case showed that there were trends in Korean politics that mirrored that of trends in advanced Western democracies. Further research on whether similar trends can be found in the political systems and political cultures of other new democracies should be conducted. Such research may assist in a better theoretical understanding of the workings of modern democracy.

Another theoretical implication of this thesis is that demand-side, supply-side and intermediary theories can provide a comprehensive explanation of political culture. Although none of these three explanations were able to provide a standalone explanation of the changes in the political culture, when used together, they were complementary and showed that the explanations and elements of political culture were interrelated. Future studies on political culture should therefore seek to examine all three types of explanations of political culture.

3 Policy implications

It was not within the scope of this study to determine whether the changes in the political culture of university students in Korea since the democratic transition are good or bad. However, the empirical findings of this thesis may be used to develop policies to encourage university students today to become more involved in politics.

Firstly, it was clear that university students today wanted a more reliable source of information on politics. The media were not perceived to be an independent and objective source of information on current and political affairs. Legislative reform to facilitate freedom of the press may improve the role of the media as a conduit for political communications. Mainstream media companies that wish to be relevant to university students today as a source of information on political affairs should make an effort to be independent of the government. A related finding was that university students did not find information about politics to be accessible. Media sources should make an effort to make coverage of politics more accessible through better quality journalism and more intuitive user interfaces.

Secondly, the interviews of university students today revealed that politicians lacked communication with university students. In order to elicit greater political participation amongst university students today, politicians should make an effort to be more responsive and communicative. One suggestion that multiple university students made was that politicians could make an effort to be more engaging, for instance, through the use of humour.

Yet, the finding that university students were distrustful of politicians and that most university students did not have a political party they supported indicated deeper issues with the Korean political system. The implication of these findings was that the current Korean political system fails to fully represent the interests of university students. This affects the political efficacy of university students and discouraged them from participating. Further research should be done to examine possible policies to improve the representativeness of political parties. This may be through amendments

to the electoral system to allow for more seats in the National Assembly to be elected by proportional representation; amendments to public funding laws to provide greater access for nascent political parties; efforts to mitigate the effects of regionalism; and ways to facilitate meaningful policy competition amongst the major political parties.

4 Limitations

There are four main limitations of this study. Firstly, the available data collected from university students in the 1980s and university students limit the findings and analysis of this study today. A total of 61 interviewees and 199 survey respondents contributed to the data used in the empirical findings of this thesis. Due to limited resources, it was not possible to carry out surveys and interviews over a larger set of respondents. However, as discussed in the research design, efforts were made to improve the representativeness of the sample. Where possible, data from other studies and statistics were also used to corroborate certain findings.

Secondly, a related issue with the availability of data is that interviewees who were university students in the 1980s and university students today were interviewed under different conditions. University students today were interviewed in their present status as university students. However, interviewees who were university students in the 1980s had to recount events, attitudes and experiences from nearly three decades ago. This meant that the responses of the interviewees who were university students in the 1980s may not be entirely representative of the attitudes and experiences that university students in the 1980s may have expressed had they been asked in the 1980s. Efforts were made to mitigate this by telling interviewees at the outset that they should

recount experiences and attitudes that they held at the time, rather than their current evaluations of past events. Where needed, secondary sources were also used to provide contextual information about politics in the 1980s.

Thirdly, an inherent problem with using survey and interview methods for data collection is that the data are only as accurate as the responses provided. Some of the interviewees expressed contradictory attitudes. For instance, some university students today said that they were interested in politics and kept up to date about political affairs. However, when asked whether they perceived any differences between the major political parties, they said that they did not know enough about politics to comment. Other university students today said that regionalism does not affect their political views, but would then later say that they held a certain attitude towards politics because they were from a particular region. When these contradictions arose, these were noted in the relevant sections.

Fourthly, a problem with relying predominantly on qualitative methods to analyse a single case study is that it is difficult to identify causal relationships. It was for this reason that this thesis does not point to specific causes of the changes in the political culture; instead, it seeks to explain the changes in the political culture by referring to parallel developments going on at the time. It is hoped that some of the relationships between particular developments and political culture identified in this thesis may be further studied through cross-national and large-n studies.

5 Further research

There are broadly four further research agendas that may be pursued based on the findings of this research. Firstly, a comparative study on the political culture of Korea and democracies may assist in identifying common issues with the workings of democracy. Such comparative literature has already been developed on advanced Western European democracies. However, a comparative study comparing the political culture of new democracies in Asia, Latin America and Central Europe may identify trends that occur in new democracies. In particular, an interesting finding of this thesis was that the cartel party thesis had a significant explanatory power on the political culture of university students in Korea. A comparative study on new democracies would be able to test whether similar mechanisms are at work in other new democracies experiencing voter disaffection.

Secondly, a large-n study on the political culture of university students in Korea or the Korean public as a whole may assist in confirming the findings of this thesis and investigating the relationship between different elements of political culture. The use of quantitative methods to analyse such data may reveal further causal relationships between the variables identified in demand-side, intermediary and supply-side explanations and elements of political culture.

Thirdly, research into specific issues with Korean politics should be undertaken to identify particular policy recommendations to elicit greater political participation amongst university students and the general public. This study revealed that university students today have a low level of trust for politicians and a low level of political efficacy. Supply-side explanations attributed this to the cartelisation of the Korean

political party system as evidenced by the increase in public funding, unfavourable electoral rules for new entrants, lack of ideological and policy differences between the major political parties and regionalism. Further research into the cartelisation of the Korean political party system and each of these issues would be able to diagnose issues with the Korean political party system in greater detail.

Finally, further theoretical investigations should be undertaken to better understand the impact of the changes in political culture on democratic governance. This may involve revisiting the definition of democracy and considering the theoretical implications of a decline in political participation by the public. It may also involve evaluating the effects of such a decline in the political participation on the stability of an established democracy or the democratic consolidation process. It is hoped that this study, and others like it, ultimately contribute to a better understanding of the workings of democracies.

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Appendix I. Interview guide

1. For interviewees who were university students in the 1980s

Introductory Questions

When you were a university student in the 1980s:

- What was your level of interest in politics from a scale of 0 to 5 (5 High; 0; Low)?

- What was your level of political participation from a scale of 0 to 5?

- How relevant did you think politics is to your everyday life?

Attitudes towards politics and government

When you were a university student in the 1980s:

- What were your attitudes towards the Chun administration?

- What were your attitudes towards the democratic transition in 1987?

Political Socialization

When you were a university student in the 1980s:

- How did your parents influence your political views?

- How did your schoolteachers influence your political views?

- How did your university peers influence your political views?

- Did your political views change after serving in the military? How did it change and what role did the military play in that change?

- How did the media influence your political views?

Political participation

When you were a university student in the 1980s:

- How did you learn about politics?

- How did you participate in politics?

- What were your attitudes towards students who participated in politics in the 1980s?

Reasons for political participation or non-participation

When you were a university student in the 1980s:

- What are the reasons for your political participation or non-participation?

On current political state of affairs

- How satisfied are you with the overall political situation in Korea today? How does this compare to your views on the political situation back in the 1980s?

2. For current university students

Introductory Questions

- What was your level of interest in politics from a scale of 0 to 5 (5 High; 0; Low)?

- What was your level of political participation from a scale of 0 to 5?

- How relevant did you think politics is to your everyday life?

Attitudes towards politics and government

- What are your attitudes towards the Lee administration?

- What are your attitudes towards the Park administration?

- What are your attitudes towards politicians?

- What are your attitudes towards political parties?

- Do you perceive differences between the political parties and candidates?

- What are your attitudes towards regionalism?

Political Socialization

- How did your parents influence your political views?

- How did your schoolteachers influence your political views?

- How does your university peers influence your political views?

- Did your political views change after serving in the military? How did it change and what role did the military play in that change?

- How does the media influence your political views?

Political participation

- How do you learn about politics?

- How do you participate in politics?

- Do you discuss politics with your family, friends and acquaintances?

- Do you vote? How effective do you think voting is?

- What are the ways that you think university students can get involved in politics? Have you ever participated in any of these ways?

- Have you participated in a group that has a political objective or has relevance to politics?

- Do you discuss politics through online media (e.g. Twitter, Facebook)?

- Do you think your political participation so far has been effective? Do you plan to continue the aforementioned forms of political participation?

- Do you think that your current level of political participation is satisfactory?

- Do you have any memorable experiences from your political participation?

- What are your attitudes towards students who participate in politics?

Reasons for political participation or non-participation

- What are the reasons for your political participation or non-participation?

Appendix II. Online survey questionnaire for current university students

1. Introductory information
- Name   - Age   - Gender   - University   - Region of Origin   - Current Region   - How would you describe your socioeconomic background? (Upper class/Upper Middle Class/ Middle Class/ Lower Middle Class/ Lower Class)   - Do you vote? (No/ Yes, but only for Presidential Elections/ Yes, for Presidential and other elections/ Yes, for other elections except for Presidential elections)   - Do you discuss politics with friends, family, or other acquaintances? (Check all that apply: Friends, Family, university professors, others, None)   - Do you discuss politics through online social media? (Yes, a lot / Yes, but only sometimes / Very rarely / Not really / Never)
2. Please rate on a scale from 0 to 5 (5 High; 0 Low)
- What is the level of influence that your region of origin has on your political preferences?   - What is your level of interest in politics?   - What is your level of political participation?

- How satisfied are you with your current level of political participation?

- How effective do you think your political participation has been?

- How relevant do you think politics is to your everyday life?

- How effective do you think voting is?

- How satisfied are you with the overall political situation in Korea?

- How satisfied were you with the previous presidential administration?

- How satisfied are you with the current presidential administration?

3. On the following statements, do you Agree/ Partly Agree/ Partly Disagree/ Disagree?

- My parents had a big influence on my political views.

- My schoolteachers did not have a big impact on the formation of my political views.

- My university peers had a big impact on the formation of my political views.

- I do not consider a candidate's region of origin when I vote.

- My electoral participation can change Korean politics.

- I have a political party that I actively support.

- I enjoy sharing my political views on online social media.

- I think that people who share their views on politics on social media like to show off.

- I discuss politics regularly with friends on online social media.

- I do not think politics is relevant to everyday life.

- I think the proverb 'People do not know who the king is in times of prosperity and peace' applies to politics today.

- I would like to participate in politics more but I do not know how.

- I think politicians work for the good of the citizens.

- Even if I knew how to participate in politics, I would not do so.

- Even if another political party were to be in power, it wouldn't make a big difference.

- I trust publicly available information about politics.

- There is a clear difference between the major political parties.

- Even if another political party were to be in power, it would not make a big difference.

- Politicians act for their own interests.

- I feel a strong connection with the political party I support.

- I think political parties should make more of an effort to earn support.

- Even if politicians are in different parties they ultimately act like a cartel.

- I actually do not know much about the policies of the major parties

- I want to become a politician in the future.

- I do not want to participate in politics because I think people will form a negative opinion of me if I do.

4. Please provide your own explanations for the following questions.

- What are the first three words that come to your mind when you hear 'politics'?

- How have you participated in politics?

- Do you have any memorable experiences relating to politics?

- What are your reasons for political participation and non-participation?

- Do you think there are any general factors that hinder political participation for university students?

- Do you have a political party that you specifically support?

  - If so, why did you choose that party?

  - If not, why do you not choose a party to support?

- What are your hopes for the current administration?

- Do you have any other general comments, feedback, or questions about the issues covered in this survey?

Appendix III. Profiles of Interviewees and Survey Respondents

Interviewees

Code	Gender	University	Major	Year of entering university	Region of Origin[66]
A01	Male	Chonnam National University	New Materials Engineering	1988	HN
A02	Male	Seoul National University	Physics	1982	YN
A03	Male	Korea University	Chemistry	1983	HN
A04	Male	Hanyang University	Inorganic Material Engineering	1989	HN
A05	Male	Inha University	Resource Engineering	1985	SG
A06	Male	Korea University	Public Administration	1975	SG
A07	Male	Hanyang University	Journalism and Broadcasting	1989	SG
A08	Male	Chosun University	Philosophy and Politics	1984	HN
A09	Male	Kosin University	Theology	1974	YN
A10	Female	Busan Women's College	Visual Design	1981	YN
A11	Male	Inha University	Education	1985	HN
A12	Male	Pusan National University	Psychology	1981	YN
A13	Female	Pusan National University	Physics	1990	YN
A14	Male	Pusan National University	Dentistry	1981	YN
A15	Female	Pusan National University	Pharmacy	1984	YN
A16	Male	Kyungpook National University	Physics	1982	YN
A17	Male	Kosin University	Theology	1983	YN
A18	Male	Seoul National University	Agriculture and Life Sciences	1983	SG
A19	Male	Seoul National University	Agriculture and Chemistry	1986	CC
A20	Male	University of Incheon	Political Science and Diplomacy	1981	SG
A21	Male	Chonnam National University	Economics	1983	HN
A22	Male	Chonbuk National University	Horticulture	1984	HN
A23	Male	Chosun University	Economics	1984	HN
A24	Male	Kyungpook National University	Mathematics Education	1984	YN
A25	Female	Kyungpook National University	Science Education	1985	YN
A26	Female	Dong-Eui University	Music	1987	YN
A27	Male	Pusan National University	Music	1985	YN
B01	Male	Seoul National University	Medicine	2007	YN
B02	Male	Seoul National University	Korean Language Education	2009	HN
B03	Female	Korea University	English Language Education	2012	SG

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[66] SG: Seoul and Gyeonggi; CC: Chungcheong; YN: Yeongnam; HN: Honam

B04	Male	Yonsei University	Biochemistry	2012	SG
B05	Female	Kyunghee University	Fashion Design	2010	SG
B06	Male	Korea University	Political Science and Diplomacy	2008	SG
B07	Male	Seoul National University	Anthropology	2005	CC
B08	Female	Korea University	Political Science and Diplomacy	2009	YN
B09	Male	Seoul National University	Political Science	2006	YN
B10	Male	Seoul National University	Diplomacy	2008	SG
B11	Female	Yonsei University	English Language and Literature	2010	CC
B12	Male	Yonsei University	Earth System Science	2007	SG
B13	Male	Seoul National University	Korean Language Education	2009	CC
B14	Male	Seoul National University	Political Science	2007	SG
B15	Female	Yonsei University	Business Administration	2009	SG
B16	Female	Hanyang University	Public Administration	2010	SG
B17	Female	Pusan University of Foreign Studies	Political Science and Diplomacy	2011	SG
B18	Male	Seoul National University	Korean Language Education	2008	YN
B19	Male	Pusan National University	Mechanical Engineering	2010	YN
B20	Male	Pusan National University	Political Science and Diplomacy	2013	YN
B21	Male	Pusan National University	Architectural Engineering	2011	YN
B22	Female	Chonnam National University	Philosophy	2011	HN
B23	Female	Chonnam National University	Global Environment	2012	HN
B24	Female	Chonnam National University	Philosophy	2010	HN
B25	Male	Chonnam National University	Industrial Engineering	2012	HN
B26	Male	Chonnam National University	Computer Science	2012	HN
B27	Male	Pusan National University	Special Education	2010	YN
B28	Male	Seoul National University	Agriculture and Life Sciences	2003	SG
B29	Male	Chonnam National University	Industrial Engineering	2007	HN
B30	Male	Handong Global University	Law	2004	HN
B31	Female	Chonnam National University	Economics	2009	HN
B32	Female	Pusan National University	Political Science and Diplomacy	2013	YN
B33	Male	Kyungpook National University	Mechanical Engineering	2011	YN
B34	Male	Pusan National University	Ethics Education	2014	YN

Survey respondents

Code	Gender	University	Major	Year of entering university	Region of Origin
R01	Male	Chungnam National University	Technology Education	2009	SG
R02	Male	Korea Baptist Theological University	Church History	2013	CC
R03	Male	Paichai University	Drama and Cinema	2011	SG
R04	Female	Hankuk University of Foreign Studies	English Language and Literature	2010	SG
R05	Male	No response	Sociology	No response	SG
R06	Male	Pyeongtaek University	American Studies	2008	SG
R07	Female	Gachon University	Composition	2013	SG
R08	Female	Anyang University	Vocal Music	2011	SG
R09	Male	Jeonju University	Design	2009	SG
R10	Female	Hankuk University of Foreign Studies	Business Administration	2009	SG
R11	Female	Dankook University	Piano	2011	SG
R12	Male	Yuhan College	Die Design	2013	SG
R13	Female	Korea National University of Arts	Performance	2014	SG
R14	Male	No response	No response	No response	SG
R15	Female	Baekseok University	Christian Practical Music	2011	YN
R16	Male	Seoul National University of Science and Technology	Global Convergence of Industrial Engineering	2013	SG
R17	Male	Inha University	High Polymer New Materials Engineering	2008	SG
R18	Male	Handong Global University	Mechanical Engineering and Science	2005	SG
R19	Female	Yonsei University	Political Science	2007	YN
R20	Female	Kyunghee University	Hotel Management	2005	YN
R21	Female	Inha University	Law	2011	HN
R22	Male	Handong Global University	Media Information and Cultural Studies	2000	YN
R23	Female	University of Incheon	Mechanical Robotics	2009	SG
R24	Male	Inha University	Law	2005	YN
R25	Male	Korea University	Sociology	2012	SG
R26	Male	Korea University	Sociology	2007	SG
R27	Female	Inha University	Korean Literature	2011	SG
R28	Female	Korea University	Sociology	2004	CC
R29	Female	No response	No response	No response	SG
R30	Male	Handong Global University	Mechanical Control Engineering	2001	Other
R31	Male	Korea University	Sociology	2010	YN

R32	Female	Inha University	Education	2012	SG
R33	Female	Korea University	Sociology	2007	SG
R34	Female	Chungkang College of Cultural Industries	Stage Art	2013	SG
R35	Male	Inha University	Education	2009	SG
R36	Female	Seoul Theological University	Japanese Language	2012	SG
R37	Male	No response	No response	No response	SG
R38	Female	Baewha Women's University	Early Childhood Education	2010	SG
R39	Female	Dongduk Women's University	Piano	2012	YN
R40	Male	Sogang University	Economics	2009	SG
R41	Male	Kosin University	Pastoral Theology	2005	YN
R42	Female	No response	Police Administration	2009	SG
R43	Male	Kosin University	Theology	2009	CC
R44	Male	Namseoul University	International Trade	2010	SG
R45	Male	Handong Global University	Law	2004	SG
R46	Female	Dong-A University	Financial Studies	2009	YN
R47	Female	Dong-Eui University	Performance	2012	YN
R48	Female	Pusan National University	Design	2012	YN
R49	Female	Kyungnam University	Early Childhood Education	2012	YN
R50	Male	Yangsan University	Hotel Culinary	2013	YN
R51	Female	Kosin University	Vocal Music	2009	YN
R52	Male	Kosin University	Vocal Music	2011	YN
R53	Female	Bukyong National University	Nursing	2010	YN
R54	Female	Kyungpook National University	Environmental Engineering	2008	YN
R55	Female	Kyungpook National University	French Education	2012	YN
R56	Female	Kyungnam University	Music Education	2010	YN
R57	Female	Pusan National University	Geography and Environmental Sciences	2010	YN
R58	Male	Kyungpook National University	Law	2007	YN
R59	Female	Kyungsung University	Home Economics	2010	YN
R60	Female	Kyungsung University	Social Welfare	2010	YN
R61	Male	Pusan National University	Music Percussion	2008	SG
R62	Male	Pusan National University	Environmental Engineering	2007	YN
R63	Female	Bukyong National University	Nursing	2010	YN
R64	Female	Korea Maritime University	East Asian Studies	2013	YN
R65	Male	Dongwon Institute of Science and Technology	Administration and Accounting	2013	YN
R66	Male	Pusan National University	Microbiology	2008	YN
R67	Male	Inje University	Mechanical Car Engineering	2009	YN
R68	Female	Inha University	Computer Information Engineering	2013	YN

R69	Female	Inha University	International Languages and Culture	2011	SG
R70	Male	No response	Law	2000	SG
R71	Female	Hankuk University of Foreign Studies	English Language and Literature	1997	CC
R72	Male	Seoul National University	Computer Engineering	2004	SG
R73	Male	Seoul National University	Electrical Computer Engineering	2008	SG
R74	Male	UC Berkeley	Computer Engineering	2008	YN
R75	Male	Dankook University	Medicine	2013	SG
R76	Male	Pohang University of Science and Technology	Chemistry	2008	SG
R77	Male	Seoul National University	Korean Language Education	1999	HN
R78	Male	Sejong University	Photoelectronic Engineering	2010	HN
R79	Male	Yonsei University	Political Science and Diplomacy	2009	SG
R80	Female	Kwangwoon University	Social Welfare	2008	SG
R81	Male	No response	Machine Design	No response	SG
R82	Female	Kyungin Women's College	Nursing	2012	SG
R83	Male	Baekseok University	Social Welfare	2006	SG
R84	Male	Hongik University	Video and Film	2009	YN
R85	Female	Sejong University	Business Administration	2012	SG
R86	Female	Seoul National University	Korean Education	2009	SG
R87	Male	Kyunghee University	Nuclear Engineering	2010	SG
R88	Male	Yonsei University	Biochemistry	2012	SG
R89	Female	Inha University	Korean Language Education	2010	SG
R90	Male	Inha University	Mechanical Engineering	2011	SG
R91	Female	Korea University	Political Science and Diplomacy	2011	YN
R92	Female	Duksung Women's University	Computer System	2009	SG
R93	Male	Sungkyunkwan University	Korean Language and Literature	2006	SG
R94	Male	Seoul National University	Korean Language Education	1999	CC
R95	Male	Sejong University	Photoelectronic Engineering	2010	SG
R96	Female	No response	Hair Design	No response	SG
R97	Male	Hongik University	Electron and Electric Engineering	2010	SG
R98	Female	Inha University	Education	2009	YN
R99	No response	Inha University	Social Education	2008	SG
R100	Female	Kyungin Women's College	Aviation and Tourism	2010	SG
R101	Male	Kongju National University	Mold Engineering	2013	SG

R102	Female	Ulsan National Institute of Science and Technology	Chemistry	2010	SG
R103	Female	Shingu College	Tax Accounting	2010	SG
R104	Female	Duksung Women's University	Korean Language and Literature	2009	SG
R105	Female	University of Incheon	Fashion Industry	2011	SG
R106	Female	Kyonggi University	Correction and Rehabilitation	2012	SG
R107	Female	No response	Korean Language and Literature	No response	SG
R108	Female	Kyunghee University	Global Communication	2012	SG
R109	Female	University of Incheon	Economics	2011	SG
R110	Female	Sungkonghoe University	Sociology	2012	SG
R111	Female	No response	Korean Language Education	2001	SG
R112	Female	Korea University	English Language Education	2012	SG
R113	Male	Namseoul University	Child Welfare	2006	SG
R114	Male	Myongji University	Visual Design	1994	SG
R115	Female	Chungang University	Child Welfare	2011	YN
R116	Male	Dongguk University	Korean Language Education	1994	SG
R117	Female	Suwon Science College	Dental Hygiene	2012	SG
R118	Male	Dongyang Mirae University	Mechanical Design	2010	Other
R119	Female	Seoul National University	Korean Language Education	2003	YN
R120	Female	Sangmyung University	Business Administration	2012	SG
R121	Female	Myongji College	Creative Writing	2013	HN
R122	Female	Gachon University	Law	2010	SG
R123	Female	Chungang University	Social Welfare	2011	SG
R124	Female	Gachon University	Law	2012	SG
R125	Female	Seoul National University	Korean Language Education	2004	SG
R126	Male	Sejong University	Photoelectronic Engineering	2010	SG
R127	Female	Hankuk University of Foreign Studies	Social Science	2011	SG
R128	Male	University of Incheon	Urban Administration	2013	SG
R129	Female	No response	Korean Language and Literature	2009	CC
R130	Female	Duksung Women's University	Korean Language and Literature	2010	CC
R131	Male	Hanseo University	Sports Science	2013	SG
R132	Female	University of Incheon	Law	2012	SG
R133	Female	Hoseo University	Social Sports Science	2012	SG
R134	Female	Kyungin Women's College	Secretary Administration	2012	SG
R135	Male	University of Incheon	Urban Architecture	2013	SG
R136	Male	No response	No response	No response	SG
R137	Male	Yonsei University	Sociology	2013	SG

R138	Female	Handong Global University	International Relations	2012	HN
R139	Female	Kyunghee University	International Development	2010	SG
R140	Female	Seoul National University	Biology Education	2007	YN
R141	Male	Kangwon National University	Agricultural Resources Economics	2006	SG
R142	Male	No response	No response	No response	SG
R143	Male	No response	Internet Business	2007	SG
R144	No response	No response	No response	No response	YN
R145	Male	Handong Global University	Law	2004	SG
R146	Male	No response	Korean History	2001	SG
R147	Female	No response	Political Science and Diplomacy	2006	SG
R148	Male	Gyeongin National University of Education	Education	2012	SG
R149	Female	Handong Global University	International Relations	2008	SG
R150	Male	Korea Polytechnic University	Machine Design	2011	YN
R151	Male	Handong Global University	Business Administration	2004	YN
R152	Female	Yonsei University	English Language and Literature	2010	CC
R153	Male	Chonnam National University	Industry Engineering	2012	HN
R154	Female	Korea University	Political Science and Diplomacy	2010	HN
R155	Female	Chungang University	Business Administration	2011	HN
R156	Female	Korea University	Economics	2010	SG
R157	Female	Korea University	International Studies	2011	SG
R158	Female	Korea University	Political Science and Diplomacy	2009	YN
R159	Male	Korea Nazarene University	Speech Therapy	2013	SG
R160	Female	University of Incheon	Economics	2010	SG
R161	Female	Anyang University	Korean Language and Literature	2012	SG
R162	Female	Handong Global University	Visual Design	2008	SG
R163	Female	Hanyang Women's University	Computer Information Engineering	2013	SG
R164	Female	Seoul National University	Korean Language Education	2001	SG
R165	Female	No response	No response	No response	SG
R166	Male	Sogang University	International Relations	2009	CC
R167	Female	Inha University	Business Administration	2012	CC
R168	Female	Chungang University	Composition	2013	SG
R169	Female	Myongji University	Life Science	2010	SG
R170	Male	Mokpo Science University	Radiology	2013	SG
R171	Female	KDI School of Public Policy	Development Policy	2013	YN

		and Management			
R172	Female	Inha University	Social Science	2013	SG
R173	Female	Kyungin Women's College	Food and Nutrition	2012	SG
R174	Female	No response	No response	No response	SG
R175	Male	Seoul National University	Korean Language Education	2009	CC
R176	Male	No response	Sports Management	2009	SG
R177	Male	Seoul National University	International Politics	2008	SG
R178	Female	Kyunghee University	Fashion Design	2013	SG
R179	Male	Gwangju Institute of Science and Technology	Computational Physics	2004	HN
R180	Male	Gwangju Institute of Science and Technology	Mechanics	2012	YN
R181	Female	Dongah Institute of Media and Art	Video Production	2013	SG
R182	Male	Gwangju Institute of Science and Technology	Electronics	2013	HN
R183	Male	Gwangju Institute of Science and Technology	Information Technology	2002	SG
R184	Male	University of Seoul	Urban Sociology	2010	SG
R185	Male	Liberty University	International Relations	2010	SG
R186	Male	No response	Mechanical Engineering	2009	HN
R187	Female	Liberty University	Education	2010	CC
R188	Female	Chosun University	Law	2010	HN
R189	Male	Chosun University	Law	2010	HN
R190	Female	Chosun University	Law	2010	HN
R191	Female	Chosun University	Law	2007	YN
R192	Female	Chosun University	Law	2007	HN
R193	Female	Chosun University	Law	2007	HN
R194	No response	Chosun University	Nursing	2013	No response
R195	Female	Sunchon National University	Japanese Language	2010	HN
R196	Male	Chosun University	Law	2007	HN
R197	Male	No response	No response	No response	YN
R198	Female	Chosun University	Law	2010	HN
R199	Male	Sunchon National University	Business Administration	2011	HN