

# SAEMAUL UNDONG MOVEMENT

## SOLVED ENDEMIC RURAL POVERTY IN 1970S SOUTH KOREA

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**Djun Kil Kim**

Professorial & Research Chair  
Samsung Korean Studies Program  
University of Asia & the Pacific

## Overview



Emblem of Saemaul Undong

- **Introduction**
- **Community Participation**
- **Civic Capacities**
- **Resource Availability**
- **Implications**

# Introduction



## □ Motivation: Rural Poverty Reduction

- Overcome *borit gogae*, or barley hump

## □ Background of the SU Movement

## □ Three Key Policy Strategies

- *Maul*, the movement unit; Saemaul leaders of both gender; and Incentive-oriented government support

## □ Saemaul Undong Process in Three Stages

- *Analysis through Schumpeterian lens within CDD Framework*



## Background of the SU Movement

### Syngman Rhee: The 1949 Agrarian Land Reform Law

- cf. North Korea's agrarian land nationalization
- No more tenant tillers in the village since 1950



### Precedent Experiences

- Early NGO CDD movements: 4-H club, Farmers' Association etc.
- Small-scale CDD programs in 1953 suggested by UN Commission for the Unification & Rehabilitation of Korea
- National Reconstruction Movement in 1961
- Six-Year Rural Development Plan (1966-1971) in 1965



### Launch of the SU Movement

- Park Chung Hee speech on April 22, 1970



## Three Key Policy Strategies

### Strategic Unit

- *Maul*, primary unit of rural community
- SU participation: 33,267 villages in 1971, 36,271 villages in 1979



### Organizer

- Saemaul leaders from both gender
- The Village General Meeting



### Government Subsidizing Method

- Categorization: Basic, Self-help, Self-reliance villages
- "Heaven helps those who help themselves" strategy

## Community Participation

### Administrative Arrangement

- Saemaul Office under Bureau of Local Affairs at Ministry of Home Affairs
- Saemaul Promotional Councils in Central, Provincial, County, Town, Village levels

### Communal Empowerment

- Village General Meeting
- *Sinbaram*, Korean-style social capital formation

### *Schumpeterian Analysis*



## Administrative Arrangement

### National Leadership

- Park Chung Hee from a poor rural community
- Authoritarian political influence

### Excellent Bureaucracy

- Elite civil servants
- Incentive for the Saemaul officers

### Educated Mass

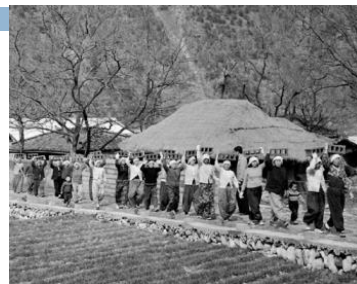
- Literacy
- Higher education
- Role of educated women



## Communal Empowerment

### Village General Meeting

- Grassroots democracy
- Younger generation leadership
- Evaluation of women's role



### *Sinbaram* Volunteerism

- Korean-style social capital formation from traditional rural community team-building spirit
- Western-style social capital formation from trust, networks, and social norms

# Civic Capacities

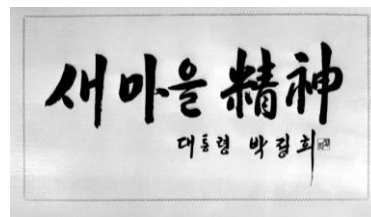


- **Ideological Reform**
  - Saemaul spirit: diligence, self-help, and Cooperation
- **Saemaul Leaders**
  - Volunteer without payment, elected, male & female
- **Saemaul Education**
  - Camp-in training at Training Institute for Saemal Leaders
- **Generation, Gender, and Social Status**
- ***Schumpeterian Analysis***

## Ideological Reform

### National Confidence

- Can-do spirit
- Industrial SU movement



### Ownership Consciousness

- Volunteerism
- Urban SU movement

### Vision-Oriented Life

- From defeatism to hope
- Saemaul spirit of diligence, self-help, & cooperation

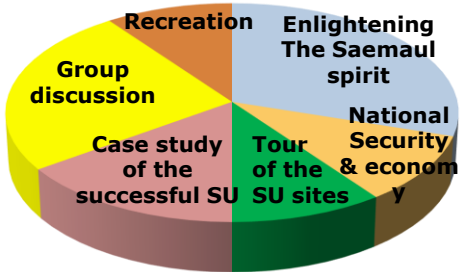


[Anti-gambling campaign]

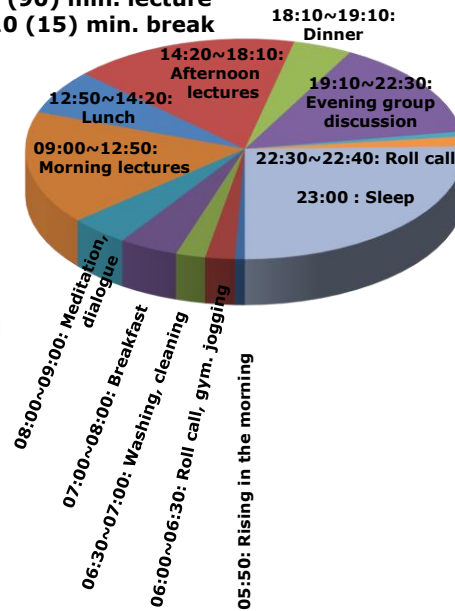


### Appendix I

Typical Training Camp Courses:  
(105 hours)



### Appendix II: Daily Time Schedule: 50 (90) min. lecture + 10 (15) min. break



## Resource Availability

### □ Government Subsidies

- Initial: 336 bags of cement and 0.5 tons of iron rod

### □ Community Funding

- Loans from public cooperatives, Saemaul Bank. . .

### □ Agricultural Outcomes

- High-yielding rice seed, greenhouse farming, farm estates

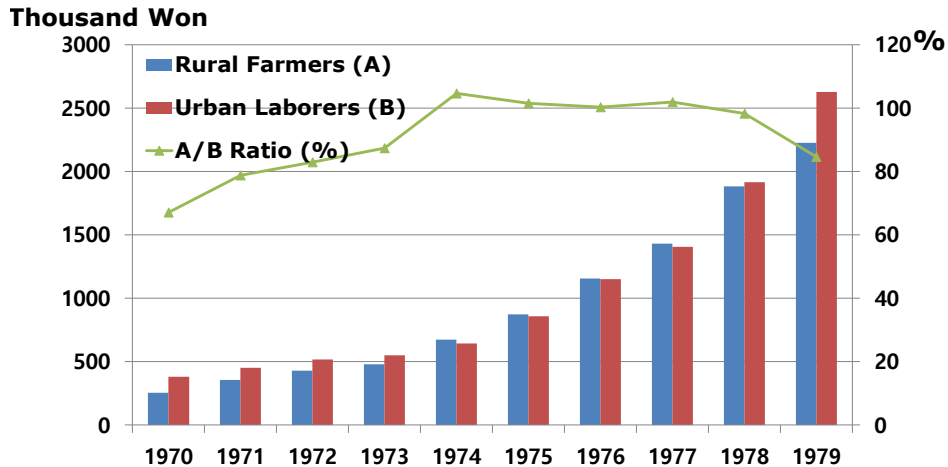
### □ Non-Agricultural Outcomes

- Saemaul factory, or cottage industry

### □ *Schumpeterian Analysis*



## Average Annual Household Income Transition Rural Farmers versus Urban Laborers



Adapted from Economic Planning Board and  
Ministry of Agriculture & Fishery of Korea

## Conclusion



### □ Some Theoretical Findings

- Administrative arrangements & communal empowerment
- Ideological reform thru education: creative destruction
- Saemaul leader: entrepreneur-innovator
- Incentive-oriented government subsidies

### □ Implications

- Administrative arrangements & communal empowerment
- Ideological reform thru Saemaul education
- Minimal role of state for endogenous source of growth

**Thank you for your attention !**

