

# Immigrant Network Structure and Perceived Social Capital: A Study of the Korean Ethnic Enclave in Uzbekistan\*

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*The main purpose of this article is to investigate the relationship between (objective) network structures of individual immigrants and their (subjective) expectations regarding access to social capital. Based on a government-funded original dataset collected on ethnic Koreans living in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, this study probes into how the way in which an individual (i.e., ego) is tied with his or her close social contacts (i.e., alters) is associated with perceived social support from them. In highlighting this causal linkage, two network concepts are explored as possible mechanisms: closure (Coleman 1988) and brokerage (Burt 1992). The findings from empirical analyses lend support for the brokerage argument. Ceteris paribus, immigrants whose egocentric networks are characterized by openness and disconnectedness (i.e., filled with more 'structural holes' or nonredundant contacts) are more likely to believe that they can receive assistance from their close friends and relatives in times of need.*

**Keywords:** Ethnic Enclave, Immigrant Social Capital, Network Structure, Koreans, Central Asia

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## Introduction

In the economic sociology of immigration, a great deal of research interest has focused on the role of ethnic networks and social capital in boosting individual life chances as well as fostering immigrant communities in the host society (Nee and Sanders 2001; Portes and Mooney 2002; Portes and Sensenbrenner 1993). Over the years, a substantial literature has emerged highlighting the connection between ethnically bounded social network and various outcomes, especially in the context of migration decisions, labor market outcomes, and civic engagement. The concept of ‘cumulative causation,’ for example, pioneered by Douglas Massey and associates (Massey 1990; Massey and Espinosa 1997; Massey, Goldring and Durand 1994), suggests that prior contacts serve to lower the costs of transnational movement by providing tangible and intangible resources to would-be migrants, thereby facilitating and channeling cross-border migratory flows. The key causal factor here is network-mediated social capital that resides between the members of the immigrant community in the country of destination or the people with prior migratory experiences in the country of origin and those interested in moving abroad (see e.g., Creighton and Riosmena 2013; Curran, Garip, Chung and Tangchonlatip 2005; Garip 2008; Singer and Massey 1998).

Ethnic social capital is also theorized to have a significant impact on post-migration adaptation and consequences, both economically and politically. As Nee and Sanders (2001, p. 274-75) observe, ‘immigrants typically turn to friends, acquaintances, and relatives in the immigrant community... Through these ties, new arrivals learn about job opportunities, find affordable housing, and master the informal and formal rules of the game as they adapt to the host society.’ Previous research has shown that access to social capital indeed has critical labor market implications. According to Aguilera and Massey (2003), for instance, network ties play a valuable role in determining the earnings outcome for Mexican migrants by providing timely information about job openings. The authors also find that the economic benefits of social capital are greater for undocumented, as opposed to documented, migrants, who face greater challenges and difficulties in the labor market and thus stand to gain more from having the right social contacts. Other studies have produced similar results by emphasizing the dual functions of social capital (i.e., ‘bonding’ and ‘bridging’) in shaping the occupational and income attainment of immigrant

workers (Kanas, Chiswick, van der Lippe and van Tubergen 2012; Lancee 2010, 2012).

Social capital is also seen as an indispensable variable in promoting successful ethnic entrepreneurship and immigrant community development (Light 1984; Light and Bonacich 1988; Min 1993; Portes 1998; Rauch 2001; Raijman and Tienda 2003; Waldinger 1996). Zhou's (1992) study of New York's Chinatown as an immigrant enclave is a case in point that underscores the value of ethnic-based social capital. The so-called 'ethnic enclave debate' is further centered on whether or not ethnicity can serve as a source of relational resources that can benefit members of the immigrant group by creating opportunities for upward mobility that are otherwise unavailable in the open economy (Nee, Sanders and Sernau 1994; Portes and Jenson 1989; Portes and Stepick 1993; Roth, Seidel, Ma and Lo 2012; Sanders, Nee and Sernau 2002).

In addition, social capital has been linked with ethnic civic engagement in mainstream politics (Berger, Galonska and Koopmans 2004; Bloemraad 2006; Gidengil and Stolle 2009; Jacobs, Phalet and Swyngedouw 2004; Klandermans, van der Toorn and van Stekelenburg 2008; Tillie 2004). These studies build on a larger theoretical basis on which scholars have investigated the role of social capital- measured in terms of associational memberships, reciprocity, norms, trust, etc.- in shaping democratic accountability of governments and civic responsibility of citizens (e.g., Jacobs and Skocpol 2005; Putnam 2000; Uslaner 2012). Gidengil and Stolle (2009), for example, examine the ways in which the social network factors influence formal (voting) and unconventional political behavior (protesting, signing a petition, etc.) and political knowledge among immigrant women in Canada. In their comparative study of Muslim immigrants living in Europe and in the US, Klandermans et al. (2008) report a positive link between social embeddedness and collective action participation. Tillie (2004) similarly report that network connections with socially active individuals and involvement in ethnic associations have a significant impact on political participation by Turks and Moroccans in Amsterdam.

In sum, existing empirical evidence supports how and to what extent socially embedded resources can produce beneficial consequences for immigrants. A review of the literature also suggests that by focusing on the 'functions' of social capital (Coleman 1998), prior research has mostly taken social capital as a given and examined its differential effects on the individual likelihood of international migration, the occupational status and earnings attainment of immigrants, their level of political activities and incorporation

in the host country, etc. That is, the bulk of previous research has conceptualized social capital as a significant determinant of positive outcomes and consequences of immigrant life (Portes and Sensenbrenner 1993). Yet, in the midst of the voluminous literature on immigrant and ethnic studies, an interesting question has escaped systematic scholarly attention: that is, how does an individual's social network influence perceived social support from his or her close contacts? Put another way, what is the association between objective network connections (how immigrants are tied to one another) and subjective anticipation of access to social capital (their beliefs about the extent to which they can utilize ethnic connections for instrumental purposes)?

## Research Objectives

The primary goal of this research is to theorize about this particular question and to offer an empirical test of the possible linkage underlying the inquiry. By doing so, this study seeks to contribute to the extant literature by investigating social capital as an *outcome* variable instead of treating it as a *causal* variable, as has often been the case in prior research. It also examines factors that affect the subjective evaluation of, rather than the actual receipt of, social support, a topic that has not received significant attention (Ameida et al. 2009). Focusing strictly on the received social capital and its consequences can lead to circular reasoning, where the positive outcome is interpreted to necessarily imply the presence of social capital (Portes 1998; Portes and Mooney 2002). Analyzing perceived social support can avoid this potential problem and offer a different perspective on the study of immigrant network structures and subjective social capital. In making sense of this connection, two key concepts are invoked, namely *closure* (Coleman 1988) and *brokerage* (Burt 1992), which present alternative, yet somewhat complementary, causal mechanisms underlying the link between social structure and the resources embedded in them (for review, see Burt 2001, 2005).

The analysis is based on survey data consisting of Korean immigrants living in one of the former Soviet Republics, Uzbekistan. For the main purposes of this paper, the dataset contains relevant information on not only the identities but also the overall structures of *egocentric* network (Wasserman and Faust 1994), i.e., to whom one is connected as well as how the focal actor's (*ego's*) social contacts themselves are interlinked. This unique

and original information is used to examine which of the two causal mechanisms- closure or brokerage- better answers the main research question posed above. In the past, most research on Korean immigrants has almost exclusively dealt with the North American experience (e.g., Abelman and Lee 1997; Kim 1999; Lee 2002; Logan, Alba and Stults 2003; Min 2001; Raijman and Tienda 2003; Shin and Alba 2009; Yoon 1997). By shifting the analytical angle toward Central Asia, the current research presents additional evidence on the immigrant lives of overseas Koreans in a novel geographical setting. The capital city of Tashkent was selected to conduct the survey since Uzbekistan is home to the largest ethnic Korean population in Central Asia, followed by Kazakhstan, which naturally qualifies as an ideal empirical setting. There is virtually no rigorous social science research available on this ethnic group. The few existing studies in English on Korean Uzbeks mainly dwell on their migration history, not their current day-to-day situation as members of a minority population. Even fewer studies that examine more contemporary aspects of their lives are based on sketchy anecdotal evidence. To the author's knowledge, this study is the first quantitative analysis based on original survey that explores the network foundation of social capital expectation among ethnic Koreans living in Uzbekistan.

The rest of this article will proceed as follows. In the immediately following section, a brief literature review will be given concerning the definitions of closure and brokerage, as they have been conceptualized and applied in previous sociological research, including but not limited to ethnic and immigrant studies. Based on this review, two main hypotheses are drawn. The next section will introduce the data, variables, and methods used for hypothesis testing, followed by the presentation and discussion of the findings. The paper will conclude with some theoretical implications about the relationship between network mechanisms and social capital that extend beyond the boundaries of the economic sociology of immigration.

## Closure and Brokerage: How Networks Create Social Capital

The so-called 'new economic sociology' has been a fertile and growing research field (Rauch and Hamilton 2001), which focuses on the role of networks in generating social capital that can shape the economic trajectories of individual and organizational actors (for theoretical overview, see Burt 2005, Dobbin 2004, Guillen, Collins, England and Meyer 2002, Lin, Cook and Burt 2001, Rauch and Castella 2001). As the concept of social capital has

gained prominence as a heuristic device, the immigration researchers have adopted it as well in explaining the adaptation processes. As Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993, p. 1322; italics added) put it, 'foreign-born communities represent one of the clearest examples of the bearing *contextual factors* can have.' According to them, such factors include bounded solidarity and enforceable trust that help overcome free-rider problems and deter opportunistic behavior. Empirical examples abound that illustrate the degree to which co-ethnicity helps generate social capital, which supports foreign-born individuals to become acclimated culturally, move ahead economically, or get politically and socially incorporated into the mainstream country (Bailey and Waldinger 1991; Levanon 2011; Nee, Sanders and Sernau 1994; Portes and Mooney 2002; Roth, Seidel, Ma and Lo 2012; Sanders et al. 2002).

As has been pointed out, though, not all forms or types of social capital work uniformly to facilitate rational individual or group pursuits. Some may be of instrumental value but others may actually become a constraint (Portes 1998). The values of social capital thus may not be transferrable but contingent upon various contextual factors (see, e.g., Baron and Podolny 1997; Sandefur and Laumann 1998). In fact, despite general agreement among scholars about the positive consequences of social capital, "disagreements begin when social capital as a metaphor is made concrete with network models of what it means to be 'better' connected" (Burt 2001, p.32). The key issue is what specific forms of interpersonal connections or network mechanisms can produce the right social capital advantage to those embedded in them. In the sociological literature, two dominant theoretical models exist that purport to explain how networks operate and which types of structural or interpersonal linkages are optimal in the creation of social capital.

First is the network closure argument proposed by Coleman (1988, 1990), according to which there are two critical elements in the social capital production, namely trustworthiness and obligation. The members of the same network must be able to trust one another and at the same they must act according to their sense of obligation or loyalty toward the group. For this to happen, norms and effective sanctions must operate to discourage free-riders and encourage cooperation. This, Coleman argues, requires a certain kind of network configuration, one that he refers to as 'closure.' Network closure exists in its pure form when everyone is interconnected and thus no one can escape the possibility of facing a sanction in case he or she defects. It thus fosters trustworthiness and ultimately creates group-level social capital advantage by lowering the risk of cooperation. In the immigration literature,

the closure argument is often invoked in illuminating the individual adaptation process. In fact, researchers commonly refer to the 'closure properties of family- and ethnic-based social networks' (Sanders et al. 2002) as a critical source of social capital in improving the life chances of immigrants. The notion of 'enforceable trust' (Portes and Sensenbrenner 1993), a representative form of ethnic social capital, is also made possible by the effective sanctioning mechanism of the immigrant enclave characterized by the same structural context as specified by Coleman (i.e., network closure).

In contrast to the closure perspective, Burt (1992) contends that social capital derives from maintaining an 'open' network structure. For Burt, what produces social capital are the networks rich in what he calls 'structural holes.' These holes are defined as the relational gap between non-redundant contacts, i.e., people in one's network who are disconnected from one another and thus able to provide novel information and brokering opportunities. To the extent that a focal actor has a pair of interpersonal contacts who do not know each other or are not linked to third parties in identical ways, that actor can be said to have access to a structural hole. And the more holes a particular network has, the less constrained (more productive) it is terms of creating social capital.

Burt's conceptualization is a related but distinct extension of Granovetter's (1973) earlier thesis about the strength of weak ties, which mainly focuses on the information benefit. Borrowing from Simmel, Burt introduces the idea of 'tertius gaudens' (the third who benefits) by highlighting the way in which spanning structural holes offers the focal actor both autonomy and ability to take advantage of not only information but also control benefits. By bridging across two nonredundant contacts, on the one hand, the actor can gain access to new and timely information. On the other, s/he can take advantage of structural holes by brokering communication and thus controlling the interconnected others through the strategy of divide and conquer. In short, "social capital is created by a network in which people can broker connections between otherwise disconnected segments" (Burt 2001, p. 31).

## Main Hypotheses

The social capital argument has become part of conventional wisdom in economic sociology broadly and in the immigration research more

specifically. But the jury may still be out on the exact relationship between network structure and the production and availability of social capital. On the one hand, the proponents of the 'open network' perspective argue that social capital is best accessed through having a network of disconnected others by providing structural autonomy to the focal actor. The 'closed network' argument, in comparison, highlights the importance of trust and cooperation made possible through overlapping ties among network members, which is seen as the prerequisite for creating social capital. Still others contend that both network structures can be combined to generate more complementary outcomes (for review, see Burt 2005). Based on the review of the extant literature, while fully recognizing that both structural types may produce social capital under different circumstances, following research questions emerge. Are people embedded in closed networks more likely to anticipate access to social capital? Or, conversely, do those embedded in more open networks show higher levels of perceived social support? For immigrants or members of an ethnic enclave, in particular, how and to what extent do their social structures shape their conception of social capital availability? Drawing on the theoretical implications of Burt's brokerage and Coleman's closure perspectives, two opposing hypotheses are formulated:

H1: Immigrants with *open* networks (measured in terms of *greater* structural holes) are more likely to anticipate greater access to social capital.

H2: Immigrants with *closed* networks (measured in terms of *fewer* structural holes) are more likely to anticipate greater access to social capital.

## Data, Measurements & Methods

### *The Setting*

The history of Korean Diaspora in Central Asia and in Uzbekistan in particular is part of a larger picture concerning geopolitics and international migration dating back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The first Korean immigrants appeared in the Russian Far East in the late 1850s, who were forced to move from their homeland due to economic hardship. The Korean farmers were initially welcomed since they provided cheap labor to the territory, which the Russian administration exploited. The poor harvest of 1869 incentivized more people to move across the border. Toward 1880s and 1890s, under the



Russo-Korean treaty, Koreans were given legal status as Russian citizens, which precipitated the migratory flow to the region by the sea route from Busan to Vladivostok. The signing of the second Korean –Japanese Treaty in 1905 and the subsequent annexation of Korea by the Japan colonial government further increased the outflow (Baek 2001; King 2001). During the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, because of the previous policies of integration and sovietization, many Koreans supported the Soviet cause and subsequently some of them even fought during the World War II against Nazi Germany. By 1920s, the Korean population was estimated to be about a quarter million.

During this time, Korean immigrants established a coherent and peaceful community known as ‘Shinhanch’on (New Korean Town) in the eastern part of Vladivostok. And many of them even took mainstream jobs in Russian society (Um 1996). Their fate changed dramatically soon thereafter, however. On August 21, 1937, the USSR Government decided to take decisive action in forcibly relocating Koreans from Far East to Central Asia (areas near what are now the independent states of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan). The special decree was passed under the suspicion that the Koreans were working as spies for the Japanese, whom the Soviet government viewed as a major political threat. The Council of People’s Commissars of the USSR and Central Committee of the Communist Party under the order of Stalin swiftly implemented the new law designed to uproot and transplant Koreans as far from the Japanese contact as possible.

The policy of systematic transfer left many homeless and even dead. Despite the hardships, the ethnic Korean community survived and even thrived eventually in their new and harsh environment (Kang 2004). While many lived in rural areas for decades, according to a 1970 census more than half the Korean population (147,000) had moved to cities, mostly in and around Tashkent (Kim 2004). Two years after the breakup of the Soviet Union, Uzbekistan was officially formed as an independent nation. As of 1997, about 200,000 *Koryo Saram* lived in Uzbekistan. The second- and third-generation descendants of ethnic Koreans, who originally migrated to the Far Eastern maritime region from their native country in the early 1900s driven by adverse economic conditions and/or political persecution, have since formed an increasingly dynamic immigrant community throughout the greater Central Asia, (Kim and King 2001; Kwon et al. 2001; Um 1996). According to the latest official statistics, about 500,000 ethnic Koreans live in the former Soviet Union, making them the 28<sup>th</sup> largest ethnic minority group among 127 recognized ‘nationalities’ (Um 2000). About two thirds of them

live in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, with the largest Soviet Korean community found in the latter country.

In the wake of the creation of the Newly Independent States after the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 90s, the ethnic Koreans, commonly known as '*Koryo Saram*' (People from the *Koryo* Dynasty in Korea), have encountered new opportunities for growth and betterment. In light of urbanization, and with increasing educational attainment, some have taken on white-collar jobs, while others have engaged in entrepreneurial activities or moved to economically more vibrant places like South Korea (Kang 2004). Others have successfully entered mainstream politics and academia. According to German Kim, an expert on the history of *Koryo Saram*, the close relationship built with South Korea has been especially instrumental in facilitating their upward mobility (Kim 2004). Many South Korean multinational companies have hired local Korean Uzbeks, and the Korean government has actively sponsored a host of cultural and educational programs to promote the country and its language. This has led to the emergence and stabilization of, among other things, the Korean ethnic enclave in major cities of Central Asia. In particular, the image of South Korea as an economically advanced country has contributed to the relatively high status of the Korean diaspora in Uzbekistan and elsewhere (Kim 2003).

The existing community of ethnic Koreans in the capital city of Tashkent constitutes the survey population for this study. Prior scholarly work on the overseas Koreans (mostly in the US) focuses on first-generation immigrants. What is unique about the current research is that it examines the lives of second- and third-generation immigrants. As such, it sheds light on a group of ethnic Koreans who have had longer exposure to their host society in terms of acculturation and adaptation. As has been pointed out, the experiences of the latter generation cannot be gleaned from those of the earlier generation (Portes and Zhou 1993). In fact, the growing second generation of immigrants in the US and elsewhere suggests an entirely new mode of incorporation, or what has been called 'segmented assimilation' (Portes 1996; Portes, Fernandez-Kelly and Haller 2005). This terminology has provided a fruitful yet controversial new area of research (Stepick and Stepick 2010). One of the aims of the present study is to contribute to a better understanding of this concept by examining the ethnic Korean enclave in Tashkent.

The funding for project was provided by the National Research Foundation of Korea, while the author was affiliated with the Asia Pacific Research Center (APRC) in Seoul. This study is part of a multi-year

interdisciplinary project that investigates the social, cultural and economic lives of the Korean Diaspora in Central Asia. The sample (N = 425) analyzed consists of working adults between the ages of 18 and 64 who lived in Tashkent at the time of the survey. They make up a multi-stage probability sample based on the residential information provided by the local government agency. The survey participants were contacted with the help of a prominent civic ethnic organization headquartered in the capital. The survey questionnaire, originally drafted in Korean by the author, was translated into Russian and Uzbek by research associates affiliated with APRC. The three different language versions of the questionnaire were presented to the survey participants throughout different neighborhoods in Tashkent, who chose the one with which they felt most comfortable. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with each participant that lasted about 30 minutes on average.

#### *Dependent Variable: Perceived Social Capital*

The main dependent variable (SOC\_CAP) was constructed from the ordinal responses given by the subjects to the statement that says 'I have enough close social connections, including friends and relatives, so that I can receive help from them if I need it.' The answers were coded using a four-point scale (4 = 'strongly agree' to 1 = 'strongly disagree'). In the sample, 131 (30.8 per cent) respondents answered that they strongly agreed while only 21 respondents (5.2 per cent) said that they strongly disagreed with the above statement.

#### *Independent Variable: Network Structure*

The main independent variable (NET\_STR) measures the survey respondents' egocentric network structures. Based on a name-generator similar to the one used in the General Social Survey (GSS), the survey asked individual respondents to indicate 'four closest people you know including friends and relatives with whom you interact frequently.' They also provided background information on these four members (age, ethnicity, sex, etc.). Calculating the 'openness' or the 'closeness' of the egocentric network structure requires a specific piece of information: the varying degrees of intimacy among the network contacts or alters. Some previous studies rely on a simple count of the network overlap using binary coding (e.g., Cornwell et al. 2008; Davern and Hachen 2006; Hurlbert et al. 2000), where the presence

	A	1	2	3	4
A		4	4	4	4
1	4		4	4	4
2	4	4		4	4
3	4	4	4		4
4	4	4	4	4	

FIG. 1.1.

	B	1	2	3	4
B		4	4	4	4
1	4		3	1	4
2	4	3		2	3
3	4	1	2		1
4	4	4	3	1	

FIG. 1.2.

of the tie is coded as 1 and 0 otherwise. The current study takes a more nuanced approach by taking into account more precisely the degree to which the network members are connected or disconnected with one another. In the survey, the respondents rated how well the four contacts had known each other on a four-point scale ('Very well' = 4, 'Somewhat well' = 3, 'Not well' = 2, 'Not at all' = 1). Based on these responses, which provide valued as opposed to dichotomized network data, a 5x5 adjacency matrix is created for each of the survey respondent, where the focal actor's relationships with the

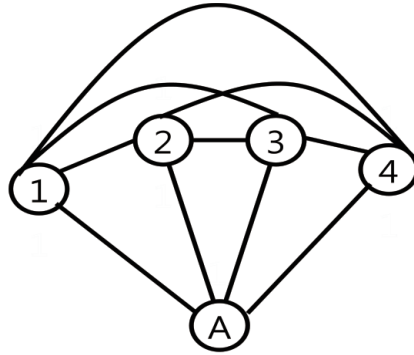


FIG. 2.1.

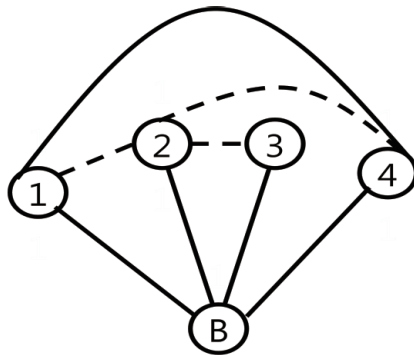


FIG. 2.2.

four contacts were assigned the value of '4' to indicate the close nature of each dyadic tie between them.

Figures 1.1 and 1.2 show examples of two matrices based on the networks of two focal actors, A and B. The diagonal cells are empty since they refer to a self-tie. For A, the network configuration suggests that all of the contacts are strongly connected to each other, indicated by the value of 4 (i.e., they know each other 'very well'). For B, on the other hand, the relationships among the contacts vary in intimacy such that the assigned numerical values differ accordingly. The data matrices thus imply different degrees of openness or closeness. The differences in network density are quantified by using Burt's (1992) concept of 'network constraint,' a standard measure used in the literature that refers to the degree to which the focal actor's egocentric network is interconnected or redundant. In other words, it measures the lack

of access to structural holes. Hence the higher the degree of overlapping ties among the actor's network members (i.e., the less the number of structural holes), the greater the value of the constraint measure. Formally, the network constraint measure is expressed as:

$$\left( p_{ij} + \sum_q p_{iq} p_{qj} \right)^2, q \neq i, j,$$

where  $p_{qj}$  is the proportional strength of  $q$ 's relationship with  $j$ , as  $p_{ij}$  is the proportional strength defined above of  $i$ 's relation with  $j$ . This measure varies from a minimum of  $p_{ij}$  squared ( $j$  disconnected from all other contacts) to a maximum of one (if  $j$  is your only contact). The sum of the above equation across contacts  $j$  measures the aggregate constraint score.

In the sample, the constraint measure varies from the minimum value of 0.51 (where none of the network contacts know each other) to the maximum of 0.77 (where they all know each other very well). Figures 2.1 and 2.2 illustrate the sociogram for the two network structures. Solid lines indicate strong ties, whereas the weaker ties are shown by the dotted lines. For actor A, the measure equals 0.77 and for actor B it is 0.67, which means that actor A's network is more constrained compared with actor B's. In other words, Actor B has greater access to structural holes and thus more social capital advantage.

#### *Control Variables: Socio-Demographic and Network-Level Measures*

Two sets of individual-level and network-level control variables are included in the statistical analysis to offer more conservative hypothesis testing. The former set consists of socioeconomic and demographic variables including the respondents' respective age (R\_AGE), gender (Male = 1), marital status (MARRIED = 1), and educational attainment (EDUC), which is coded as 'elementary school' = 1, 'middle school' = 2, 'high school' = 3, 'college' = 4, and 'graduate' = 5. Also included is their participation in social or organizational activities. The survey asked for the number of active club membership, whose values vary from 0 to 8. This variable (CLUBS) is included since voluntary association is an important proxy to measure potential social capital (Cornwell et al. 2008; McPherson, Popielarz, and Drobnic 1992; Stolle 2001). The respondents' spoken Korean language skill (LANGUAGE) measured on a four-point scale (4 = 'very well'; 3 =

**TABLE 1**  
**DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE VARIABLES USED**

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
NET_STR	.51	.77	.70	.04
R_AGE	18	64	28.31	13.07
GENDER	0	1	.84	.36
MARRIED	0	1	.33	.47
EDUC	1	5	4.01	.94
LANGUAGE	0	4	2.78	.80
CLUB	0	8	.61	1.12
TRUST	0	1	.29	.45
DURATION	21	648	192.47	120.58
CONTACT_AGE	13.75	82.1	33.42	13.32
COWORKER	0	5	1.24	1.59
KIN_MEMBER	0	4	1.90	1.30
STATUS	0	4	1.46	1.56
CLUB	0	8	.61	1.12

'somewhat'; 2 = 'little'; 1 = 'not at all') is also taken into account. The last individual-level control variable (TRUST) measures the respondents' levels of generalized trust based on the following question: 'Do you believe that most people can be trusted, or do you think that you need to be careful in dealing with people?' It is a dichotomous variable coded as 1 if the subject answered 'yes' to the question. It is included in the analysis since people who are more likely to trust the goodwill of others would be more inclined to expect that they can receive help from their social contacts in times of need (see e.g., Yamagishi and Yamagishi 1994; Tyler 2001)

As for the network-level variables, several key dimensions of the relationship between the survey respondents and their network members are controlled for. There are three variables designed to measure the variation in closeness or intimacy. First is the average duration of the relationship (DURATION) measured in months between the focal actor and the four network members. Second, the number of contacts with whom the focal actor worked together (COWORKER) is controlled for, which is a type of proximity measure that can facilitate, for example, 'frequent contact, densely knit connections, mutual awareness of problems, and easy delivery of aid' (Wellman and Wortley 1990, p. 568). The third variable (KIN\_MEMBER) measures the total number of network members who are related by family to the focal actor, which has been found to have an impact on the probability of

TABLE 2  
CORRELATION MATRIX

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. SOC_CAP	1													
2. NETWORK_STR	-.116*	1												
3. R_AGE	.078	-.035	1											
4. GENDER	.060	-.025	.066	1										
5. MARRIED	-.012	-.040	.548**	.005	1									
6. EDUC	.075	-.101*	.157**	.007	.042	1								
7. LANGUAGE	.126*	-.128*	-.114*	.001	-.090	.006	1							
8. TRUST	.010	-.073	.106	.062	.075	-.036	.004	1						
9. CIUB	-.078	.009	-.183**	.054	-.155**	.025	-.195**	.021	1					
10. DURATION	.104	.185**	.547**	-.048	.410**	.025	-.172**	.024	-.149**	1				
11. CONTACT_AGE	.075	.036	.728**	-.007	.495**	.145**	-.124*	.084	-.174**	.324**	1			
12. STATUS	-.019	-.025	-.025	-.086	-.051	.174**	-.018	-.079	.037	.023	.020	1		
13. COWORKER	.062	-.068	-.018	-.198**	.025	.173**	-.011	-.041	-.076	.112*	.090	.252**	1	
14. KIN_MEMBER	.072	.295**	.112	.079	.129*	.104	.127*	-.070	-.101	.478**	.306**	.067	.091	1

\*p < .05; \*\*p < .01; \*\*\*p < .001



providing social support (Hurlbert et al. 2000; Wellman 1992). Also included is the variable CONTACT\_AGE that measures the average age of the network members, since it has been shown to influence the likelihood of help the respondents can expect to receive (Hurlbert et al. 2000). Lastly, the variable (STATUS) that measures the social status of the network members is included. The survey contains a question that asks whether the network contacts occupy important positions in the local business community. This measurement taps into valued resources such as power and status accessed by individuals through their network ties. The logic is that a focal actor who is connected to those who are higher up on the socioeconomic ladder can expect to have greater access to social capital, a view consistent with the social resources argument found in the literature (see Lin 2001).

Table 1 presents the description of all the variables used. Table 2 contains the bivariate correlation matrix. Since the dependent variable consists of polytomous ordinal responses, ordered logistic regression models are run to estimate the main effects of the network structure (constraint) variable, while controlling for the other covariates. Multiple alternative models are estimated to demonstrate the robustness of the regression results.

## Findings and Discussion

The validity of the two stated hypotheses is assessed through the logistic regression models presented in Table 3. Model 1 shows the statistical results from regressing the dependent variable (social capital expectation) on the network constraint indicator, initially excluding all of the control variables. The coefficient is negative and significant ( $p < .05$ ), indicating that having a more constrained network structure (i.e., that which contains fewer structural holes or nonredundant contacts) is related to a lower expectation concerning access to social capital. This finding supports H1 based on Burt's brokerage perspective, which states that people embedded in a more open network structure characterized by more holes rather than closure are more likely to believe that they can receive help from their close interpersonal contacts in times of need. Model 2 includes the individual-level background variables. Among them, only the respondents' educational levels and language skills have a significant and positive effect on the outcome variable. That is, those who are better educated and more fluent in the Korean language are associated with higher expectations. Also significant once again is the network constraint variable, which lends further support for the

**TABLE 3**  
**LOGISTIC REGRESSION MODELS OF SOCIAL CAPITAL EXPECTATIONS**

Independent Variables	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	Coeff.	S.E.	Coeff.	S.E.	Coeff.	S.E.	Coeff.	S.E.
Intercept 1	-4.58***	1.42	-5.52***	1.66	-2.27	1.69	-2.79	2.02
Intercept 2	-3.91**	1.41	-4.77**	1.65	-1.99	1.68	-1.97	2.03
Intercept 3	-2.19	1.40	-2.89	1.64	-1.61	1.68	.047	2.02
NET_STR	-4.96*	1.98	-5.15*	2.08	-7.01**	2.34	-6.23*	2.45
<i>Individual-Level</i>								
R_AGE			.001	.008			-.042*	.016
GENDER	-		.396	.280	-		.312	.362
MARRIED	-		.083	.275	-		.202	.327
EDUCATION	-		.232*	.110	-		.377**	.137
LANGUAGE	-		.320*	.135	-		.336*	.161
CLUBS	-		-.145	.091	-		-.068	.113
TRUST	-		-.214	.229	-		-.386	.268
<i>Network-Level</i>								
DURATION	-		-		.001	.002	.004*	.002
CONTACT_AGE	-		-		.004	.014	.022	.018
COWORKER	-		-		.151	.096	.123	.103
KIN_MEMBER	-		-		.200*	.101	-.042	.123
STATUS	-		-		-.125	.097	-.120	.102
-2 Log Likelihood	469.11***		998.96***		804.40***		735.89***	
Degrees of Freedom	1		8		6		13	
Number of cases	425		412		421		412	

p \* < .05; p \*\* < .01; p \*\*\* < .001 (two-tailed tests)

brokerage argument.

Model 3 consists of the set of five network-level control variables. Controlling for these structural characteristics of the focal actor's network does not diminish the statistical association between the main independent variable measuring network structure and social capital anticipation ( $p < .05$ ). Having network contacts who are kin members also leads to higher expectation, while the other four controls are found to be non-significant. Model 4, the full model, includes both sets of controls. Here, the effect of interaction with family members disappears, once the individual-level factors are taken into consideration. Instead new findings emerge. The duration of the relationship is now significantly related to the outcome variable, i.e., the

longer the average relationship between ego and alters, the higher the expectation. Also consistently significant are the subjects' education and language skills. For the first time, the age variable is found to be statistically significant, albeit inversely, to the dependent variable: older people on average display lower levels of social capital expectation. The main result from this last model points to the same and consistent conclusion: *ceteris paribus*, networks that are characterized by openness and disconnectedness rather than closure and overlap are associated with higher expectations regarding access to resources available through social contacts.

The central finding from this study sheds interesting, and somewhat unexpected, light on the extant scholarship on immigration research; it also has some theoretical implications for the economic sociology literature more generally. A main argument in ethnic and immigration studies is that co-ethnicity can be a valuable source of social capital that allows immigrants to become successfully incorporated into the mainstream host society. The network mechanism cited in explaining the linkage between ethnic social capital and immigrant adaptation lies much closer to the closure rather than brokerage argument. One of the major accounts for the role of social capital in facilitating immigrant economic attainment is in fact 'shared norms and values within an ethnic group (Levanon 2011, p. 79), which are more likely to emerge in the context of network closure that facilitates monitoring and sanctioning of individual behavior (Coleman 1988). Concepts like 'bounded solidarity' and 'enforceable trust' (Portes and Sensenbrenner 1993) are oft-quoted examples in immigration studies that are also based on a similar notion.

For immigrant communities, the closure properties of network are of special importance since 'ethnic ties provide the basis for trust that supports forms of economic cooperation among coethnics that are less likely to obtain in the context of cross-ethnic transactions' (Sanders et al. 2002, p. 283). Members of a co-ethnic community adhere to social norms and cooperate with one another because they are able to draw on interpersonal trust and other forms of social capital that reside within the group. According to Rauch (2001), for example, co-ethnic ties enable immigrants to mobilize their resources to engage in collective action against discrimination and to help each other out in entrepreneurial ventures. In the case of Koreans in the U.S., 'in starting up a business, they have advantages not only in terms of business information but also in terms of business capitalization because they can buy merchandise on a credit from Korean wholesalers' (Min 1984, p. 21; see also Min 1993), a clear example of the social capital advantage associated with

ethnicity. The rotating credit association found in ethnic enclaves is another example that illustrates this mechanism, which is 'based first on the reputation of the recipient and second on swift retribution against those who default' (Portes and Sensenbrenner 1993, p. 1333). And closure is a necessary prerequisite since reputation cannot arise in its absence (Coleman 1988).

In sum, the thematic common denominator underlying many of the previous studies is that the key to immigrant social capital lies in overlapping and dense network structures in which individuals are intimately connected with one another circumscribed by their shared ethnicity. When it comes to the relationship between objective network structure and subjective understanding of social capital, however, the empirical results from this study offer a contrasting lesson: ethnic Koreans with more disconnected interpersonal networks are more likely to anticipate social support from their co-ethnic immigrants. Phrased in more theoretical terms, the probability of trusting in one's social contacts to deliver interpersonally transferred resources is associated with being positioned in an open network filled with opportunities to bridge across structural holes. As is the case with other typical immigrant groups, the Korean-Uzbeks surveyed for this research form a small minority whose survival largely depends on communal support, mutual trust and group solidarity. Previous research has shown that reliance on such network-mediated social capital within immigrant enclaves implies a certain degree of social closure that is necessary to monitor and enforce cooperative behavior (Bailey and Waldinger 1992; Nee and Sanders 2001; Portes and Sensenbrenner 1993; Rauch 2001; Sanders et al. 2002). Interestingly, the subjects analyzed in this study does not conform to this conventional understanding, at least insofar as their subjective perception of social capital is concerned.

This seemingly anomalous finding points to an important debate in the literature on immigration studies, namely the one surrounding the concept of segmented assimilation. Initially proposed by Portes and Zhou (1993), it hypothesizes that the new second-generation immigrants in the US, the descendants of those who entered the US after the 1965 Immigration Act, face a tougher economic and social environment to assimilate into and to adapt to in comparison with their parents. As a result, the argument goes, the younger generation may enter one of three different possible routes of incorporation in the host society: upward assimilation, downward assimilation, and "upward mobility combined with persistent biculturalism" (Waters et al. 2010, p.1169). This theory has been subject to criticisms because of its failure to produce consistent empirical support (see Waldinger

and Feliciano 2010). Nevertheless, it has been one of the most important theoretical contributions in the study of children of immigrants in the last two decades (Stepick and Stepick 2010).

What is relevant about the concept of segmented assimilation for the purposes of this paper is that it helps us to make sense of why ethnic Koreans embedded in sparser networks have higher expectations regarding access to social capital. As described above, the earlier generation of ethnic Koreans, or the original settlers, in Uzbekistan and in other parts of Central Asia had to endure a much harsher and more challenging set of circumstances—economically, politically and socially. However, over time, the latter generation of Korean immigrants have come to more successfully absorb the local culture and better meet the demands of the traditional, as opposed to ethnic or enclave, labor market (Kim and King 2001; Kwon et al. 2001). In other words, the mode of incorporation (Portes, Fernandez-Kelly and Haller 2005) was different for the successive generations of Korean Uzbeks. More specifically, because of government policy and changing economic opportunity structure, the environment was more hostile in the beginning but became more hospitable later.

Thus for the earlier generation of immigrants, given their limited access, they were forced to interact almost exclusively with members of their own ethnicity (i.e., fellow Koreans). In doing so, they had no choice but to form relationships that were overlapping and redundant, as characterized by the definition of network closure. However, as time passed, the younger generation faced an easier time in adopting the local culture and learning the local language, which enabled them to better assimilate into the mainstream Russian and subsequently Uzbek society. Better acculturation also implies that the immigrants of latter generation have been able to expand their networks beyond ethnically circumscribed boundary and thereby tap into socially embedded resources that are found in sparser interpersonal relations (i.e., those with more structural holes), which is consistent with the quantitative results reported above.

The main empirical finding also deviates from those found in other network studies outside the domain of immigration research. It has been reported that individuals with closed networks are more likely to trust their contacts and expect them to offer help when called for (see e.g., Campbell, Marsden and Hurlbert 1986, Hurlbert et al. 2000, Wellman and Wortley 1990). Hurlbert et al. (2000), for example, found that in a natural disaster situation people are more likely to receive assistance from denser core networks. This is because closure among strong ties lowers the risks normally

associated with trusting others, by facilitating the emergence of reputation, the enforcement of group norms, and the sanctioning of those who behave selfishly (Burt 2001; Coleman 1988; Granovetter 1985). By increasing the probability of interpersonal trust and the chances of reciprocity and cooperation, closure, by extension, thus raises the likelihood of social capital expectations held by individual actors. While this characterization applies to many typical immigrant communities, ethnic minority groups, and enclave economies, it does not apply when interpreting the empirical results from analyzing the Korean-Uzbeks residing in Tashkent. Network brokerage, not closure, is what shapes the degree to which subjects in the dataset anticipate their close contacts to deliver social capital when the occasion calls for it.

## Conclusion

The current research set out to investigate a topic which has not received much scholarly attention in the immigration literature, i.e., the association between structures of interpersonal relations and the subjective understanding of access to network-mediated resources. In examining this issue, two dominant theoretical concepts have been invoked as possible causal mechanisms underlying the linkage. While the closure argument presupposes the values of shared obligations and expectations based on effective internal control and sanctioning mechanism, the structural hole argument stresses the importance of gaining advantage through bridging across opportunities that exist between disconnected others. The sociological literature contains substantial evidence concerning the function or value of social capital. However, 'despite the accumulating empirical data, the issue of social capital and the mechanisms by which it influences actors... have been a matter of some controversy' (Zaheer and Bell 2005, p. 813). Based on original data collected from an ethnic enclave in Uzbekistan, this study sheds new light on how people are linked interpersonally can shape their perception of access to social capital.

In surveying the application of the concept of social capital in immigration research, Portes and Mooney (2002, p. 306) observe that the use of this concept could fall into the trap of making mere 'tautological statements [where] a positive outcome necessarily indicates the presence of social capital, and a negative one its absence.' To avoid this pitfall, concrete hypotheses highlighting the causal link between social structure and (actual and perceived) social capital must be specified and empirically tested. One

related such attempt has been to differentiate between the 'bridging' and 'bonding' forms of social capital (Gidengil and Strolle 2009; Lancee 2012). The former refers to cross-cutting social relations, while the latter deals with within-group ties. The bridging-bonding dichotomy also corresponds to the brokerage and closure distinction, where brokerage has to do with the bridging role and closure has closer affinity with the notion of bonding. Under what structural conditions are immigrants more likely to believe in their abilities to gain access to resources found in their relationships? And how do the different network structures (or different forms of social capital) lead to different social capital utilization and outcomes? The answers to these questions can significantly add to the existing scholarship on the roles ethnic networks and immigrant social capital play in the adaptation process. The main purpose of this study is to contribute to that endeavor by shifting the focus to an understudied population.

When it comes to the sociological literature on social capital more generally, this study also offers a noteworthy lesson. In understanding the role of social capital in economic attainment or market outcomes, blanket generalizations cannot be made, since a form of social capital acquired to aid in one type of action may hinder others (Portes 1998). A particular network structure can in fact be an asset or a liability. It can be facilitative or disabling, depending on the specific goal set and sought after by the individual. The value of network structure also hinges on the content of what flows through the interpersonal ties, since it has important consequences on the causal relationship between structure and performance for the actors (Ahuja 2000; Podolny and Baron 1997; Shipilov and Li 2008). As has been suggested, 'forms of social capital may be said to have a *valence*, contingent upon the goals which the actor wishes to attain' (Sandefur and Laumann 1998, p.483; italics in original).

In short, both closure and brokerage can create network advantage, depending on different situations and circumstances (Burt 2005). The challenging task remains for scholars to figure out exactly when and how situational and circumstantial factors interact with network mechanisms in producing the kinds of social capital that matter in promoting individual socioeconomic mobility. The current study serves to illustrate the complex relationship between egocentric network and perceived social capital in one specific empirical setting: the Korean ethnic enclave in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. This study also points to a direction toward which future research can be guided. A theoretically relevant question is how well the 'new second and third' generations of ethnic Koreans in Uzbekistan and other parts of Central

Asia will do socially and economically in the future. Whether they will manage to enter higher mainstream socioeconomic class or become marginalized will be an issue of considerable importance. According to the contested concept of segmented assimilation, there are multiple possibilities. In addressing this issue, the empirical evidence in the literature has been for the most part confined within the context of the US immigration. It would be interesting to investigate the future trajectories of Korean Uzbeks in Central Asia and discuss the relevance and applicability of their experiences to the other cases in North America and other developed capitalist democracies.

There are some important limitations regarding the nature of the data used in this study. Specifically, the size of egocentric network is limited by the questionnaire design. Hence, the level of intimacy of relationships among the four alters as provided by the survey participants primarily indicate connections among 'strong ties' (Granovetter 1973). It would be more interesting to incorporate the role of weak ties (friends of friends) in understanding the linkage between network structure and social capital expectation. Also, given the cross-sectional nature of the data and the related methodological problem of endogeneity, causal inference from the statistical models presented above must be made with caution. Though the scenario may seem unlikely, it cannot be ruled out, for instance, that people who expect greater access to social capital may consciously seek out particular network contacts and specific patterns of relationships among them. For more effective theory building, additional evidence is in order to examine whether or not the findings from this research is unique to the ethnic Koreans living in Central Asia. How social networks and social capital are related is a central topic in the economic sociology of immigration that deserves further careful investigation.

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