Digital Globalization and the Attack of 'Platform Capitalism' on South Korea and its Implications for Africa

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Abstract East Asia has shown new opportunities and possibilities by adopting developmental strategies of globalization, rapid industrialization, urbanization, and high-tech development. Particularly, digital-based platforms have emerged through the development of horizontal and transnational networks. However, these are now facing various challenges leading to rising unemployment, bi-polarization in wealth, and a shrinking social safety net. The rising platform capitalism produces new forms of social conflict by suppressing labor rights and deskilling entrepreneurs. The traditional concept of labor has given way to the gig economy or platform economy filled with surplus workers, so Korea can hardly avoid the crisis brought on by the advent of platform capitalism. In response, Korea is actively searching for alternatives by reclaiming local resilience through experimenting with the so-called 'light community' model. This paper examines digital globalization that will intensify platform capitalism in Korea. This review can provide some implications for Africa, which is already experiencing challenges due

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to injustice and unsustainable development. We suspect that digital globalization driven by an invisible algocratic system presents opportunities and resources for the continent in that Korea has been struggling with the attack of platform capitalism. In conclusion, the authors suggest implications for Africa that can be learned through South Korea's example. The light community model can be an alternative development model by which they can actively respond to the upcoming threats of platform capitalism.

Introduction

Due to the globalization of neoliberalism, local communities in South Korea (hereafter Korea) are crumbling, social safety nets within families no longer operate, and individualism has become prevalent. We have had difficulty sustaining local communities and have witnessed the importance of collaboration and solidarity among local community members, especially throughout the Covid-19 pandemic (Lee 2021). While underscoring the resurfacing role of local communities in response to the pandemic, we do not argue for a return to the traditional community. In fact, that is neither possible nor desirable. Korea has become a role model for developing countries in our catch-up strategy. The government simultaneously promotes globalization, rapid industrialization, urbanization, and digitalization. However, Korea is also struggling with many unexpected challenges. For example, the digital revolution has led to the beginning of a platform economy in which materials and non-material ideas are easily connected and traded.

A platform is a space for coexistence where participants exchange values through autonomous interaction. This platform is constantly expanding its domain by finding alternatives to satisfy the diverse needs of participants. As the platform economy paved the way for a sharing economy, we see the possibility for increased cooperation and community formation through greater connectivity from digital platforms. We can easily and quickly create transnational networks with digital platforms. With the digital revolution, these new opportunities can be made by overcoming space, speed, and scale limitations. However, the digital revolution has accelerated unemployment, bi-polarization, a low fertility rate, a hyper-aging society, and reduced social safety nets (Lee 2020; Chun 2021). Platform capitalism has brought a gig economy, which triggered a rapid increase in temporary workers.[1] Remarkably, the platform economy has destroyed the traditional labor concept and deteriorated working conditions. As labor rights in the platform economy are frequently disregarded, and the workers' social safety nets are reduced, the workers have gradually fragmented, individualized, and then marginalized from public issues. For instance, platform companies are not taking responsibility for gig employment.

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[1] In the platform economy, the financial industry, higher education service industry, used car sales and publishing industry are leading the platform market. However, the problems of an uncertain global supply chain, protection of platform workers' rights, and protection of participant information are occurring at the same time. (Park, 2022: 51).

They are mobilizing invisible algorithm operations to discipline and control platform workers and consumers.

In addition, we also note the emerging algocracy, meaning algocratic domination that has rapidly erased memories of collaboration and reciprocal relations from the past and has invisibly exploited precariat workers. Even though these algocratic systems enhance our knowledge, increase our health and well-being, and improve social outcomes, we do not have a clear sense of exactly how they manage to do this. The social spaces have become so opaque to human reason. The platform economy is not only inevitably expanding quickly but also controlling citizens through invisible algorithms. In other words, heavy reliance on the platform economy equipped with algocratic systems should threaten legitimate decision-making procedures (Danaher 2016).

Within this context, this paper examines how local societies can creatively respond to such a hyper-connected digital world run on a platform economy. Rather than macro changes top-down, we propose a bottom-up approach from the grassroots where people seek alternatives and creatively participate in socio-economic activities. Ezio Manzini (2019) focused on how local community members rediscovered social values needed for building a 'light community', such as reciprocity, sharing, solidarity, cooperation, tolerance, communication, autonomy… etc., and recovered their resilience through various challenges.

Globally, as the Earth is burning away toward peak oil which has led to the climate crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in disaster capitalism (Kim 2013). The elite has been promoting meritocracy, leading to social wealth inequality and intensified bi-polarization worldwide. Community and family spirit is rapidly disappearing in Korea, which has been rushing into economic development. During the pandemic, grassroots democracy is critical to improving health care locally (Tronto 2021). Public good and social solidarity are important at the local level. It is of utmost importance for local residents to actively participate as a core actors in the decision-making process. Various citizen groups have actively engaged in grassroots democracy, socio-economic reciprocity, and cooperation to regain local resilience.

Given these, this paper explores how Korean citizens have struggled with the so-called 'platform capitalism' and have searched for alternatives to the unsustainable developmental model. The authors highlight the significance of the light community model, where people do not passively respond to the platform economy at the grassroots but creatively utilize digitalization in daily life. We believe that the light community model should contribute to improved local resilience against the rising platform economy. In conclusion, we try to draw some implications for Africa where the light community model can help them discover alternatives against the threats of platform capitalism and algocratic systems.

A Glimpse of Increasing Global Crises and Platform Capitalism

The platform economy, operating with information and communication technologies such as big data, artificial intelligence(AI), and robots, has caused major changes in the labor market. Technological innovators based on digital platforms are replacing the existing labor force, causing many jobs to disappear and new jobs to appear. According to a 2015 joint study of Nomura Research Institute and Oxford University, the jobs that disappear will be accountants,

retailers, professional writers, real estate agents, flight pilots, economists, health technicians, actors, firefighters, supermarket clerks, taxi drivers, and security guards. On the other hand, related jobs such as big data, artificial intelligence, and robot-related algorithm developers will receive attention (Park 2021: 239).

Korean society is facing significant internal and external challenges due to the pandemic, the rise of the platform economy, and the Russia-Ukraine war. The crises have intensified, and even grassroots residents are feeling the effects. Domestic crises include the world's lowest fertility rate, the fastest entry into a super-aging society, the disappearance of good jobs, the collapse of rural communities, energy transition such as de-fossil and renewable energy, social bi-polarization and inequality, and an increase of socially vulnerable groups, generational conflict and competition, the central-community gap, and local revitalization. These crises at both domestic and international levels are overlapping and threatening simultaneously.

In addition, the global crises include overcoming social bi-polarization, climate, pandemic, and the war crisis together. Value transformation is necessary for the transition to a sustainable future society. The Korean government has tried to insist on the past development model to overcome overlapped crises by relying on continuous growth based on neoliberalism. Beyond financial globalization, the global capitalist system is actively taking advantage of the digital revolution and AI to dominate algorithms built on a transnationally connected society. The platform economy operating on an invisible algorithm has penetrated every corner of our lives during the recent pandemic. Local people fear the impending collapse as the future for local communities is uncertain. We do not insist on returning to the traditional community in nostalgia while rejecting new changes. Instead, we try to rediscover the community's strengths that have been passed down and challenge that a recent experiment is creatively applied in the changing environment.

First, we should start by reflecting on the dark side of globalization and platform economy threats. Neoliberal globalization supports the free movement of money, material, and men across national borders by which people dream of becoming the so-called 'transnational capitalist class' who enjoys a transnational nomadic life without belonging to any country or region (Sklair 2001). Korean society also emphasizes the idea of 'winner-takes-all', thus meritocracy and social mobility through education. In reality, such upward mobility is limited to the few who have achieved worldly success through zeal and effort. They emphasize fair competition but criticize any support given to care for the socially disadvantaged as unfair favoritism. Therefore, those who live in a competitive country like Korea cannot move upward socially through their efforts to catch up with those who had begun at a higher starting point.

As a result, as the sense of belonging to local communities is vanishing and social values of cooperation, coexistence, and solidarity have weakened, extreme individualism, meritocracy, familism, and even the 'winner-takes-all' idea have become strongly established as mainstream. As Michael Sandel highlighted in his book, Korean society recognizes and praises smart and capable people but is less likely to embrace those who fall behind in the competition (Sandel 2021). There is increasing competition and conflicts of self-interests across class, gender, and race, generations. Korean citizens struggling with isolation and alienation have been making every effort to promote citizenship, but they remain in individual participation (Kong 2012). While individualized citizens are easily connected, they are hesitant to build a sustainable network.

Furthermore, as the power of solidarity disappears, citizens' capabilities are somewhat weakened. In addition, as the public sphere is also heavily dominated by major platform companies, powerless gig workers, consumers, and individual citizens are disappearing from the sphere. In short, with the advent of the digital revolution, which has led to a transnationally connected society and a platform economy, citizens have become marginalized in the decision-making process.

While quickly engaging in neoliberal globalization and the digital revolution, local Korean communities have had difficulty maintaining a strong network as in the past. It is time that we find alternatives such as a more open, horizontal, and lighter community in which people can move around more easily rather than insisting on regenerating traditional communities based on strong ties like hometown, blood, and academic alumni (Kong & Lim 2020). Manzini argues that we need a more flexible and open community, a light community, rather than striving to revive a strong and sticky community (Manzini 2019: 1-33). The light community we search for does not mean a simple return to traditional forms. While local community members connected vertically and horizontally need to consider the global context, they can also easily enter and exit a community to adapt to new challenges (Manzini 2019). Light communities such as this can respond more flexibly to the overlapped challenges.

In short, Korean society has experienced globalization most compactly right after rushed-to modernization through industrialization, informatization, and urbanization. Korea is now facing an unfathomable new challenge, the so-called platform capitalism based on the digital revolution and transnational connection. As many developing countries in Africa are also experiencing these changes more compactly and trying to mimic the Korean development model, we believe that an alternative model of rediscovering local resiliency from the bottom up should provide significant implications for the later comers. In other words, the 'light community experiment' promoted in Korean society has significant implications for the African region.

Given these, the authors highlight the 'light community' model as an alternative to the platform economy equipped with neoliberal globalization and the digital revolution. This new model can provide a just and sustainable community against the overlapped global crises.


Research Framework: Improving Local Resilience

Internationally, the transnational rivalry competition between democratic and neoliberal globalization networks has failed to restore the tilted playground to balance. While the realistic view of international politics, which puts its interests first, is still prevalent, global governance mechanisms remain abstract. Of course, grassroots movements are disappointed with global governance and continue experimenting with local alternatives.

Locally, those more likely to live on social values are coming together to find alternatives. However, there are always value conflicts and competition within the community. Local people are facing more conflicts over the value transformation between development and conservation, for-profit and reciprocity, and economic interest and ecological sensibility. They need a long-term vision that encourages them to improve local resilience by living on social values rather than forcing their ethical consumption. Community sustainability is not achieved through a few projects. Rather, innovation is implemented through creative experiments and challenges from

the grassroots level. In other words, local resilience is secured when local community members voluntarily and continuously join in on new projects and share collaborative achievements.

Given these, the authors continue to explore local resilient models by asking the following questions: What should we rediscover, and how do we weave them together? What should we rediscover, and how can we weave them together in the community? Finally, we highlight a research framework in which five factors contribute to improving local resilience, as shown in Figure 1.
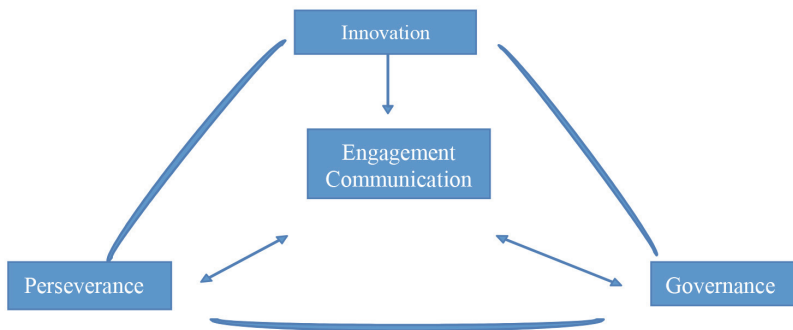
Fig. 1 Improving Local Resilience Model (Kong & Lim, 2020. P. 30)

First, perseverance is the most fundamental factor for grassroots residents to enhance local communities resilience. The perseverance of local residents originating from their experiences and cooperative memories has been deeply ingrained in their hearts. The case of Italian Trentino, where the cooperatives based on local residents' collective memory and experience never fall behind in competition with for-profit enterprises, shows perseverance accumulated through daily collaboration. In short, the locals agree to value collaboration most.

Second, innovation comes from creative experimentation. Rather than shrinking in the face of new crises and threats, grassroots should start to remember past cooperation experiences and actively propose creative joint projects. Innovation emerges through discussions and devising experiments rather than relying on stable external support and subsidies. Innovation without experimentation or transgression against the existing framework is impossible. Such innovations result from enriching social values as well as local collaboration.

Third, governance is more likely to be successful when local communities have some degree of independence and voluntary capacity. Many scholars have emphasized key features in governance by adding adjectives such as good, transparent, and democratic. It shows that governance often becomes weakened when implemented in various local contexts. When heavily dependent on government subsidies, local governance strategy is prone to failure due to weak governance. It means that local governance strategies tend to restrict residents' innovative activities and thus are prone to failure. Local governance should be democratic, transparent, and horizontal. If we expect governance factors to serve as the panacea to improving local resilience, we must be aware that it can turn into poison if we overdo it.

The fourth and fifth elements, communication and participation, are interconnected and function as the thread of local community resilience. Residents can grow as citizens by

empowering local civil society through participation (Scholte 2003). This participation process necessarily presupposes communication among local residents. As William Gamson argued, talking about politics matters for mutual understanding in terms of deliberation (Gamson 1982). When deliberating local issues together, residents can understand each other's positions and persuade others to reach a social consensus. Through such deliberation, people voluntarily become more responsible citizens and actively engage with the local challenges they face. In the process of cooperation, innovation can naturally emerge. Given this model, the authors examine how the local community responds to the platform economy and digital revolution and how it tries to scope out alternatives.

As mentioned above, the local community is closely linked to platform capitalism beyond national borders due to the advent of a transnational connected society. With the rise of the Internet, social media, and platforms, we are experiencing revolutionary changes, from establishing relationships within the country, market, and civil society to participating in activities. Criticism of government policies can be put under pressure individually or online as a meme strategy. Anyone can become so-called 'mojos', that is, mobile journalists, and can share large amounts of information simultaneously with many people at a low cost. However, rather than being transparent and responsible, this information politics strategy has resulted in the self-affirmation effect, which leads to the irresponsible spread of fake news or only sharing content that conforms to one's opinion. It distorts the public sphere through distrust, fragmentation, and anger, being locked in one's assertions rather than communicating with others. It means that people are reluctant to discuss with and persuade opponents but ignore them and only focus on communicating with people who share the same opinions. This kind of distorted communication leads to misunderstandings and amplification of conflicts without distinguishing fake news.

In addition, the realm of the market is getting more serious. We are moving towards a platform economy dominated by so-called invisible algorithms (Lee 2020). The ideal sharing economy is disappearing, and only a few who dominate the platform economy are monopolizing profits while most workers are being reduced to gig workers. A few promising cases mislead many into believing that the sharing economy is producing benefits for all. Unfortunately, Alexandrea Ravenelle argues that a sharing economy based on platform capitalism has benefited only a few for success and that the majority are currently struggling and even frustrated (Ravenelle 2019). It shows that digital platform-based sharing economy activities have many limitations and obstacles to enhancing the resilience of local communities. Let's examine the double sides of sharing economy as well platform capitalism.

Staggering between Sharing Economy and Platform Economy

It seems that the current sharing economy has become quite different from what Lawrence Lessig first talked about in 2008 (Lessig 2008). He defined the sharing economy as based on a product that many people once used. The current sharing economy is a 'customized service based on utility, similar to a platform economy. Rather than overcoming the weaknesses of capitalism, such as inequality and social bi-polarization, the sharing economy is nothing but another form of capitalism that pursues profit that exists above its extension. As the platform economy draws customers from existing manufacturing and service industries, the jobs of

regular workers could be at risk. Guy Standing claims that globalization creates a 'precariat' and criticizes the sharing economy as another platform capitalism that extorts unearned income by exaggerating sharing packaging (Standing 2011). The sharing economy has the limitations of a kind of rental economy, strong selling economy, and connection economy. There is a restaurant where you can enjoy as much food, alcohol, or coffee as you want every day for 30,000 won a month. Unlike the previous hard-selling, it approaches sharing in the sense that it enables 'access' and 'use' beyond 'ownership' according to an individual's order.

In this hyper-connected society, boundaries disappear, and liquids replace solids. It is possible to connect and exchange goods and services anytime and anywhere without the constraint of construction. Under a mixed reality where virtual reality and augmented reality are merged through cloud data, the world will change beyond our expectations (Sundarrarajan 2016). However, will the fourth industrial revolution bring about a utopia that overcomes today's low growth and polarization through innovation in growth and distribution? Or will the advent of AI lead to a dystopia where morals and ethics do not exist and where technology dominates? The outlook is mixed.

Recently, taxi driver's suicide rate has been on the rise in the United States. As the number of cheap shared vehicles around Uber and Lyft increased, it has become difficult for skilled drivers who have been driving taxis for a long time to make a living. Although it is a sharing economy, this economy produces only mass non-regular temporary workers, thus maximizing the profits of platform workers and threatening regular jobs. Although Uber is making an astronomical deficit every year, it not only sets a low fee for a new entry in areas but also provides subsidies for Uber drivers to compensate for the low fares. However, Uber and Lyft are increasing their corporate value tremendously, surpassing the existing giant manufacturing and service industries. More than half of the global economy is increasingly related to the sharing economy. For example, Uber for mobility, Amazon for logistics, WeWork for coworking space, Airbnb for living and lodging, Vandebron for green electricity delivery, and 8 Percent for a p2p finance startup based on crowdfunding have become attractive for young people.

Furthermore, platform companies account for 70% of the top 10 global companies by market capitalization. While Amazon took over the toy market with its platform, Toys "R" Us, which is famous for its children's toy department store, went offline and eventually went bankrupt.[2] Department stores in Europe and the United States are also closing or reducing their stores due to online purchases.

The problem with sharing economy is that platform companies can dominate the network, monopolize the market, and exploit labor by using algorithms with big data and AI. Platform companies continue to monopolize the network by connecting users and providers without intermediaries. While the sharing economy is rapidly spreading due to digital globalization, it has resulted in adverse effects such as the mass production of platform workers and increased labor exploitation. In reality, platform workers have become marginalized rather than participating as local community members. Although there is a difference in scale, this is by no means limited to the problem of urban areas. Platform workers are also increasing in rural communities.

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[2] Unable to withstand the competition with the platform represented by Amazon, the Toys "R" Us headquarters filed for bankruptcy protection on September 18, 2017, and as a result, 182 of the branches were closed. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toys_%22R%22_Us)

It is an important emerging task for local communities to decide whether to embrace increasing platform workers in their community. The state appears reluctant to redefine labor and secure a social safety net for platform workers to prevent them from being marginalized in their community.

The platform capitalism attack weakens local residents' perseverance, which is a key factor in local resilience. More and more economic activities in the platform economy have reduced people to compliant consumers instead of independent and creative consumers through their invisible algorithms. In addition, offline encounters are reduced, and creative projects with others are weakened. We are easily tied to the cyberspace of a digital platform and are prone to unilaterally pour out our opinions rather than engage in open communication and deliberation. Even worse, as fake news dominates cyberspace, the public sphere has slowly distorted citizens to avoid communication. From this perspective, platform capitalism further exacerbates local communities' incompetence and displaces citizens as individualized outsiders through the digital revolution and invisible algorithmic domination.

The platform economy is infiltrating every corner of local communities, and civil society's response to this needs to start at a more fundamental level. The reason is that the platform economy is breaking down the boundaries between jobs as well as the meaning of traditional labor. First, let's take the case of Coupang, the fastest-growing platform company in Korea. Coupang proudly introduced the rocket delivery system, ensuring that any order placed before midnight is completed by 7 AM the next day. Rocket delivery was made possible by the Coupang flex system, which allowed anyone self-employed to carry out the rocket deliveries with their own car. Coupang Flex is an emerging job as anyone with a vehicle can carry out Coupang rocket delivery. Workers receive an assigned delivery amount and a commission fee per case after applying for work one or two days before the delivery. Applying for Coupang Flex is easy. You can apply for a job immediately by installing the Coupang Flex application, filling out individual information, and choosing delivery areas on the app. This way, the threshold is lowered so that anyone can work easily. However, not all applicants are picked, of course. Even if you apply early in the morning, since the selection process is on a first-come-first-served basis, you cannot always get an assignment. Applicants do not know what algorithm is used for this allocation process, so they become dependent on the platform economy.

Coupang Flex, based on a contract between the platform company and the self-employed, does not protect them with labor laws such as industrial accident compensation, employment insurance, and Labor Standards Act. If an accident occurs while working, the flex man has to resolve it at his own cost. Ironically, Coupang flex is quite different from quick delivery workers.[3] Despite the seemingly same work they do, Coupang Flex lacks a safety net as it is composed of self-employed people. It shows how the platform economy avoids direct employment that must provide a social safety net while indirectly directing and supervising platform workers through fee policy and algorithm control. As a result, workers are exposed vulnerable at the forefront of a new labor market. This will ultimately be the biggest obstacle to improving the resilience of local communities. Why are platform workers so important to the local community? Their status is unstable, and they are marginalized from local life as they have to take two or three extra part-time jobs to survive and cannot afford to participate in community activities. It seems that

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[3] Ironically, delivery drivers collect, transport, and deliver other people's goods, but Coupang Flex delivers goods purchased by Coupang, so it is not covered by industrial accident insurance.

the platform economy is sucking everyone up.

Let's examine another case of Korean franchise businesses rapidly increasing their dependent self-employed population. The number of franchise brands in Korea was 7,094 in 2019, and strikingly, the proportion of franchise stores in Seoul that closed within five years reached 48.5%. The problem is that the skill level of the self-employed is deficient. Statistics show shocking results that 74.1% of self-employed people who started a business within the last year had less than six months to prepare (Chun 2021). Although franchise owners are self-employed and have practical business discretion, the franchise headquarters control them. In other words, with the rapid growth of the platform economy, franchisor headquarters are subjecting their franchisees to invisible control mechanisms. The self-employed are reduced to the same status as dependent workers. For example, let's look at the case of starting a study café. Since it is convenient to obtain a business license, many people start the business without enough preparation, such as data research, field research, marketability research, etc. As with study cafés, new businesses that anyone can easily start means the competition becomes fiercer. To survive in the competition, developing the necessary skills or mobilizing capital is critical. Most self-employed people do not have the skills, so they outsource skills to franchisees and become subordinate franchises providing capital and labor. On top of this, the social distancing policy during the Covid-19 pandemic has caused serious damage to small business owners(Horton 2021).

In conclusion, as seen in Figure 2, the platform economy is making it more difficult for the self-employed to survive in Korea, leading them to be deskilled and even to become platform workers. With big data, AI and algorithms, platform companies can easily track work performance in real-time and effectively and indirectly control their labor intensity. In other words, the rights guaranteed to traditional workers are not provided for independent or special workers. The reason why jobs such as Coupang Flex continue to expand is that the platform economy is rapidly increasing. And what makes this possible is that platform companies monopolize the algorithm, so more and more platform workers are easily engaged in the platform economy while ignorant of the process.

Similarly, as seen in Figure 2, franchise entrepreneurs have become subordinate in hierarchical relationships because of deskilling and the invisible control of algorithms. With the advent of platform capitalism, the traditional self-employed are incorporated into the franchise hierarchy to survive in the increasingly competitive system. Without developing sufficient skills, they are absorbed into the more competitive market structure and eventually straddle between the two sectors as a subordinate entrepreneur. It is another result of the algorithm monopoly of platform and franchise companies. Although Korean society has achieved economic development through rushed-to industrialization, informatization, and urbanization, it is quickly being sucked into the platform economy. This phenomenon is not only aggravating social inequality and bi-polarization, but it is forcing many regular workers to turn into platform workers. Even worse, with the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic, this subordinate process has accelerated, and its effects are expanding and deepening. Platform companies straddle between the sharing economy and the platform economy to invisibly control the process. Still, they only take the profit and no responsibility for the consequences of bi-polarization and poverty risk. To form resilient local communities, we must scope out social values such as justice, sustainability, inclusiveness, and subjectivity. We prepare an alternative development model.
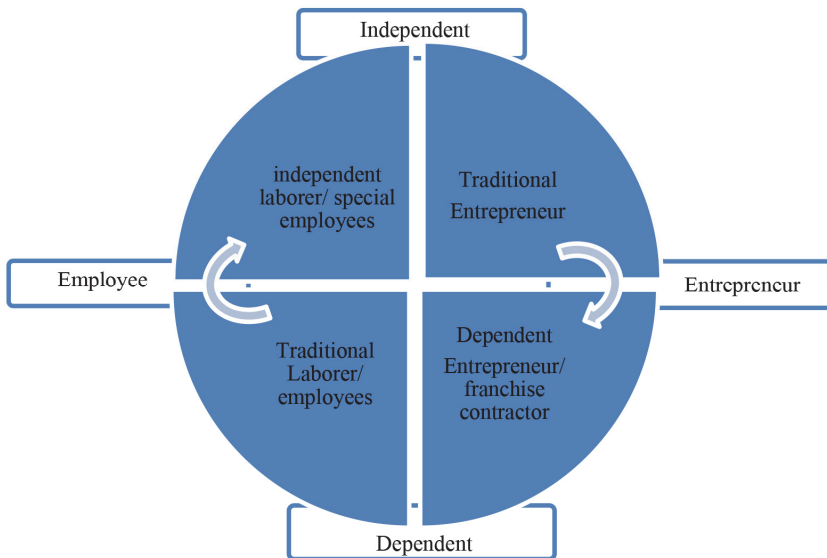
Source: Chun, H. 2021: p. 31.

Fig. 2 Distorted Labor Relations

Implications for Africa: A Light Community Model

We live in overlapping crises in a transnationally connected society, and we are facing a world converging into a platform economy. We believe Korea's struggling with the platform economy has significant implications for developing countries, especially Africa. The authors here would propose a light community model for them. At the exploratory level, we have been focusing on the 'light community' model to search for alternatives to platform capitalism. We are not arguing that the local community is reborn as new hardware amid internal and external crises. Rather, it rediscovers the sense of community through existing traditions and experiences and constantly invites members to a more open, horizontal space. We believe that light communities can actively utilize the newly emerging digital innovation and platform economy. In the long run, the light community strategy emphasizes learning and understanding the local area at the micro level and establishing local attachment and a sense of belonging. At the same time, the light community model aims to build an open ecosystem across national borders to integrate global crises into local contexts. The light community is wary of becoming buried in local areas but practices being the so-called 'rooted cosmopolitan citizens' by actively leveraging digital platforms (Tarrow 2005: 35-56).

Let's briefly highlight the key characteristics of the light community model. Unlike the traditional community model, those who belong to the light community actively engage in digital platforms and use it as a lever t for more freely mobilized transnational connections. As seen in Figure 3, rather than passively responding to changes brought by transnational capitalism, the local community actively participates in local issues and challenges by focusing on digital

innovation and a sharing economy that allows for easy access to information and databases. It also means that local residents should voluntarily serve as independent pro-sumer, being both a producer and consumers in the platform economy by creatively utilizing digital innovation in their daily lives.
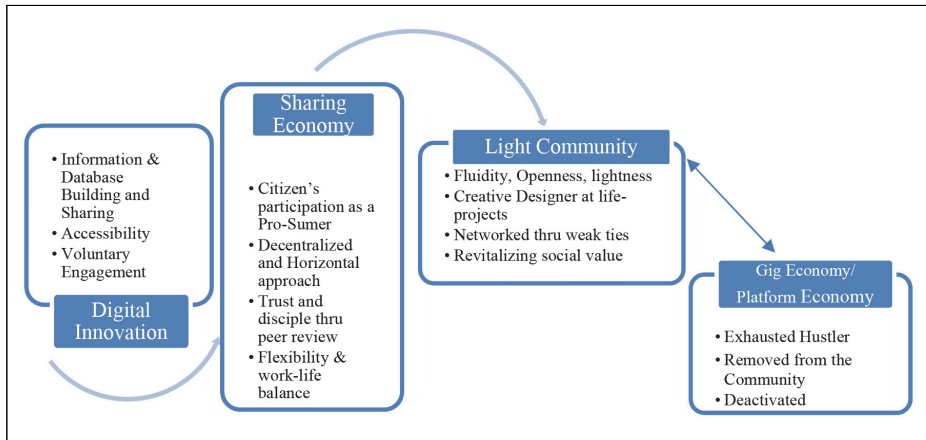
Source: Kong (2020): revised.

Fig. 3 Light Community Model

As shown in Figure 3, the light community emphasizes fluidity, openness, and lightness. It is characterized by greater freedom to enter and exit the community. The light community model does not reject either globalization or the digital revolution. In other words, it does not seek to return to the past, which is the rebirth of a strong, cohesive and heavy community based on strong ties. Manzini proposes the light community experiment as a daily project. First, the community should rediscover resources for cooperation and reciprocity in the village (Exploring). Second, the community should strengthen the sense of belonging among members through collaborative projects (Collaborating). Third, the community should make residents actively practice (Acting) and creatively break the boundaries of existing customary activities. In short, such experimental processes transgress obstacles and ultimately transform the local community into a light community (Manzini 2015; 2019). In short, Manzini argues that light communities should be more flexible, open, and built on lighter ties (Manzini 2019: 1-33). He highlights that the light community helps to overcome self-absorbed and individualized lives driven by platform capitalism. This community can be a meaningful reference for a new model to find out what kind of community will be sustainable against overlapping global crises.

In short, the light community is discovering alternatives while constantly carrying out creative joint projects in our everyday lives. Based on weak rather than strong connections, local residents communicate, devise, and cooperate with each other. They recognize and respect each other and reproduce social values in the community. Above all, there is an open attitude where various members can enter and leave the community more smoothly with less resistance. Such light communities are essential for people living in a transnational connected society to belong to the

local community. Unfortunately, in the current situation where all economic activities are being sucked into the platform economy, platform workers controlled by invisible algorithms are gradually moving away from the local community. Although they work hard to engage in platform economy for their interests, they are degenerated into subordinated workers and are alienated from the community.

On the other hand, we should pay more attention to the obstacles and catalysts we can encounter when developing a light community. The authors discovered the following catalysts and hindrances while visiting various sites engaging in local social and economic activities in Korea since 2015. As a catalyst factor, we have found mobility, creativity, intimacy, openness, flexibility, reciprocity, altruism, professionalism, transparency, and accountability within the local community. Each helps enhance local resilience regarding the light community. On the contrary, we also found such hindering factors as local territoriality, ties and connections, Confucian family selfishness, indifference to local issues, and exclusion of minorities such as platform workers.

We do expect that Africa will also likely be sucked into the platform economy. As soon as electricity was introduced in developing countries, they skipped telephones and directly used smartphones. There is a traditional offline market, and transnational platform companies such as Uber, Airbnb, and Amazon already permeate local life. Many migrant workers from neighboring countries like Zimbabwe are flocking into Johannesburg, South Africa, and are becoming platform workers like Uber drivers. The newly relocated community is not an open and fluid community in which they still stay around as platform workers. If Africa's state-led development policy is pursued while local communities' social conflicts are ignored, Africa's state-led development model won't be sustainable. Most African countries follow the state-led development strategy promoting rapid economic development.

African countries following the state-led development model will sooner or later witness the complex crises that Korean society currently faces. Korea is fighting against increasing threats of platform capitalism with the spirit of cooperation and community activities. We do believe that such examples should have significant implications for Africa. Interestingly, we found that various projects to create a sustainable Africa are underway. The projects include food system renewable packaging, eco-friendly construction, recycling electronics waste, and upcycling textiles. It is of great significance that the recycling and circular economic industry and the plastic use reduction project are being carried out experimentally in Africa.[4]

However, to maintain a light community, the most important thing is to value the deliberation process among members who continue to learn and discuss a sustainable ecological environment, self-help and cooperation, inheritance of traditional values, and discovery of future visions. We should be wary of the prevailing developmentalism which dismisses the past banal and ecological environment as an object for development and not for conservation. On the contrary, strong competitors still oppose these social values but prioritize local tourism, development, and competition. Africa must pay attention to the social costs Korea is bearing due to its society's aggressive development strategy.

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[4] End plastic Pollution! Circular Economy: design-production/remanufacturing-distribution-consumption-repair/reuse. Source: https://greenium.kr/

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