

The Research on the Japanese Governmental Program to Dispatch Urban Young People to Rural Areas in Terms of Stability

Kunihiro Matsumoto*, Naoto Shinohara**and Masanori Sawaki *

Introduction

In Japan, it happened the population concentration to the metropolitan areas after World War 2. It occurred the power gap between urban and rural area. Today, rural area faced the local economies sagging. Especially, decreasing the number of young generations has weaken the local community. Therefore, the bearers of local industries and local societies are needed.

On the other hand in urban area, young people who wish to enjoy comfortable and affluent daily life in rural area have increased in recent years. In response to such movement, Japanese government implement various programs to dispatch young people to rural area as for the bearers of local community and permanent residents (Table 1). For example, those programs are as bellows. One is the program which dispatch university students in urban area to rural area in a short time, two weeks to four weeks. The other is the program to employ urban young people as a short time (two or three years) staff to revitalize the local communities and industries. Especially, the program named “The local community development caravan (Chiiki Okoshi Kyoryoku-tai, hereinafter called LCDC)” is one of the major program which dispatch urban young people to rural area. In fiscal 2013, this program dispatched 978 young people to 318 nationwide local governments (Fig.1). Through the program for a definite period, it will be expected to revitalize local communities as results of the operations. Additionally, it is also expected that young people settle down in the dispatched area after the program.

According to the analysis of previous studies¹⁾⁽²⁾⁽³⁾, most of researches about these programs were study only for particular area or local government. So there were few researches focus on the opinions and situations of dispatched people by the governmental program. Moreover, most studies were the evaluation of the program themselves, so it was not cleared the dispatched people's life and the stabilities in rural area.

Table 1 Japanese governmental program to dispatch the urban young people to rural areas

Name	Term	Organizer
Community Development Internship program	1996-*	Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism
Countryside Working Squad	2009-	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
Village support program	2008-	Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications
The local community development caravan	2009-	Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

(*not in 1998-2000)

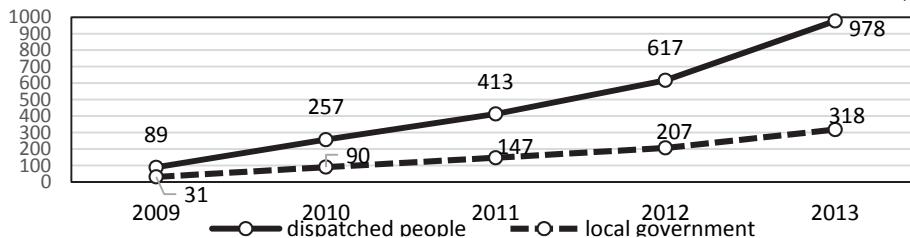


Fig. 1 The number of dispatched people and receiving local governments by LCDC

*Graduate School of Engineering Osaka University ** FUTURE Design Lab Co., Ltd
E-Mail: matsumoto@see.eng.osaka-u.ac.jp

Method

Therefore we focused on LCDC program as the subject of research. We did the research about dispatched people's work, life and the relationship with local residents and local government officers. Furthermore, we did the research about satisfactions and the intension of dispatched people for the continuous settlement in the future. (Table 2)

We did the questionnaire survey directed to the dispatched people by LCDC program. To contact with them, we received the cooperation from the dispatched people's networking association: "National local community development caravan community (Sonraku-LLP)" and the dispatch assisting association: " National Council of local supporters". We did the web-based questionnaire survey for two weeks between the 30th of December 2013 and the 13th of January 2014 and got 109 respondents in 89 areas.

Table 2 Information of the survey

Item	Details
term	two weeks (between the 30th of December 2013 and the 13th of January 2014)
questionnaire targeting	dispatched people by LCDC program
method for investigation	web-based questionnaire
number of respondents	109 respondents in 89 areas
content of questionnaire	Activity/ Expectations from local communities/ Planning of the activity/ Contentment and Intent of Stabilities/ Worries about the future

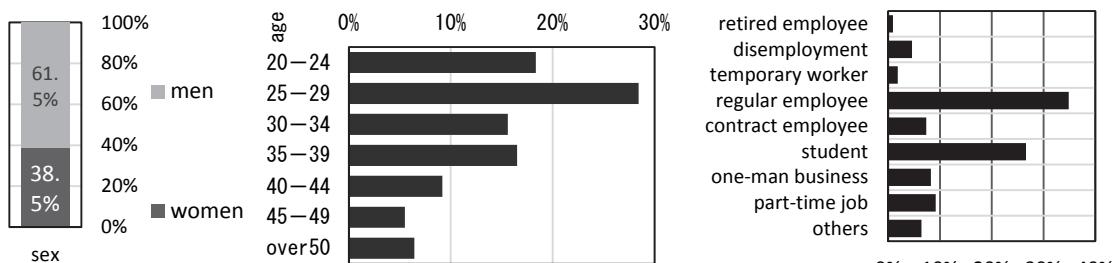
About the LCDC program

This program is managed by the ministry of internal affairs and communications of Japan, and started in 2009. By the ministry's financial support, local governments employ urban young people as the bearers of local industry and community. Dispatched member's works are to support the regional revitalization program, to support the local industry (agriculture, forestry and fisheries), and to support residents' life.

Results

1. Characteristics of respondents (Figs.2,3,4)

Average age is 33.1 years old and the 20's is the most. The most common former work-style is "full-time worker (34.9%)", and the second is student (26.6%). 71.6% are unmarried.



2. Activity

74.3% of respondents get engaged in the support of the local community events and revitalization of the traditional cultures. Then 67.0% put out the local information on the internet and the papers. 50.5% do the development and promoting of the local specialty products.(Fig.5)

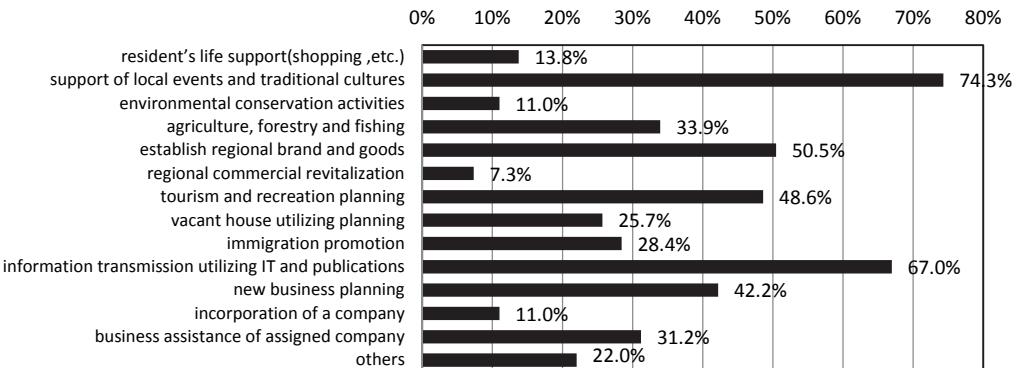


Fig.5 Activity (N=109)

3. Expectations from local communities

74.3% of respondents feel the expectations from the local communities about the suggesting of new idea and the plans. As for the continuous stabilities, 67.0% of respondents feel the expectations about their continuous stabilities after their engaging terms.(Fig.6)

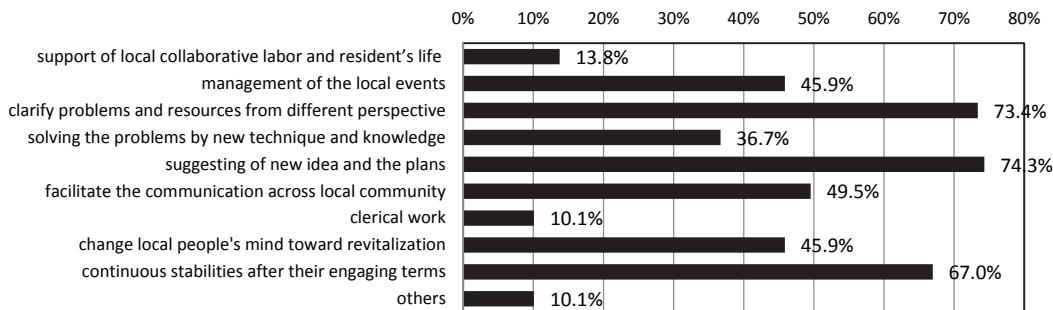


Fig.6 Expectations from local communities (N=109)

4. Planning of the activity

68.8% of respondents feel the lack of clear region's future vision for revitalization. And 72.5% feel the lack of clear rolls of LCDC's activity positioned in revitalization plan(Fig.7).Many respondents are dissatisfied with the shared awareness between the local governments, the local residents and the supporters.

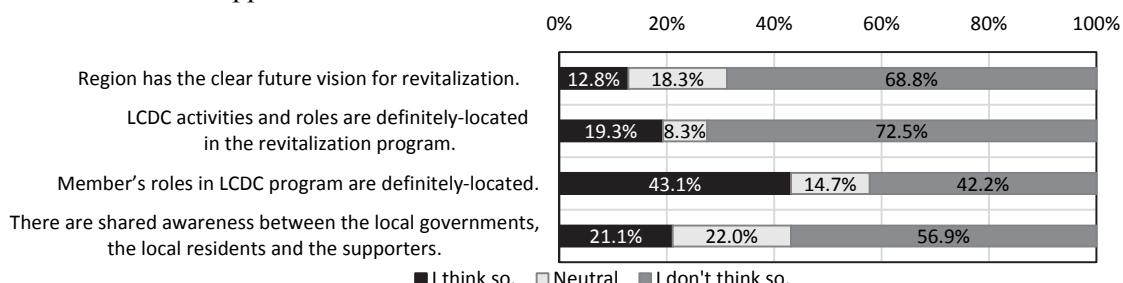


Fig.7 Evaluation of the management system of the program (N=109)

5. Contentment and Intent of Stabilities

58.7% of respondents feel the contentment through their activity (Fig.8). And 47.7% have the positive intensions of stabalities in their dispatched areas.(Fig.9)

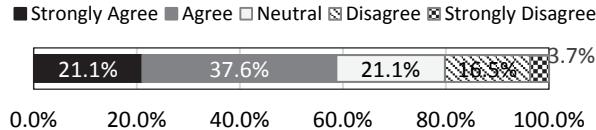


Fig.8 Contentment through the activity (N=109)

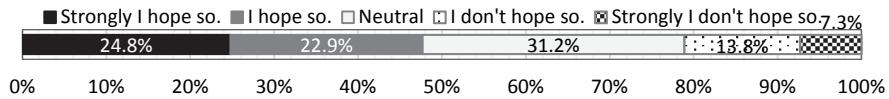


Fig.9 Intension of the stabilities in the dispatched areas (N=109)

6. Worries about the future (after finishing the engaging terms)

68.8% of respondents are anxious about making steady incomes. Then 44.9% anxious about the dwelling expenses (Fig.10). On the other hand, 68.8% want to engage in the worthwhile jobs.

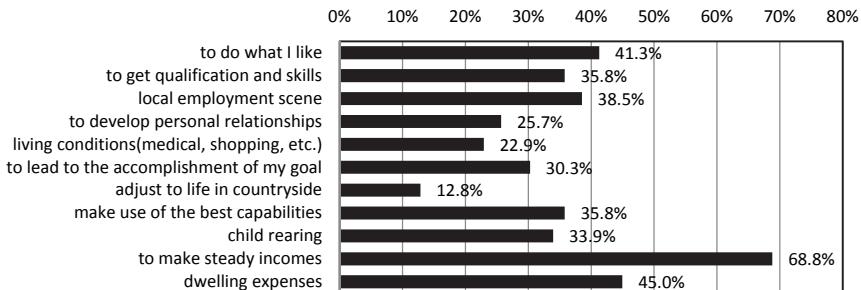


Fig.10 Worries about the future (after finishing the engaging terms) (N=109)

Conclusion

Many member dispatched by the LCDC program get engaged in the support of local community events, the transmission of local information, and the development of special regional products. In addition, the local residents and local government officers expect the young people's new point of views and ideas. Besides, local residents and local government officers need the support for local community events which are in endangered by weaken of local community power. On the other hand, most of local residents and local government officers don't have a clear vision for revitalization, or cannot share the community intension for future revitalization with dispatched young people. In addition, dispatched young people feel the lack of clear rolls of LCDC's activity. Therefore, to improve their motivation and to get the better outcome, we consider that the LCDC's activity should be positioned in revitalization plan.

For the continuation of activities, it is needed to promote the dispatched young people's settlement after LCDC. However, more than half of them don't have positive intensions of stability in their dispatched areas. Therefore, for promoting the stability, we consider that minimal support for the member, such as helping to find accommodations and living expense is required.

Keywords: revitalization, rural community, Settlement from cities to rural areas

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