Role of Kominkan in the Super-aged Society
- Cases of Okayama Municipal Kominkan-
About myself

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Outline

1. Introduction
2. Super-aged Society, Japan
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1. Introduction

1-1 What is Kominkan?
1-2 Okayama Municipal Kominkan

- 37 Kominkan
- Managed and run by Local Government
- About 5 staffs at each Kominkan
- Various users from children to elderly, especially elderly women
- Base of ESD (Education for Sustainable Development = ESD) activities in each community
1-3 “Kominkan-CLC International Conference on ESD”
- Community Based Human Development for Sustainable Society-

- Held in Okayama in October 2014.
- Role of Kominkan/CLC for ESD Promotion at local level and future perspective
- “Okayama Commitment 2014”
2-1 Super-aged Society, Japan

- Highest life expectancy in the world
  (Average Age of Male: 79 years old, Female: 86 years old)
- Retirement is 60 years old but will be extended to 65 years old
- Elderly are still mentally and physically “young”.
- Super-aged Society = Society where the percentage of elderly people over 65 years old exceed 21% of total population.
2-1 Super-aged Society, Japan

(Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications of Japan, as of October 2011)
2-2 Issues on Retirement of Baby-boomer Generation

- In General
  - The retirement of baby-boomer generation has big impact for the national pension system and medical care cost would be higher.

- Especially Men
  - Many of men in this generation were hardest worker. After retirement they should find another goal in life.
  - They have few relationship in the local community and nowhere to go.
  - They have rich experiences. Their contribution to the community can be expected.
3. Cases of Okayama Municipal Kominkan

Project Team of Okayama Municipal Kominkan for supporting men in the baby-boomer generation

- Kominkan staffs conducted research and practice.
- Question: What is the role of Kominkan to support elderly men to be healthy and live longer and activate them for the community?
- Duration: 5 years (2005 – 2009)
- Target: Men in the Baby-boomer generation
  → Middle-aged and older men
3. Cases of Okayama Municipal Kominkan

【Case 1】

Red Brick Club
(at Higashi Kominkan)

【Case 2】

Kominkan & Lion Dance Festival
(at Mitsu Kominkan)
Case 1: “Red Brick Club” (Higashi Kominkan)

- The club is named after the wall’s color of the Kominkan.
- Started by Kominkan Manager, staffs and local people
- Support networking and having finding a new purpose in life learning activities
Main activity: Café

- 1:30~3:30 PM, on third Thursday
- Open for everyone
- Members serve coffee brewed with local water for 100 yen (free refill)
- Members organize entertainment program ex. Music played by a group of Kominkan users.
1) Motivation for participation in the club

- After retirement I attended a course for reflecting myself and my life, and also for learning local history. Through that, I’ve got more interest in local history and culture and I thought intergenerational exchange is also very important.

- After retirement I had time but nowhere to go. I went to Kominkan providing various activities for everyone for free. At the time when I got ill and felt down, a Kominkan staff encouraged me to join the club.
2) What has changed through the club activity at Kominkan?

- I have place to go and friends. I enjoy learning. Without Kominkan I would have had nowhere to go and I spent days for no purpose. Kominkan changed my life.

- Each member has different personality. I’ve got nice friends. We learn a lot from each other.

- I learned different values. My perspective has widened.
Case 2: Mitsu Kominkan/ Lion Dance Festival (Mitsu Kominkan)

- Once a year
- The 36th Festival in 2014
- Kominkan users do a performance (Dance, Song, Music, Painting etc.)
- Cultural class students, local groups, elementary and junior high school students etc.
Case 2: Mitsu Kominkan Festival/ Lion Dance Festival (Mitsu Kominkan)

- The 16th Lion Dance Festival, organized by a part of Kominkan Festival in 2014
- Performed by a group consists of members from children to elderly
- Also the people outside from the community come to the festival, which motivates members.
Efforts of the Festivals

- The festival provides opportunity the local people from children to elderly to communicate with each other and strengthen their relationship.
- They can realize the network and increase attachment for the community.
- Pass experiences, skills and traditional culture on from generation to generation.
Process of learning at Kominkan

For Individual interest and learning

1) Nurture strengthen relationship to the local people and love to the community
2) Feel confidence that the community need them.
3) Have motivation to make the community better.

Participation and Engagement in the community
Find friends and know more about the community
Exchange with people

Improvement community
How should the Kominkan staff communicate with local people?

For Individual interest and learning

- Communicate with them and know their interest
- Provide a nice atmosphere to let them make friends
- Provide opportunities to be active in programs
- Provide opportunities also in the community

Participation and Engagement in the community
- Find friends and know more about the community
- Exchange with people

Improvement community
- 1) Have motivation to make the community better.
- 2) Feel confidence that the community need them.
- 3) Nurture strengthen to the local people and love to the community
4. Summary (Role of Kominkan in Super-aged Society)

1) Provide elderly with place where they can access easily for gathering, learning and acting, so that they feel safe and vitality, and enjoy their life.

2) Support intergenerational exchange and learning, which leads that skills, experiences and local culture will be taken over from elderly to the next generation, and the community will be better and vitalized.
Thank you for your kind attention.

I am looking forward to welcoming you in Okayama!