Empowerment

Learning and practices so that people who are in socially difficult positions can reassert themselves and people in the community can actively participate in it.

2014/10/10
At Okayama Convention Center
Place to learn, coordinator

**kominkan**

Positive image

Coexist and support each other in the community

Negative image

Individuals with living skills, and abilities to utilize survival skills

Empowerment

Independent Community activities

Mutual learning

Issues

Enhance awareness

Experience/knowledge

Desire to solve problems

Community power

Learning loop
Community Change through Mutual Learning
- Creation of a New Community

- Community changes and the increased gap between areas (mainly poverty) due to economic growth and increased globalization

- The gap’s increase has increased due to the negative effect of the Internet society.

The interconnection between people has weakened.
Local community cannot be maintained.
Past, present and future in Japan??

Nuclear family

• Multigenerational family → Decrease in childbirth

Aging society

Interconnection between people has weakened.

Social isolation is 15.3%
the highest in the world.
OECD (World value survey 1999-2000)
Background of activities in Okayama City

City area---Decrease in population, aging society, and many apartments built in commercial districts

Residential areas in suburbs---Many people are not closely connected to each other

Agricultural villages---Mixed with local farmhouses and residents in newly developed housing districts

Mountainous regions---Few young people, empty houses, lonely seniors

Aging ratio (Okayama City): 21.8% (in 2013) → 22.6% (in 2014)

Households with seniors: Approx. 40%

Households of seniors only: Approx. 20%

Nuclear family ratio (Okayama Pref): 81.5%
Roles of kominkan

- Coordinate
- Mutual learning
- Practice
- Making network

Promote mutual learning

↓

Foster people who play active roles in the local community
Efforts by Okayama City

- Human resource development/coordination
- Notify activities to the entire area
- Motivate people to solve issues

Mutual learning

↓

Develop human resources that play active roles in community

Individual empowerment

Kominkan Class “Nikkorina”

Parent-child Club
Developmentally disabled children

Minute functional disorder existing at birth

→ **Unnatural actions and words, behavior and words which are difficult to understand**

→ **Lack of communication ability**

6.5% of school children
(2 to 3 children in each class)
Parents who have developmentally disabled children

**Sense of social isolation**
- Insufficient information
- Lack of connection with people
- Lack of understanding in the community

"Hito Fureai Hiroba"

NPO

"Hito Fureai Hiroba"

6th year

Children are impeded by society → Support for employment and provide workers education
Parents: Persons to receive advice → Persons to give advice
People in the community: prejudice → Understanding
Derivation from kominkan

Kominkan: “Hito Fureai Hiroba”

Work experience:
“Work★Work”

Increased community ability

Creating a comfortable place
“With you”

Creating a comfortable place
“Challenge Music”

Providing information
“Niko Niko Tsushin”

Kounandai kominkan
Results

- **Changes in parents**
  They correctly understand their children’s disease after learning. They are connected to other parents. They create activity places.

- **Changes in children**
  They can communicate with others.

- **Changes in community**
  They understand the disease, and groups which warmly observe such children have been formed.
Seniors’ mental care

Necessity for volunteer companions
Request from facilities for elderly

Training course
7 days, 14 hours,
the 4th year: 68 people completed the course

- The second class is a lecture by personnel of the facility for elderly.
- The sixth class is hands-on experience.
- The seventh class is to review hands-on experience.
  Small lecture by a volunteer companion.
Kominkan and Volunteer Groups

Kominkan:
Volunteer companion training course
"Fuku no Mimi"

Volunteer companion group
Promoting registration

Companion activity at a facility
Activities by volunteer groups

Listeners

Feel achievement and fulfillment
Vitalized by working hard together

People with skills independently

act in the community.

• Consult and drink tea together with seniors in the neighborhood
• Listen to seniors at “Fureai Ikiiki Salon” in the neighborhood association
• Visit and listen to seniors living alone in the neighborhood
Independently and voluntarily caring for residents in the community

Rebuild **interconnections**, **Bonds in the community** and **Revitalizes the community**
“Hito Fureai Hiroba” from Participants to Supporters

“Hito Fureai Hiroba” at Kounandai Kominkan

“Hito Fureai Hiroba” at Jonan Kominkan
Place to learn, coordinator

**kominkan**

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Independent Community activities

Fukuhama

Fukuda

Kounandai

Community power

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Mutual learning

Community activities

Learning loop

Economic growth

Problem

Problem

Problem

Community
Kominkan’s roles and issues

- Clearly present local issues as their tasks
- Establish learning places for solving issues
- Establish activity places to make use of what people had learned
- Publicly notify their activities and link their activities to others

Issues

- People are not used to voluntarily learning and acting
- Lack of coordinators and leaders
- Creating a community place
- Utilize the existing organization
Summary

• Mutual learning power is enhanced by connected learning groups
• Kominkan’s missions are to willingly create learning places to connect learning people and foster people to continue learning
• Mutual learning creates community

凍星も星座を組めば煌けり (野澤節子)
（いてぼしも せいざをくめば かがやけり）
Solitary stars do not shine, but in a Constellation, they are brilliant.  (by Setsuko Nozawa)
Community Change through Mutual Learning -Creation of a New Community

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