

To maintain local government ~through the current state of Kawanishi~

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Introduction

These days, the concern over local governments in Japan has risen. For example, **the population in Yamagata prefecture has been decreasing**. It is important that the Japanese government develop local areas. **The present study focused on the action by Kawanishi town in Yamagata prefecture**. Kawanishi town has been taking action in order to inform the people in other area about its attraction. **In this study, what measures have been taken in this town and how much influence the measures have had will be discussed.**

Method

The interview was conducted on August 17th 2018. **The author went to the town office in Kawanishi**. The interviewee was a male staff member of the town hall.

Research question

The interviewer asked **two** research questions, and **eight** other questions.

RQ1: What kind of measures has Kawanishi town taken so far?

RQ2: Were the measures considered effective?

Q1: What kind of people will emigrate to Kawanishi town?

Q2: What is the base for promoting Kawanishi town?

Q3: Does Kawanishi consult with organizations out side the local community regarding its town planning?

Q4: What kind of activities does the Community building team do?

Q5: Why do people emigrate to Kawanishi town?

Q6: Does kawanishi town connect with other prefectures?

Q7: What are the positive points of Kawanishi town?

Q8: What the problems in daily life in Kawanishi town?



Result

For RQ1, Kawanishi town has planned many events, for example “Yamagata Kawanishi Bean Exhibition”. This event was held in Tokyo and the purpose of this event was to spread the information about the town’s products. One of the other measures is the “Higashizawa Yantya Ryugaku” which the children of Machida city in Tokyo come to Kawanishi town. In this project, the children from the big city can experience farming, rural festivals of this town and a barbecue using Yonezawa beef which is one of the most famous beef brands in Japan. Moreover, they can interact with the children in the rural area and it leads to cultural exchanges.

For RQ2, these measures that are mentioned above had some effect to increase migrants from urban areas. However, there is still room for improvement in these plans. The awareness should be raised in order to increase the participants of these events.

For Q1, mostly it’s young single people who emigrate to Kawanishi.

For Q2, Kawanishi focuses on the to AISAS model. AISAS is an economic term, that mean’s Attention, Interest, Search, Action, Share. It is purchasing in model that categorizes people’s behavior.



For Q3, Kawanishi town has contracted a Community building team, since 2012.

For Q4, they are doing various activities at the local community center in the district. For example, they opened a personal computer class room, so local people could communicate with people living in urban areas.

For Q5, for some, people want to do agriculture, live with nature and so on.

For Q6, Kawanishi collaborates with Aichi University in Aichi prefecture. Kawanishi town supports students from Kawanishi who study at Aichi University. This year, Aichi University students did fieldwork in Kawanishi town.

For Q7, People can live in nature and eat the seasonal food. Residents are kind. Life is more relaxed than in urban areas.

For Q8, snow management is a serious problem for migrants, also wages are low and there are not enough work places.

Conclusion

The interview was conducted in the city hall in Kawanishi town and the measures taken by the town were found out from this interview. The town hall’s actions should be improved to increase publicity of the town. One positive measure is the “Higashizawa Yantya Ryugaku” because urban children can be influenced by local Kawanishi culture and food. Thus it is important to promote this experience to the children of Machida city to increase the number of participants. The publicity other towns have done will be discussed in the further research.

