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Survey Results of Volunteer Activities in Japan

Masayuki Hiromoto

Abstract

This paper aims to extract notable information beneficial to research on volunteer activities conducted in Japan by outlining the results of surveys of volunteer activities. Several surveys revealed people's experiences of and opinions on volunteer activities. Reviews of the facts that these surveys disclose show the focal points beneficial to designing a new research of volunteer activities in Japan.

I. Introduction

The central government of Japan decided on the Gold Plan (*Kōreisha hoken fukushi suishin jukkanen senryaku*) in December 1989 to secure enough manpower and facilities for welfare services for the elderly. It also created the Angel Plan (*Kongo no kosodate shien no tame no shisaku no kihonteki hōkō ni tsuite*) in 1994 to aid parents in childrearing. The 1990s and the following years were a period in which the government attempted to enhance welfare services for the elderly and parents engaged in childrearing. The 1990s witnessed an increase in places where the elderly, parents, and infants can gather to enjoy events, chats, and social interactions. Volunteers from the community manage these gatherings for the elderly and families with young children.

In 2000, the Social Welfare Act was enacted through amendments of the Social Welfare Services Act. One of the new act's purposes is to foster welfare in communities. Clause 4 states that residents in communities and individuals concerned with the provision of welfare services should cooperate with each other and endeavor to promote the community welfare. Clause 107 stipulates that municipal governments should seek to establish plans to foster residents' participation in welfare activities within their communities. The Japanese welfare regime, namely, the pattern of provid-

ing welfare services in Japan, thus seems to have been transformed since the beginning of the 1990s.

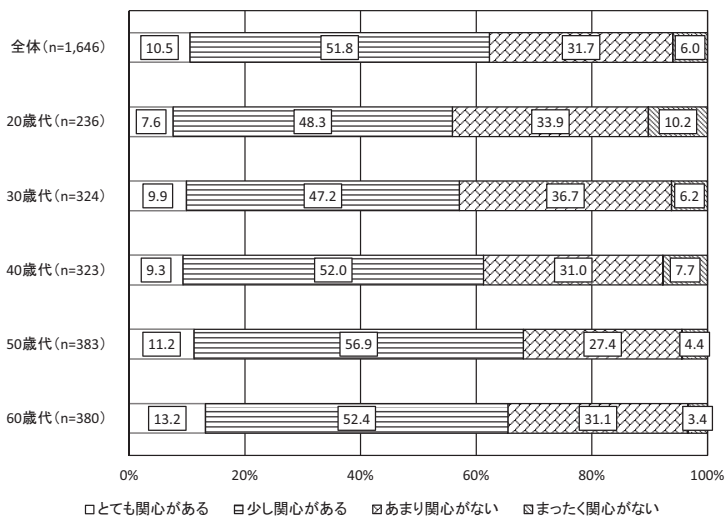
Every local region of Japan offers activities for the elderly and parents engaged in childrearing. However, the degree of engagement in these residents' activities varies among the communities. Although many residents willingly participate in volunteer activities in particular communities, there are some areas where few residents eagerly desire to volunteer. What factors influence community's level of engagement in volunteer activities for the elderly and parents engaged in childrearing? The development of social networks, that is to say, linkages among residents and local organizations in a community, can be one of the determinants of willing participation. It may be supposed that solid and large social networks promote residents' assistance of each other. Other factors may also affect participation in volunteer activities through which residents aid each other.

This paper reviews the results of surveys of volunteer activities in Japan to gain focal points for new research on the factors that lead to strong engagement in volunteer activities within communities. The surveys that this paper discusses were conducted during and after the 1990s. The results are analyzed to identify which categories of people tend to participate willingly in volunteer activities and what induces differences in the level of volunteer participation among areas.

II. Nationwide Surveys of Volunteer Activities

In 2014, the Cabinet Office conducted a survey of people's opinions on and participation in volunteer activities. The respondents resided in areas across Japan and were twenty to sixty-nine years of age. The overall percentage of respondents who reported that they were interested in volunteer activities very much or a little was 62.3%. However, the degree of interest in volunteer activities varied among age brackets. There was a pattern of increase in the percentage of respondents interested in volunteer activities from the group of people in their twenties (55.9%) to the group of people in their fifties (68.1%). The group in their sixties (65.5%) was situated between the brackets of people in their forties (61.3%) and fifties (Figure 1) (Naikaku fu 2015, 107).

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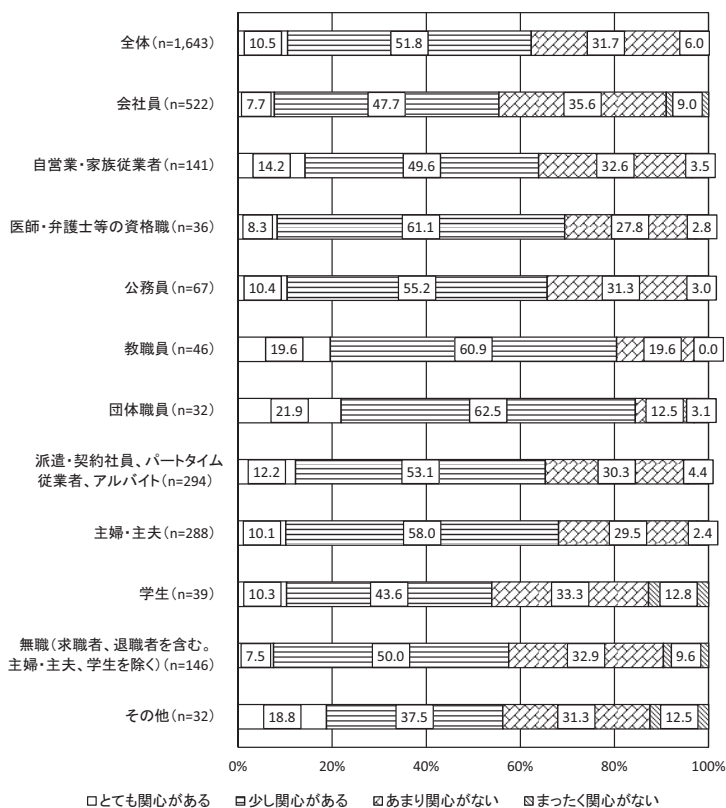
Source: Naikaku fu (2015, 107).

Notes: The percentages described in the paper are calculated by using the numbers of all the respondents in each age bracket and of the respondents who answered that they were interested in volunteer activities very much and a little. They are not the sums of the percentages on the graphs.

Figure 1. Interest in Volunteer Activities by Age in 2014 (The Cabinet Office)

Classification of the respondents by occupation showed that workers for semi-public/semi-private organizations (*dantai shokuin*) had the highest percentage (84.4%) of respondents interested in volunteer activities. Teachers had the second highest percentage (80.4%), followed by qualified professionals (69.4%), housewives and househusbands (68.1%), public servants (65.7%), part-time workers (65.3%), the self-employed and family workers (*kazoku jūgyōsha*) (63.8%), unemployed individuals excluding housewives, househusbands, and students (57.5%), others (56.3%), workers for companies (55.4%), and students (53.8%) (Figure 2) (Naikaku fu 2015, 109).

The respondents were also asked whether they had participated in any volunteer activities within the past three years. The respondents in their sixties gave the highest percentage of affirmative responses (30.4%) among all the age brackets, followed by the respondents in their twenties (27.4%). As



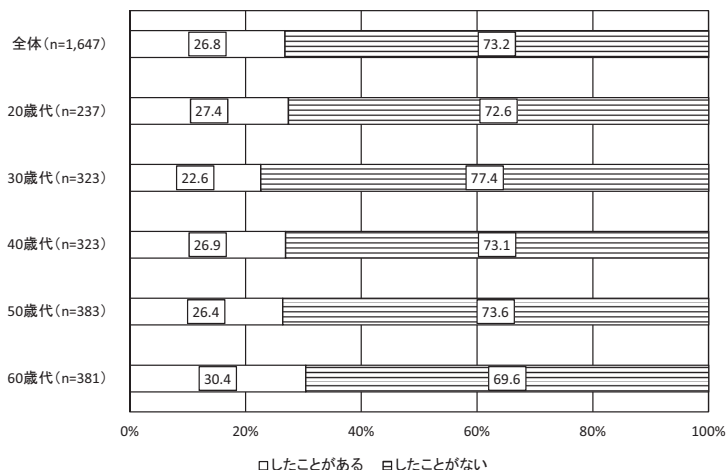
Source: Naikaku fu (2015, 109).

Notes: The percentages described in the paper are calculated by using the numbers of all the respondents in each occupational group and of the respondents who answered that they were interested in volunteer activities very much and a little. They are not the sums of the percentages on the graphs.

Figure 2. Interest in Volunteer Activities by Occupation in 2014 (The Cabinet Office)

explained above, the respondents in their fifties were the most interested in volunteer activities. However, only 26.4% of them had actually participated in volunteer activities within the last three years. This percentage was lower than that of the respondents in their forties (26.9%) (Figure 3)

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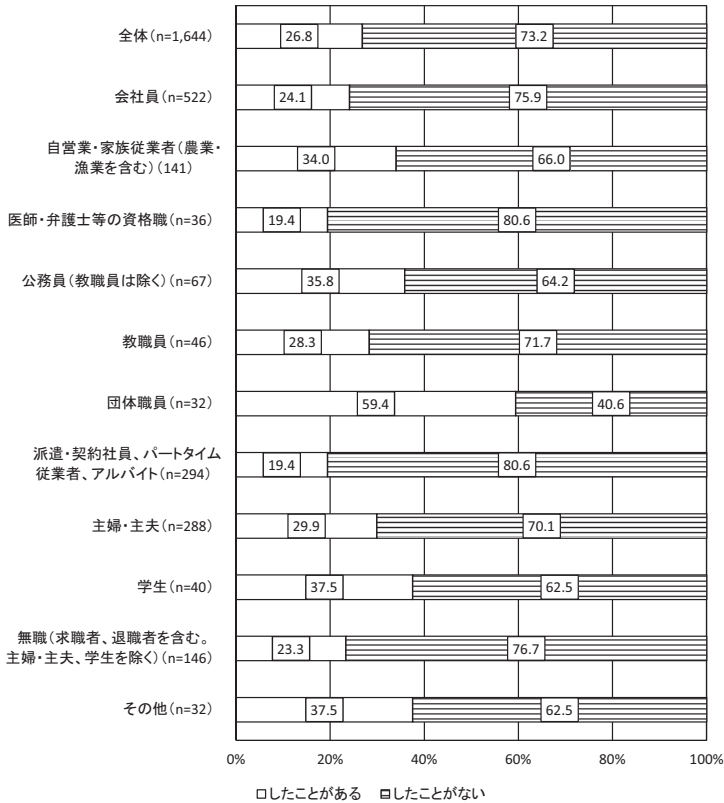
Source: Naikaku fu (2015, 111).

Figure 3. Participation in Volunteer Activities by Age in 2014 (The Cabinet Office)

(Naikaku fu 2015, 111).

The survey results classified by occupation showed that workers for semi-public/semi-private organizations had the highest percentage (59.4%) of respondents who had participated in volunteer activities. As described above, these workers also had the highest percentage of respondents interested in volunteer activities. However, it is not necessarily true that occupational groups with a high rate of interest in volunteer activities had a high rate of volunteer participation within the last three years. In order, the groups with the second to seventh largest percentage of respondents who had participated in volunteer activities were students (37.5%), others (37.5%), public servants (35.8%), self-employed individuals and family workers (34.0%), housewives and househusbands (29.9%), and teachers (28.3%) (Figure 4) (Naikaku fu 2015, 113).

The survey results classified by age bracket and occupation reveal distinctions between the respondents' interest in volunteer activities and their actual activities. Although people in their fifties showed the highest rate of interest, people in their sixties and twenties actually participated in volunteer activities at higher rates. While teachers had the second highest percent-



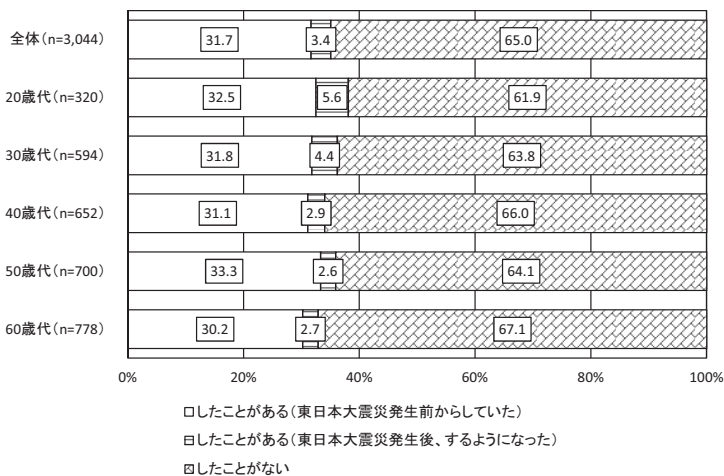
Source: Naikaku fu (2015, 113).

Figure 4. Participation in Volunteer Activities by Occupation in 2014 (The Cabinet Office)

age of respondents interested in volunteer activities, the percentage who had participated in volunteer activities was lower for this group than for students, public servants, self-employed individuals and family workers, and housewives and househusbands. These disparities between people’s interest and participation indicate that people’s participation in volunteer activities should be observed rather than their interest, in order to understand the actual circumstances of volunteer activities.

In 2013, the Cabinet Office carried out another survey similar to the 2014 survey. The respondents of the 2013 survey were individuals who resided

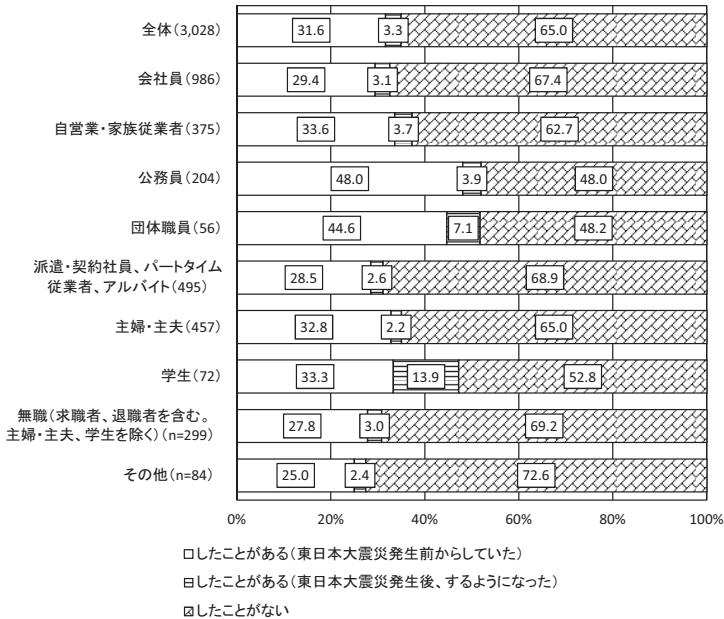
in areas across Japan and whose ages ranged from twenty to sixty-nine years, too (Naikaku fu 2014, 1). There are several disparities between the results of the 2013 and 2014 surveys. The 2013 survey results reveal that the respondents in their twenties had the highest percentage (38.1%) of individuals who had participated in volunteer activities. Next, in order, were the respondents in their thirties (36.2%), fifties (35.9%), forties (34.0%), and sixties (32.9%) (Figure 5) (Naikaku fu 2014, 33). Public servants were the occupational group that had the highest percentage (52.0%) of respondents having participated in volunteer activities. This group was followed by workers for semi-public/semi-private organizations (51.8%), students (47.2%), self-employed individuals and family workers (37.3%), housewives and househusbands (35.0%), company employees (32.6%), part-time workers (31.1%), and so on (Figure 6) (Naikaku fu 2014, 34).



Source: Naikaku fu (2014, 33).

Notes: The percentages described in the paper are calculated by using the numbers of all the respondents in each age bracket and of the respondents who answered that they participated in volunteer activities before and after the Great East Japan Earthquake. They are not the sums of the percentages on the graphs.

Figure 5. Participation in Volunteer Activities by Age in 2013 (The Cabinet Office)



Source: Naikaku fu (2014, 34).

Notes: The percentages described in the paper are calculated by using the numbers of all the respondents in each occupational group and of the respondents who answered that they participated in volunteer activities before and after the Great East Japan Earthquake. They are not the sums of the percentages on the graphs.

Figure 6. Participation in Volunteer Activities by Occupation in 2013 (The Cabinet Office)

The Prime Minister’s Office implemented a survey of public opinions on volunteer activities in 1993. The respondents were people who resided in areas across Japan, aged fifteen or older (Sōri fu 1995, 32). The survey asked whether they had participated in any volunteer activities. Among the age brackets, the group of young people aged fifteen to nineteen years old had the highest percentage (36.0% for males and 41.0% for females) of respondents who answered affirmatively. Next were people in their forties (32.2% for males and 33.5% for females). When the results were classified by occupation, students had the highest percentage (39.9%) of respondents

who were participating or had participated in volunteer activities, followed by family workers (32.9%), the self-employed (32.2%), unemployed individuals (30.2%), housewives and househusbands (29.3%), and employees (27.3%) (Table 1) (Sōri fu 1995, 33–34). Students may be notable objects of

Table 1. Participation in Volunteer Activities (The Prime Minister's Office)

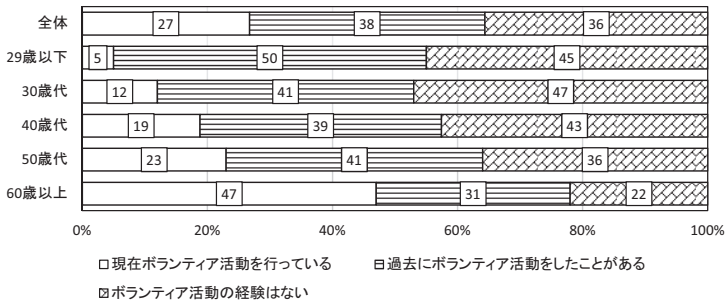
		該当者 数 (人)	した こと が ある	した		これまで に した こと は ない	わ か ら な い
				現在 して いる	過去 に し た こ と が あ る		
総 数		2,144	30.1	9.9	20.2	69.0	0.9
男性	計	970	30.0	10.5	19.5	68.6	1.4
	15～19歳	100	36.0	5.0	31.0	63.0	1.0
	20～29	117	21.4	3.4	17.9	76.1	2.6
	30～39	125	28.0	9.6	18.4	71.2	0.8
	40～49	180	32.2	13.3	18.9	66.1	1.7
	50～59	173	29.5	11.0	18.5	69.4	1.2
	60歳以上	275	31.3	13.8	17.5	67.3	1.5
女性	計	1,174	30.2	9.4	20.9	69.3	0.4
	15～19歳	83	41.0	8.4	32.5	59.0	
	20～29	148	30.4	4.1	26.4	69.6	
	30～39	218	28.0	7.8	20.2	71.6	0.5
	40～49	260	33.5	10.0	23.5	66.5	
	50～59	233	30.0	14.6	15.5	69.5	0.4
	60歳以上	232	25.0	8.6	16.4	73.7	1.3
職業別	自営業主	255	32.2	14.1	18.0	67.1	0.8
	家族従業者	155	32.9	11.6	21.3	65.8	1.3
	被用者 (小計)	869	27.3	9.1	18.2	71.7	1.0
	管理・専門 ・事務職	433	31.6	10.4	21.2	67.4	0.9
	労務職	436	22.9	7.8	15.1	75.9	1.1
	主婦	460	29.3	9.8	19.6	70.4	0.2
	学生	193	39.9	6.2	33.7	59.1	1.0
	その他の無職	212	30.2	10.4	19.8	68.4	1.4

Source: Sōri fu (1995, 34).

research on volunteer activities because they are more willing to participate in volunteer activities than people with other occupations.

A comparison among the results of the three nationwide surveys discussed above shows that elderly people and young people, as groups, tend to include active volunteers. There is a possibility that a disparity in the question asking the respondents about their volunteer activities induced the differences in the survey results. However, the three national surveys disclose the probability that young and old people can be more willing to volunteer than individuals in other age brackets. The finding common to two of the Cabinet Office surveys is that workers for semi-public/semi-private organizations, public servants, students, self-employed individuals and family workers, and housewives and househusbands were more active in volunteer activities than other occupational groups. The results of the survey implemented by the Prime Minister’s Office are also significant in showing that students may perform a role as promoters of volunteer activities.

The Japan Institute of Social and Economic Affairs (*Keizai kōhō sentā*) conducted a survey of volunteer activities in 2011 (*Keizai kōhō sentā* 2011, 7), and the results showed a tendency in people’s volunteer activities similar to



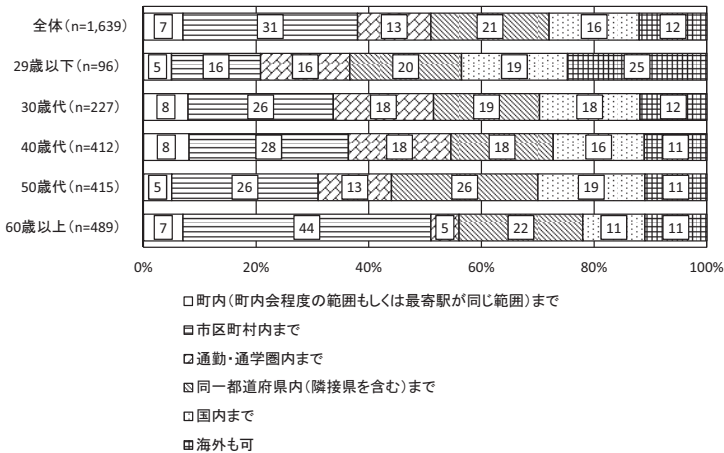
Source: *Keizai kōhō sentā* (2011, 10).

Notes: The percentages described in the paper are calculated by using the numbers of all the respondents in each age bracket and of the respondents who answered “I participate in a volunteer activity now” and “I have participated in a volunteer activity before.” They are not the sums of the percentages on the graphs.

Figure 7. Participation in Volunteer Activities by Age (The Japan Institute of Social and Economic Affairs)

the results of the 2014 survey conducted by the Cabinet Office. Specifically, there are similar tendencies in the percentages of respondents who answered “I participate in a volunteer activity now” and “I have participated in a volunteer activity before.” The age group of people sixty years or older had the highest percentage (78%) of respondents who were participating or had participated in volunteer activities. Younger groups tended to have lower percentages (55%, 53%, 58%, and 64%, respectively, for respondents below thirty years of age, and in their thirties, forties, and fifties) (Figure 7) (Keizai kōhō sentā 2011, 10).

The Japan Institute of Social and Economic Affairs also asked the respondents who wanted to participate in volunteer activities, “Where do you want to volunteer?” One of the notable findings was that the percentage of respondents who desired to participate in volunteer activities within their communities or municipalities was higher for respondents in their sixties or



Source: Keizai kōhō sentā (2011, 24).

Notes: The percentages described in the paper are calculated by using the numbers of all the respondents in each age bracket and of the respondents who answered that they desired to participate in volunteer activities within their communities and municipalities. They are not the sums of the percentages on the graphs.

Figure 8. Places Where People Desire to Participate in Volunteer Activities (The Japan Institute of Social and Economic Affairs)

older (51%) than for those in the other age brackets (21%, 34%, 36%, and 31%, respectively, for those below thirty, and in their thirties, forties, and fifties). The bracket of sixty years or older showed a relatively low percentage of respondents who desired to participate in volunteer activities in larger areas such as within the country or in foreign countries (Figure 8) (Keizai kōhō sentā 2011, 24). These results indicate that older people desire to conduct volunteer activities locally. In this point, elderly people have potential as promoters of volunteer activities in their areas of residence.

The Economic Planning Agency's (*Keizai kikaku chō*) survey obtained results similar to those that the Japan Institute of Social and Economic Affairs disclosed. In 2000, the Economic Planning Agency implemented a

Table 2. Places Where People Desire to Participate in Volunteer Activities (The Economic Planning Agency)

年齢	総数	住んでいる、または隣接する都道府県内程度での活動	通勤・通学圏内程度での活動	住んでいる市区町村内程度での活動	住んでいる町内（町内会程度の範囲）での活動	地域範囲はどこでもよい	具体的にはわからない	無回答
総数	3,972	8.6	6.1	33.0	19.3	9.1	23.8	0.1
15～19歳	261	11.5	11.9	19.2	11.5	19.9	26.1	—
20～24歳	266	11.3	13.2	21.8	8.3	11.3	34.2	—
25～29歳	316	8.5	8.2	22.2	11.4	11.1	38.6	—
30～34歳	336	10.1	8.9	27.7	15.5	9.8	28.0	—
35～39歳	341	9.4	5.9	35.2	15.2	10.9	23.5	—
40～44歳	395	6.8	8.9	38.0	14.2	8.9	23.3	—
45～49歳	408	9.6	5.4	40.2	15.9	8.8	20.1	—
50～54歳	497	6.0	3.8	41.4	21.9	8.9	17.9	—
55～59歳	426	10.3	3.5	38.5	22.1	6.1	19.2	0.2
60～64歳	344	8.7	2.0	32.3	32.8	6.1	18.0	—
65～69歳	382	4.5	0.5	33.0	36.4	3.7	21.7	0.3

Source: Keizai kikaku chō (2000, 156).

Notes: The percentages described in the paper are calculated by using the numbers of all the respondents in each age bracket and of the respondents who answered that they desired to participate in volunteer activities within their communities and municipalities. They are not the sums of the percentages in the table.

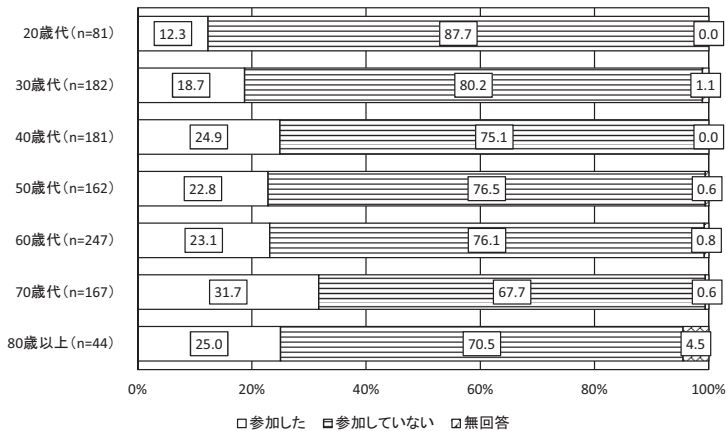
survey of people residing in areas across Japan. The ages of the respondents ranged from fifteen to sixty-nine years (Keizai kikaku chō 2000, 1). One of the questions was “Where do you want to volunteer?” The respondents aged sixty-five to sixty-nine showed the highest rate (69.4%) of desiring to conduct volunteer activities within their communities or municipalities. The bracket of respondents sixty to sixty-four years old had the second highest percentage (65.1%) (Table 2) (Keizai kikaku chō 2000, 156). This demonstrates that there is a tendency for older people to desire to participate in volunteer activities within their communities or municipalities. The results indicate that local volunteer activities may have lively participation in areas where many older residents live.

III. Local Surveys of Volunteer Activities

As Section II shows, the results of the nationwide surveys revealed several tendencies of volunteer activities. This section outlines the results of local surveys of volunteer activities. Participation in volunteer activities varies by area in Japan. This section points out how municipalities and a prefecture differ from each other in terms of residents' volunteer activities.

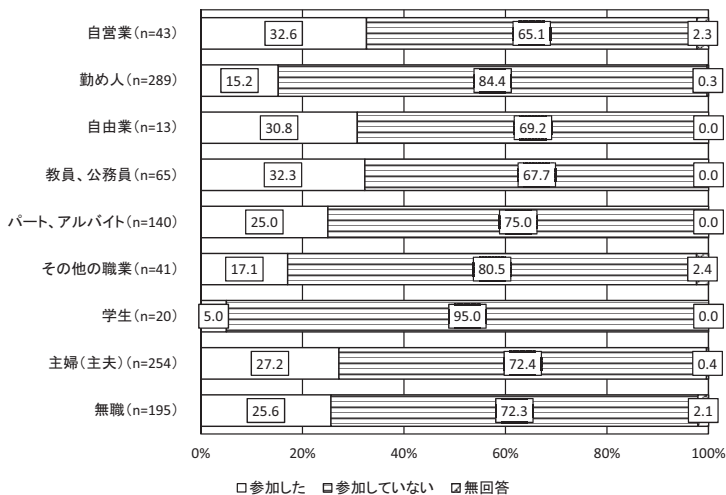
In 2011, the Lifelong Learning Center of Chiba City (*Chiba shi shōgai gakushū sentā*) surveyed the volunteer activities of Chiba City residents aged twenty years or older (Chiba shi shōgai gakushū sentā 2011, 1). Chiba City is the capital of Chiba Prefecture and is located within the metropolitan area. The questionnaire survey asked the respondents whether they had participated in community activities and volunteer activities during the past year. The percentages of respondents in their twenties, thirties, forties, fifties, sixties, seventies, and eighties or older who reported having participated in activities were 12.3%, 18.7%, 24.9%, 22.8%, 23.1%, 31.7%, and 25.0%, respectively (Figure 9) (Chiba shi shōgai gakushū sentā 2011, 19). The percentages were high among respondents in their sixties or older. Among occupational groups, the self-employed had the highest percentage (32.6%) of respondents who had participated in activities. Next, in order, were teachers and public servants (32.3%), independent professionals such as medical doctors, lawyers, and artists (30.8%), housewives and househusbands (27.2%), the unemployed (25.6%), part-time workers (25.0%), others

(17.1%), salaried workers for companies, stores, factories, and so on (15.2%), and students (5.0%) (Figure 10) (Chiba shi shōgai gakushū sentā 2011, 21).



Source: Chiba shi shōgai gakushū sentā (2011, 19).

Figure 9. Participation in Community Activities and Volunteer Activities by Age in Chiba City



Source: Chiba shi shōgai gakushū sentā (2011, 21).

Figure 10. Participation in Community Activities and Volunteer Activities by Occupation in Chiba City

Thus, young people and students in Chiba City tend to be reluctant to participate in community activities and volunteer activities.

Yokosuka City, Kanagawa Prefecture, is also located in the metropolitan area. In 2010, the city government of Yokosuka conducted a survey of residents' participation in volunteer activities (Yokosuka shi 2010, 1). The questionnaire survey asked, "Have you participated in a volunteer activity?" The answers of the respondents aged twenty to seventy-nine years showed that the residents in their seventies had the highest percentage (57.4%) of respondents who had participated in volunteer activities, followed by those in their

Table 3. Participation in Volunteer Activities by Age in Yokosuka City

	この1年間に参加あり	以前参加	参加なし	無記入	小計
10代	2 11.1%	5 27.8%	11 61.1%	0	18
20代	15 10.1%	31 21.0%	101 68.2%	1 0.7%	148
30代	27 11.5%	43 18.2%	164 69.5%	2 0.8%	236
40代	39 27.3%	20 14.0%	84 58.7%	0	143
50代	56 37.6%	15 10.1%	78 52.3%	0	149
60代	181 39.5%	38 8.3%	232 50.7%	7 1.5%	458
70代	136 46.7%	31 10.7%	118 40.5%	6 2.1%	291
80代	8 32.0%	4 16.0%	12 48.0%	1 4.0%	25
無記入	5 29.4%	3 17.6%	8 47.1%	1 5.9%	17
計	469 31.6%	190 12.8%	808 54.4%	18 1.2%	1,485

Source: Yokosuka shi (2010, 8).

Notes: The percentages described in the paper are calculated by using the numbers of all the respondents in each age bracket and of the respondents who answered "I have participated in a volunteer activity within the past year" and "I participated in a volunteer activity more than one year ago." They are not the sums of the percentages in the table.

sixties (47.8%), fifties (47.7%), forties (41.3%), twenties (31.1%), and thirties (29.7%) (Table 3) (Yokosuka shi 2010, 8). Like Chiba City, Yokosuka City showed a tendency for old residents to engage more actively in volunteer activities than young residents.

In 2002, the Sasebo City Government in Nagasaki Prefecture investigated the volunteer activities of Sasebo residents in their twenties or older. (Sasebo shi 2003, 3). Sasebo City is located in Kyūshū, the southwest region of Japan. The results of the survey differ from those of the Chiba survey and the Yokosuka survey. The age brackets of residents aged seventy years and older and residents in their sixties had, respectively, the highest percentage (62.4%) and second highest percentage (54.4%) of respon-

Table 4. Participation in Volunteer Activities by Age in Sasebo City

	合 計	現在参加 している	現在は参加 していない が、以前に 参加したこ とがある	参加したこ とはないが、 機会があれば やってみ たい	参加したこ とはないし、 今後も参加 したいとは思 わない	無回答
合 計	2,169 100.0	690 31.8	478 22.0	670 30.9	306 14.1	25 1.2
20歳代	124 100.0	12 9.7	51 41.1	44 35.5	17 13.7	— —
30歳代	184 100.0	18 9.8	55 29.9	81 44.0	30 16.3	— —
40歳代	221 100.0	44 19.9	58 26.2	101 45.7	18 8.1	— —
50歳代	307 100.0	72 23.5	70 22.8	127 41.4	36 11.7	2 0.7
60歳代	540 100.0	215 39.8	79 14.6	171 31.7	71 13.1	4 0.7
70歳代以上	776 100.0	321 41.4	163 21.0	144 18.6	133 17.1	15 1.9
無回答	17 100.0	8 47.1	2 11.8	2 11.8	1 5.9	4 23.5

Source: Sasebo shi (2003, 33).

Notes: The percentages described in the paper are calculated by using the numbers of all the respondents in each age bracket and of the respondents who answered “I participate in a volunteer activity now” and “I have participated in a volunteer activity before.” They are not the sums of the percentages in the table.

dents who answered “I participate in a volunteer activity now” or “I have participated in a volunteer activity.” People in their twenties had the third highest percentage (50.8%) (Table 4) (Sasebo shi 2003, 33).

The survey results obtained in Chiba City, Yokosuka City, and Sasebo City reveal that some areas have characteristics that encourage young people’s willing participation in volunteer activities. Urban areas may possess fewer resources that promote volunteer activities among young residents in comparison to rural areas. The results of the Chiba City survey show that

Table 5. Participation in Volunteer Activities by Age in Shizuoka Prefecture

		ボランティア活動の経験				
		全く経験がない	何度か経験がある	月に1回程度活動している	週に1回以上活動している	合計
年齢	20-25 度数	13	27	0	0	40
	%	32.5	67.5	0.0	0.0	100.0
	26-30 度数	11	13	0	0	24
	%	45.8	54.2	0.0	0.0	100.0
	31-35 度数	19	24	1	0	44
	%	43.2	54.5	2.3	0.0	100.0
	36-40 度数	30	22	0	0	52
	%	57.7	42.3	0.0	0.0	100.0
	41-45 度数	19	24	2	0	45
	%	42.2	53.3	4.4	0.0	100.0
46-50 度数	24	21	2	2	49	
%	49.0	42.9	4.1	4.1	100.0	
51-55 度数	36	31	0	0	67	
%	53.7	46.3	0.0	0.0	100.0	
56-60 度数	32	33	4	1	70	
%	45.7	47.1	5.7	1.4	100.0	
61-65 度数	44	22	5	0	71	
%	62.0	31.0	7.0	0.0	100.0	
66-70 度数	56	36	13	4	109	
%	51.4	33.0	11.9	3.7	100.0	

Source: Shizuoka ken shakai fukushi kyōgikai (2009, 22).

Notes: The percentages described in the paper are calculated by using the numbers of all the respondents in each age bracket and of the respondents who answered that they participated or had participated in a volunteer activity. They are not the sums of the percentages in the table.

students there tended to be reluctant to participate in volunteer activities. This finding differs from the results of the nationwide surveys that were described in Section II. It is presumable that there may exist certain determinants or factors affecting whether students willingly participate in volunteer activities or not.

The Shizuoka Prefectural Council of Social Welfare assessed Shizuoka Prefecture residents' volunteer activities by a survey conducted in 2008. The respondents were twenty years of age or older (Shizuoka ken shakai fukushi kyōgikai 2009, 2). Shizuoka Prefecture is excluded from the metropolitan area. The survey results classified by age of the respondents showed that young residents tended to have participated in volunteer activities, rather than old residents. The percentages of respondents who had participated in volunteer activities were 62.5%, 49.0%, 54.3%, 50.4%, and 44.4% for respondents aged twenty to thirty, thirty-one to forty, forty-one to fifty, fifty-one to sixty, and sixty-one to seventy (Table 5) (Shizuoka ken shakai fukushi kyōgikai 2009, 22). These results reinforce the hypothesis that urban areas such as the metropolitan area have fewer resources that foster young people's participation in volunteer activities, in comparison to rural areas.

IV. Discussion and Conclusion

As the above sections explain, the results of the nationwide and local surveys of volunteer activities reveal tendencies and variations in volunteer activities. The information on these tendencies and variations can be applied for designing new research on the welfare regime of Japan. This section reviews the findings of the nationwide and local surveys of volunteer activities.

A tendency revealed by the nationwide and local surveys, excluding a few exceptions disclosed in the above sections, is that elderly individuals engage more actively in volunteer activities than residents in other age brackets. Two surveys disclose that elderly individuals tend to desire to participate in volunteer activities within their communities or municipalities, as compared with younger people. These propensities lead to the hypothesis that areas where many elderly individuals reside may have lively participation in volun-

teer activities.

Fukushima (2012) revealed determinants of seniors' intentions to participate in community activities and volunteer activities. The respondents of Fukushima's survey were elderly individuals who resided alone in metropolitan housing estates located in Shinjuku Ward, Tōkyō Metropolis. They filled out the questionnaire in the period from 2010 to 2011 (Fukushima 2012, 42–43). Fukushima conducted logistic regression analysis by employing the dependent variable of whether the respondents desired to participate in community activities or volunteer activities. Fukushima explained that determinants of seniors' intentions to participate in the activities were their age and the length of time they had lived in the housing estate. Younger seniors and seniors who had been residing in the housing estate for ten to twenty-nine years tended to intend to participate more in community activities and volunteer activities than older seniors and residents who had lived there for nine years or fewer (Fukushima 2012, 46). As described in Section II, there are disparities between people's interest in volunteer activities and their actual activities. However, Fukushima's findings may make more specific the hypothesis that areas where many elderly individuals reside have lively participation in volunteer activities. A more specific hypothesis is that volunteer activities have active participation in communities where many young seniors reside or many seniors have resided for a long period.

In addition to the detailed observation of elderly individuals' volunteer activities, clarification of participation by young people and students also can improve the research on volunteer activities. According to the survey results explained above, young people and students' participation in volunteer activities may differ by area. Urbanization or ruralization of areas can influence whether young people participate in volunteer activities. Moreover, factors other than urbanization and ruralization can also be determinants. Research on volunteer activities may be evolved by clarifying what factors encourage young people and students to engage in volunteer activities.

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