

# Town Revitalization and Rural Area Development in Hokkaido, Japan

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## **Town Revitalization and Rural Area Development in Hokkaido, Japan**

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Population decreasing is a serious society problem in Japan. Low birth rate and aging population is forming population crisis there. So local governments have started new policy of revitalization. Hokkaido has more serious population problem than other places and Hokkaido which land scape is the biggest in Japan also has population distribute problem. Hokkaido government makes revitalization policy/measures based on its famous sightseeing spot and delicious food. Hence, this research would like to discuss the content of Hokkaido's revitalization policy/measures and its efficiency. Local business is also an important factor in revitalization, for example they could produce special products which are local area's sightseeing resources. So, local business participation in town revitalization is discussed in this research, too.

There are two measures in Hokkaido's revitalization policy. One is to avoid outflow population; the other one is to accept new resident for area. This research found that there are new concepts called related population and exchange population in revitalization policy. Exchange population is people who visit the town, but they do not have decided purpose. Related population is people who has relationship in the town, such as people who has connection in business part and who has root in there.

In my research I am going to answer the three research questions: What are the contents of revitalization policy? How do local governments measure revitalization policy? How local governments participate in revitalization. To answer these research

questions, the researcher used interview method to collect and analyze data.

Key words: town revitalization, Hokkaido, related population, local business, local government

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE.....	9
INTRODUCTION.....	10
Background.....	10
Motivation.....	12
Research Purpose.....	13
Research question.....	13
Contribution.....	13
Limit and Delimit.....	14
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	15
The trend of town revitalization.....	15
Revitalization theory.....	18
Population problem and policy in Japan.....	19
Local business.....	24
Related population and Exchange population.....	25
Solve lack of successor problem policy by central government.....	27
Hometown tax.....	28
METHODOLOGY.....	30
Research design.....	30
Source of Data.....	31
Instrumentation and Data Analysis.....	32
Interview Question (included interview list).....	32
Tools for data analysis.....	35
DATA ANALISIS.....	36
Answer the research question 1.....	36
Answer the research question 2.....	48
Answer the research question 3.....	52
CONCLUSION AND SUGESTION.....	56
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	59
APPENDIX.....	62

## **LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1. Interview List in research.....	33
Table 2. List of KPI.....	49

**LIST OF FIGURES**

1. Figure: the map of city at risk of disappearing.....23

## **PREFACE**

I am appreciate for all interviewee in my research. I used online interview, to accept my interview all interviewee preparing their interview tool, resource to answer my interview question and took time for interview. Japan has influenced COVID19 pandemic than Taiwan and local government staff effort to keeping local resident lifestyle harder. I really appreciate interviewee accepting my interview in this period. My hometown is Hokkaido, and I am proud of my hometown. This is very good chance to consider about our hometown and future in Japan, population problem is own problem too. I except each local area can promote revitalization positively and many people can know hometown's strength through this revitalization policy.

## INTRODUCTION

### Background

Recently, the decreasing birthrates and aging population are two serious social problems faced in Japan. Young people are moving from other local areas to Tokyo. At the same time, other rural areas have a small and aging population. The Japanese central government published one research report which showed that 896 local governments would disappear in the future due to population outflow.<sup>1</sup> Town revitalization would be a solution for rural areas to stimulate economic development and increase population. From the statistic data, Shikoku, Tohoku, Hokuriku, and Chugoku areas are facing the most serious population problem in Japan. Hence, the central government started to implement rural area revitalization policy. Through this policy, the government encouraged young people to move to rural areas by supporting them with more kindergarten and childcare facilities. However, the aging percentage is still high and population outflow problem is still serious in Japan today.

Economically, tourism is an important income inflow for locals with the numbers

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<sup>1</sup> Hisakazu Kato, "Declining Population and the Revitalization of Local Regions in Japan" (Meiji University Japan 2014).

of visitors rising. It is a very serious problem for locals. Real prefectural inhabitants income<sup>2</sup> have a big gap between Tokyo inhabitants. The government have implemented public policies for locals however, there is still a gap between rural and urban areas. Industrial structure, approach from production phase and transition are all different between the local areas and Tokyo.

Therefore the problem is not only related to population. Town revitalize is very difficult however there are a few of local governments successful in increasing population or attracting more visitors with leads to a good economic effect. These activities are called town revitalization (“Machi Okoshi” in Japanese). I focus on this activity and research about how they successfully town revitalization in Japan. I focus on sightseeing policies for local businesses. Many rural areas are developed with special products and experiences. Current fashion, every tourist needs special experience only. Both factors are important for the research of town revitalization.

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<sup>2</sup> ロンドンリサーチセンター シニアエコノミスト (LDN 駐在) 近藤 智也 et al., "都市と地方のこれからを考える 多様な働き方を実現するために," (Japan2016).

## Motivation

Many rural areas try to achieve economic development or increase Japan's population to solve both the population and economic problem. But not all areas completely understand town revitalization and many local governments still try implement revitalization. Town revitalization policy have to appeal their features and good points for other areas inhabitants because each area has special products or sightseeing spots. These good points are hiding with other area's products. Local government have to consider about how to appeal or draw attention. This promotion is very difficult for public organizations. According to the information of promotion of overcoming population decline and vitalizing local economy secretariat, there are many types of town revitalization activity with good economic effects. For examples; applying for old houses or vacant stores, appealing to the traditional streets, developing tourism and the local industry, pushing for health and longevity policies and developing for local community<sup>3</sup>. These types of town revitalization activities are successful with good economic effects. These town revitalizations have a very clear concept and many local governments have already tried. This means local governments already have a lot of

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<sup>3</sup> 内閣府地方創生推進事務局, "稼げるまちづくり取組事例集「地域のチャレンジ100」," (Japan2016).

information, hence I wonder why other local governments still have problems in town revitalization as well as the reason in why there is a big economic gap between local and Tokyo.

### **Research Purpose**

The purpose of this study is to discover the good solutions to solve this population problem and modify the gap between local and Tokyo. This gap caused population outflow problem from local to Tokyo, therefore situation has a bad cycle and it is worsening. Japan has serious population problem and it is related to our future, so need to acknowledge and solve this problem.

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the effective policies/measures for revitalization in Hokkaido?
2. How do local governments measure and modify revitalization policy?
3. How do local businesses participate in town revitalization?

### **Contribution**

The realization of town revitalization will be alternatives for the people who want to turn or not suitable for city life. This is also a good chance to appeal each area's

good point, not only the food but their unique culture and precious local industry. If local area succeeds in increasing the population, it will be a clue in solving the aging and low birth society. Thus, I think town revitalization is related to Japan's future plan and have big potential.

### **Limit**

It may be hard to study about all local areas and all town revitalization in Japan with my limited research time. Furthermore, there are so many different revitalization policies in Japanese local areas since each area has its own town revitalization policy. It is impossible to study all local areas' revitalization policies.

### **Delimit**

In my research I selected Hokkaido area, where has serious population problem than area areas. Hokkaido has the biggest land in Japan, so population density is low it means Hokkaido area's population drain is serious than other area. On the other hand, Hokkaido is famous for sightseeing spot in Japan. Such as beautiful landscape and delicious food . Many tourists come from other areas and foreign tourist in all seasons. There are some strengths can appeal for other areas. Hence, I think Hokkaido's town revitalization is very meaningful and interesting according to this situation.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### First Section: The trend of town revitalization

Rural area's decline is still a serious problem and many local governments rely on the local allocation tax from central government. However, this system has a problem due to bureaucracy's limit. Therefore, each local government have to develop voluntarily without the central government's support. Many local governments try to achieve town revitalization through sightseeing policies with local food or natural resources. The idea of tourism is changing with increasing visits to the rural area and natural habitats for sightseeing.<sup>4</sup>

Onsen (hot spring) is a famous natural resource for Japanese people. Onsen culture was developed in Japan and is a very useful way apply for Japan's own natural resources. Local government appeal their hot spring and traditional view with Onsen. However, a problem occurred during the development of Kurokawa Onsen. These include the lack of parking areas as well as the need to create an aesthetic for all tourism. Also,

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<sup>4</sup> Chris McMorran, "Constructing Idealized Communities in Japan's Countryside: Tourist Place-Making in Kurokawa Onsen

日本の遠隔地域における観光客増加の潜在的要因-黒川温泉を事例として"  
(University of Colorado, 2005).

the problem of protecting their traditional landscape and Onsen culture cooperation with local people is important things to promote the Kurokawa.

The other famous factor is food with each local area having their local food as their unique food culture.<sup>5</sup> The use of B level food revitalization was success model. The B level food is a local food, which is not expensive as it is made by locals. One citizen group had a competition for B level food which resulted in a good economic effect. Every year, the first place local food's area attracts a large number of tourists. This includes Furano Ome curry in Furanpo, Japan which is located in the middle of Hokkaido and sells omlet rice with curry. This Ome currey is famous B level food with brought great economic effects in Japan.<sup>6</sup> This food's spin-off benefit totaled to 2500 million yen for locals. This Furano Ome curry has a joint council made by local people and volunteer staff from local government. Therefore, this organization does not rely on budgets from the local government as well as the revenue share by central government. This restaurant has 6 rules to sell for tourism about the production of food and price etc. The rule is made by joint council thought in consumer and tourist position. This town revitalize activity started in 2006 and Furano ome curry joint council started in 2009. It took a long time for

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<sup>5</sup> Ueda Michiaki, "The Lessons from Regional Revital in Use of Local Foods: Using Local Resources and Corporations among Multi Sectors" (BUKKYO UNIVERSITY, 2013).

<sup>6</sup> 阿部智和, "食を通じたまちおこし組織の活動プロセス:「富良野オムカレー」普及活動の10年史," 地域経済経営ネットワーク研究センター年報 第5号 (2016).

them to realize the benefits and have a clear sell system for local food. Especially, the publicity part and to get approval from the local people is most difficult part in promoting this local food. First, they promoted curry used by local food in Furano. They tried to differentiate other local food by making the Omelet curry with Furano's vegetable.

In this process the most important thing is the relationship between joint council members and restaurant by volunteer members. The other revitalization activity local government use is the “community reactivating cooperator squad”<sup>7</sup> system as well as the promotion policy for immigrants. In this case, to avoid the decreasing population, the local government can use this system.<sup>8</sup> This is short term stay for immigrants in that area in which they can receive job experiences. After this short-term immigrant they can decide whether to continue living there. This system bring benefit to the local area but also has problems as well. In Kawakami village case, there is close relationship between locals which make it very difficult for the new immigrants to fit in. So the local government tried increasing the “related population”. The related population do not include immigrants and tourist but they are related to the people in that area. For example,

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<sup>7</sup> Home Affairs MInistry of Public Management, Posts and Telecommunications, "地域おこし協力隊の概要," ed. Home Affairs MInistry of Public Management, Posts and Telecommunications (Japan).

<sup>8</sup> 酒井千絵 越智祐子, "「新規移住者」と「関係人口」が人口減少に直面する山村に果たす役割：奈良県川上村における学生調査をとおして the Roles of “Newcomer Residents” and “Populations Who Retain an Interest in Local Villages (Kankei-Jinkou)” in Depopulated Countryside Villages: A Case Study of Students’ Research Activities in Kawakami Village, Nara" (Kansai University, 2020).

a company staff which has project there or old resident . They are living in other places but have connections to that area. Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications expect that they can bring some new ideas or style in local for revitalization. From these examples, the relationship between the local government and local people are one of the important factors to realize the town revitalization. And success case is tool for a long time realized revitalization.

### **Second Section: Revitalization theory**

My theoretical framework is the revitalization. Revitalization is strength policies that promote an increase in the Japanese and the need for regional administrative restricting corresponding to a population decline in Japan. Japan's central government solve decreasing population problem and population inflow to Tokyo problem started town revitalization policy. Japan Policy Council published one research 896 local government would disappear in 2040. Due to this report, Japanese cabinet office decided to solve these population problems positively. These all policy is about to revitalization of local regions in Japan.<sup>9</sup> Similar world is "gentrification", both word means developing the one are to get more benefit. Gentrification means that the value of land is higher,

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<sup>9</sup> Kato, "Declining Population and the Revitalization of Local Regions in Japan."

building high towers or constructing big shopping malls. It also expresses developing, however gentrification<sup>10</sup> has background history of immigrants in America. The place of lived by immigrant and changed the value of land higher with the times. After rich people moved to the place and. Gentrification caused problem between the new rich neighbors and old neighbors. Recently, gentrification was influenced by the urban policies to realize city regeneration<sup>11</sup>. So it is not just changing value of land, but also realizing the area's desire and bring benefit. Anthony Wallace definition "a deliberate, organized, conscious effort by members of a society to contrast a more satisfying culture"<sup>12</sup>

### **Third section: population problem and policy in Japan**

Town revitalization is due to the serious population problem caused by low birthrate and aging population in Japan. Many local governments have tried to increasing population there as well as the town revitalization activity. This population problem has caused a gap between local and downtown. Japan's population is decreasing<sup>13</sup>, Kanto area

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<sup>10</sup> National Geographic Society, "Gentrification," *National Geographic*, no. Anthropology, Sociology, Social Studies, U.S. History (2019).

<sup>11</sup> FUJITSUKA Yoshihiro, "The Frontiers of Gentrification Studies::The Case of London in the 2000s" (OSAKA CITY UNIVERSITY, 2016).

<sup>12</sup> Anthony F.C. Wallace, "Revitalization Movement" (University of Pennsylvania, 1956).

<sup>13</sup> Statistics Bureau of Japan, "人口推計（令和2年（2020年）1月確定値，令和2年（2020年）6月概算値）（2020年6月22日公表），" ed. Home Affairs MInistry of Public Management, Posts and Telecommunications (Japan2020).

is increasing in work force and young people population<sup>14</sup>, but the local area has population outflow problem.

Japan policy council reported that the city at risk of disappearing<sup>15</sup> in Japan. This is the local government which had prospect the decreasing number of women who is aged between 20 to 39 years old in 2040. The local government totalled to 1799, in 896 local governments will disappear in the future due to Japan Policy Council report<sup>16</sup>. In city at risk of disappearing, 523 local governments have a higher risk of disappearing. Aging and low birthrate society will bring not enough social welfare service by local government. Especially, nursing old people service will cause shortages and the continuing decreasing population problem is not only the nursing part, medical part will have bad influence. So this population problem is really big and we need to solve problem for our future.

To solve this the Ministry of Internal Affairs and communication started the regional revitalization project. To correct the gap and monopolar concentration in Tokyo, the central government have decided to remove government-affiliated organs<sup>17</sup>. For

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<sup>14</sup> "都道府県別人口と人口増減率," ed. Home Affairs Ministry of Public Management, Posts and Telecommunications (Japan2015).

<sup>15</sup> 増田寛也, "「選択する未来」委員会提出資料  
人口減少問題と地方の課題," ed. Cabinet Office (Japan 2014).

<sup>16</sup> 増田 寛也, "国土交通政策研究所「政策課題勉強会」  
消滅時を据「地域消滅時代」を見据えた今後の国土交通戦略のあり方について," ed. Polict  
research Institute and Infrastructure for Land, Transport and Tourism (Japan 2014).

<sup>17</sup> 松原宏, "地方創生関連政策の制作過程と政策評価に関する覚書き," in 経済地理學年俸(日本

example, the Japan Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology and National Cancer Center Japan etc. Many of national research institute moved to local areas and brought some employment opportunity in there. However, this is only government-affiliated organs, and they can't force to remove private enterprises. On the other hand, national strategy are policies in Tokyo, this policy and regional revitalization policy has a dilemma. And the policy considered by the central government is a big framework and use the same method to revitalize, but it is not suitable for each local area. So each local government have to consider the method to be suitable to each area with limited budget.

Many governments wanted to increase birthrate, inflow population and the population of workforce. To realize this goal, the local government uses consultant company or think tank about town revitalization. About 78% of local government use these company partial abandonment and 6% of local government all abandonment<sup>18</sup>. These companies are private enterprises, therefore the budget is an important factor for locals. To promote revitalization, the central government give local the special budget which is a local grant. This local grant has two types, type one; a model case, a unique revitalization or subject project related to immigrants and talent training, type two is a project decided in early stage central government to give budgets for local distributed

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2016).

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

evenly<sup>19</sup>. Especially, Nagano prefecture and Hokkaido got type one local grant, because their revitalization project applied for tourist attraction is very useful. However, one of the local governments cannot get enough budget, therefore causing gaps. In 2016 local grant broaden the scope to get for locals.

Recently, multiple local government have the revitalization project together and the support to venture corporation's project are increasing. Except that local grants RESAS<sup>20</sup> is good method for local. RESAS (Regional Economy Society Analyzing System) can research about the data of local economies with each local government unity. This system can select the area, compare and add up area about the local economy datas. This is very useful to promote venture corporation and develop local industry. It is important for the to use this system successfully<sup>21</sup>. From these things, to realize revitalization, the local government and central government have problems and dilemma. Each local government has different environmental conditions, population and problem. And changing the trend and political part, the related regional revitalization policy is changing too. There are a lot of new ideas and new choices for local but realization is very difficult. The map city of risk of disappear in Japan

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> RESAS - 地域経済分析システム, "About&Related Information Resas とは・Resas 関連情報 (イベント等、分析事例)," <https://resas.go.jp/#/13/13101>.

<sup>21</sup> 松原宏, "地方創生関連政策の制作過程と政策評価に関する覚書き."

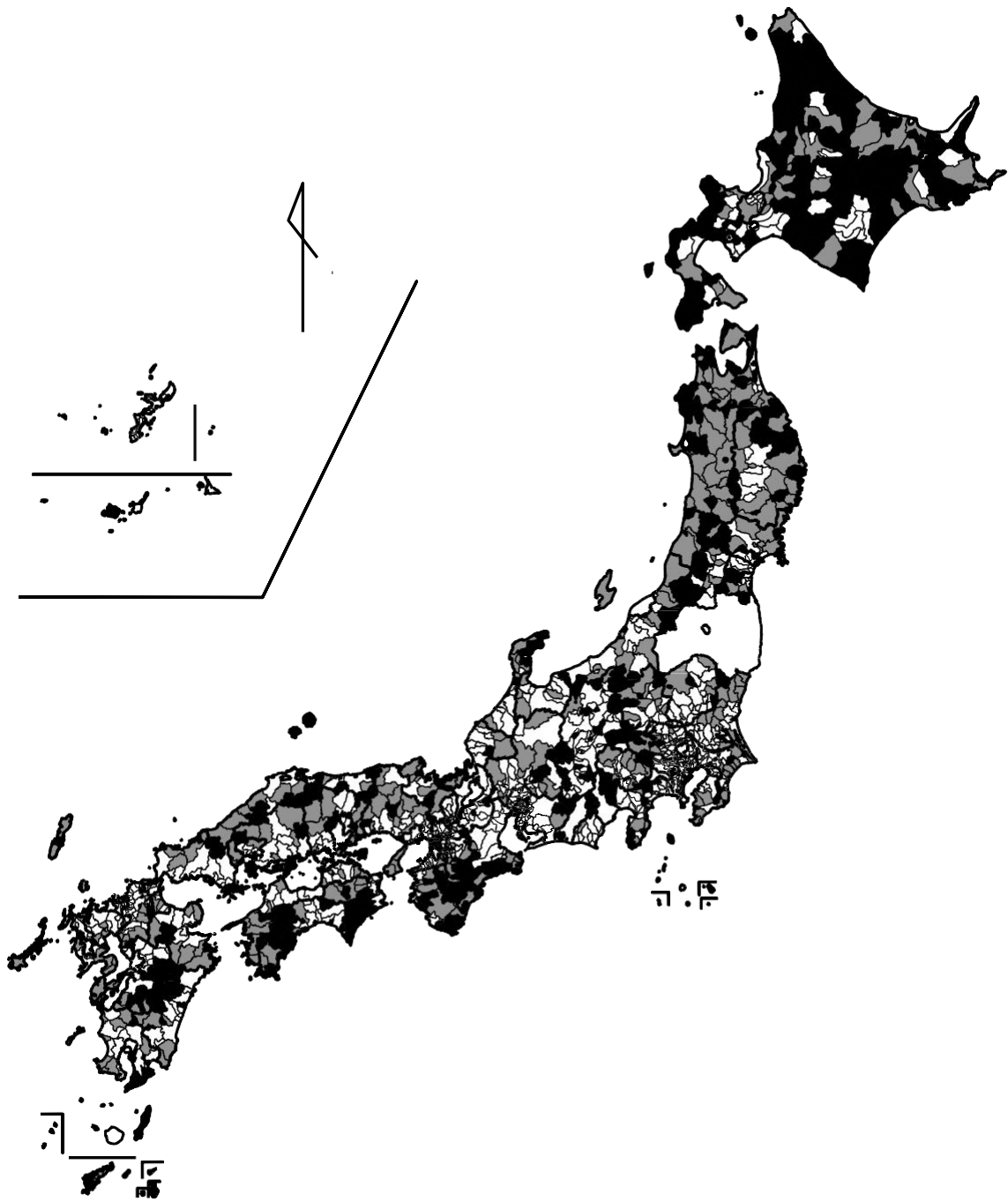
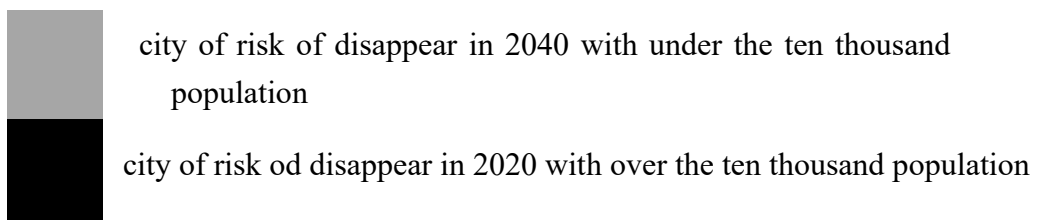


Figure: the city at risk of disappear in Japan

Source: Hokkaido Intellect Tank



### **Forth section: Local business**

In generally local business is related to local industry, special products, famous foods, or popular tourist spot there. Recently, local business has a new concept in Japan. That is “Glocal business”<sup>22</sup>, this world is global and local with together and made by Japanese people. This Glocal business is based on locals but their market is international. As in the past, an international market can appeal and promote Japan’s brand but now local brand can also appeal in international markets. Because, come to Japan’s tourists are shopping spree in Japan and they purchase Japan’s brand product. But now to increase high inbound tourism and promote more special experience which has added value in Japan<sup>23</sup>. To realize this each area, have to appeal their own good point and apply for useful tourism resource. Local business is not only the local, they can expect more in the international market. Local business has more potential to get more economic benefits.

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<sup>22</sup> 巴特尔 Baatar, "日本発グローバルビジネスとインバウンド観光客との相関について a Study on the Correlation between Glocal Business and Inbound Tourists," in 多摩大学研究紀要「経営情報研究」(2019).

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

## Related population and exchange population

Related population<sup>24</sup> is new concept started around 2016 and 2017.

Related population is who has relationship with local area, related population neither residential population nor exchange population.

In local area faced decreasing population and lack of working population problem, so related population is expected in revitalization.

Related population example

- After the Great East Japan Earthquake, many of volunteer doing job and having connection with local resident. They are not living in east Japan, continuing do volunteer job as a staff. Fukushima renovation group<sup>25</sup> is consisted by people from other area. In their activities area exchange and communicate with earthquake victim, in addition they are making opportunities of communication with victim and other area people. For example, they are accepting study tour for university student, business worker, company and foreigner to attend town.
- Having identity, job experience, sightseeing experience, business and activity. These

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<sup>24</sup> Hirokazu SAKUNO, "The Significance and Possibility of Relationship Population in Population Decline Society in Japan " (Shimane University 2019).

<sup>25</sup>Okayama Nobuo, "Recovery from Earthquake Damage and Related Population Case in Fukushima," (Japan 2019).

are factor having relationship with in there. People who want to providing knowledge and work power for own hometown, if they are not living in hometown, they can participant revitalization. For example, they can carry on traditional culture from other area and continuing have relationship with local area. This is very useful way to revitalization in the future. In the same time, local government have to collection the related population's idea and providing suitable public service to get new related population.<sup>26</sup>

- According to questionnaire survey, 30% people who living in urban area want to live in rural area<sup>27</sup>. So related population has demand for these people in revitalization.

This is a new concept who want to have connection in rural area. Before 2016, they have to decide live in urban city or rural area. There are only two choices, after made related population concept they can choose in three choices. Related population is in the middle of residential population and exchange population. Related population have more strong connection than exchange population, but they are not living in there.

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<sup>26</sup> Home Affairs Ministry of Public Management, Posts and Telecommunications, "Review Meeting About to Immigration and Exchange Policy in the Future," (2018).

<sup>27</sup> SAKUNO, "The Significance and Possibility of Relationship Population in Population Decline Society in Japan".

Exchange population<sup>28</sup>

People who work or visit in town or having connection in there. For example, office worker, attending school student, tourists, shopper, lodger and sport leisure in there.

Exchange population's purpose does not matter in revitalization. Related population take objection to residential population.

### **Solve lack of succeder problem policy**

Professional talent project is made by cabinet office in Japan and try to solve lack of succeder problem in 2015. In each prefecture has professional talent strategy's office and in establish Japan talent organization in urban area. In this organization do talent matching cooperate with talent office in private enterprise and local business.

Organization send matching talent for local business. This talent organization has time limit to 2026, and solve inflow population problem in Tokyo. This organization's target is different to private enterprise talent office, their target is working in urban area in management, developing new project as a management executive around 40~50 generation (president, CEO and chief director level). But many local business has one owner style, there are vague management policy and developing strategy. So this

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

organization supporting local government preparing good environment to accept new succeder. For example, solving problem of management, productivity improvement, improve job system and negotiation requirement of accepting new succeder. It is useful way to solve employment problem between local business and urban area work population in Japan.

### **Hometown Tax System**

Hometown tax present situation and problem

- Most of “thank you gift” is over the 2000 JPY from local government
- Pay hometown tax over the 2000JPY, people can deduct resident tax. Deduction is changed by annual income and family make-up, for example annual five million JPY family pay hometown tax, deduction is 61000 JPY. It is over the 15000TWD, so pay hometown tax is very useful way saving money<sup>29</sup>.

Hometown tax is based on concept made by Fukui prefecture governor in 2006. Local government using tax to grow up child for high school student. In the other hand urban

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<sup>29</sup> Ryo Kawaguchi, "Hometown Tax Present Situation and Problem," (Japan 2016 ).

are can get tax from young worker population. To solve this unbalance tax revenue, making pay tax for own hometown people can get deduction.<sup>30</sup>

In 2007 July, established “Hometown tax workshop” in Ministry of Public management, Home, Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications. This workshop’s report is submitted in October, in this workshop council argued definition of Hometown. Hometown is “feel at ease place”, “favorite prefecture and memories prefecture” and “people want to live in the future”. Hometown’s definition is expanded to second hometown, so hometown tax system people can choice the area pay tax. After pay hometown tax, people can get “thank you gift” presented by local government. This “thank you gift” is also their special product in there. Hence increasing demand of special product, it is related to revitalization. When send “thank you gift” with special product’s pamphlet, so people would buy other special product through pamphlet. Many towns become known better through hometown tax. This system is very useful PR for local government. And started movement of “rediscover the strength of own town” and “to promoting special product for Japan”

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<sup>30</sup> 嶋田 暁文 Shimada Akifumi, "Reconsideration Hometown Tax" (KYSHU UNIVERSITY 2019).

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

Hokkaido has serious population problem than other area. Low birthrate and aging population is caused a lot of problem. And Hokkaido landscape is twice of Taiwan, so there are problem caused by this large land. For example, population localization, especially doctor's localization is very serious problem in Hokkaido to keep high quality welfare and public service. Hokkaido is famous for delicious food, these famous foods are made in primary industry. In primary industry has problem the lack of succeed. Primary industry worker also aging of population progress, lack of succeed primary industry worker cannot take over their industry to young people. Aging population problem is already influenced Hokkaido a lot. On the other hand, Hokkaido is famous for sightseeing industry part, and Hokkaido is one of name brand in country. Our food, beautiful view, winter spots and good climate is famous sightseeing contents. Many of Hokkaido place accepted special subsidy by central government. It is means many of Hokkaido's local area can apply their sightseeing resource. So I choose Hokkaido to research this problem.

Case study and compare with other area's town revitalization activity. The

relationship between local government and inhabitant is different due to different sightseeing resource and local business. This relationship is also important factor to understand town revitalization activity in there.

### **Source of Data**

Necessity of revitalization is due to Japan's serious population problem. To identify this problem and describe to how they influence through the population problem statistic data is necessary. Related to tourism and economic factors are described by statistic data too. These statistic data made by local governments or central government are found on their internet page. To understand the relationship between the local government and inhabitant interview content is an important research source. Interview is also my research source of data, due to research question interview to local government is important. Local government promote revitalization for local resident directly, so I think interview research is important in my research. After the interview I would prepare the interview sheet and organize interview data and answer the my research questions.

## **Instrumentation and Data Analysis**

Interview is an important process in my research to understand the relationship between the local government and inhabitant. Also having to research the purpose of their revitalization and related policy. There are many types of revitalization policy and support by local governments to realize their desire with each situation. Interview content is used to describe and make it easy to understand and apply for my conclusion. I contacted some of local government and consulted corporations about to town revitalization to interview. One consulting corporation and four local governments accept my interview survey and were used online interview.

### **Interview question**

- What is the core idea of regional revitalization strategy in process of policy decision?
- What is the notice point to keep good connection between local government and resident?
- How does local government implement revitalization? indirectly or directly? (Does local government subsidize community to implement revitalization or implement revitalization by itself?)
- What is the support system to local business by local government?

- In addition to existed KPI, are there any other effective managerial indicators to measure the regional revitalization ?
- What are the measures/policies to attract new immigrants and to keep the current residents?

Table 1: Interview list

	Town	Department	Interviewee
1	Wassam town	General Coordination Division	G.T
2	Yakumo town	Business Tourism and Lobor administration	F.N
3	Nakashibetu town	Policy Division	S.T
4	Hokkaido executive	Implemenatation of growth strategy	M.K
5	Co, GLOCAL DESIGN	President	S.H

Wassamu town is located in middle of Hokkaido near the Asahikawa city. Main

industry is agriculture, Wassamu town's pumpkin and overwintering cabbage is famous special product in there. Recently, focus on the pumpkin seed and promoting their special product. <sup>31</sup>

Yakumo town is located in middle of Oshima Peninsula in south of Hokkaido. There area abundance seafood, famous for dairy farming and glutinous rice. This town is birthplace of wood carving bear. It is represent Hokkaido's culture and popular as a souvenir. <sup>32</sup>

Nakashibetu town is located middle of Nemuro and east of Hokkaido. In little snowfall compare with other area in Hokkaido. Main industry is dairy farming and famous for milk. ice cream and cheese. <sup>33</sup>

Hokkaido executive is central government in Hokkaido. Hokkaido is surrounded by Pacific Ocean, Sea of Okhotsk and Sea of Japan. There are beautiful nature, large bog and beautiful lakes and marshes. Placed in north of Japan, use this location aim to be a base connection with Asia and The pacific side. <sup>34</sup>GLOCAL DESIGN is produce and consulting company about to town revitalization, producing, sightseeing management,

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<sup>31</sup> General Coordination Division in Wassamu Town, "About to Wassamu " <https://www.town.wassamu.hokkaido.jp/affairs/information-management/about-wassamu-town/>.

<sup>32</sup> Yakumo Town, "Overview of Yakumo " <https://www.town.yakumo.lg.jp/soshiki/seisaku/content0310.html>.

<sup>33</sup> Nakashibetu Town, "Introduce About Town " <https://www.nakashibetsu.jp/shoukai/sangyou/>.

<sup>34</sup> GLOCAL DESIGN, "Company's Outline " <http://www.glocal-d.com/company/>.

making travel product, area management, community management, revitalization in central city and business, supporting entrepreneur and education talent od sightseeing.<sup>35</sup>

### **Tools for data analysis**

After the interview I organize interview data. When do interview research, I recorded interview data and writing interview memo. I interviewed use my interview question sheet and ask question to order. Data analysis, I reference to interview data and recording data to answer the research question. And discussed with my adviser in data analysis.

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<sup>35</sup> Hokkaido Executive, "Overview of Hokkaido " <http://www.pref.hokkaido.lg.jp/overview/index.htm>.

## **DATA ANALYSIS**

In this chapter, I will try to answer my three research questions which are what are the effective policies/measures for revitalization in Hokkaido. How do local governments and local residents relate in town revitalization? And How do local businesses participate in town revitalization? / how related with local government and local business in town revitalization? I did interview research for local government in Hokkaido to answer my research question.

### **Research question 1:**

#### **What are the effective policies/measures for revitalization in Hokkaido?**

Japan has serious population problem due to low birth rate and high aging population rate. Japanese social security and pension is supported by working population. Hence, decreasing population is profoundly serious problem for Japan. To solve this problem, central government started promoting town revitalization policy. I think revitalization policy can be separated into two types: one is avoiding outflow population; the other one is accepting immigration from other areas.

## **Communities revitalization**

Communities revitalization, one example of town revitalization, makes community accessible to all residents since it prepares events, such as sowing beans festival and Xmas which requires space and time, for resident to communicate with another resident.

Increasing aging population brings problem of “solitary death” which means elder people died lonely. It means old people living alone and no one notice about his/her physical deconditioning death alone. Lately, the “solitary death” occurs at least once per year. It is hard to image the serious Japanese problem and this profoundly serious problem has been reported by many medias. Hence, some old people were forced to move to capital city of region living with their family for avoiding solitary death. Communities revitalization can solve this problem if people has serious health problem emergency anyone can notice. Local resident can communicate with other people positively with community revitalization. So preparing community area and community event is effective policy in revitalization.

In our community area, there is one solitary death per year

(interviewee S.H)

To avoid solitary death, old people moved to capital city

living with their family in case. (interviewee G.T)

Young people also have similar problem in the communities. Their problem is about remote work which has been a new work style before the corona pandemic. Young people use computer and network to complete their job at home. This work style became more popular after the corona pandemic. Many of company requires staff to do remote work in pandemic. However, staff works in house alone without any face to face communication. Though this work style is convenient for young people since they don't need to go company and they can manage their own time flexibly, it caused loneliness feeling and bad influence to mental health for these young people. In today Japan society, many companies require to staff continuing remote work due to coronavirus pandemic. So, it is not a new concept of work and it became normal concept in Japanese society after pandemic. If local government preparing community centers for young people, they can work together and communicate face to face. It can solve loneliness feeling communicate with other people.

this work style is very convenient but stay home time is longer than before. So young people need community revitalization too. (interviewee S.H)

## **Increasing “related population” and exchange population in revitalization**

Hokkaido’s decreasing amount of population is more than average decreasing amount of population in Japan. Hokkaido government has reported that Hokkaido couldn’t avoid decreasing population a certain number in the future. It is difficult to increase birth rate and immigrant population directly. So, Hokkaido focus on increasing exchange population and related population in revitalize which are easier than increasing birth rate and immigrant population in revitalize. Hokkaido’s population problem is serious than other areas in Japan and this population number prediction makes local residents anxious when continue living in Hokkaido. These situations will cause population outflow more and more. That is why Hokkaido government focus on exchange population and related population in revitalization.

Due to Hokkaido government’s decision, many towns try to increase related population and exchange population too. Exchange population means all people who came to the town. Related population means they participated town’s festival events or their communities’ activities etc, so it is like a fan of the town.<sup>36</sup> Related population has better relationship than exchange population. In order to increase these population, towns promote short stay policies/measures such as summer resorts. Short stay (season

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<sup>36</sup> There are other meanings of related population, such as....

stay is same meaning) project is policy of accept immigrant for town. However, this policy is suitable in summer only since the weather is cool only. Winter is too hostile for exchange population for other area's people. Hence, the government is changing policy's object now. They try to target on medical workers who would like to have work experiences.

Short stay policy has not good efficient for increasing immigrant population directly so changing object and doing trial and error suitable for our town. (interviewee S.T)

After the 20 years Hokkaido's population decreasing one million, this is difficult for increasing birth rate and immigrant population.

So focus on increasing exchange population and related population. Recognizing decreasing population and making new policy suitable for Hokkaido. (interviewee M.K)

Hokkaido government promoting secret kitchen project. There are many kinds of method people have relationship with rural area in Hokkaido. This method to compare to recipe in this project. This project's concept people can shar this recipe. This is a reason of name secret kitchen project. This is a project for increasing related population in Hokkaido rural areas. Main activity areas and object people are in

Sapporo which is capital of Hokkaido. It means Sapporo is the most well-developed urban area in Hokkaido. In Sapporo, there are many people who has roots in rural area. It means many of people from rural areas in Hokkaido moved to Sapporo for work or study. Hokkaido government focus on these people who has potential can be related population for rural area. This project is to support talents for rural areas from Sapporo. In addition, secret kitchen project's homepage introduce information about rural area's new event in Hokkaido. People can get information about rural area's event, project of short stay and immigrant consulting seminar. This is very convenient to get information, because each local government has own homepage and provide information, use this secret kitchen project homepage people can get information in same time. It started prior to the COVID19 pandemic but it is forced to stop due to the influence of pandemic situation.

### **Maintaining habitable environment even though population is decreasing in the future**

Hokkaido government reported that it could not avoid the population decreasing to one million in the future. This number is too big to only relying on revitalization policy which is aiming to increase birthrate and immigrant directly.

That is why Hokkaido government recognized decreasing population in the future and it could not avoid naturally decreasing population (naturally death).

Decreasing population causes small number of staff for running public service and keeping infrastructure. Rural areas have to provide public service and infrastructure with small number of staff in the future. Decreasing staff cannot support public service so that people won't live in there, neither. To keep high quality of public service and infrastructure with small number of staff, Hokkaido government started a policy to change system of running public service. For example, integrating public services provides by three towns instead of one town in rural areas. This policy could appeal to local residents keeping living in Hokkaido where there is decreasing population. It is unusual for a local government to recognize decreasing population in the future, inform local residents this serious problem, and prepare new style public service in small number of staff.

Avoid to this problem, Hokkaido government promote to keeping public service and infrastructure cooperate with other towns.

It is important to avoiding make a reason for move from Hokkaido. (interviewee K.M)

## **Many kinds of education policy for children**

Education policy is effective policy avoiding outflow population too. Before the interview survey I was not focus on education policy in revitalization. But, I found that many towns are promoting education policy to keep their residents in towns.

Poor education quality is one of reasons for outflow population. Education is important factor for young family to decide if they should have child in there. Hokkaido has the biggest land in Japan so there is unevenly distributed school and teacher problem in childcare system.

Japan's scholarship is different from Taiwan's scholarship. Japan's tuition is much higher than Taiwan, so many students apply for scholarship. Japan's national and public university tuition is almost same Taiwan's private school and Japan's private school tuition is double for national public school in Japan. So Japanese education expenses is very expensive. Japan's scholarship has to be paid back with low interest. Scholarship is important for Japanese student to go study in college. And rural area students want to get high quality education, they move to urban area after graduated would stay in there starting job. To solve these two problems, local governments grants original scholarship to student live in there. For example, Wassamu town and Yakumo town has original scholarship system provide to student, after graduated they would

come back the town and started job in there, local government support their half tuition. Students who finally passed the medical doctor exam and returned to rural areas do not have to pay back the scholarship. So it is one of education policy which can avoiding population outflow.

This is first case in We have remote lesson before the pandemic to keep high quality education for every student. Especially, teaching technical content very useful for student and teacher too.

(interviewee M.K)

Cooperation with other area promoting international exchange with Taiwan, every year 20~30 junior high school student participating this project. (interviewee G.T)

Preparing nurse school for farmer in our town, increasing farmer and dairyman caused lack of nursery school use for them, so town started to lending place in farmer's Japan preparing nursery school for farmers. (interviewee S.T)

### **Local government's policy for solving problem about lack of successors in Local business**

Hokkaido has problem about lack of successor in many places. This problem is

much more serious in the primary industry part in Hokkaido. It is difficult to solve this problem in the primary industry because it takes a lot of initial cost and expert knowledge. Furthermore, aging rate of worker population is higher than before so getting new worker and successor is very difficult in now. Small-to-medium sized enterprise has same problem too in rural areas. There are many kinds of special products which can appeal for other places. Due to this successor problem and decreasing primary industry workers, small-to-medium sized enterprise have to wind up their company. Especially, Hokkaido is famous for delicious food which is part of primary industry, such as milk, vegetable, seafood and rice. Hokkaido's self-sufficiency rate is 198%,<sup>37</sup> which is much higher than the average rate in Japan (40%). Tourist like these delicious foods from Hokkaido so the primary industry is Hokkaido's main industry and resource of sightseeing. If due to lack of worker and successor problem, the prime industry has been influenced badly.

Yakumo town and Chamber of Commerce and Industry established new company, Mokuren Co., to solve this problem. Mokuren Co. consist of young people from the town. This company's purpose is to grow up new working population and succeed the existing firms in town in the future. Because the town has good industry

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<sup>37</sup> Forestry and Fisheries Ministry of Agriculture, "Self-Sufficiency " (Japan2018).

system and abundant resource which can sell as a special product. Company signed contract for consignment of operations with local governments, proceeding hometown tax, running antenna shop. Antenna shop is a store which sell many special products produced in local areas. Antenna shop is different from normal grocery shop in Japan. For example, there are many antenna shops in Tokyo. People can buy local area's special products in urban area. Hometown tax is a contribution which people who can make for rural area as a tax. This tax system means people who wants to support for his/her own hometown development.<sup>38</sup> Usually, people move to urban areas for their jobs and pay tax for these urban areas where they live. This tax system can give people choose which hometown they want to support as a tax. After paying hometown tax, people will receive "thank you gift" from that local town, for example, the local town special product. When paying hometown tax over 2000 JPY, people can deduct their resident tax in own living area. This is a very popular way to pay tax in Japan. Corporation can procedure hometown tax for government.

Mokuren Co. company procedures hometown tax in Yakumo town.

It attracts young workers to work in commercial and industry and learn skill of business

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<sup>38</sup> Home Affairs MInistry of Public Management, Posts and Telecommunications, "よくわかる！ふるさと納税 Undrerstand ! Hometown Tax," [https://www.soumu.go.jp/main\\_sosiki/jichi\\_zeisei/czaisei/czaisei\\_seido/furusato/about/](https://www.soumu.go.jp/main_sosiki/jichi_zeisei/czaisei/czaisei_seido/furusato/about/).

management in forest, agriculture and fishers. High school students in there and who want to work in there moved from other area. Young people are trained through on-the-job (procedure hometown tax, running antenna shop) to get business skills in town. The company develops new product, management, marketing and targeting for young people. This company is established in 2020 summer so this is new style revitalization.

This is new style revitalization and expecting their activities in the future. (interviewee F.N).

We are preparing home to provide new worker in forest industry and providing lesson about to farming and forest industry. (interviewee G.T)

Successor problem in local town has been mentioned in previous discussion session and professional talent center is one way to solve the problem. Professional talent center is a project sponsored by central government and it will do talent matching for small-to-medium sized enterprises in local down. In addition to hold training programs about forestry and farming for trainees, local government also prepare homes for them. Trainees can learn how to start work in town soon and no worry for housing.

We are considering about the future in town and making new product. Hokkaido is a big brand name but it does not mean

it has prepotency always. (interviewee G.T)

## **Research question 2:**

### **How do local governments measure and modify revitalization policy?**

In revitalization, local government must look back policy efficient. Because revitalization policy is not short-term policy. revitalization is long-term policy, to increase population is big project and it will take for a long time to realize. In long-term policy local government have to check policy efficient and apply for the next policy in revitalization. To apply for next policy local government need to recognize what is weak point also what is strength in policy, these contents can reference next policy decision. So I wonder how local government measuring their policy efficient. In research question two, I will answer this problem.

### **KPI (Key Performance Indicator) is important factor to measuring policy efficient**

In policy making, each local government will decide its goal of policy. This is very easy to understand and judge if the policy is successful or fail. So many of local government using this style in policy making in Japan. KPI is used in quantitative evaluation in process of measuring policy implementation.

For example, Wassamu town displayed KPI result of policy for local residents.

I retrieved the revitalization policy of Wassamu town<sup>39</sup> in 2018 and found that it has the 2<sup>nd</sup> Basic Goal which is sending strengths of area and promoting exchange, visit and immigrant. The KPI of revitalization policy of Wassamu town are in Table X.

Table 2: The KPI of revitalization policy of Wassamu town

Policy	Indicator	Index-value	Result	Index-ratio
(1) information transmitting about to Wassamu town positively	The number of Wi-Fi free spots	10 spots	12spots	120%
(2) preparing sightseeing facility with characteristic of town and supporting event	The number of tourists	200000 people in 5 years	178060 people	89%
(3) promoting migration settlement policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of experience migration and migration counsel</li> <li>• Preparing home and the number of settlements</li> <li>• The number of adopting regional revitalization cooperation corps</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100 people in 5 years</li> <li>• 50 cases in 5 years</li> <li>• 4 people in 5 years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 80 people</li> <li>• 75 cases</li> <li>• 1 people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 80%</li> <li>• 150%</li> <li>• 25%</li> </ul>
(4) expanding exchange network	Hometown tax payment cases	4000 cases in 5 years	10487 cases	262%
(5) creating the area sustainable with	• New cooperation business cases	• 5 cases in 5 years	• 3 cases	• 60%

<sup>39</sup> 和寒町, "和寒町まち・ひと・しごと創生総合戦略一 平成 30 年度実績 一," (2018).

cooperation	· Promoting event	· 50 events in 5 years	· 89 events	· 178%
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Source: Town, People and work revitalization total strategy in Wassamu -Achievement in Heisei 30 period-

This is one example of KPI. Wassamu town has policy of 5 years project. After this project, they have looked back their policy efficiency measuring with this KPI. For example, the indicator of shortage, local government reviewed why did not achieve this indicator. They will apply this indicator for the next project in measuring policy quantitative evaluation part.

**FEEDBACK--Preparing chance to hearing local resident’s idea directly**

In the policy decision making process, government using KPI (key performance indicator), this is number of goal and when government measuring policy.

I wonder using only KPI it is not enough to measure policy efficient. There is good policy with bad KPI result, there is not efficient policy with good KPI result for local resident. After the policy, local government having consider the result of KPI, why that contents have not good achievement, what is not enough point in this policy. To

measuring policy efficient, hearing local resident's idea opportunity is very important measuring policy efficient.

A few of local governments have chance to hearing local resident idea directly. Their core of policy is applying for local resident's idea policy direct. One local government have meeting with each community, hearing their idea directly. One town and Hokkaido government having questionnaire for local resident to measure policy efficient. Using questionnaire and using statistics data apply for next year's policy decision making process. Due to these hearing data and questionnaire data, local government decide the policy leave for next year or changing the policy suitable local resident's needs. Doing hearing survey and questionnaire survey and applying these data local resident can feel local government hearing their idea for policy directly more. This is also communication time local government and local resident in revitalization.

We have chance to hearing local resident's idea once in year, in our town has 12 community area. Local government staff visiting community area and hearing survey about to their living life in the town (interviewee G.T) we have questionnaire for local resident about to our town policy and apply for policy in next years, but in this year

influenced corona virus problem I don't know we can do

this. (interviewee S.T)

Reference to questionnaire survey and statistic data for  
policy decision making process.

(interviewee M.K)

### **Research question three:**

#### **How do local businesses participate in town revitalization?**

Local businesses are important resources to revitalize Japanese local areas, since local towns try to make local brands and appealing for their special products. Each area has different special products which can appeal for and increase exchange population and related population. Hokkaido is famous for delicious food and beautiful landscape in Japan and in foreign countries too. Producing special product requires cooperation with local government. Furthermore, the central government and local governments have their subsidy system which support local businesses in rural areas.

#### **The innovation and creation of local business by subsidy**

Many local governments have subsidy system for local business. Hokkaido government's subsidy is more flexible than central government's subsidy.

In young people's image, working for primary industry is a hard job, for example, dairymen have to clean up pasture. In order to encourage these farmer, Nakashibetu town gives subsidy to farmer for support and provides financial guarantee for lending money from banks when they start new business. This system can solve deserted shopping street in local area.

Other towns promote pumpkin as a special product for themselves. They establish new local business companies to support the selling and promotion of pumpkin. These new local business companies are eligible to receive subsidy from local towns. These subsidies are used as new projects in revitalization. Since it is very difficult to get new budget from local towns so creating a new company to get subsidiy is a very useful way in revitalization.

Our subsidy supporting to make new product the area can appeal, Mukawa town's dinosaur goods is one example.

(Mukawa town excavated dinosaur bone) (interviewee M.K)

There are many kinds of subsidy in revitalization, normally small town doesn't have knowledge about to subsidy.

Especially Niseko town and Shimokawa town can use subsidy very well. (interviewee S.H)

### **Promoting new special products**

Special product is important factor in revroitalization because it is one of sightseeing resource. We can find that local businesses and local government have cooperated to promote local area's special products in town.

Hence, this is a new concept in revitalization to sell their products with area image for users or buyers. Many towns provide subsidy for local businesses but few of them participate in the project of developing new product with local businesses. Local government made local brand concept and did promotion independently. Appealing for special products is an important factor for rural area to get tourist and related population. However, branding is very difficult and needs expert knowledge about for area branding. Using consulting company is useful way. Consulting company has expert knowledge about to area branding and making added value for product. New product is made by local company use with these area's materials

When I am making new product, consider about inside procurement rate in town. When town sale product they have to earn them self. (interviewee S.H)

Special product is a “thank you gifts” and it is related to hometown tax which I mentioned before. Some people will decide to pay hometown tax when they would like to have “thank you gift”. Local business accepts support from local government in this process in Wassamu and it is supported to develop new special product and product distribution for customer. These products are sold in direct sales store or an exhibition of the product in department store.

## CONCLUSION

Japan has problem of low birth rate and aging society and Hokkaido is more serious than other areas. Low birth rate and aging population cause lack of population and rural area's local government cannot run their public service and maintenance infrastructures. To solve this problem, governments started to promote town revitalization policy. This research targets on Hokkaido revitalization and tries to find out the content and efficiency of revitalization in Hokkaido. The main findings are:

The first, avoiding population outflow policy is easier than accepting new resident policy. There are many kinds of revitalization policy, methods, and concept in now.

Revitalization policy can separate two types: avoiding outflow local resident population and accepting new local resident from other area. In avoiding outflow population part, local government have to solve the problem local resident's anxiety in dairy life. It is mean, comfortability of living is very important for resident in revitalize. Community revitalization and education policies can solve local resident's anxiety about to their dairy life directly. In the other hand, accepting new resident policy have to preparing their sightseeing spot and developing special product. Revitalization policy is long term policy and it would take for a long time to increase population directly. Avoiding outflow population policy is easier than accepting new resident policy and increasing birthrate policy. So local government strengthen avoiding population part in revitalize

more efficient.

Second, accepting new resident (include increasing related population policy) requires cooperation with chamber of commerce and industry and local business. In accepting new resident policy, local governments try to promote special product and their sightseeing point in town. When promote the special products, producer and seller are local business, not local governments. The local governments cannot promote the town revitalization by themselves; instead, they have to cooperate with local residents and other organizations. To increase the number of related population, need to cooperate by other organization. If Hokkaido focus on accepting new resident, local government have to prepare the good communities. Accept new resident, need to get the understanding of local resident. Hokkaido government is focus on increasing related population in revitalization. To increase this population, require to developing sightseeing part and promote special product. So local government have to cooperate with other organization necessary in revitalization of Hokkaido.

There are limitations of my research. First, the researcher used online interview in Taiwan to talk with interviewees in Japan for collecting research data. Due to lack of face to face talking, the data collection might not be totally completed. Second, COVID19 pandemic is influencing so that people cannot move to other areas. Hence,

local government's project is different from original revitalization project in this year.

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## APPENDIX

### Interview memo of Nakashibetsu Town

1. What is the core idea of regional revitalization strategy in process of policy decision?

Stopping population decline The core is to solve the problem of declining birthrate and aging population and to increase the number of children. In 2016, we started the regional comprehensive strategy as the first step. From now on, the increase in natural decline cannot be stopped, so the core is to increase the number of children. Nakashibetsu Town is supported not by the tourism industry but by the people of the surrounding cities.

2. What is the notice point to keep good connection between local government and resident?

Based on the Basic Autonomy Ordinance established in 2012 What is defined about the role and collaboration of the townspeople 1 Information sharing 2 Townspeople participation 3 Collaboration

3. What is the support system to local business by local government?

Dairy is the core industry and there are two types of agriculture It provides pasture maintenance and funding to support the primary industry. We also conduct tours for new farmers. As the number of new farmers increased, the lack of childcare facilities became a problem. Preparing nurse school for farmer in our town, increasing farmer and

dairyman caused lack of nursery school use for them, so town started to lending place in farmer's Japan preparing nursery school for farmers. It started last year and can be said to be a new initiative nationwide. We also provide loan guarantee fees and support to make the most of Shutter Town.

4. In addition to existed KPI, are there any other effective managerial indicators to measure the regional revitalization ?

What is the support system to local business by local government?

Currently, in the 6th phase of the comprehensive development plan, we are conducting a townsman questionnaire in addition to KPIs. KPIs are often biased toward self-evaluation by staff, but we confirm the gap in staff recognition by conducting a townsman questionnaire. we have questionnaire for local resident about to our town policy and apply for policy in next years, but in this year influenced corona virous problem I don't know we can do this. The 7th Comprehensive Development Strategy is expected to start next year, but it is unclear whether it can be implemented as planned due to the influence of Corona.

5. How does local government implement revitalization? indirectly or directly? (Does local government subsidize community to implement revitalization or implement revitalization by itself?)

The town subsidizes the executive steering committee for events that are familiar to the local community, such as festivals.

6. What are the measures/policies to attract new immigrants and to keep the current residents?

The good thing about Nakashibetsu is that it is easy to live in!!! Shops, businesses, clinical trials, academic fields and company branches are concentrated in Nakashibetsu Town. The consumption population of Nakashibetsu Town is twice that of the town itself. Municipal hospitals accept patients 24 hours a day, which is unusual in Kushiro jurisdiction. The mayor's slogan is livability NO1. Trial life Some repeaters use it every year, but there are few records of actual migration. Short stay policy has not good efficient for increasing immigrant population directly so changing object and doing trial and error suitable for our town. Therefore, I give a work experience when I try to live. The target is mainly medical staff. It's not about big businesses and tourism, but about livability.

## **Interview memo Hokkaido Agency**

1. What is the core idea of regional revitalization strategy in process of policy decision?

Women are concentrated in the metropolitan area, and the population decline problem becomes remarkable because the urban area has a low birth rate.

Therefore, in the name of regional revitalization, we started to implement policies for population measures.

The Hokkaido Government also initially started policies in line with national plans and trends, but the current Second Phase Hokkaido Comprehensive Strategy is centered on making the people of Hokkaido aware of the population decline. After the 20 years Hokkaido's population decreasing one million, this is difficult for increasing birth rate and immigrant population. So focus on increasing exchange population and related population. Recognizing decreasing population and making new policy suitable for Hokkaido. The population decline to some extent is already unavoidable, and the aim is to create a community where people can continue to live even if the population declines at the same time as measures for population growth.

It mainly aims to expand the systems and relationships that keep the municipal

infrastructure alive and the exchange population.

It can be said that it is unusual for local governments to implement policies while acknowledging the negative impact of population decline.

2. What is the notice point to keep good connection between local government and resident?

Mr. Muto himself has little to do with local residents, but I think communication is important in implementing migration policies. For local residents, it is directly linked to the comfort of living, and the success or failure of migration policy depends on the local community.

We are actively holding seminars for university students. While many students go out of Hokkaido to find employment, we hold seminars to dispel the negative image of young people toward Hokkaido, saying that there are many excellent companies in Hokkaido even if they cannot beat the major companies.

3. What is the support system to local business by local government?

The secret kitchen initiative is to dispatch human resources who live in Sapporo and have roots in other areas to connect them. The Hokkaido government is

working to expand the population involved, but this year the original plan has not been implemented because of the coronavirus.

#### Community development comprehensive grant

We provide financial support to non-commercial organizations and community development with grants tailored to each region's internal circumstances and circumstances. Since it is profitable for ordinary local businesses, it does not issue grants, but it is a grant that is relatively flexible, such as providing support for public local businesses.

Our subsidy supporting to make new product the area can appeal, Mukawa town's dinosaur goods is one example.

4. In addition to existed KPI, are there any other effective managerial indicators to measure the regional revitalization ?

Numerical targets are necessary in the process of implementing policies. I feel that it is important to analyze in detail why the figures did not rise even if they did not rise, and why the measures could not be taken. Reference to questionnaire survey and statistic data for policy decision making process The results of questionnaires from the people of Hokkaido may be statistically reflected in the measures. If you think about the preset numbers of KPIs later, you may feel that they are not appropriate numbers.

5. How does local government implement revitalization? indirectly or directly? (Does local government subsidize community to implement revitalization or implement revitalization by itself?)

Most of the measures taken by the prefectural government are basically sent by the prefectural government, and consultants are often asked to go beyond that. I feel that there are some businesses that should be outsourced to consulting, but I feel that throwing them all will not be considered as my own problem. It is important to clarify what you are looking for by implementing the measures.

6. What are the measures/policies to attract new immigrants and to keep the current residents?

I am aiming for an area where I want to continue living. No one wants to leave the area they are accustomed to, so we are aiming for an area where we can continue to live without going to the city. Avoid to this problem, Hokkaido government promote to keeping public service and infrastructure cooperate with other towns (Prevent population outflow) Other Assuming that it will be difficult to maintain infrastructure due to population decline, we are preparing a project to cooperate not only with one local government but also with other regions. In terms of education, we have been conducting online classes even before the Corona situation. This is first case in We have remote lesson

before the pandemic to keep high quality education for every student. Especially, teaching technical content very useful for student and teacher too. The medical aspect is also an important item as an area where people can continue to live, and since Hokkaido has a large area, the problem of uneven distribution of doctors is remarkable, so we are making efforts to solve the problem. The shortage of successors for primary industries and SMEs is also a serious problem. There are many cases in which a family member in an urban area moves to another place because the business cannot be continued without a successor. There are businesses that solve the shortage of successors through professional human resources centers, but solving the problem itself still takes time to solve.

## **Interview memo Glocal Design**

1. What was the core of the process of deciding regional revitalization strategies and policies?

Policies to promote fertility, depopulation, and migration. We are implementing policies and initiatives to add value to the child-rearing environment, the expansion of the exchange population, and industrial and agricultural brands.

2. What is the notice point to keep good connection between local government and resident?

I go to see him many times. I go directly to the farmers for suggestions and explanations many times.

For example, at the stage of how to show the vineyards for wine to tourists at the workshop held in Urausu Town, the farmers can directly instruct the tourists to guide them. The emphasis is on getting used to it anyway.

When I am making new product, consider about inside procurement rate in town.

When town sale product they have to earn them self.

Citizens' awareness was low regarding the invitation of the Olympic Games in Sapporo, and to close the gap with the government, a place to provide opinions (about 1,500 people) was set up for civic communication.

### 3. What is the support system to local business by local government?

About the mechanism of support and cooperation for local businesses and local industries Support from the Ministry of Agriculture can be obtained for the development of agricultural products. (Subsidies, subsidies, etc.) Guidance on applications and procedures for receiving such support.

There are many kinds of subsidy in revitalization, normally small town doesn't have knowledge about to subsidy. Especially Niseko town and Shimokawa town can use subsidy very well.

National support and roads

Town planning company Tourism, branding, profitability of the organization, it takes about three years to get an agreement with the local people and execute it.

4. In looking back on the policy performance, is there any way to confirm the effect other than the result of KPI? (The evaluation on the data did not determine that it was an

effective policy, but there was a direct evaluation from the residents, etc.)

It is important to be aware that the scenery of the town has changed due to the recognition of the townspeople. If it is a small town, you'll feel that it has changed just by opening a few new shops. If farmers find it fun after they start accepting tourists, their consciousness has changed.

It is important to get used to the unusual scenery.

5. How does local government implement revitalization? indirectly or directly? (Does local government subsidize community to implement revitalization or implement revitalization by itself?)

(Example: Do you pay a subsidy for each area, or do you work directly with the residents from the planning stage?)

I will be involved from the planning stage. Or even if the project was built but there is no know-how to do it.

6. What are the measures/policies to attract new immigrants and to keep the current residents?

After going on to school, we will implement hometown education and tourism education so that we can return to the area.

Even if it is not in Tokyo because it has been proved to the public that remote work is possible in the situation of corona, a system to introduce vacant houses to move to near the airport or places with low land prices due to child-rearing and the natural environment etc. I think it is important to be able to implement it in the future.

Not only town development but also the development of each community is an important factor for population growth. A satellite office as a place to improve the environment such as having no one to talk to or leaving the house due to the implementation of remote work, and the development of the community to prevent lonely death and to promote watching over children To go.

In other things about to town revitalization (got information after asked interview questions)

- In our community area, there is one solitary death per year.
- this work style is very convenient but stay home time is longer than before. So young people need community revitalization too.

## **Yakumo Town Interview**

1. What is the core idea of regional revitalization strategy in process of policy decision?

There are agriculture, fishery and business in town. Our industry is very good balance with infrastructure, but lack of successor is serious problem to continue developing.

2. What is the notice point to keep good connection between local government and resident?

It is important to have good relationship between agriculture, fishery and business part. Understanding each other, cooperation are important too. To solve this problem, it is important more than have relationship between the local resident.

3. How does local government implement revitalization? indirectly or directly?

(Does local government subsidize community to implement revitalization or implement revitalization by itself?)

From the regional revitalization strategy, we setup new company to staffing in July. in this company, grow up new successor and educating earn money. Related to this company, it is not stand up by local government staff, it is young people centering on company. Using young people sense and pick up new successor so local government

protecting this business environment. This policy is far from old idea's revitalization, it is new style. This company is just established, so we expect their working.

4. What is the support system to local business by local government?

It can be judged that the town building activities through RIPMO and Mokuren Co, Ltd. correspond to indirect town building. The management of the Yakumo float parade executive committee is directly involved and holds familiar events in the area.

5. In addition to existed KPI, are there any other effective managerial indicators to measure the regional revitalization ?

(We only talk about PRIMO and Company of Mokuren,)

6. What are the measures/policies to attract new immigrants and to keep the current residents?

RIPMO and Mokuren Co., Ltd. are a major project to simultaneously increase the number of people moving in from other areas and prevent the outflow of residents. It is possible to lead to employment in Yakumo Town by revitalizing each industry at the same time, rather than just preparing a place of employment to secure the in-migrant population. The main measures to prevent population outflow include the enhancement of the child-rearing environment and the expansion of the related population and the exchange population. Although it is difficult to stop the outflow of population due to young people

going on to higher education, we will work to improve the attractiveness of the town and motivate them to settle down so that they can choose I / U turns after graduation or according to their lifestyle

## **Wassamu Town interview**

1. What is the core idea of regional revitalization strategy in process of policy decision?

Apply for resident's idea to policy directly in process of policy decision.

2. What is the notice point to keep good connection between local government and resident?

We have chance to hearing local resident's idea once in year, in our town has 12 community area. Local government staff visiting community area and hearing survey about to their living life in the town. These hearing contents are apply for policy to developing public service quality.

3. How does local government implement revitalization? indirectly or directly? (Does local government subsidize community to implement revitalization or implement revitalization by itself?)

Local government provide subsidies to develop communities. There are no concretely of uses decided by local government, it can use for developing communities. In sightseeing part, discussing with producer directly.

4. What is the support system to local business by local government?

Cooperate with sightseeing resource, council, local business, chamber of commerce and industry, farmer's cooperative and producer. Start supporting from set up the company process to promote own industry. Wassamu town is famous for pumpkin, it is not just commercialize, local government support to send a product for user. The method of sending, cooperate with direct sales store and event hall at department store. Trying developing new product.

5. In addition to existed KPI, are there any other effective managerial indicators to measure the regional revitalization ?

Wassamu has one council, organized by representative of agriculture, business, welfare and resident about 20 people. The good policy for local is leave if it is not good result in paper. And the good result by KPI's policy but it is not for local, that policy is changing other style. This method is based on core of policy decision.

6. What are the measures/policies to attract new immigrants and to keep the current residents?

The purpose is increasing relationship population and exchange population that increasing town's population.

To avoid solitary death, old people moved to capital city living with their family in

case. So community revitalization is also important.

In other things about to town revitalization (got information after asked interview questions)

- About to former's cram school's goal is studying how to participate agriculture and support to finance part and increasing new agriculture worker. We are preparing home to provide new worker in forest industry and providing lesson about to farming and forest industry.
- To educate international sense and grow up adaptable fighting potential, getting foreign language teacher and homestay program. Foreign language teacher is dispatch nursery school and health center. Cooperation with other area promoting international exchange with Taiwan, every year 20~30 junior high school student participating this project.

We are considering about the future in town and making new product. Hokkaido is a big brand name but it does not mean it has prepotency always. So it is a little harder to promote name of town directly.