

Impacts of traditional culture inheritance on the sustainability of village maintenance : A case study of Hitoyama Nouson Kabuki in Shodoshima

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1. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Recently, depopulation and aging in farming villages causes the shortage of successors of local industry and regional resource management, and the decline of the community function, and then it is becoming difficult to maintain various village activities so that the strategy for rural areas revitalization has been reconsidered from the planning sectors. In rural planning, implementing rural revitalization based on endemic features and unique cultural resources of the area is enhanced accordingly. Traditional cultures and customs like ritual have been focused on particularly as regional resources which can form and strengthen residents' cooperation in recent years. In this study, a traditional culture on Shodoshima Island "*Hitoyama Nouson Kabuki*" was chosen as a case study. The objectives are to clarify 1) changes in recent years and inheritance factors of *Nouson kabuki*, 2) effects of *Nouson kabuki* on the district, and 3) differences of residents' consciousness to their district by the degree of involvement in inheritance activities. In addition, the impacts of traditional culture inheritance for sustainability of village management were examined based on the results.

2. STUDY AREA AND METHODOLOGY

In Hitoyama district, Tonosho-cho, shodo-gun, Kagawa prefecture as a study area, *Nouson Kabuki* has been inherited for about 340 years from Edo period. It is hosted by Hitoyama autonomous association and given support by "Hitoyama *Nouson Kabuki* conservation committee" which assumes the core of the Kabuki performance. Preparation and operation is done by one group selected by rotation system among six groups in the district. The interview with stakeholders was conducted at June 30th to July 3rd, August 25th to 29th, and October 8th to 9th, and questionnaire for all households was conducted at middle of October.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this research, the followings were mainly clarified.

1) Inheritance factors of *Nouson Kabuki*

The rotation system has enhanced each group's sense of responsibility and pride. The conservation committee has carried out flexible organization reform according to social changes of the region, and has contributed to the formation of atmosphere that conserves the tradition by "whole region and residents".

2) The effects of *Nouson Kabuki* on the district

It was clarified that the inheritance of *Nouson Kabuki* brings the impacts that deepen interaction between residents and promotion of daily mutual aid and building a relationship of mutual trust. Moreover it was suggested that common experience of *Nouson Kabuki* would create unity in regional associations and contribute to the formation of the community awareness among residents.

3) Differences in residents' consciousness by the degree of involvement in *Nouson Kabuki*

It became clear that residents deeply involved in *Nouson Kabuki* had higher favorability in satisfaction with the living environment, strong connection with the district, been more cooperative with neighbors, pride for the district and consciousness to settle in their district. Also, it became clear that regardless of the degree of residents' involvement, they think *Nouson Kabuki* is necessary for the district.

For the future strategy of revitalization in rural areas, it is important to include conserve and utilize cultural resources based on proper evaluation of their value in rural areas.