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論文の要旨

This research focuses on local community activism in Japan after the triple meltdown at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant in March, 2011. It examines the evolution of a citizen network in the Tokatsu region, Chiba Prefecture in terms of risk management and citizen science. By combining qualitative interview analysis, participant observation, and weblog analysis, the research investigates the social relationships and identities that appeared in certain communities after the Fukushima nuclear power accident, how local activism was shaped by complex dynamics of post-Fukushima reality, and the role of the internet in this process.

Within the first introductory chapter, the author sets out the central arguments within the thesis and poses two main sets of research questions. The first set of research questions examines the process by which certain citizens of the Tokatsu region became “active participants” in creating “scientific knowledge about low-dose radiation contamination.” The second set of research questions involves the identification of the relevant actors, the extent of their associational activities, and the nature and means by which they gathered and exchanged scientific information. Within the overall case-study focus, the author’s methodological approach combines various data sources including physical document analysis, interviews, ethnographically oriented participant observation, analysis of online artifacts in the form of weblogs, and the creation of network diagrams illustrating the issue relationships and connections of these citizen groups. This introductory chapter concludes with an overview of the remaining chapters of the thesis.

The second chapter of the thesis provides details of the four main theoretical streams employed by the author to theorize the activities of lay citizens who are transforming themselves into “expert citizens.” The first theoretical principle describes the definitions and background related to political participation drawing on Putnam (2001) and Norris (2002). The author asserts that traditional forms of civic engagement are evolving and new frameworks for understanding such engagement need to be determined. Addressing a wide variety of social issues and weaving the different strains of causes and effects have led to new perspectives of knowledge production. The second main theoretical stream involves public participation in science, which has emerged as a trajectory of this transformation. The author discusses how the relationship between citizens and scientific experts evolved from a clearly delineated nature to potential collaboration and co-production. The author draws on Bang’s (2004) study on the nature of contemporary participation, in which he identifies an emerging class of “expert citizens” and “everyday makers,” the latter group in particular transcending traditional political ideological bases to highlight the transformation of their traditional roles through the process of active participation.

The third theoretical stream draws on Collins’ (2014) identification of “expertises,” arguing that a combination of these expertises involving lay citizens and scientists can be combined into “ubiquitous expertise.” “Connective action” incorporating alternative knowledge networks in the flow of scientific information discusses how the process of cooperation and collaboration between scientists and lay people gives rise to new forms of knowledge production. Finally, digital technologies, largely concentrating on the Internet, have contributed greatly to the widespread knowledge dissemination. In the context of collective action, studies involving the Internet continue to develop theoretically; how and by whom knowledge is

processed and re-produced, including the new relationships emerging through knowledge, remains an underdeveloped research area, especially comparing offline and online contexts.

The third chapter in the thesis provides a detailed discussion of the issue background. The author describes historical approaches to environmental activism in Japan and draws attention to the possibility that these experiences may be also interpreted as a gender-related distinction between traditional environmental science (described as mainly a masculine domain) and local lay knowledge (mainly a feminine domain). The author also discusses traditional family roles in Japan that delineate the roles of fathers (who work outside the home) and mothers (who stay at home and care for children), the latter being described as “professional housewives.” The formation of consumer cooperatives (seikatsu kurabu) is given as an example of women-centric networks in Japan. This background, combining traditional activism with gender-role discussions, is particularly germane to the author’s overall argument as the citizen groups involved in the case study of the Tokatsu region’s environmental activism were mainly composed of “professional housewives.” The collective transformation of these groups into expert citizens involving social and individual identity transformation is one of the main aspects discussed in this thesis.

The fourth chapter of the thesis provides extensive detail regarding the methodological approach. As noted earlier, the author combined multiple approaches for the purposes of triangulation of data and in order to undertake a holistic method to addressing the research questions (and theoretical framework), to ensure consistency and accuracy in analysis, as well as maintain objectivity. Owing to the broad methodological coverage, this lengthy chapter includes sections on the sampling methods, interviewee selection, and weblog analysis, as well as ethical considerations. The conceptual framework provided in Table 4.3 in particular guides the weblog and interview content analysis. A brief section concerning the issue analysis (network analysis) is also provided.

The results of the research are given in the fifth chapter. Using primarily documents, interview results, and weblog-based data, the author demonstrates how new ideas involving power relations, community networks, and enhanced knowledge networks were formed through the process of gathering and analyzing data. Taking personal and individual responsibility for gathering information about radiation contamination in the area and expanding that sense of responsibility to the community level were the original steps. Articulating and then sharing the data and knowledge, and the ensuing processes affecting relationships within the community itself, are then presented through interviewee and weblog analysis. The subsequently produced and co-produced knowledge was both utilized by the community and communicated to local governments and scientific experts. The range of actors involved, the nature of the data, and the dynamics of the knowledge production and co-production processes are expressed and explored in detail through the author’s description of the processes.

The final chapter (Chapter 6) summarizes the thesis by returning to the research questions. Through data collection and analysis, the author was able to suggest a combined theoretical process termed the “knowledge co-production model” (Figure 6.1) wherein the process of becoming “expert citizens” is represented as a series of steps. As a result, a new type of activists’ identity—expert citizens—has emerged. Following Takao (2016), the author defined expert citizens as groups of independent from the state, local volunteers who are, by building cooperative networks between citizens, experts and policy-makers and by extensive process of learning and data collection, were able to acquire sufficient interactional and contributory expertise in order to pragmatically deal with scientific controversies and related policy problems thus becoming a new channel of environmental governance. Consequently, by exploring the notions of scientific credibility and expertise, this research claims that contemporary public participation in risk-related issues should be theorized in categories of co-production rather than participation. Furthermore, this research suggests that in contemporary society where information and knowledge can be easily obtained lay people have to be treated as knowledgeable actors that have the capacity to shift scientific paradigms and enact social changes by formulating new initiatives and creating new knowledge along with lawmakers and scientific experts. In this sense, this thesis contributes to understand the process of knowledge production not only in terms of the actual knowledge produced, but how it is used, who uses it, and how it can possibly transform relationships.

審査の要旨

1 批評

Using a case-study approach, the author of this doctoral thesis explores how certain residents of the Tokatsu region in Japan transformed themselves into a group of expert citizens in response to potential environmental risks and damage in the 2011 nuclear incident at the Fukushima Dai’ichi nuclear power plant. The author makes two main arguments. First, the author asserts that current definitions of civic participation and engagement are contentious owing to the contemporary nature of civic participation that incorporates potential avenues for civic participation, the means that citizens employ to undertake such participation, and the range of related actors. In particular, the author suggests that traditional definitions do not address the possibilities of “co-production” in terms of the relationships that citizens may have with other relevant actors. Second, the author proposes that analyzing the direct and indirect artifacts of a community’s communication

activities, including traditional forms of participation through meetings and discussion as well as online artifacts in the form of weblogs, demonstrates a new approach to examining how communities face and engage with risk and scientific uncertainty.

In terms of overall evaluation, this thesis has certain merits and demerits in the following areas. The first area is the logical flow of the thesis itself. The theoretical streams that are utilized in this thesis are broad and quite encompassing. The author should be commended on her acumen in identifying the relevant theoretical arguments and undertaking the analysis and application of such theoretical streams. However, at certain points in the thesis, the theoretical approaches, including that of the methodology, seem somewhat disjoint. For example, the author presents multiple theoretical discussions and enhances these discussions with diagrams (i.e., Figures 1.2 and 6.1) and tables (i.e., Tables 2.2 and 2.3). However, the thesis seems to lack an over-arching “grand” theoretical basis that summarizes all the theoretical points. This is to be expected somewhat in a major study that incorporates multiple theoretical dimensions, however, it is advised that the author continue to refine the theoretical arguments presented herein with the goal of formulating a single theoretical construct that can be used for future studies.

The second area is that of depth. Related to the above, certain topics within this thesis deserve fuller discussion and treatment. From a background point of view, as part of the methodological approach, the choice of case study area (the Tokatsu region) should be further elaborated. This is one area that may prove to be an important trajectory for further research, particularly in terms of applying the author’s current theoretical approach to other communities as case studies. The current thesis provides some rationale for the case of the Tokatsu region, but in order for this study to advance, deeper and broader explanations of the case study choice (including background) are necessary. From the current theoretical and methodological basis that the author has devised, this study could be replicated further in other communities, and by using a comparative approach, further theoretical insights may possibly be gained. Such further comparisons may also enhance the social-scientific objectivity that is critical to maintain in researching social-science phenomena.

Related to this, the triangularized methodological approach encompassing ethnographic study (interviews and participant observation), document analysis, and Internet-related artifacts (including Internet artifact analysis and network analysis) could be applied to other communities. In particular, the online environment, how it is constructed and how it interacts with the offline world, is one area for future exploration. Finally, the topic of gender roles and how these roles are perceived and experienced generally in Japanese society and on the community level, and the eventual evolution of such roles, is a tantalizing topic that the author should be encouraged to explore in more detail. In general, the author should be commended for attention to theoretical, methodological, and ethical considerations.

The third area of potential improvement is that of process changes. The author has provided a great deal of detail and analysis of the process of Tokatsu citizens becoming expert citizens over the course of their active years in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake in March 2011. The author has analyzed their evolution effectively in terms of social and individual changes, documenting the transformation from residents of a certain area into a coalesced proactive community. Yet this transformation in turn begs the question as to whether their perceptions, opinions, and identities as community residents similarly evolved either simultaneously with their social and individual transformation or as a result thereof. Horizontal relationships as well as relationships with various governmental authorities and institutions could be explored in future expanded studies, possibly in a comparative approach with other communities.

Finally, the fourth area where this thesis could be improved lies in its overall presentation. While the conclusion attempts to coalesce the theoretical streams that the author presents, here again, a more comprehensive theoretical framework could have been articulated. While not related directly to the content of the thesis, there are numerous grammatical errors throughout the thesis which possibly could have been rectified with more attention in the final production stages.

In conclusion, this thesis is an original work that makes both theoretical and methodological contributions to social-science research in general and sociological studies in particular. In this evaluator’s opinion, this doctoral thesis satisfies the requirements of Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Tsukuba, Japan.

2 最終試験

The final examination committee conducted a final examination on February 1, 2018. The applicant provided an overview of the dissertation, and addressed questions and comments raised during the Question-and-Answer session. All committee members reached a final decision that the applicant passed the final examination.

3 結論

Therefore, the final examination committee approved that the applicant is qualified to be awarded a Doctor of Philosophy in International and Advanced Japanese Studies.