

The Sustainability and Relationship among the Community Organizations in the case study of Hanno Ecotourism

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ABSTRACT

Different from mass-tour, ecotour claims for the balance of economic development and environment conservation, which attracted plenty of countries and areas to promote it. Since ecotour emphasize the protection of local nature and the participation of local residents, the local community is playing an important role in the whole ecotourism system. So in order to find out what factors make the ecotourism system sustains and how the system relates to community, local community organizations' participative procedures and framework should be made clear. As a connection of ecotour and community, it is also required to assess the effects of community organizations so to measure the influence to community form ecotourism system. In this study, community organizations in the ecotourism system are taken as the main research object, reviewing their characteristic features in the system by analyzing their succession through literature research, and doing a interview to public servants so the relationship among community organizations and the role they playing in the whole ecotourism system can be clarified.

1. INTRODUCTION

Ecotour is a type of tourism came up with the background of environmental pollution and destroyed by mass tour in 1980s and the concept was widespread in 1990s. It means responsible travel to natural areas conserving the environment and improving the well-being of the local people (The International Ecotourism Society). Japan began the experiment to ecotourism in 1991, then used the chance of Shirakami Sanchi and Yakushima nominated as world heritage in 1993 as a new beginning, some tourism operators started ecotour at national parks and some natural areas. In 2004, Japan government expanded the ecotour's area form natural area to cultural and historic areas, launched the project of Ecotourism Promotions during 2004 to 2006, and selected 13 areas as the model areas.

Hanno City in Saitama pref. was selected as one of the model areas in this project and it is the only area still operates on the same ecotourism system after the project, sustained for 14 years till now. However, it is common that ecotourism department be merged by other department and ecotour career be incorporated by other careers at other model areas. Thus, sustainability is a big characteristic of Hanno ecotourism. In the previous research, most are discussing about the Hanno's ecotourism's construction and how it works, but barely focus on the core of this system, ecotour guides, who work as a number of community organizations or individual at Hanno. Most of these ecotour guides are retired persons and work as voluntary. To find out why the Hanno's ecotourism system can continue this long and how the system related to community, It is important to make clear how the organizations sustained and their relationship.

2. METHOD

To look into the reasons of Hanno ecotourism's continue, there will be a longitudinal comparison of Hanno ecotourism system's framework and community organizations' change during 2004 to 2016. Also, a lateral comparison among every organizations will be done by literature research. Then by interviewing the public servants in Hanno Tourism/Ecotourism Promotion Section, the relationship between guide system and ecotourism system will be clarified, and the evaluation of this system will be discussed.

2.1 Sample Preparation

The research methods divided to literature research and interview. Literature research is based on the paper of Hanno Ecotourism Development Report from 2004 to 2016. The report is made by Hanno Ecotourism Promotion Section and submit to Hanno government every year. It records every ecotours' name, organizer, date which was held in that year, also records the tourists' thoughts of the tour, the details about Ecotourism Promotion Conference and so on. According to the report, we extracted the information about every tour's title, date and organizer, list them in chronological order as original data.

As for interview, based on previous research of Hanno ecotourism's construction, we chose Hanno Tourism/Ecotourism Promotion Section's public servant as our target, because they are in charge of the whole system's advance and have a compact connection with community organizations by accompany the ecotours.

2.2 Experimental Procedure

As we mentioned, after extracted the information we needed at Hanno Ecotourism Development Report from 2004 to 2016, we arranged the times of ecotours every organizer held every year, so can analyse community organization continued situation.

Table 1. Organizations' every year's ecotour held situation(part)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
NPO法人名乗カズ 一工房	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	12
お散歩マーケット 実行委員会&推進 協議会	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	12
NPO天竜山・多賀 主山の自然を守る 会	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	11
白子五人衆 中沢を楽しもう会	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	11
市野彰俊	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	11

The row of form1 are years and column are community organizations' name, form with color means the organization held ecotours that year, and form without color means it didn't hold an ecotour that year. And the last raw is the total years organization activated at ecotour. Form this form, organizations' active and sustained years can be known. In addition, we classified every years' ecotours to new ecotour, sustained ecotour and stopped ecotour by title, so to observe every year's ecotours' sustained situation. Thus, to compare organizations' and ecotours' continuity and change in years. To do the lateral comparison, we divided community organizations to 4 groups by their sustained years, ①1~3 years continued, ②4~6 years continued, ③7~9 years continued and ④10~12 years continued, then counted the times of ecotours corresponding to every group. Then compare every groups at sustained years and ecotours' rate, to find out community organizations' and the whole system's characteristic.

The purpose of interview is making clear the connection among every organizations and government's effect in this system. The interview contains 2 parts, about ecotourism system

and about community organizations, about the ecotourism system is most of the government's thoughts about the system, the effects they feel from the system and their expectation to this system, and about community organization is most of how the organizations connect to each other and how the guide system works.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A) Hanno Ecotourism System and Ecotour Guide System

The system of ecotourism in Hanno includes Tourism/Ecotourism Promotion Section, Ecotourism Promotion Conference, and Community Organizations three parties (Figure 1), and the government train the community organizers to ecotour guides. (Order ③)

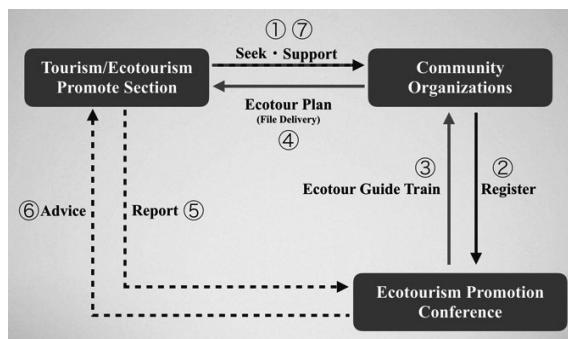


Figure 1. Hanno Ecotourism System

B) Sustainability of Community Organizations and Ecotourism System

According to the statistics, there are 92 community organizations held 1109 times ecotours, and the number of organizations and ecotours is an upward trend in 13 years. Based on the calculate about every year's new joined, continued and stopped organizations, we know average 7 organizations are new joined in the system every year, average 23 organizations continued from last year, and average 5 organizations stopped holding ecotours every year.

By dividing the organizations to 4 groups, ①1~3 years continued, ②4~6 years continued, ③7~9 years continued and ④10~12 years continued, there are 10 community organizations sustained more than 10 years, though 50 organizations continued less than 3 years. And the 10 organizations which sustained more than 10 years held 481 times ecotours, occupied 43% of all ecotours. Especially one organization named Citizen Guide Council, held 286 times ecotours in 12years, held about 1/3 ecotours of all. Otherwise, the communication among organizations was not be seen according to the interview.

C) Ecotourism System and Community

Tourism/Ecotourism Promotion Section is taking a big part in the Hanno ecotourism system, so we did the interview to master their expectation to the system and their evaluation about the ecotourism.

Table 2 shows the major questions we asked, it is aware that this system is expected to revitalize tourism in Hanno and regional activation, however, the effects about the system is not distinct through data, and guides' aging problem is grave. Therefore, to make clear the connection between the system and community, a questionnaire to community organization is considered.

Table 2. Interview sheet

Tourism/Ecotourism Promotion Section	
Work at the section	Ecotourism's adjustment ; Seek for the tourism resource and guide; advertisement
Tourism before ecotourism in Hanno	Tourism be arranged because the promote of ecotourism
Expectation to the system	Let more person know about the ecotourism, and develop Hanno's tourism, then achieve regional activation, increase resident
Effects about the system	Hardly see by number data, yet the residents who know ecotourism are increase, and the communication of residents are increase
Issues about the system	Guides' aging problem
Improvement measure	Increase new community organizations

4. CONCLUSIONS

By literature research of organizations' sustained situation, we considered that the Hanno ecotourism system is sustaining through a few organizations' continuance and most organizations' replacement. Through the interview, to sustain this system should solve the problem of guides' aging first, meanwhile, Hanno's ecotourism was regard as the method of regional revitalization, it's effect on community's connection can be expected.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank the following for their contribution to this report:

The authors would like to thank all of the staff members, managers and commissioners at the study site Hanno, who gave valuable time effort and support for the project, particular thanks public servants working at Tourism/Ecotourism Promotion Section, provided the literature research's report and approved interview.

We also express our sincere thanks to Dr Hiromu Ito for the advices of the interview contents and everyone in seminar who gave us advices and ideas about this report.

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