

Summary

● Opening Article

A salt reduction initiative, without compromising taste for a healthier and sustainable society
“Let's eat tasty, enjoyable, and healthy diets!”

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Salt reduction is a vital nutritional step for good health and longevity. The world is striving to achieve the World Health Organization target of 30% salt reduction by 2025, but no country has achieved it yet. There is an urgent need to promote a food environment where people can eat delicious, enjoyable, and healthy diets with reduced sodium effortlessly. In this report, we present an initiative for salt reduction without compromising taste, based on two of our research findings. First, we focused on soups to assess the effect of umami substances on the saltiness and palatability of low-salt solutions and investigate the preferred salt concentration in soups for the purpose of salt reduction. Laboratory-level experiments and a randomized blinded study conducted in multiple locations in Japan (n=651) found that low-concentration salt solutions enhanced saltiness and palatability with an optimum amount of umami substances. Additionally, 0.3% sodium chloride with 0.3% monosodium glutamate was validated as the most preferred concentration of salt in soups. These findings suggest that using the right amount of umami seasoning can reduce excessive salt intake. Second, we aimed to verify the feasibility of interventions using the new low-sodium, high-potassium foods in free-living settings and to evaluate their effects on blood pressure. The study participants (n=187) were randomly allocated to an intervention group (n=93) and a control group (n=94). They consumed a boxed lunch and miso soup for their weekday lunch every day for 6 weeks in a double-blinded manner. Compliance between the groups was found to be similar, suggesting successful blinding. The low-sodium, high-potassium lunch consumption was found to promote urinary excretion of sodium and reduce the increase in systolic blood pressure. In conclusion, the combination of umami substances with the new low-sodium, high-potassium foods may prove to be an effective strategy for improving the food environment and promoting a healthier and sustainable society.

Keywords: salt reduction, Umami, food environment improvement, sodium, potassium, blood pressure, hypertension, double-blind, randomized controlled trial, free-living settings

● Research Report

Challenges and Prospects concerning Exhibition Facilities for “Traditional Crafts of Fukuoka and Hakata”
-Consideration using Designated Manager Administration Evaluation Sheet and Consumer Attitudes Survey-

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This paper focuses on the Hakata Traditional Craft and Design Museum, the Hakata Machiya Furusatokan and the Takumi Gallery in ACROS Fukuoka as public exhibition facilities that exhibit and sell traditional crafts in Fukuoka City. Each facility conducts various activities as a base for disseminating traditional crafts. In particular, the author grasped the current situation by comparing the operational status of these facilities with that of the Kumamoto Prefectural Traditional Crafts Center and the Kumamoto Handicrafts Promotion Center in Kumamoto City. In addition, the results of awareness surveys of citizens and nationwide consumers suggested that there is room for public facilities to respond to various consumer needs. Based on these analyses, the author proposed measures to increase awareness and visitor numbers of public facilities that exhibit and sell traditional crafts of Fukuoka and Hakata. Conducting questionnaires that citizens and tourists can easily answer may not only lead to the improvement of the administration evaluation sheet, but also be an effective means of understanding the current state of consumer needs. There is a possibility that it can also be reflected in the formulation of efficient placement of public facilities.

Keywords: Traditional Crafts of Fukuoka and Hakata, Designated Manager, Administration Evaluation Sheet, Consumer Attitudes Survey

Changes of Talent Attraction Policies in Shenzhen
and Their Implications to Japan's Major Cities

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The sustainable development of a city needs its total factor productivity (TFP) to keep rising, in which the contribution of creative talents is indispensable. In recent years, the competition for talents among major cities in various countries has become increasingly fierce. As the fastest growing city in China, one of the main reasons of Shenzhen's 40 years of strong growth lies in its talent attraction policy, which always goes compatible with the city's development strategy and industrial structure transformation. There are many introductions about the general characteristics of Shenzhen's talent policies in different periods in the existing literature, but there is a lack of systematic investigation on various aspects of these talent policies and analysis on the reasons for their changes. This paper analyzes the changing characteristics of Shenzhen's talent policies from four aspects: types of target talents, institutional support system, preferential measures to the talents, and preferential measures to stimulate output. It also discusses the reasons of policy changes in Shenzhen from the perspectives of push-pull theory of migration, industrial development law, urban development law, and Hierarchy of Needs theory. The analysis results of this study can shed light on talent policies of major cities in Japan, including Fukuoka.

Keywords: Talent Attraction Policy, Changes, Reasons, Shenzhen

'Social Upheaval'
The Impact of COVID-19 on Statistics and the 'New Normal' Today

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The report summarizes how the attitudes and behaviors of Fukuoka City residents have changed due to the expansion of COVID-19 infection after 2020, focusing on statistical data, and examines the social fluctuations and the current state of the "new normal" in Fukuoka City. As a result, the level of impact seen in the statistics was at its maximum when the first declaration of a state of emergency was issued in 2020, and the impact has not been proportional to the increase in the number of infected people since then. On the other hand, many statistics have not fully returned to 2019 levels, and the number of public transportation users remains at 70% of the 2019 level. As the consciousness and behavior of consumers indicated by these statistical data, shopping behavior tended to be more selective in purchasing products and services. In terms of eating and drinking behavior, there is a noticeable trend to refrain from eating out, especially drinking, but there are signs of recovery in 2022. In terms of working style, the case of remote working increased rapidly in 2020, but the momentum has declined since then and will remain at a certain level. Fukuoka citizens are more satisfied with their lives than they were before the coronavirus pandemic, perhaps because they have turned their attention to the fulfillment of their lives, such as by becoming more family-oriented. This trend is consistent with the advent of a society that emphasizes well-being, and gives us a glimpse of the new normal of the image of consumers.

Keywords: COVID-19, Pandemic, State of Emergency Declaration, Statistical Data, Civilian Life, "New Normal"

There is a growing movement to apply well-being as a new indicator for cities. However, little progress has been made in examining the political process and the effects of measures to deploy well-being as policy indicators. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to help develop a policy framework for well-being by organizing related research. As a result, 1) the concept or compass of well-being, 2) the measurement and understanding of well-being situation, 3) the determinants of well-being, and 4) the effects of well-being are shown to be the key research fields of well-being. Of these, the first three fields are considered as a cyclical series of processes for policy development. Measurements are needed in both steps 2) and 3). At the second step, it measures the subjective well-being of citizens, and at the third step, it measures the implementation status of policies, such as the progress of policies. Through this, the framework will allow us to confirm whether the implementation of the policy is effective to the expected fields of well-being. However, it is also necessary to take into consideration the fact that there will be a time gap between the implementation of measures and their effects being apparent.

Keywords: Subjective well-being, city index, application of well-being to public policy, flourishing

Fukuoka City Citizen Attitude Survey and Well-Being Index

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This research note compares two citizens' awareness surveys that have been conducted by Fukuoka City, "Survey of Attitudes toward City Administration" and "Survey of Attitudes toward the Performance Indicators of the Fukuoka City Master Plan," with reference to existing urban well-being indices (happiness indices), to identify items and elements necessary for understanding the subjective well-being of citizens. As a result of the comparison, it became clear that it is necessary to consider the following two points: 1) setting indicators and questions according to the underlying urban vision and basic policies, and 2) understanding residents' well-being as a set of values and current conditions. On top of this, it is necessary to consider well-being indicators while incorporating new perspectives such as "comfort and excitement," "fulfillment," and "altruism," as well as considering personal, emotional, and specific questions in order to respond to a diverse society and diverse values.

Keywords: Well-being, Happiness, Subjective Well-being, Subjective Satisfaction, Attitude Survey, Regional Policy, Gross Arakawa Happiness, Aggregate Kumamoto Happiness, Liveable Well-Being City Index, World Happiness Report, Canadian Index of Wellbeing

Learning From “Yanesen” How to Create a Local Brand
-The Possibility of Re-Recognizing the Attractiveness of the Region Through Local Media Production-

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The term "Yanesen," a popular sightseeing area in Tokyo, originated from the local media magazine "Yanaka, Nezu, Sendagi," which was first published by community residents in 1984, and later established a local brand that attracted people's attention. On the other hand, in Fukuoka City, although the number of tourists is on the increase, citizens have a negative perception that there are no outstanding tourist attractions in the city, and there have been no cases of tourism areas being developed out of attachment to specific areas of the city. The factors that led to the formation of the "Yanesen" regional brand were 1) people, 2) content, 3) mass media and tourism, and 4) community involvement. Therefore, a possible clue for creating a regional brand would be for 1) members of the community, 2) along with a variety of community activities, 3) to deliver the content that readers can relate to.

Keywords: Yanesen, local magazine Yanaka, Nezu, Sendagi, local brand, regional branding, charming town, town development, local media, regional media, community movements

A Study on the Resistance of Companies and Cities to Change
-Reflecting on the URC City Seminar “How to create a resilient company”-

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In August 2022, City Seminar was held by the Fukuoka Asian Urban Research Center (URC) in conjunction with the 2021 URC Research Report on the theme of "Resilience of the Local Economy". The seminar aimed to develop further discussions with managers of SMEs and start-ups, as well as experts who support corporate management. The purpose of this paper is to summarize the lectures and panel discussions held by the speakers, and to present further suggestions for building resilience in local economies. As a result, the following three points were extracted as keywords: "internal communication," "employee engagement," and "sharing of local resources". These were found as important for "local economy resilience," in which companies face changes and grow further by taking advantage of those changes.

Keywords: SMEs, organizational resilience, internal communication, employee engagement, sharing of local resources