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Japan Study as a Public Good in Asia



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Preface

The economic and social situation of Asian countries has advanced dramatically in recent years. Collectively, we are now facing similar challenges. In Japan and many other Asian countries and regions, declining birthrate and aging, rapid technological innovation and related society changes, and the creation of a robust society against natural disasters are big issues for us.

Researchers of Asia and Japan are now paying attention to the common problems confronting Asia. We believe that research collaboration can contribute to solving these issues, and we will also be approaching them from similar cultural backgrounds. We will acquire new perspectives and knowledge by focusing on common problems and issues in Asia. Those perspectives and knowledge will lead us to a new path for problem solving in the future.

For example, with regard to the declining birthrate problem, in the case of South Korea, the world's lowest total fertility rate of 1.08 births per woman was recorded in 2005. In 2006, the "Basic Plan for Low Birth Aging Society" by Korean government was issued as a policy against the declining birthrate.

The Japanese Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare announced that the total fertility rate of Japan in 2016 was 1.44. According to the "White paper on aged society in Japan 2016," the proportion of the elderly population aged 65 years or older in Japan was 27.3%. On the other hand, according to the "United Nations World Population Estimation (2015 revised edition)," the aging rate for people aged 65 and older is rapidly increasing from and will surpass China in 2025; by 2025, it is estimated that the number of elderly people in Japan will exceed 200 million people.

The aim of this book is to describe and clarify how these problems can be resolved in Japan and Asia. For the future, we should focus on Japan because Japan has entered into the realm of a "super aging society," Through Japan's example, it will be possible to provide "common knowledge" as a public good. This book collects research results on declining birthrate and aging, rapid technological innovation and society changes, and recovery from natural disasters from researchers in Japan, China, South Korea, Singapore, and Indonesia.

Chapter 1 covers the Japanese social welfare system reform and the transformation of social governance. Chapter 2 addresses decreasing birthrate and national security.

Chapters 3 through 5 discuss three aspects of the impact of modern technology on Japanese society. Chapter 3 examines the impact of computing, Internet, and information technology (IT) on Japanese studies in the last three decades. Chapter 4 examines how Japanese society, which is at the cutting edge of science and technology, has been dealing with disadvantages and social problems. Chapter 5 explores the relationships of Chinese living in Japan with Japanese society through an examination of the life histories of some new overseas Chinese.

Chapter 6 is an essay on the relationship between people with disability and disaster. Chapter 7 provides the research results on the recovery from earthquake disasters in east Japan to explore the role of advertising on market confidence recovery.

Through reading this book, you will understand why it is increasingly necessary to capture Japanese studies in Asia as a public good. Also, you will recognize the multidisciplinary nature of the chapters and how this allows the volume to make a particularly unique contribution to the study of Japan. We believe that sharing of “knowledge” as a public good is of great help in solving problems for the future.

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