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Abstract PAPER Submission Form

Submission Deadline: **11 February 2019**

You will receive a confirmation upon receipt of your submission.

Title:

Investigation of volunteer recruitment for environmental activities and use of ICT for it

Keywords (5 keywords maximum)

Citizen groups, volunteer, ICT, social survey, interview

Related Conference Theme:

Partnerships and Collaborations, Digitization and Civil Society

Abstract (between 500 and 800 words in length, excluding bibliography)

1. Introduction

In regional environmental activities, cooperation of volunteers is the key to successful activities (Mori et al, 2008). From this point of view, we are developing an information system named BORAICHI, a matching site of volunteers and organizations which need volunteers. For supporting the development, an investigation of the current situation of recruiting volunteers and utilization of ICT for activities done by citizen groups was done. The target population of the investigation were citizen groups working in Iruma City Citizens Activity Center (IRUMIN) in Iruma City, Saitama Prefecture, Japan, which are considered as the potential users of the system.

2. Method

The investigation was conducted in two stages: a questionnaire survey and interviews. The questionnaire survey was conducted for 91 organizations in Iruma city using IRUMIN. The investigation period was from June 5 to July 22, 2017. The contents of the activity, the status of recruitment of members and volunteers, their ICT use, etc. were questioned. Based on the results of the questionnaire survey, six interviews were held on December 5 and 10, 2017.

3. Result

The results of the questionnaire survey (n=40, response rate = 44%) were as follows. Firstly, ICT was not their mainstream of recruitment of members and volunteers, whereas word of mouth has mainly used. Secondly, as for the question about the information posted on their Web sites and blogs, there were many responses such as volunteer recruitment following introduction of the organizations, activities and event information. In addition, as for the question as to how to manage information on recruited members and volunteers, management using ICT was almost half.

From the interview survey, there were considerable differences among the groups regarding positions of volunteers in their activities and the use of ICT. For example, the groups which activities require special knowledge and skills, e.g., fish biology and emergency life-saving techniques, were not recruiting volunteers. On the other hand, volunteers were active in the social welfare council activities and environmental fairs. Also, while there are organizations that are using new tools such as LINE, messenger, Google Drive, etc., the organizations in which most members are elderly were negative to use ICT. In addition, there were many positive evaluations in the idea of the matching site of volunteers and organizations which need volunteers. At the same time, issues related to the matching site, such as the size of the area to be dealt with by the site, operational cost of the site, and who are suitable as the manager, were pointed out.

4. Summary

The current situation of recruiting volunteers and utilization of ICT for activities done by citizen groups were investigated. As a result, the citizen groups were positive in the idea of the matching site. On the other hand, issues related to the matching site, such as the size of the area to be dealt with by the site, the operational cost, and who are suitable as the manager, were found. Utilization of ICT and volunteers showed differences in groups. A half of them have not been able to utilize ICT for member management and volunteer management as well. It is necessary to segment the volunteer activities and citizen groups, and to determine the scope of application of the matching site.

Bibliography

Yasuhumi MORI, Kenzo MORI, Hiromasa INUDUKA, Yasunobu MAEDA, Toshihisa ASANO and Syougo SUGIURA (2008) Determinants of Volunteering based on a Theory of Volunteer Opportunity, *Environmental Science*, 21(5), pp.391–402.