

A Comparison between Flea Markets and Traditional Open-air Markets

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A Comparison between Flea Markets and Traditional Open-air Markets

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Kanazawa University

Principal Investigator

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Open-air market / flea market / social class / non-economic charm / Toyama / Wajima / Niigata / customer-vendor network

Research Abstract

I have compared three kinds of open-air markets, a periodical street market in Niigata City, a morning street market for residents and tourists in Wajima City and an open-air flea market in Toyama City. What follows is main findings :

I.Major determinants of rise and fall of open-air markets

1. Unique commodities which are not available at any other stores

The prosperity of an open-air market depends on whether it has original commodities which are not available at any other stores, especially supermarkets. Open-air markets in Japan are very vulnerable to competition with supermarkets.

2. Non-economic charm unique in open-air markets.

Face-to-face contacts between vendors and regular customers, the experience of temporally becoming vendors, and thrills of negotiating for prices are charm experienced just at open-air markets. Open-air market which provide these non-economic pleasures have a chance of success.

3 The types of market management

(1) municipal authorities' control (2) vendors' autonomy (3) volunteers' committee independent of municipal authorities and vendors

The vitality of markets is often restrained by municipal control. Vendors' autonomy has a tendency to maintain their markets unchanged, because vendors have vested interests in the market. Volunteers' committee is the most eager to create a new type of markets. One of the problems is that a committee is unlikely to ensure economic resources and keep participants' motivation for a long time.

II. Open-air markets and social class

The results of multiple regression analysis of Wajima research data show that customer frequency to go to a morning market is positively correlated with the number of acquainted vendors and is inversely correlated with customers' social class, one's educational career and job prestige. Open-air markets seem to have a kind of affinity for relatively lower class people.

Research Products (3 results)

All Other

All Publications (3 results)

[Publications] 溝部 明男: "北陸におけるフリーマーケットの動向" 金沢大学文学部論集行動科学科篇. 第15号. 31-64 (1995)



[Publications] 溝部 明男: "富山市「青空蚕の市」のこと" 金沢大学附属図書館報 こだま. 121号. 5-7 (1996)



[Publications] Akio MIZOBE: "The Present Situation of Flea Markets in Hokuriku Area" STUDIES AND ESSAYS. No.15. 31-64 (1995)



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