

Characteristics of Regional Issues in Local Municipalities of Japan in Consideration of Socio-Economic Condition

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Abstract : We are facing serious problems related to a long-term depopulation and an aging society with a falling birth rate in Japan. In this situation, we are suffering from a shortfall in human resources as well as a shortage of workforce in rural regions. In addition, we are struggling with a protracted economic slump and excess concentration of population in the Tokyo Metropolitan area. It is an urgent national issue to consider how to live in this country and what kind of structure of society and administration policy is needed. It is necessary to clarify people's desire for their way of living and social assistance to be provided. The aim of this study is to clarify the characteristics of regional issues and the degree of their seriousness in local municipalities of Japan. We conducted a questionnaire survey about regional agenda in all local municipalities in Japan. We obtained responses concerning the degree of seriousness of regional issues and degree of importance of policies. Based on the data gathered from the survey, it is apparent that many local municipalities are facing an aging population and declining population. We constructed a model to analyze factors for declining population. Using the model, it was clarified that a population's age structure, job opportunities, and income level affect the decline of population. In addition, we showed the way of the evaluation of the state of a local municipality.

Keywords : evaluation, local municipality, regional analysis, regional issue

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