

論文の内容の要旨

論文題目 STUDY ON THE FEASIBILITY OF IMPLEMENTING BASIC INCOME (BI) IN
ASIAN RURAL CONTEXT: CASE STUDIES OF CHINA AND JAPAN

(アジア農村部におけるベーシックインカムの実施可能性に関する研究
－中国と日本を例として－)

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Rural areas in Asian countries such as China and Japan are challenged by population decline. Sustaining the function of rural areas requires a certain amount of rural population. In accompany with the visions in a sustainable rural society where people are expected to live, an appropriate rural social system provided by the government is essential to keep an appropriate amount of population in rural areas.

The key originality of this research is to link basic income (BI), which is defined as a periodic cash payment unconditionally delivered to all on an individual basis without means-test or work requirement, to holistic approaches toward the development of sustainable rural society. Based on the concerns on BI as an approach to the future social transformation in the human society, the overarching motivation of this research is that BI may contribute to keeping an appropriate amount of rural population in China and Japan by reshaping the meaning of work, employment and lifestyle, the structure of the local economy and social security system in the rural context. Whether BI could be feasibly implemented is thus a key question for any discussion promoting BI into policy and economic agenda, and it should be investigated corresponding to the governance system and the social-economic status. So far there is a lack of studies touching upon the question above.

This research aims to investigate the feasibility of implementing BI in the rural context, taking China and Japan as two case studies. Three research objectives are formulated as follows: 1) to calculate the cost of implementing BI in rural context at the municipal level, 2) to investigate the attitudes of key stakeholders involved in the policymaking process toward BI in the rural context and 3) to provide strategies on enhancing the feasibility of BI in the rural context of China and Japan corresponding to the opportunities and challenges embedded in the governance system and the social-economic status of the two countries respectively.

An intensive literature review on BI theories including the BI definition and potential impacts of BI on the human society and 15 selected BI empirical cases around the world was conducted in Chapter 2.

Chapter 3 estimated the cost of implementing BI in the rural context of China and Japan at the municipal level, taking rural Ganzhou and Sado as two case studies. Secondary data about the public finance of local government in rural Ganzhou and Sado were used for the cost estimation. Taking the adjustment on existing policies into consideration, it was estimated that the implementation of BI at present would annually cost 1.2 billion USD to 1.6 billion USD in rural Ganzhou. Meanwhile, the annual cost of implementing BI in Sado was estimated at from 231.0 million USD to 294.4 million USD. The result implies that if BI was currently implemented in rural Ganzhou or Sado, a huge financial deficit would be created, which largely increases the public finance expenditure of the local government immediately. BI is argued not affordable merely based on the current capacity of local public finance in rural Ganzhou and Sado.

Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 aim to address the objective 2. Chapter 4 quantitatively investigated the public attitudes toward

the implementation of BI and the factors influencing their attitudes in the context of rural Japan, taking the Hokuriku region as a case study. An online survey was conducted among 1,028 local residents in August 2019. Through cross-tabulation analysis and chi-square test, it is found that from the perspective of self-interest, the attitudes toward BI varied among the surveyed respondents with different age and income, family structure, interest in participating in non-market activities and employment status, due to concerns about the gains and loss from a trade-off selection between BI and existing policies it would replace. From the perspective of individual value, the public attitudes toward BI are significantly influenced by the perception on the future vision of society created by BI. The findings about the factors influencing the public attitudes toward BI identified in the chapter were used in the discussion on the feasibility of three scenarios proposed in Chapter 3 for the case of Sado. It is argued that compared with the other two scenarios, the scenario 3 (SS3) giving all adult residents between 20 to 64 years old a full BI is relatively more feasible to be implemented, due to a comprehensive consideration of the estimated cost of BI and public attitudes in Sado toward this policy.

Chapter 5 investigated the attitudes of the local government in the rural context of China through qualitative approaches. Taking rural Ganzhou as an example, 4 interviews and 3 group discussions on officials of the local government of Ganzhou at different levels and a member of the Ganzhou political consultative conference were conducted during September 2019. The result from discourse analysis shows that the local government of Ganzhou considered that BI would potentially bring both positive and negative impacts on rural Ganzhou from the social, economic, and political perspectives. The general attitudes of the local government toward BI at present is interpreted not positive due to several constraints including the risk on the stability of rural society, controversial impacts on the rural economy, radical attributes of BI, limited financing capacity as well as limitation to initiate policy reform without authorization from the superior government. Key points for addressing the constraints above were proposed correspondingly.

Based on the findings from the previous chapters, Chapter 6 overall discusses the opportunities, challenges, and strategies on enhancing the feasibility of implementing BI in the rural context of China and Japan. BI and the existing national rural policy frameworks in each of the two countries is argued reciprocally interlinked with each other, which provides grounds for practically promoting the debates on the implementation of BI into policy agenda. However, limited public financial resources of local government and features of the policymaking process determine that BI is difficult to be initiated from the grassroots as a local policy in the rural context of China or Japan. Correspondingly, a top-down approach from the national level is anticipated as a strategy to enhance the implementation of BI in the rural context. Furthermore, strengthening the development of local economy and industries and diversifying fundraising methods are essential to secure the financial source on BI. Finally, modification and innovation on the approach of BI are also required in the practices which further expand the current BI definition. In this chapter, it is argued that compared with the democratic governance system, the communist governance system is more feasible to implement the above rural social system. Moreover, different proposals of BI are recommended for the rural context of China and Japan respectively, according to the differences in the governance system and the social-economic status in the two countries. Chapter 7 summarizes and concludes the entire thesis.