

**ADAPTATION PROCESS OF JAPANESE CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS
(CSOs) WORKING FOR COMMUNITY WELFARE UNDER COVID-19
PANDEMIC:
THE CASE OF MITAKA CITY AND AOBA WARD, YOKOHAMA CITY**

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COVID-19 pandemic since 2020, and simultaneous long term quarantine have significantly affected so-called vulnerable populations, such as those with chronic diseases, children, the disabled and the elderly. In Japanese context, community welfare, originally inspired by the notion of community organization and community care, is one of the key solutions. The present research aims at clarifying the key research question; "How do CSOs working for community welfare respond and adapt to the pandemic situation?," and extracting critical elements to continue the activities of community-based CSOs working for community welfare, in the context of the COVID-19 era.

Community welfare has been developed throughout long history and transition by adopting the theories of "community organization" and "community care," and the increased significance of citizen autonomy, and also includes diverse actor. Additionally, CSOs working for community welfare tend to seek the solutions based on citizen autonomy, and put value on the already created connections with people within the community, in the comparison with CSOs working for another field.

Through semi structured interview, the author asked those working inside CSOs about three main questions; 1) How have the activities adapted to COVID-19? 2) If the format has changed, what has been the alternative? and 3) Are there any conditions to get back to the "pre-COVID-19" format?. Regarding first and second point, most of the interviewees partly suspended their activities by keeping in touch with their users and volunteer staffs, minimizing activities, and utilizing online tools. Regarding third point, the interviewees raised the lifting of the state of emergency, service users' agreement, and reopening of facilities, as a condition for getting back to pre COVID-19 format.

The results imply that CSOs working for community welfare need diverse types of support, to continue their activities under the pandemic situation. Additionally, the results imply that long term activity period, diversified need, high demand for restart, and high motivation of volunteer can be key factors for continuation.

As for the limitation of the present research, the author only focuses on community-based CSOs working in metropolitan areas, the registered groups in the council of social welfare. and those who manage CSOs. Future research need further consideration to determine the key actors to implement the suggested supports.