

30. Study on Volunteer Activities

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(1) Purpose and Aim of Study

Since baby-boomers are expected to play an active role as volunteer instructors for community-based experiential activities, the purpose of this study is to conduct a survey of their attitudes toward volunteer activities in the aim of contributing to future measures to promote such activities.

(2) Outline of Research Results

We conducted an Internet-based survey of baby-boomers' attitudes toward volunteer activities, since this group is expected to play an active role as instructors and coordinators of community volunteer activities. The results are outlined below.

- Thirty-five percent of the baby-boomers surveyed indicated that they currently undertake volunteer activities.
- The areas in which they were most commonly involved were "helping out in neighborhood/residents' associations" (19.1%) and "local environmental beautification activities such as picking up litter" (17.4%).
- Respondents who were currently undertaking, or who had in the past undertaken one or more volunteer activities in any field, were asked what motivated them to do so. The most common answers were "I responded to an invitation from the community (neighborhood/residents' association, etc.)" (70.9%) and "I did it on my own accord" (59.1%), followed by "I did it as part of the activities of a group or organization I belong to" (39.8%).
- A high proportion of those currently engaged in volunteer activities expressed satisfaction with their involvement, with 20% saying they were "very satisfied" and 52% saying they were "fairly satisfied."
- When those currently engaged in one or more volunteer activities in any field were asked what they thought about those activities, there was a strong tendency toward positive attitudes, with many people choosing the responses "agree" or "strongly agree" to the following statements: "I play a useful role in the community," "The activities broaden my outlook and way of thinking," "The activities give me a stronger sense of

sympathy for others,” and “I can make new friends and acquaintances.”

- When asked about what kind of volunteer activities they intend to undertake in the future, the largest proportion of respondents (56.5%) cited environmental activities such as “Picking up litter in the community,” followed by participation in community activities such as “Helping out in the neighborhood/residents’ association” (54.9%) and “Local traditional performing arts/traditional events” (34.7%), and nursing or welfare activities such as “Caring for elderly or disabled people” (30.2%).
- Based on the survey results, the study suggested that there is a need to:
 - (i) actively provide forums in which baby boomers can contribute, as a means of encouraging them to participate in society,
 - (ii) reassess the satisfaction to be gained from cultivating people, shaping living environments and making things, and to hand down Japan’s heritage,
 - and (iii) to foster an attitude of public recognition of volunteer efforts.