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Some Empirical Hypotheses of Diffusion Process of Innovations in a Japanese Rural Community, Part II

—Case Study of a Diffusion Process of Gentian Cultivation—

Yoshiyasu Uno and Shinichi Aoike

The purpose of our study is to find out the general theory of diffusion process in the Japanese rural community from the viewpoint of the communication science. In conducting this research work, the differences between American communities and one of the Japanese communities have been studied in regard to the propositions made by Professors E. Rogers, H. Lionberger, G. Beal, M. Coughenour, E. Wilkening, E. Katz, L. Coleman and H. Menzel.

As the results of the proposed study of the Japanese rural community for the past several years, some influential factors have been found which seem to accelerate the various diffusion processes.

The factors influencing the diffusion process are:

1. The mutual communication among relatives or neighbourhood as shown in the case of chrysanthemum cultivation.
2. The influence of rational and powerful activities of a local political leader in expanding his power as shown in the case of gentian cultivation.
3. The activities of change agents as shown in the case of weed killer, 2.4.-D, P.C.P.
4. Prevailing fashions and salesmen's activities as shown in the case of durable consumption goods, T.V. set and others.
5. The agricultural crisis like cold weather damage as shown in the case of improved breed of rice, Chikuma.
6. Marginal farmers in the community who have a side job in

a nearby city as shown in the case of affiliating with a new religion.

In this article, the results of the study numbered "2" is dealt with. Especially the hypotheses proposed by Professor E. M. Rogers have been applied to all the farmers totaling 146 at Minami Majinoku of Konami Mura in Nagano Pref. Japan.

The innovation (gentian cultivation) dealt with in this article has been necessitated by all farmers as measures in increasing their income because of the increasing change of the culture of the present Japanese rural community both in the way of living and agricultural technology. Personal characteristics such as age, farm scale, innovative adoption score of both consumption goods and production goods, etc., have been also investigated among 30 adopters. Furthermore, the four propositions made by Professor Rogers in regard to the adoption process (mental process) or the relationship between the four sources (mass media sources, personal cosmopolite sources, personal localite sources and Self) and the various stages (awareness, interest, evaluation, trial and adoption stage), and the two propositions with relation to the diffusion process (diffusion curve and speed of awareness and adoption) have been carefully studied. Finally based upon the above stated investigation, a composite picture of adopter categories has been made.

Following the research work, it is found that the results of the investigation of information sources are almost the same as the sociometric questions (friendship, discussion partnership and adviser-adviseeship relations) which are also indicating the strong influence of local political leader on the diffusion process of gentian cultivation. It is also found that the chart of information flow in the process of diffusion is quite different from that of chrysanthemum cultivation which has been already reported in the other journal.