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Biomedical Regional Knowledge Cluster in Kobe —Entry motivation, social embeddedness and performance—

内容の要旨

From 1990s, in order to enhance the regional competitiveness, policies supporting cluster formation have become popular. (J.Cortright, March 2006).. Kobe cluster is one of the government-led clusters. It is important for companies and policy makers to understand the characteristics of the cluster, including entry motivation, the communication among companies and the performance of the companies. However, there is little previous work on it.

Kobe lacked the “homebase” of the industry as suggested by Porter (Porter, 1990). Nevertheless, the cluster has developed to hold 170 firms at the time of 2010 May. This paper focuses on investigating the characteristics of Kobe cluster. For example, what is the motivation of the firms? What are the characteristics of the embeddednesses and the performance of the companies? This research analyses the above questions by an empirical study based on the data collected from 61 companies inside the cluster.

This research revealed the characteristics of the cluster. First, the result revealed that there is a difference in upstream communication (suppliers, universities/research organizations and governmental organizations) inside and outside the Kansai area. Second, the result suggests that there is a trend that upstream motivation alone or upstream communication alone does not contribute to the performance of a company, only when the motivation and communication match together would therefore contribute to the performance of the companies.

This result is important for the strategy of the companies in the cluster or willing to enter the cluster. It gives an idea that it is important for companies to make sure their original motivation and communication after entering are

matched in order to have good performance. For policy makers, it is important for them to understand the picture of the cluster and this research result provides an insight of the motivation of entry and communication pattern of the companies inside the cluster.