

## Chapter II

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# Research Reports and Contributed Manuscripts

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1. The Significance of and Issues with Salon Activities in Disaster-Affected Areas:  
What We Have Learned from the Progress of Salon Activities Targeting Evacuees from Fukushima Prefecture
  2. Camp Project for Parents and Children in Disaster-Affected Areas
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# The Significance of and Issues with Salon Activities in Disaster-Affected Areas: What We Have Learned from the Progress of Salon Activities Targeting Evacuees from Fukushima Prefecture

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## 1. Survey Objectives

The massive earthquake that struck on March 11, 2011 caused a tsunami on Japan's Pacific coast, wreaking enormous damage, leaving 18,430 dead and missing. Additionally, the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station accident occurred, forcing many Fukushima residents to evacuate to the neighboring prefecture, Miyagi Prefecture. Regular salon activities for these people were started and support groups are continuing these activities.

The Miyagi Disaster Mental Health Care Center has cooperated with salon activities held by other organizations since FY 2014 and took over as host of these activities in FY 2017 (Slide 1). These activities generally consist of seasonal events, such as cooking and tea talks, and sometimes participants even bring gifts. Overall, these activities take place in a peaceful atmosphere (Slide 2).

Eight years have passed since the earthquake, and the earthquake reconstruction plan presented by Miyagi Prefecture is nearing its end. Furthermore, new questions about the expansion, withdrawal, and significance of these salon activities are being raised. In this study, we examined the relevance of this salon from questionnaire surveys and interviews with participants. We reported on the issues people faced in the particular situation of evacuation outside the prefecture. The purpose was to provide suggestions for considering salon activities in a future disaster and to gain insight into future disaster support considerations.

## 2. Survey Content

(1) Targets: 18 salon participants, aged  $74.8 \pm 6.3$  years (61-87),  
7 male (38.9%), 11 female (61.1%).

(2) Implementation methods

Salon participants were surveyed using the following two methods (Slide 3):

- ① We sent participants copies of the Health-Related Quality of Life (HRQOL) scale SF-8 and our questionnaire via postal mail and used these to conduct a survey. We asked about their living conditions and health level and confirmed how they perceived salon activities.
- ② We conducted interviews with current participants and those involved in the operation of the salon. Participants were interviewed mainly about their living conditions. We interviewed the people concerned about the background to establishing the salon and the operational issues thusfar.

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### 3. Results

The response rate was 100%, and there were no missing values. In terms of the SF-8, the scoring rate tended to be lower than the 2007 national standard value. However, the obtained values are not necessarily low considering our participants' average age (slides 4, 5, 6).

From the answers to our questionnaire, we discovered that the salon offered participants an opportunity to go out and expand their social circle (“Q. The salon provides me an opportunity to go out.” Strongly agree/somewhat agree with responses = 83.3%) (“Q. My social circle has expanded.” Strongly agree/somewhat agree responses = 88.9%), and we found that many people wanted to continue their salon activities (“Q. About the future of the salon, I would like it to continue for as long as possible. I would like it to continue for a little while longer,” 77.8%) (slides 7, 8).

From the results of our interviews, it became clear that while many people wanted to continue the salon, they believed it would be quite challenging to manage the salon entirely independently. Many participants thought that some external support was needed. Moreover, we discovered that many participants did not move to Miyagi Prefecture immediately after the nuclear accident but instead had repeatedly moved around the country several times. Additionally, many of them experienced physical and mental disorders during the process of evacuation and moving. It became clear that some people are still worried about securing their basic livelihoods and planning for the future (Slide 9).

### 4. Discussion

From the salon participants' survey at this time, we inferred that many people are still living with “ambiguous loss” eight years after the earthquake. In the interviews, many respondents said they felt uncomfortable when asked questions such as “Did you receive significant compensation?” (or heard rumors that such questions were asked) at evacuation sites. For those who were hurt at the evacuation site and repeatedly moved, the salon was a valuable place to talk about the local area without hesitation and manage their hardships after the earthquake.

We believe that the participants' age in this survey was why our SF-8 scores were lower than the standard values. In light of this, the low score obtained is not necessarily an indication that the health condition of our participants is extremely low, but we did discover that some people had suffered heavy physical and mental burdens due to the evacuation and relocation thus far and were experiencing troubles in their current daily lives. Furthermore, many were asked about compensation at the evacuation site and said they felt uncomfortable (Slides 10 and 11). Currently, nearly all of the people who participate in multiple salons participate in salons for evacuees from Fukushima Prefecture. It is thought that these experiences may have influenced their choice of salons (Slide 12).

Additionally, we obtained many positive answers to the question of whether or not “Salons enable me to talk about my hometown without hesitation.” Evacuees' evacuation experiences have been an obstacle in their efforts to expand their friendships in their new homes. Thus, the need for a salon where evacuees can talk about their hometown without hesitation has been raised since the earthquake. It is still considered to be expensive even after eight years have passed.

Moreover, from the interview, it appears that the participants engaged with the salon for multiple reasons and their feelings about the salon were different. Further, each participant had various background factors, including the differences between those who voluntarily evacuated and those who evacuated due to the nuclear accident. Furthermore, there are differences between the original municipality of residences and the relationship with Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) before the earthquake. In the questionnaire, the salon's “ease of participation” and “program content” were not so highly evaluated, and even when asked about “the topic of nuclear power plants,” there were relatively few answers that indicated that it “was a big topic.” It is thought that the circumstances leading up to such participation, differences in standing position and background, and so forth, influenced participants' evaluation of the salon and its contents.

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In these interviews, participants indicated that there were two other salons they visited. However, while they decided to participate in those salons based on the program content (i.e., they did not participate in every meeting), nearly all the same members participated in our salon every time. No large fluctuations in the number of participants were observed. It is thought that our salon's character is not the attractiveness of the program content itself, but the “atmosphere” where participants can meet face to face and talk without hesitation. Although each participant has a different background, everyone is cherished which contributes to the pleasant atmosphere.

Further, from the interview, it was confirmed that many people are thinking about living in Fukushima Prefecture and resuming business. Many feel that they cannot give up on their hometown. This is the so-called “ambiguous loss,” and it can be said that a deep attachment to the past life and emotion that values the present life coexist. In this survey, we became acquainted with each other through the salon. It was confirmed that the participants exchanged information such as going to Fukushima prefecture and going back and forth between each other's houses. Such exchanges are considered to be an essential factor in activating one's resilience. Also, for those who have conflicting feelings about the past and present, the present residence is the most convenient position for maintaining mental balance.

### **5. Wrap-Up**

Some participants are gradually participating in club activities to expand their relationships in their new place of residence. However, in this survey, there were still many requests for the salon to continue, and it was found that there is still a significant need for a place where people can talk without hesitation. With the completion of the reconstruction plan, projects are being organized more and more. However, I think it is necessary to contemplate continuing the nature of such a space to ensure that participants' needs are not ignored. In future, I would like to study comparisons with other salons and surveys of the actual conditions of evacuees in Fukushima Prefecture and consider opportunities for dissemination, all while remaining respectful to the feelings of those who have evacuated.

(This paper is a compilation and addition of the content presented at the 55th Japan Mental Health Welfare Association National Convention and the 18th Japan Mental Health Welfare Society Academic Meeting.)

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## Founding of the Salon

Legend:  
 ■ Regions that cannot be returned to  
 ■ Regions with restricted residency  
 ■ Areas released on March 31/April 1, 2017  
 ■ Regions ordered to evacuate  
 ■ Fukushima Daiichi Reactor

- The Great East Japan Earthquake on March 11, 2011 caused a tsunami to hit the coastal areas and caused enormous damage
- In addition, the nuclear power plant accident forced many Fukushima residents to evacuate outside the prefecture.
- Many people evacuated to Miyagi Prefecture, and then a salon was held for the evacuees.
- The Miyagi Heart Care Center cooperates with salons run by other organizations. It took over from 2014 and became the host organization.

Slide 1

## Salon Overview

Frequency	Once per month, on Friday afternoons
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Mainly seasonal events such as tea parties, cooking, and cherry blossom viewing.</li> <li>➢ Other events planned as requested.</li> </ul>
Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Compared to other salons, the participation rate of men tends to be high.</li> <li>&gt; About 20 registrants. The number of participants each time is about 15 to 18, and the participation rate as a couple is high.</li> <li>&gt; The members are generally fixed, and the number of participants does not increase or decrease with time.</li> <li>&gt; Self-pay is generally in the range of 20,000 to 30,000 yen.</li> </ul>

Slide 2

## Survey Overview

1 Targets

- 18 salon participants
- aged 74.8±6.3 years (61-87)
- 7 male (38.9%), 11 female (61.1%)

2 Implemented methods:  
The following two methods were used (February 2019)

Survey type	Content
Questionnaire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① Health-Related Quality of Life Scale, SRF-8</li> <li>② Our own questionnaire</li> </ul> Confirm living status, health level, and opinions about the salon.
Interview survey	About participants lifestyles and specific opinions about the salon. * Salon managers were asked about their history, issues, etc., with the salon.

Shunichi Fukuhara, Yoshimi Suzuki, SF-8 Japanese Manual: Specifier Nonprofit Organization Health and Medical Evaluation Research Organization, Kyoto, 2004 (this citation appears on several slides)

Slide 3

## Questionnaire results, SF-8

Answer	Mean value
Overall, how has your health been over the past month?	43.660
In the past month, how much did physical health problems limit your usual physical activities (walking, climbing the stairs, etc.)?	28.860
In the past month, how much difficulty did you have doing your daily work, both at home and away from home, because of your physical health?	33.631
How much bodily pain have you had during the past month?	43.718
During the past month, how much energy did you have?	30.256
During the past month, how much did your physical health or emotional problems limit your usual social activities with family or friends?	39.858
During the past month, how much have you been bothered by emotional problems (such as feeling anxious, depressed or irritable)?	31.789
During the past month, how much did personal or emotional problems keep you from doing your usual work, school or other daily activities?	41.180

Shunichi Fukuhara, Yoshimi Suzuki, SF-8 Japanese Manual: Specifier Nonprofit Organization Health and Medical Evaluation Research Organization, Kyoto, 2004 (this citation appears on several slides)

Slide 4

## Questionnaire results, SF-8

Overall, how has your health been over the past month?

Rating	割合
1 Excellent	0.0
2 Very good	11.1
3 Good	61.1
4 Fair	16.7
5 Poor	5.6
6 Very poor	5.6
Total	100.0

In the past month, how much did physical health problems limit your usual physical activities (walking, climbing the stairs, etc.)?

Rating	割合
1 Not at all	33.3
2 Very little	38.9
3 Somewhat	11.1
4 Quite a lot	16.7
5 Could not do social activities	0.0
Total	100.0

Shunichi Fukuhara, Yoshimi Suzuki, SF-8 Japanese Manual: Specifier Nonprofit Organization Health and Medical Evaluation Research Organization, Kyoto, 2004 (this citation appears on several slides)

Slide 5

## Questionnaire results, SF-8

During the past month, how much have you been bothered by emotional problems (such as feeling anxious, depressed or irritable)?

Rating	割合
1 Not at all	22.2
2 Slightly	33.3
3 Moderately	27.8
4 Quite a lot	5.6
5 Extremely	11.1
Total	100.0

During the past month, how much did your physical health or emotional problems limit your usual social activities with family or friends?

Rating	割合
1 Not at all	38.9
2 Very little	38.9
3 Somewhat	16.7
4 Quite a lot	5.6
5 Could not do social activities	0.0
Total	100.0

Shunichi Fukuhara, Yoshimi Suzuki, SF-8 Japanese Manual: Specifier Nonprofit Organization Health and Medical Evaluation Research Organization, Kyoto, 2004 (this citation appears on several slides)

Slide 6

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### Survey results, question items ①

Items with ~80% positive answers

- “The salon is easy to participate in.”
- “The salon has broadened my social circle.”
- “I meet with salon participants outside the salon, too.”
- “I can speak about my hometown without hesitation.”
- “I want the salon to continue.”
- “I want to try attending other salons.”
- “The salon is an opportunity for me to go out.”

Slide 7

### Survey results, question items ②

- The percentage of answers that indicated that the salon was “**very easy to participate in**” and program content was “**very fun**” was small.
- With respect to a question asking if “**the topic of the nuclear accident was raised**,” we also observed a low rate of responses indicating that “**it very much was**,” and variance was high.
- Finally, in response to the questions “**Did salon participation change your daily life?**” and “**I receive information about Fukushima and my place of residence**,” the percentages of responses indicating “great change” and “I strongly agree,” respectively, were low.

Slide 8

### From interviews

Number of evacuations/re-locations	<b>Average of 7.2 times (4-14 times)</b>
Number of years living in Miyagi	<b>Average of 5.37 years (3-8 years)</b>
Number of years participating in the salon	<b>Average of 3.97 years (1-6.5 years)</b>

Slide 9

### Survey results, interviews

- “**I used to work all day before, but I became unable to handle that mentally.**”
- It became clear that participants had been through a significant number of evacuations and relocations before coming to live in Miyagi, which left them with considerable physical and mental burdens.
- “**I eat dinner at my eldest son’s house.**”
- “**I play with my grandchildren, who live in the same city.**”
- While many participants responded that their families had been “reduced,” they maintained some degree of connection, and were not left isolated.
- “**I liked it better when it was smaller.**”
- “**I would like more people to participate.**”
- Participants’ desires for what they would like to see happen to the program varied considerably. We believe these differences in opinion have to do with how these individuals came to take part in the salon.

Slide 10

### Survey results, interviews

- “I take care to not appear as though I have money.”
- “When I tell people I relocated from Fukushima, they start asking me about my compensation money. I try to avoid telling people I’m an evacuee.”
- Most participants had experienced negative emotions due to unpleasant comments.
- “I’m not sure whether or not I should return home or just start working here.”
- “While my family’s graves are back home, there’s nothing else there.”
- Now that more than eight years have passed since the disaster, participants feel a variety of different ways about their current situation: some are optimistic and looking forward to broadening their social circle, some are unable to decide what to do, and some feel empty about their daily lives.

Slide 11



Slide 12