Happiness and Social Capital: Social Psychological Perspectives for Sustainable Societies, with Happiness Indices for Communities (HICS)

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JST　RISTEX　Designing a Sustainable Society through Intergenerational Co-creation

"Practical Feedback for the Measurement of Various Aspects of Happiness in Local Areas and the Sustainability of Intergenerational Societies"
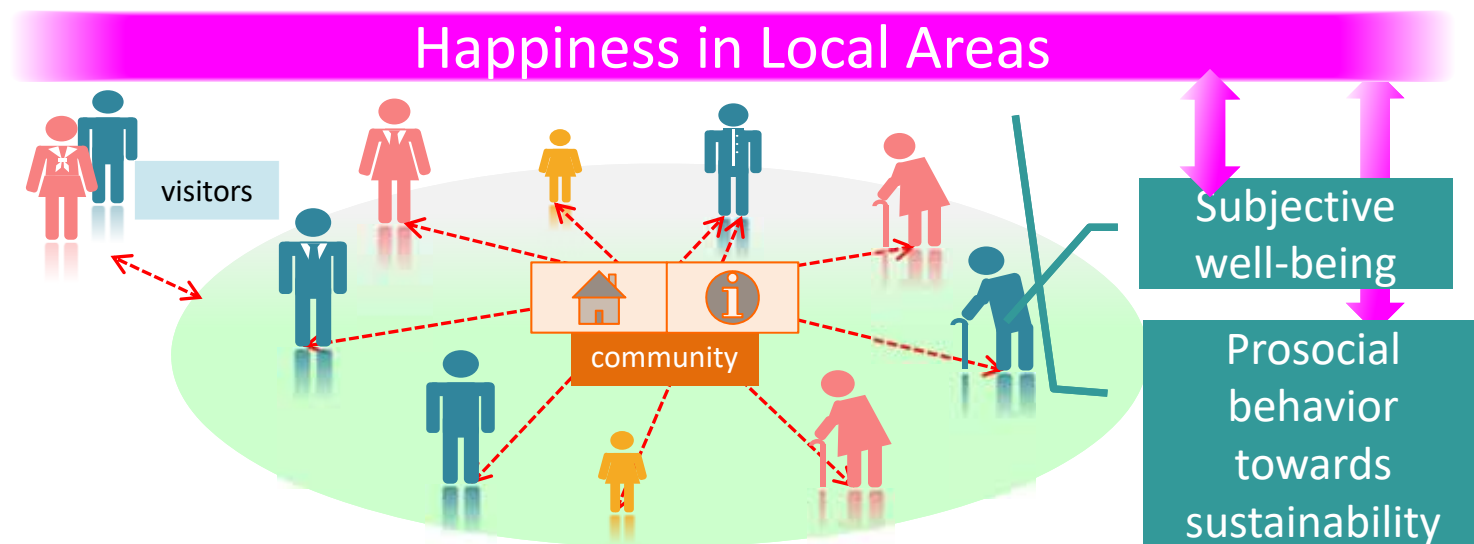
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地域の幸福
プロジェクト

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Happiness in Local Areas

visitors

community

Subjective well-being

Prosocial behavior towards sustainability

2

Cultural Psychology

From cross-cultural comparisons using experimental psychological methods

Rethinking psychological "universalism"

Elucidating mutual construction processes between culture and psyche

Satisfaction with Life

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Koyasu et al., 2012
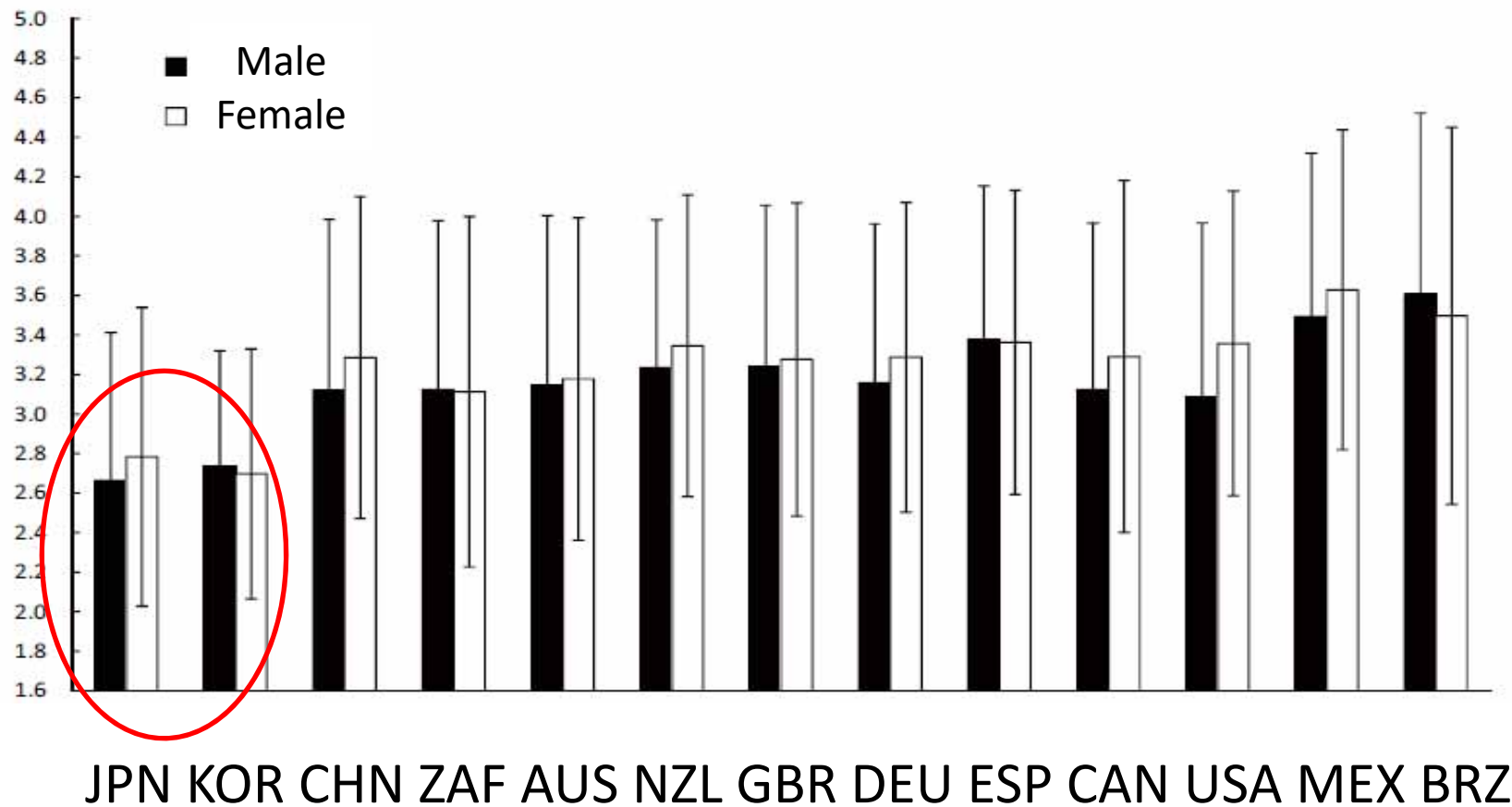
Interdependent Happiness Scale (IHS) (Hitokoto & Uchida, 2015)

- A measure of one's happiness which is based on *interpersonal harmony, ordinariness,* and *quiescence.*

- Contrary to the existing scales on well-being that tend to focus on measuring happiness of individuals' achievement, IHS was constructed based on the Japanese idea of happiness (Uchida & Ogihara, 2012).

- This concept of "interdependently attained happiness" is available across cultures.

Interdependent Happiness Scale
(Hitokoto & Uchida, 2015)

	Japan	U.S.
I believe that I and those around me are happy.	.42	.62
I feel that I am being positively evaluated by others around me.	.60	.55
I make those who are most important to me happy.	.44	.37
Although it is quite average, I live a stable life.	.63	.55
I do not have any major concerns or anxieties.	.57	.43
I can do what I want without causing problems for other people.	.49	.43
I believe that my life is just as happy as that of others around me.	.72	.82
I believe I have achieved the same level of living as those around me.	.61	.70
I generally believe that things are going well for me in its own way as they are for others around me.	.78	.57

Interdependent Happiness

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Koyasu et al., 2012
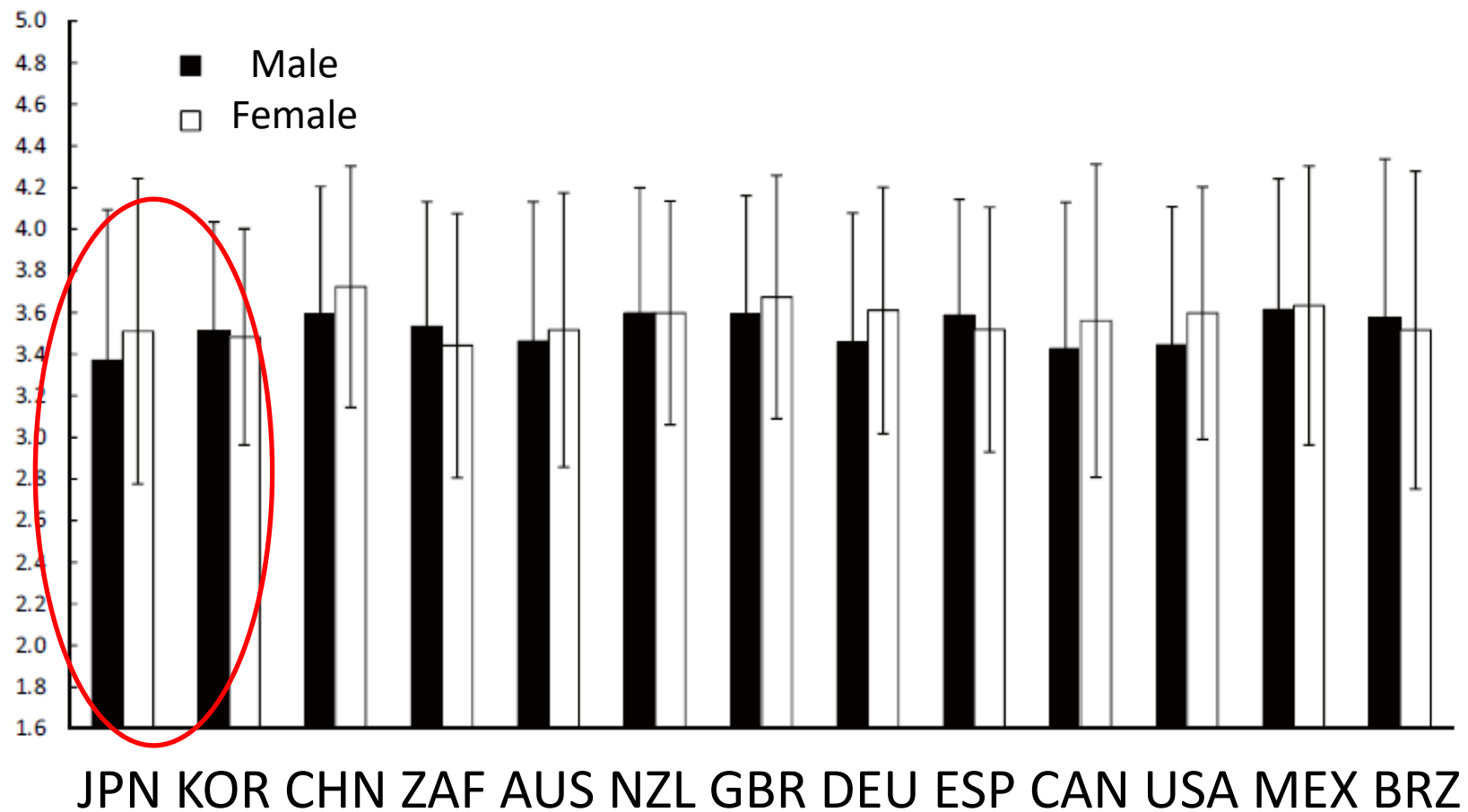
Cultural meaning and Happiness

- Happiness: Result of positive feedback received in social life (especially Eudaimonia — meaning in life)

- Strongly connected to cultural values

Happiness:

- Hedonia: Positive/Negative affects

- Eudaimonia: Meaning in life, Evaluation

Purpose of the project

- "Regional wealth" has mostly been measured using indices like economic conditions. Recently, psychological variables have also gained attention. Happiness indices - such as the OECD's Better Life indices and Bhutan's Gross National Happiness (GNH) index - have been used to measure societal well-being.

- There is no comprehensive indicator that can measure what conditions create a sustainable sense of happiness among people within a region.

- To create a sustainable regional community, we must create a society that can sustainably foster regional happiness.

Purpose of the project

- This project aims to develop indicators (the Happiness Indices for Communities: HICS) that can contribute to a new way of creating places that can be passed down to the next generation, one that also retains the culture and values that have historically fostered the region.

- Not comparing the average values of indicators between regions, but analyzing the strengths and weaknesses within each region and invigorating intra-regional ties and connect them to forces that promote change.

- Culture is multi-layered
- We have to know which cultural levels of shared reality promote certain psychological tendencies
- Which functions produce psychological patterns?
  - National level : law, public language
  - Local/community level: dialect, natural environment, eco-cultural functions, rituals, etc.
  - These indices were developed from the perspective of multi-level analysis and thus focus on both the macro-level functions of communities and the micro-level functions of individual differences.

Happiness in Communities

1) How do people in communities perceive their happiness?

2) How do we evaluate macro-level happiness among communities?

What we need are….

1. **Good scales (including cultural values)**
2. **Purposes to measure the well-being**
   - **Not for a "ranking", rather providing of vision**
3. **Good analyses for individuals/collectives**
   - **Multilevel analysis**

Multiple Methods

Large scale survey

Community sampling
Multilevel analysis

ICT devise to measure social network

ICT
Objective action (sleep, walk)
Social network

Bio measures

Saliva sample
Epigenetics

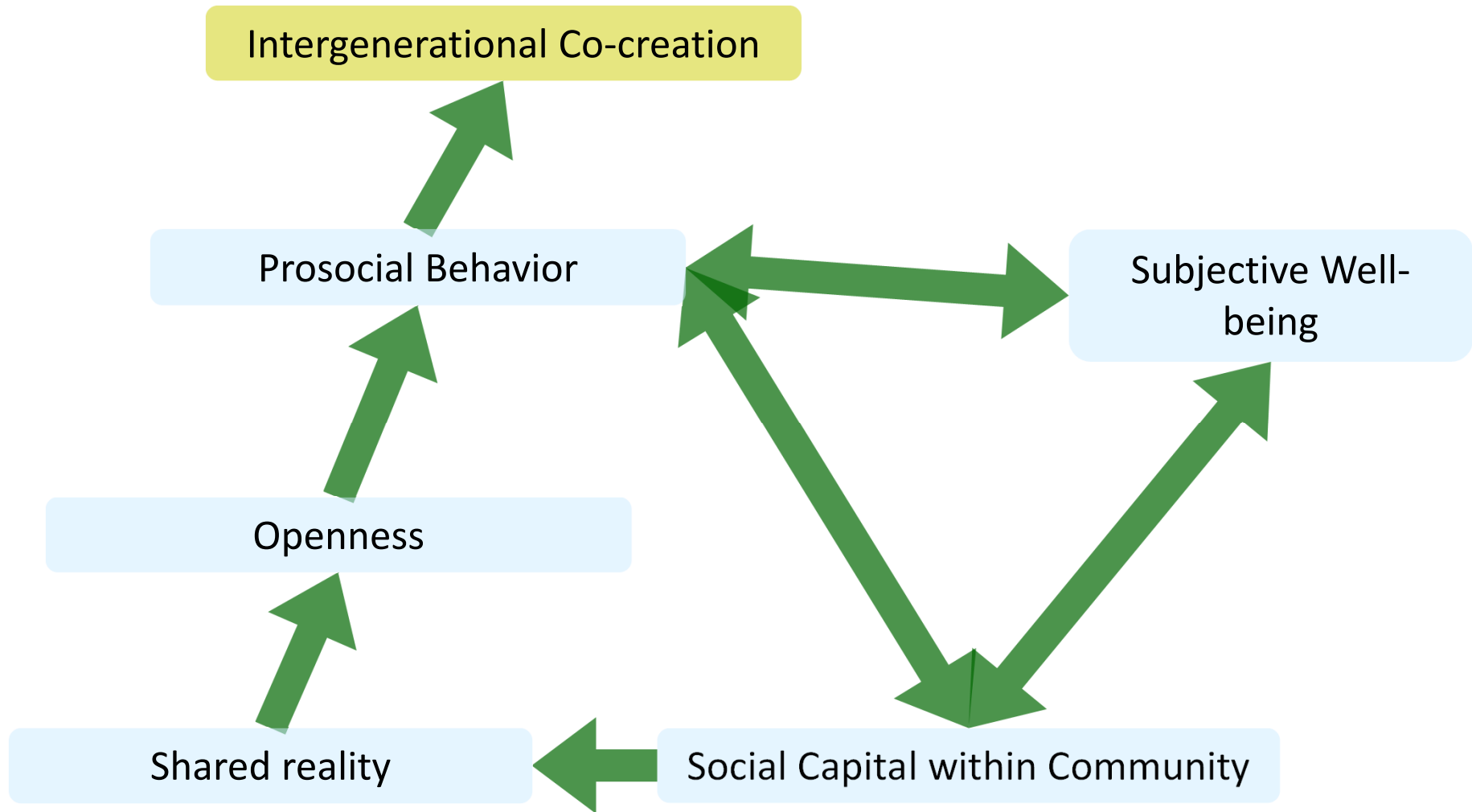**Living environment**

House, Cars, Alert signs

- Community level sampling (farming area, fishing area, city area)
- Collecting multiple measures
  - Correlations of happiness amongst people within each community
  - By psychological, physiological (e.g., Stress hormone), and behavioral measures (e.g., social interactions within & beyond communities)

Happiness in Communities

How do people in communities perceive their happiness?

How do we evaluate macro-level happiness among communities?

Intergenerational Co-creation

Prosocial Behavior

Subjective Well-being

Openness

Shared reality

Social Capital within Community

Method

- A large survey study (N = 6,452) in 540 communities in Japan with multilevel analysis (response rate = 17.2%) in Oct 2016
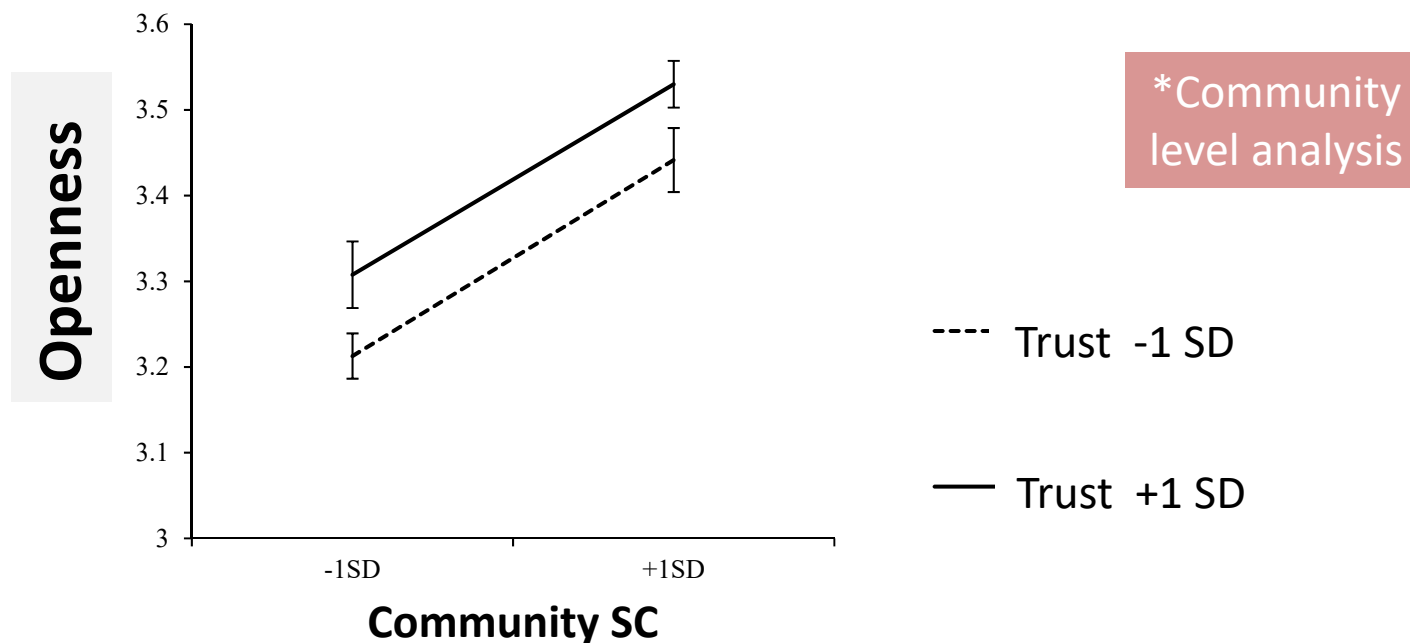
Community SC promote Openness

DV=Openness (e.g., I would be happy if a person from outside of my neighborhood settled in this neighborhood)

IV=Population density, Community SC (e.g., The people in my neighborhood are trustworthy),
Trust for generalized others (e.g., I trust other people, even if I don't know anything about them),
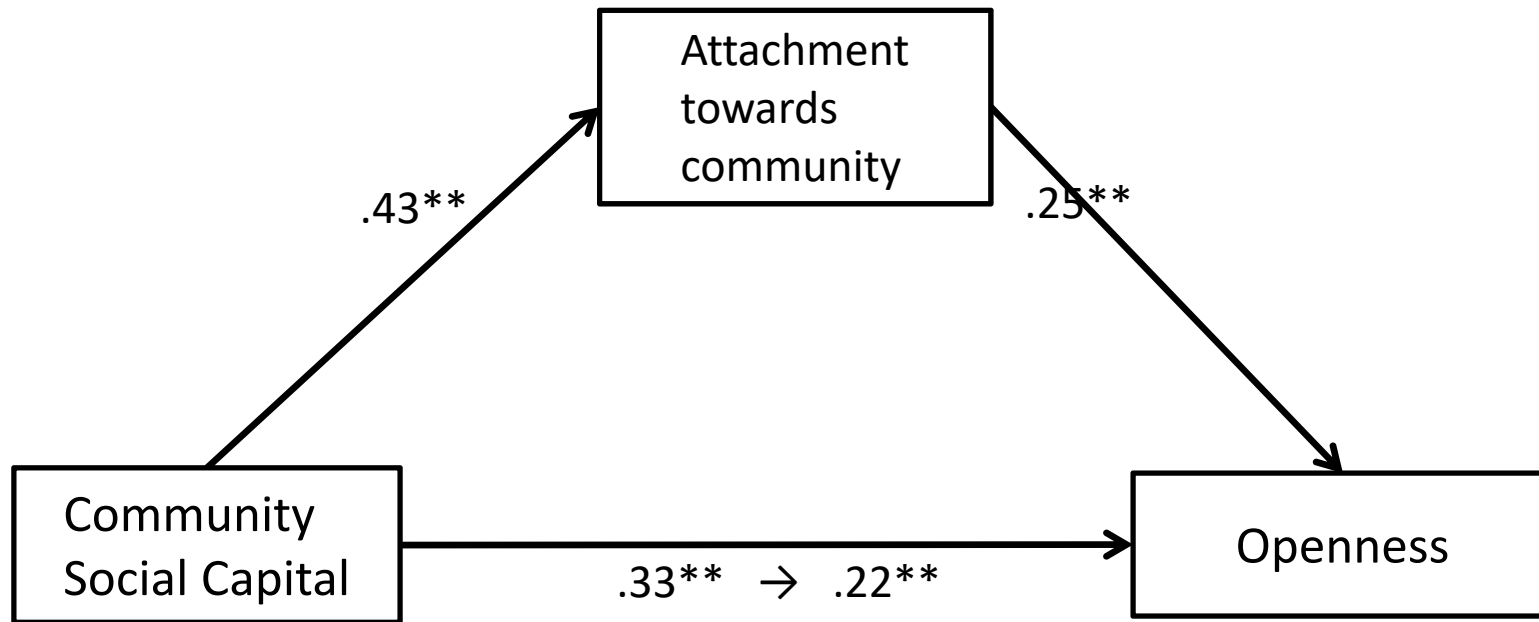interaction between community SC x Trust for generalized others

*Community level analysis

Community SC β = .28, p<.01
Trust for Generalized others β = .11, p<.05

Mediation Analysis

Community Social Capital → Attachment towards community: .43**

Attachment towards community → Openness: .25**

Community Social Capital → Openness: .33** → .22**

(*Z*=3.95, *p*<.001, 95%CI: 0.06-0.17)

Summary

- Community social capital promotes openness
- This effect is mediated by attachment towards community
- SC creates sustainability
- We need to think about the boundary conditions (e.g., This might be limited in Japanese communities)
- SC should be measured by objective behavior as well

Activity monitoring in Kyotango
(PI; Masashi Komori)

When they go out, participants living in the village carry an Activity Monitor, which measures activity levels (mainly the number of steps they take), and a portable device that records who they walk past.

△ the activity monitor   △ the portable device
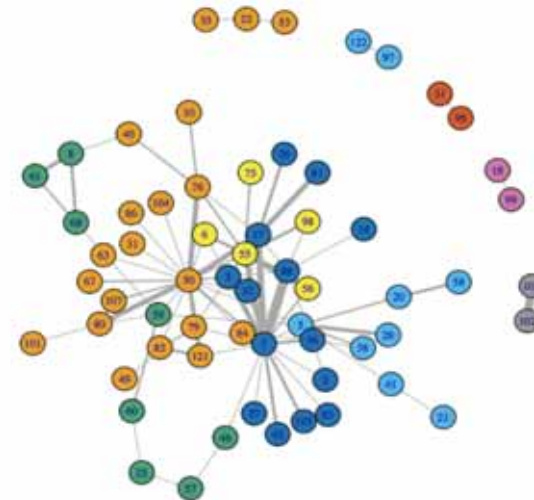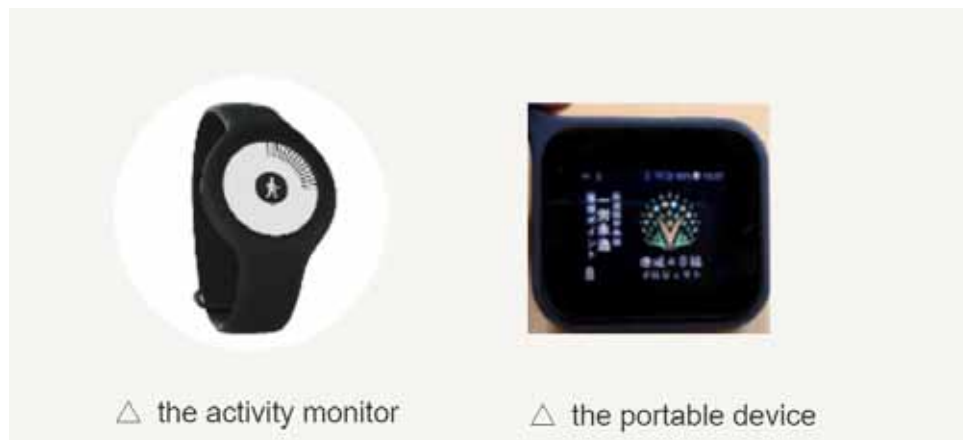
The portable device records "social contact" between residents at five-minute intervals, which creates a record of sequential patterns of social contact between residents that allows us to confirm their social networks.
By connecting this social network information to subjective indicators, it is also possible to examine what kinds of networks are associated with regional happiness and multi-generational contacts.