

Program for Evolving Humanities and Sociology: Research Visit Report

[Personal Information]

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Major: Sociology

Research Topic: The Exit of Activists from Social Movement Activities: Retirement, Burnout, and Suspension

Research Location

Country: UK

City: Colchester, London, Edinburgh

Research Period

5 Jul 2012–8 Sep 2012 (65 days)

(1) Overview of Plans

There were two objectives for my research visit.

The first objective was to articulate the analyses of qualitative data. Numerous books about mixed methods and social network analysis have been published in Japan; however, more practical methods that utilise computer software and applications of quantitative data have not attracted significant attention. Therefore, I attended the 45th Essex Summer School in Social Science Data Analysis at the University of Essex to study practical qualitative methodology.

The second objective of my research visit was to collect data regarding activists' 'burnout'. Scholars familiar with social movements and civil societies have ignored the exit of activists from social movements. However, activists and protesters have focused on their departure and retirement from political activities. I conducted interviews with a number of them from various organizations to learn more about burnout, retirement, and suspension from social movements.

(2) Achievements

During my research visit, I was able to acquire the basic approaches for social network analysis, mixed-method research, and case studies. I applied these methods to develop the presentation for the Second International Sociological Association (ISA) Forum (Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1–4 August, 2012) and for the Power and Difference 3rd International Conference (Tampere, Finland, 27–29 Aug, 2012). Through the two conferences, I was able to learn more about tangible problems that develop when we bridge the data and analysis. Moreover, I participated in a workshop at the 2012

Applications of Social Network Analysis (ASNA) Conference (Zurich, Switzerland).

Based on the knowledge gained from summer school and relevant conferences, I organised the Social Network Analysis Workshop at University of Tokyo. Participants thus far have included several young students from various disciplines (i.e. International Relations, Area Studies, Sociology, and Media Studies). I hope that this workshop contributes to diverse research investigations and topics.

Moreover, I conducted interviews with activists in the UK. I was permitted to visit some of the organisations they represented and take part in meetings. The comparison to the Japanese situation will be the basis for the presentation of my paper at the 85th Annual Meeting of the Japan Sociological Society (3–4 November, 2013, Hokkaido, Japan), the IOS-IASA 4th Joint Workshop, and the AsiaBarometer Workshop 2013 (Mar 1–2, 2013, Tokyo, Japan). I will publish a paper about the topic in *Sociologos* (37) in October 2013.

(3) Plans for Further Research

Through this research visit, I appreciated the interesting findings from quantitative data that resulted from employing the various methodologies. Consequently, I will consider using mixed-method research, social network analysis, and case studies for my doctoral thesis.

Moreover, this visit was productive for research purposes and acquisition of knowledge about the practices of social movements. I discovered that burnout from political activity is related closely to problems associated with political and social structures throughout the world. Therefore, investigations regarding the relationship between activists' burnout and political conditions in Japan could be insightful.

In the future, I hope to collaborate with researchers in other countries and other research areas. I have been inspired by young researchers from other disciplines; already, I have conducted collaborative research with some of these scholars. My interest is communicating with other researchers regardless of nationality, research topic, or specialty.