

The Effect of Public Subsidies on Library Services: the Case Study of Areas Adjacent to US Military Facilities

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Abstract: This research aims to clarify whether government subsidies have financial influence on public library services in the area adjacent to the US military facilities in Japan. Japan's Ministry of Defense has provided subsidies to areas adjacent to US military facilities. Part of subsidies from the Ministry of Defense of Japan are allocated as the operating costs of public libraries. In this research, we focus on the case studies of Eniwa City in Hokkaido. We consider the influence and problems on the communities, the facilities and services of the public libraries from the proportion of subsidies of the Ministry of Defense to the educational expenses of each local government.

Keywords: Community, Public library, Subsidies, Military facilities

1. Introduction

R. David Lankes stated: «Libraries are on a mission: to improve society through knowledge creation». Public libraries have several missions and one of their missions is to improve society through variable library activities including knowledge creation.

There are 78 facilities dedicated for US military in Japan. The total area is 263,192 square kilometers in the report (2018) which is updated on 31st March 2018. Japan's Ministry of Defense has provided subsidies to areas adjacent to US military facilities in order to improve the living environment of local residents. Some of these funds are shared for construction of public halls and libraries, establishment of crematories, and maintenance of cemetery garden.

We consider libraries as public facilities to improve the cultural and living environment of the community in Japan. For example, according to the ordinances in Tokyo and Kyoto prefecture, it is impossible to open so-called sex shop, pachinko parlor or other amusement facilities within 100 meters around the school, hospital, child welfare facilities and libraries. Many people long to live

in town with public libraries. Public libraries are proof that they can dwell in peace.

The US Air Force Bases are in the vicinity and the local residents are annoyed by noise caused by training planes and helicopters. The noise of the Self-Defence Force training area may cause the production of milk to drop. Some of them may complain of health hazards like hearing loss. Troubles caused by US military personels occasionally hurt them. There are also inconvenient things. We think people can spend comfortably in the town where are cultural facilities like public libraries. The library can solve people's anxiety and dissatisfaction. Therefore, the Japanese Gouvernment is granting subsidies to areas adjacent to US military bases.

2. Background

In this research we focused on the case of Eniwa public libraries and considered the influence that the library services gave in the local community. Eniwa city is located the east of Sapporo in Hokkaido, and its total area is 294.87 square kilometers. There are many snowfalls in winter, but it is mild throughout the year. That is blessed with rich nature, furthermore has the vast forest opened. In the area, daily farming and agriculture are prosperous. The city is rich nature and abundant agriculture, tourists are increasing. There are seven industrial areas with housing complexes for houses.

There are the practice facilities of the Japanese Self-Defense Forces in the city, and Chitose Airport to share with the United States Armed Forces approaches it. As there have been a threat from Russia (former Soviet Union), Chitose Airport is the northernmost front base. Although the threat form Russia has decreased, Hokkaido is exposed to the menace of China and North Korea. Therefore, a grant to keep the environment of local inhabitants from Japanese Government and Ministry of Defense is paid for resources of the city, and in Eniwa city subsidies are incorporated into expenditure.

The main library was established using the part of the grant in 1992. There are two branch libraries within the city. Shimamatsu branch library was established in 1992. Eniwa branch library was established in 2003.

The total construction cost of main library was 1724 million yen in 1992. It is approximately 13.8 million US dollars at the exchange rate of yen and US dollar at that time. Table 1 shows the breakdown of the total construction cost of main library. The total construction cost was partly covered by the national subsidy from the Defense Facilities Administration Agency (the present Ministry Defense) of 74.6 million yen and the prefectural subsidy of 50 million yen.

Expense	Yen	Dollar (1\$=125 yen)
Construction (including shelves)	907.43 million	7.26 million
Equipment	320.33 million	2.56 million
Furniture	114.50 million	0.92 million
The others (including the purchase of land)	381.74 million	3.05 million
Total	1724 million	13.8 million

Table 1 The construction cost of main library in 1992

Shimamatsu branch library renovated the building of post office as a library. The total cost of renovation was 42.57 million yen. The cost of construction was 33.5 million yen, of furniture was 6.54 million yen and of the others was 2.53 million yen. In 2003, Eniwa branch library was attached to the City Hall established in February 1979. The cost of installation was unknown.

They have some reading activities. They set up the “book start” for babies in the city in 2000. Since October 2013 they have begun to locate several books in the coffee shops, the restaurants, other stores and perform activity to make the whole city library.

3. Methods

We examined the change with passing years of several statistics in Eniwa city since the main library was established in 1992. Particularly we focused on indicators of agriculture, industry, commerce and criminals. Because the influence of library services seems to show economic conditions and safety in these statistics. Industry indicators represent the richness of the area. The crime indicator implies whether the area is safe or not.

4. Findings

Figure 1 shows the change of Eniwa city's population and library registrants. In this figure we can see a slight increase of population from 1989 to 2009 and a gradual increase of library registrants from 1992. Number of library registrants rose to the peak and 71.7% of residents were registered in 2005.

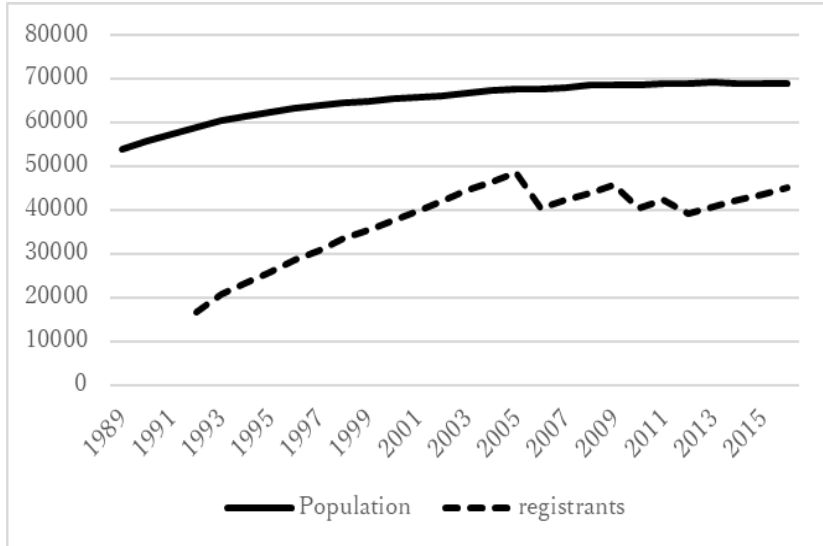


Figure 1. Population and library registrants

Figure 2 shows the change of Eniwa city's revenue from 1989 to 2016. The average of revenue for this period is approximately 23 billion yen.

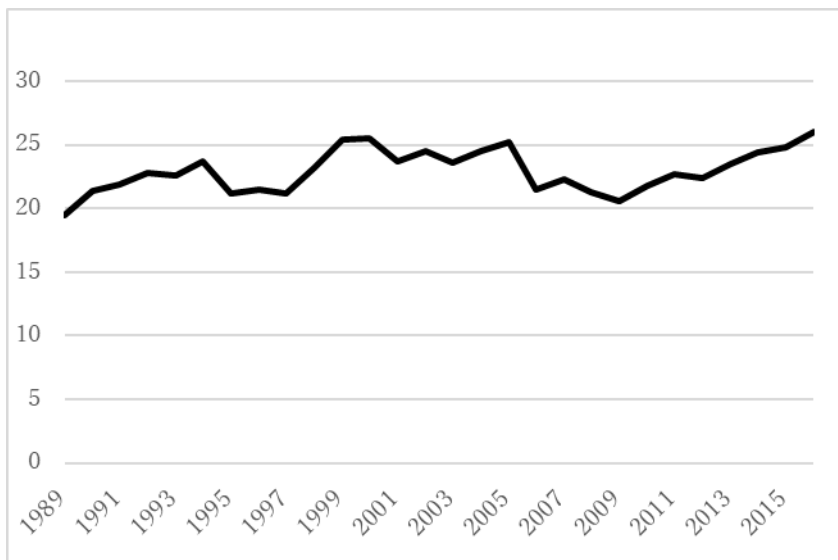


Figure 2. Revenue (Scale: billion yen)

Figure 3 shows the change of the agricultural output from 2001 to 2006 and 2014 to 2016. Data from 2007 to 2013 is missing. There is no dramatic change in agricultural output.

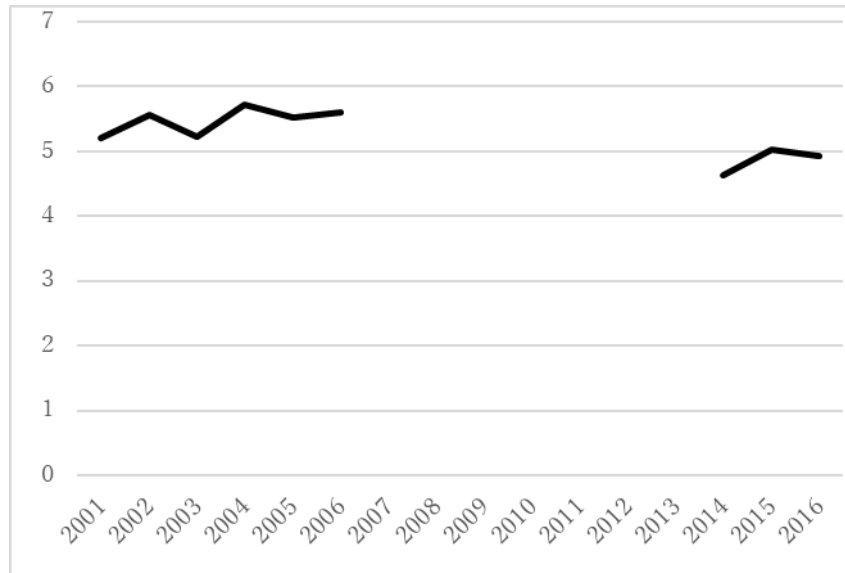


Figure 3. Agricultural output (Scale: billion yen)

Figure 4 shows the shipment value of manufactured goods

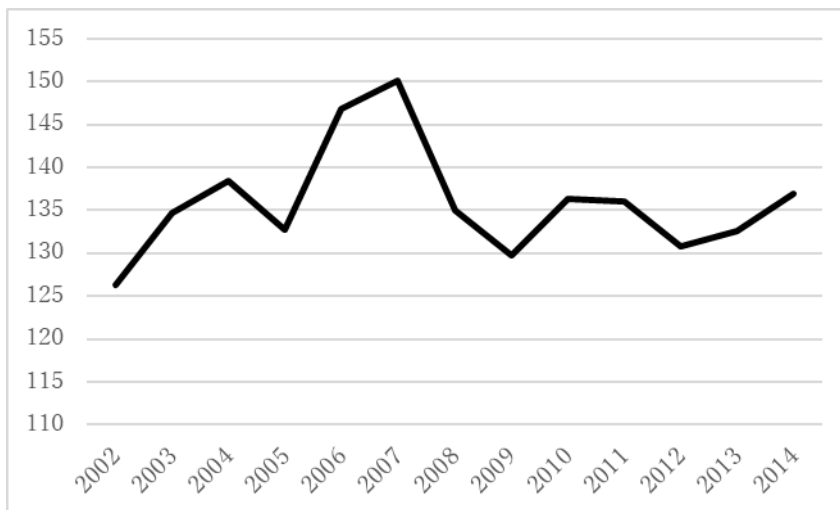


Figure 4. Shipment value of manufactured goods (Scale: billion yen)

Figure 5 shows the retail sale.

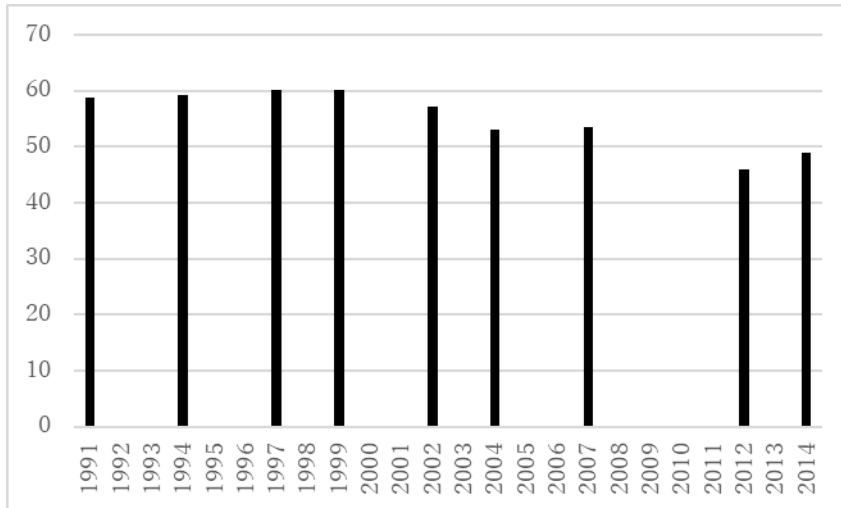


Figure 5. Retail sale (Scale: billion yen)

Figure 6 shows the number of crimes (bar) and crime rate (line). The crime rate is the percentage of incidence of crime per 1000 population. In the last twenty years, the number of offences has been steady decreasing with 2004. By comparing the crime rate from 2001 to 2005 and from 2012 to 2015, it has decreased by half in recent year.

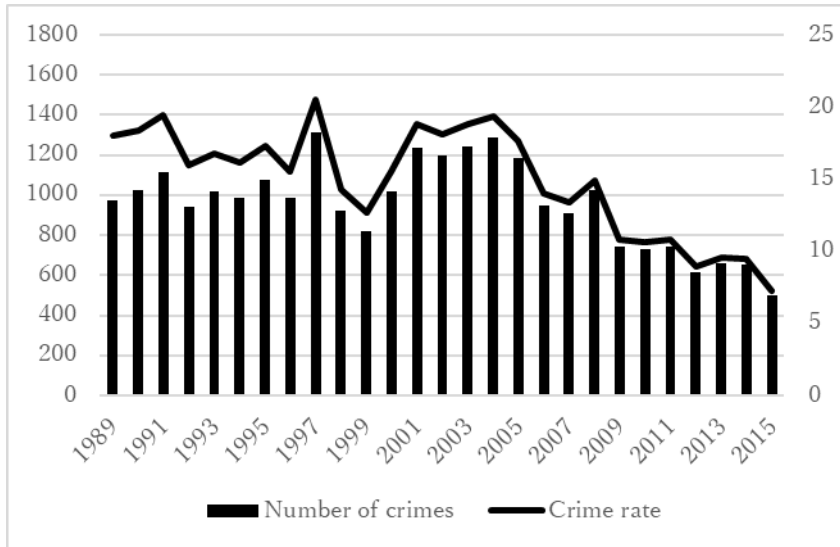


Figure 6. Number of crimes and crime rate

5. Analysing

In this paper, we first consider the impact of public library's serving to economic dimension in Eniwa city. We then discuss the underlying problems on the connection between public library's activity and the decreasing of crimes.

Although there are few statistical data on agricultural output value in Figure 3, the impact of library service is considered to be small. Because the annual agricultural production amounts from 2001 to 2006 and 2014 to 2016 are around 5 billion yen and there is no remarkable change.

In Figure 4, we notice that shipments of industrial products increased from 2005 to 2007. One of reasons for this rise of shipments may be that there was a period of economic expansion with low growth in Japan 2004 to 2008 after the economic boom of the dot-com bubble lasted from 1999 to 2001. Eniwa Techno-Park, one of seven industrial estates, opened in 1989. This is developed with logistics and communication network. It is reasonable to assume that residents of industrial park began to register in their library rather than having the library service affect the shipment value of industrial products.

In Figure 5, since 2002 the annual sale amount shows a downward trend. This is due to the low growth economy after the collapse of the Japanese asset price bubble in 1992.

It follows from what has been said that the influence of library service hardly appears in economic and industrial indicators.

We turn to the question on decreasing of crimes in Figure 6. As already mentioned in previous section, number and rate of crimes in Eniwa City have been decreasing since 2004. It is difficult to think of this as the impact of library service alone. In Eniwa City, the crime prevention regime was strengthened after a brutal murder case in 2000. Thanks to the increasing of security system, brutal crimes have hardly happened. Significantly decreased is the number of occurrence of thieves. The number of thieves occurred in 2004 was 1060, but that in 2015 was 315 which was reduced to nearly one third.

What can be said clearly is that in Eniwa City the number of crime has decreased in the last twenty years, among which the number of case of thieves has drastically decreased.

6. Conclusions

In the case of Eniwa City, the impact of the public library serving to their community does not appear markedly in the agriculture output, the shipments of industrial products and the retail sale, but that may be evidenced by a decline in the number of crimes.

Library service may be useful for improving community safety. In the case of Eniwa City, the Ministry of Defence increased the safety of community through the establishment of public library by the subsidy.

As indicators to measure the influence of libraries on the community, while there are financial indicators, safety indicators and industrial indicators, we will have indicators related to population, health, and education. Indicators on population include birth rate, marriage rate, divorce rate, and mortality rate. As indicators of health, there are life expectancy, number of hospitalized patients, number of elderly people who need care. The index on education has a university admission rate.

There is room for further investigation on the connection between the library service and the number of crimes. We need to study relevance between library services and various social indicators.

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