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Analysis on the contributions of social organizations for economy and society in Japan

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ABSTRACT

Social organizations, as a third sector which are making up for government and enterprises are playing an increasingly important role today. Social organizations attract wide attention of researchers. In this paper, the fields of social organizations are analyzed based on the development of Japanese social organizations. Successful experience is summed up from three aspects (government, social organizations, citizens). In the end, four recommendations are put forward: developing organizational autonomy, improving laws and regulations, enhancing the service ability and strengthening public awareness of citizens.

KEYWORDS

Social organizations; Economic development; Social development; Government; Japan.



INTRODUCTION

Social organizations, the third sector organizations, which are different from enterprises and governments, have played an important role in social welfare, education, culture, economy and international affairs. For lack of unified definition for social organizations, non-profit organizations (NPOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and geographical social organizations are sorted in the category of social organizations in Japan^[1]. Compared with enterprises, social organizations are non-profit and increase the interest of the society as a whole through fundraising activities; compared with the government, social organizations do not rely on financial support and public power. Social organizations maintain social life in addition to the government and enterprises^[2].

With the recovery of Japan's post-war economic, the influx of western culture has impact on the traditional thoughts and culture in Japan, which exposed a series of social problems. Together with frequent natural disasters like earthquake, tsunami, etc, the government has too many problems to deal with social emergencies and natural calamities. The Japanese government's "failure" is just an opportunity for the development of civil social organizations in Japan. Through the outstanding performances in dealing with social and natural disasters, social organizations won the trust of the Japanese government and people^[3]. The Japanese government also actively encourage and promote the development of social organizations, and creates good conditions for them.

As an Asian neighbors, Japan has many similarities with China in development. Accompanied with rapid economic growth and self-interest, moral landslide has caused many social problems, to which needs to be paid attention. It is highly valued in the eighteenth big report of the party that China need to construct the socialism with Chinese characteristics of social management system, speed up the formation of party committee leadership, government responsibility, non-governmental support and public participation, the rule of law guarantee system of social management, speed up the formation of government-led, covering urban and rural basic public service system, speed up the formation of separate government and social explicit power and responsibility, in accordance with the autonomy of the modern society organization system. The State Council is actively promoting institutional reform and the transformation of government functions to realize a modern social organization system in 2017. In this paper, the contributions that Japan's social organizations made to the economic and social development are analyzed, in order to learn from the successful experience. Policy recommendations are also provided to make better use of social organizations to make up the "government failure".

DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS IN JAPAN

Japan social organizations are developed from Meiji restoration. Meiji restoration is the beginning of Japan to study western advanced civilization. Social organizations as part of the western capitalist social system, was introduced into Japan by some hospitals, charities and schools founded by the church at that time^[4]. Japan was a conservative and Confucianism-based country, and Japanese government had to take more government-led policies for the lack of understanding of the social organizations and non-governmental force among the public. Different from the spontaneous formation of the western ones, early Japanese social organizations are mostly "official", having a strong government background.

As Japan was defeated in the second world war, Japanese social organizations recovered, whose development almost stopped then. Rights of association provided legal protection for the development of social organizations. Japanese economic recovery and national consciousness of participation in social affairs helped more social organizations seize the opportunities of development. Many folk organizations were willing to maintain "the approval" status for too multifarious applications, which was bad for social credibility and influence^[4]. The development of civil social organizations faced the new bottleneck.

The great Hanshin earthquake in 1995 was a milestone of the development of social organizations. The Japanese government got a lot of criticism by the Japanese people for its slowness to respond and mutual shuffle in the earthquake. Different from government, Japanese social organizations organized a large number of volunteers rushing to the scene at the first time^[5]. This incident made the Japanese government fully aware of the power of social organizations. Under the pressure of public opinion, the Japanese government gradually let go of the social organizations to apply for registration procedures. This greatly promoted the development of the non-governmental organizations, fully arousing the enthusiasm of the Japanese citizens to participate in social management. Japanese social organization also ushered in the new development opportunity. Taking NPOs as an example, after special non-profit activity promotion law in 1998, Japanese NPOs have achieved rapid development^[6]. As shown in Figure 1, based on data provided in NPO portal, the number of NPOs in Japan has risen from 23 in 1998 to 49042 in 2014, almost 9 NPOs everyday^[7].

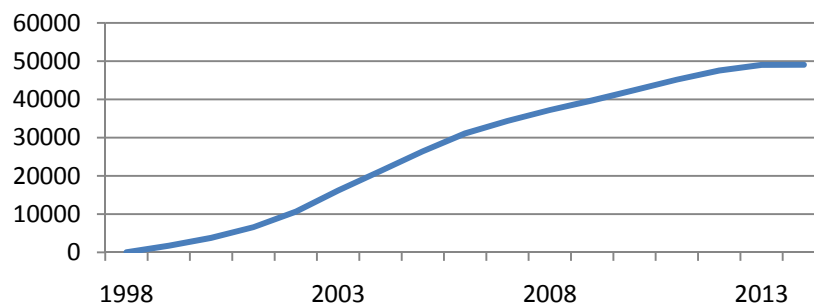


Figure 1 : The number of NPOS in Japan

JAPANESE SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS' CONTRIBUTIONS TO ECONOMY AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS

Services of Japanese social organizations

Japan's social organizations not only in quantity have the obvious growth, but also expand their service area from political area like trade unions, women's rights, to social area like emergency rescue, environmental protection, consumer protection, and social services^[4]. Japanese international social organizations are eager to take part in many international rescues and international communication activities with its increasing national competitiveness and big responsibility^[8].

Emergency rescue

Japan is a country with many natural disasters. Japanese society organizations are active in natural disaster emergency rescue and have rich experience in the rescue. Besides the great Hanshin earthquake in 1995, many rescue activities were conducted and national social rescue organizations were set up in the great east Japan earthquake in 2011^[6]. Relief activities not only include disasters occur to aid and support for the affected residents life, but also include disaster relief and effective prevention disaster training, establishment of rescue network and post-disaster assistance activities^[8].

Environmental protection

The organizations related to environmental protection were set up early in Japan. High-speed economic development in the period of the fifties and sixties of the 20th century, caused a large number of environmental problems, accompanied with serious threat to the health and life safety of local residents. The Japanese government and the enterprise gained strong dissatisfaction. After 80 s, global warming and environmental pollution problems upgraded the Japanese public concern for the environment problems. Environmental protection demand for funds, and as public goods, there are few companies willing to bear the responsibility of environmental protection. Environmental protection activities in most cases are made by the government through the fiscal and tax^[9]. But the Japanese government's environmental protection work can not fully meet the environmental requirements of the Japanese public, this makes a lot of Japanese social organizations involve in the campaign to protect environment, actively promoting people to classify the garbage processing, to reduce exhaust, to buy goods and services with little damage to the environment^[10]. The current environmental protection organizations in Japan mainly has three categories: the first is against public nuisance and pollution; the second is to protect the wild animals; the third kind is to protect the residents living environment^[8].

Social welfare

Japan has a lot of the social organizations for the elderly, the disabled and other social vulnerable groups to carry out all kinds of social welfare services^[3]. The Japanese government cabinet meeting passed the white paper version of the aging society in 2014. Since Japan's aging problem is increasingly seriously, in addition to the government and enterprises in the capital support, Japan's social organization has played an important role in the elderly health care benefits. As Japanese families form evolution toward miniaturization, the traditional family care function decline gradually. It is very difficult just to rely on family members or community residents and mutual assistance for the elderly in nursing. These organizations will adopt corresponding way of service according to the different needs of the elderly^[11].

In addition, the Japanese social organizations also actively provide again obtain employment service for healthy old people, the unemployed, the disabled and other social vulnerable groups, helping the elderly unemployed regain economic source. For example, independent support center, one of those who often provide employment support activities for the elderly, actively explore job market corresponding ability, technology and experience of the elderly^[8].

Community services

In Japan, the social group is also involved in regional development, community development and other public affairs^[3]. Japan's high speed development accelerated its urbanization process. In the process of urban transformation, local governments tend to get rich quickly, overlooking the protection for some old buildings and some historical relics in the city which have not been able to get a good save. Many social organizations are born to protect historic preservation and cultural tradition. Social organizations also take part in the planning of the canal development activities with the local administrative department of city planning. On the one hand, this measure protects the canal with a long history, on the other hand also good for the history of the canal cultural resource for secondary development^[8]. Not only that, social organizations also undertake duties such as the community clean and tidy, community policing, community crime prevention, organization community recreational activities, and make contributions to the communication between local governments and residents^[1].

International assistance and communication

The internationalization of Japanese society organization mainly reflected in its active in international assistance, international aid, and international communication. In Japan NGOs are used to refer to those involved in international cooperation and assistance, while NPOs refer to activities with non-profit organizations is limited to the domestic social organizations^[12]. Japan's NGOs often go into the region to carry out activities, solving the local people's life difficulty to help

the social vulnerable groups, such as farmers, women, children, ethnic minorities and people living in slums and poverty of victims and refugees, etc. Japan international volunteer center (JVC) international relief activities throughout Asia, the Middle East and Africa help local farmers to increase income, improve the quality of life with rational use of resources. Many social groups also have Japanese class, teaching Japanese and Japanese culture, and help foreigners with useful information^[8].

The role of Japanese social organizations

The realization of function transformation of government

Government departments provide the public with public products and services, which can overcome the non-exclusive and non-competitive of public resources and avoid the social injustice caused by "market failure". But the government in the allocation of public resources have their defects and the short board, that is the sole products and services. The government is difficult to meet the personalized demand of public service of the public, and in response to sudden demand side response is relatively slow. Japan's social organization can make up for the lack of government, share the burden of the government in public services, and realize the change of government functions.

First of all, social organization can meet the personalized needs of the public at a relatively low cost. For example, after the natural disasters such as earthquake, which affected people's life and health, mental health, public health problems of the disaster area, professional medical personnel and psychological consultant are all needed. Private voluntary of medical personnel and the counseling experts can provide professional assistance and support for the affected people. The government to set up specialized agencies, the cost is much higher than the social organization. Second, the mobility and flexibility of civil society organizations is more suitable for dealing with sudden demand. Social organization rooted in civil society can find people demand more accurately earlier than the government organizations. Establishment conditions of Japanese non-governmental organizations is relatively loose, which can quickly meet the specific needs of the public.

Constraint government power and supervise enterprise behaviors

Japanese social organizations as the third party strength independent of the government and enterprises, can constraints on the power of government and supervise the behavior of the enterprise. Since the 1990 s, Japan's social forces gradually changed. On the one hand, the Japanese folk strength actively participate in public affairs and public life of the country. On the other hand, the Japanese government reduces the intervention activities of civil society organizations for carrying out autonomous, gradually transition from big government to small government. It is very beneficial for the Japanese people through civil society organizations to express their demands. Government in the renovation of town or promotion of some new policies, will consider more of public demands which are passed by these social organizations, balancing the interests of each other. In addition, for some the improper behavior of the enterprise, such as environmental pollution, such as consumer fraud behavior, social organizations can help the government to perform the supervision of the enterprise.

Improve the national quality and promote social harmony

Japanese social organization not only create conditions for the Japanese people express their demands, and by organizing some public welfare activities, improve the national quality, ease some social problems, and promote the Japanese social harmony. With the growth of strength of the Japanese social organizations, more and more of the Japanese to participate in them. The Japanese public voluntarily form organizations, out of the narrow of the private sector, participating in public affairs and service, which represents the rise of Japanese citizen consciousness, right consciousness and autonomy consciousness. Not only that, the Japanese pay much attention to the training of members. By setting up training propaganda the aim of the social organizations and relevant content, the skills of members in the related field are improved. Some women's rights groups, for example, recruit some women in politics development every year^[8]. In addition, association behavior can help the disadvantaged groups of society, which maintain the social fairness and equality, and cultivate a good community atmosphere for mutual assistance between people. According to a survey of the cabinet office in 2013, 58.3% of the Japanese people have expressed interest in volunteer activities, and there are 35% of the Japanese people involved in volunteer activities^[7]. It can be seen that due to social organizations active in Japan, many Japanese people participate in public affairs, fulfill their civic duty, express an interest to help others, and many people actively involved.

Promote the development of economy and alleviate employment pressure

Japan's social organization provide quality services for the public, at the same time also promote the development of the economy, creating the employment opportunity. According to the calculation of the national economy in 2012 by the cabinet office for economic and social research institute, Japanese folk non-profit organizations recruit employees 1.737 million people, accounting for 2.7% of the total employment in 2012. As shown in Figure 2 and Figure 3, the Japanese folk non-profit organizations in the number of job creation and contribution to the total employment level are showing a rising trend year by year. As of may this year, Japan's jobless rate dropped from 0.1% to 3.5%, its lowest level since December 1997. Japan's civil society organizations contributions to reducing unemployment is very big.

Employment (Ten Thousand)

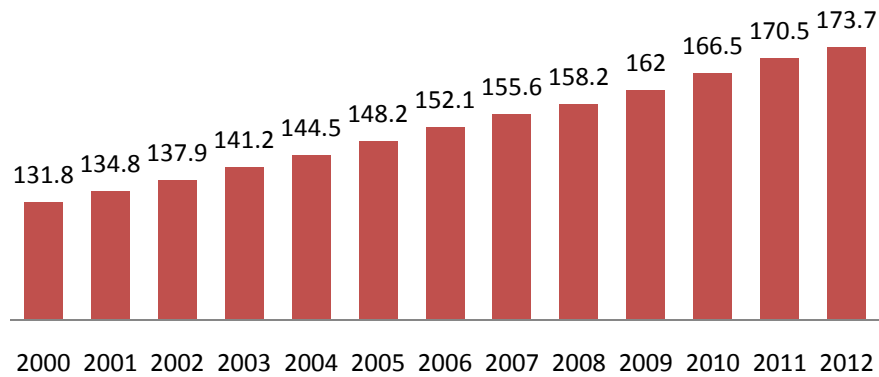


Figure 2 : Employment of Japanese social organizations

The Proportion of Total Employment

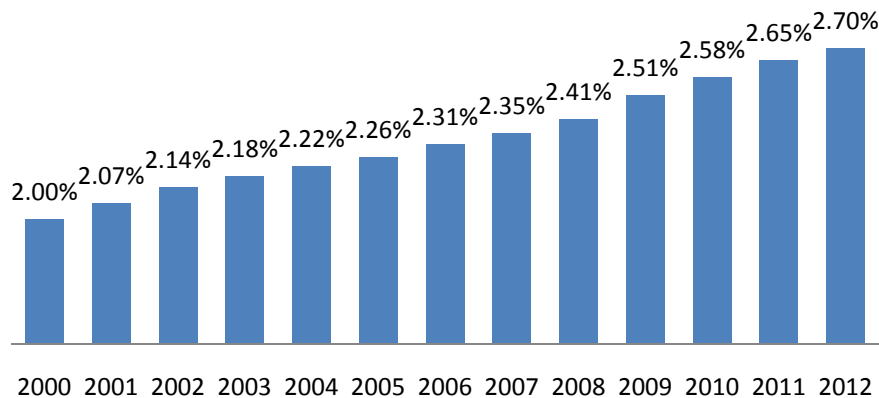


Figure 3 : The proportion of total employment

Participate in international affairs, enhance national influence

Japan's civil society organizations actively participate in international aid and emergency rescue, promote international and humanitarian spirit, change Japan's international image, enhance the Japanese people with other countries, which has a very active role in mutual affection. Japanese non-governmental organizations help residents suffering from natural disaster areas rebuild their homes, schools and medical center in the economic underdeveloped regions in construction, which has been affected by the region's consistent high praise. At the same time, the Japanese non-governmental organizations have also been actively eliminate misunderstanding and friction with other countries, promoting the official diplomatic activities, such as Yokohama Japan-china friendship association will often organize delegation, through holding all kinds of lectures and seminars to enhance people-to-people friendship. In addition, the Japanese non-governmental organizations participate in some major international issues in the international arena, the discussion of a certain influence on the UN resolution^[8].

SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCE OF JAPANESE SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS

It is not hard to see from the analysis, the Japanese social organizations in the economic and social areas have made outstanding contributions. For social organizations in China are still in the initial stage of development, successful experience of Japan's social organizations is worth using for reference.

Government level

The Japanese government's funding support for social organizations

The government's financial support to civil social organizations is the main source of social organization funds in Japan, especially in the field of health care and social services agencies, 45.2% of funds from the financial support of the

public sector^[5]. The government's funding of social organization is mainly embodied in three aspects: the project, funding support and public donations^[13]. In addition to the traditional way, the government provides borrow bridging loan interest subsidies to social organizations in the entrusted administrative business, or provides margin in debt guarantees, using all kinds of financial instruments such as donation, lending, bonds and investment way to absorb folk capital to help social organizations solve problems^[6,14].

The Japanese government's legal support for social organizations

Perfect legal system is the fundamental to the healthy development of the social organization^[15]. Japan civil social organizations achieve leapfrog development of today's achievements, which is the result of the Japanese complete details of the various laws and regulations. In 1946, the Japanese constitution explicitly put forward the citizen has the right of association, which create the conditions subsequent related laws and regulations^[16]. Perfect legal system mainly due to social organization classification system, and the corresponding laws and regulations can be found to regulate different types of social organizations^[5]. More than two-thirds of the Japanese social organizations have a complete set of relevant laws and regulations, the Japanese government is a good way to constraint the behavior of the organization^[1]. In the aspect of the tax law, by strictly define profit organizations and activities, to ensure that the civil society organizations can enjoy the reasonable tax incentives, and constraints tax evasion under the guise of "non-profit" name^[17].

The Japanese government's policy support for social organizations

In 2009, the Democratic Party of Japan who advocated national life in the first, implemented a program called "the new public policy." The policy will change the original monopoly of public service by the government to the new public service in which society and citizens are the main body in the whole society, to achieve "national leading" society^[6]. The policy mainly divided into two stages: the "new public" roundtable and the "new public" propulsion conference. In the first stage, the declaration of the "new public" and "the proposal of the new public roundtable with institutional requirements" were proposed. In the second stage, how to enrich the proposal and effective implementation of it and how to build the relationship between "the new public" and public administration problems are discussed in this paper. Social organizations gained the support from "new public" policy on the height of country.

The Japanese government's management's support for social organizations

In the aspect of the management of social organizations, the Japanese government also gave a lot of help, including sending experts to social organization for business guidance, opening assembly to provide financial reporting and other professional skills, assisting to build network, organization, propaganda and membership recruitment, etc^[6]. The Japanese government has formed many social organization support centers, the support centers play an important role in the hardware facilities, activities, establishment of cooperative relations between the government and enterprises^[1].

The Japanese government support for social organizations in international affairs

Japan's official development assistance (ODA) policy implemented by Japan's foreign ministry, and social organizations in Japan, especially the nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), which are more compact on the scale of institutions and personnel and have high flexibility, are Japan's ODA's best partners^[8]. As a result, Japan's foreign ministry gave the Japanese non-governmental organizations a lot of help in international affairs and many foreign aid are operated by NGOs. On the one hand, it promoted the international influence of Japanese social organizations; on the other hand, Japan's social organizations also can give full play to its friendly, reducing conflicts between the international diplomatic mission.

Social organization level

Diversification of the service

Japanese folk organization provides a very rich Japanese national service, making up for the inadequacy of the government on public services. Pension services, for example, it is well known Japanese aging problem is serious and difficulties of the elderly are not the same. In order to meet the diverse needs of the elderly endowment, Japan's social endowment institutions offers a door-to-door service, service in the day, short-term, long-term services and various types of services. For the disabled, mental disorder or physical impaired person, many pension agencies also provide shuttle service^[18].

Talent specialization

Organization is composed of people, talent is the necessary factor for the healthy development of any organization. The Japanese government for the sake of cultivating professional talents of the social welfare set up many specialized agencies and the national appraisal system^[11]. Members of the social organization can obtain the qualifications and certificates after passing the qualification examination. The specialized talented person can guarantee social service specialization and improve social service ability of the organization.

Independent legal consciousness

Japanese non-governmental organizations tend to have stronger consciousness of independent legal person. Although the vast majority of Japan civil society organizations have their authority, but different from institutions with the

director of the China social organization, Japanese authorities rarely involve in social organization activities and personnel, only supervising social organizations and providing financial support. Although many social groups accept the money of authority, social organizations are still actively expanding their capital channel. They don't want to subject to authorities, hoping to get greater autonomy.

The national level

Japan's rapid growth of the social organizations is inseparable with its solid foundation of national. In 2013, the cabinet office conducted a sample survey to a domestic 20 to 69 - year - old national. In the study of 3044 people, 58.3% of people said volunteer public welfare activities are concerned, and 35% of people said they participated in volunteer public welfare activities^[7]. Social organizations can have such a high approval rating and participation, firstly is attributed to the Japanese society organization own outstanding achievements, winning the recognition of Japanese. Second, it has to do with the Japanese government and social organization attaches great importance to the education of national public awareness. Finally, because of Japan's frequent natural disasters such as earthquake, tsunami, and volcanic to Japanese people bringing a lot of painful memories, the Japanese to non-governmental organizations represented by the disaster relief have natural affection.

ENLIGHTENMENT OF JAPAN'S SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS

The social organization development environment analysis

Japan as Asian powers, China's neighbors, is worth China learning, for it has a lot of experience in the development of social organizations. There are similarities between the two countries in the cultural, economic and political background, which creates the conditions for the Chinese social organizations to better learn Japanese social organizations.

Cultural background

The two countries both are located in east Asia, having deep roots of Confucian culture and in the process of realizing the national rejuvenation have also absorbed many western advanced technology and culture.. But in the process of economic development, many social problems also gradually emerges, which restrains the balance development of state. With the improvement of residents' living standard, residents lives are growing and population aging is serious.

Economic background

Japan is the country of scarce resources, while due to China's large population, per capita resources are relatively scarce. The high-speed development of economy consumes a lot of resources and environmental concerns are also growing. The global financial crisis on the economy between the two countries have caused serious influence. Chinese is hard to maintain double-digit growth, and Japan after the economic bubble burst has failed to return to previous levels. Stagflation become the dilemma faced by both countries.

Political background

Through several political reforms, Japan has gradually realize from the "big government" to the transition of "small government", giving more political functions to society. China is also trying to realize the change of government function, to streamline institutions and improve the efficiency of the government agencies, fully encouraging social organizations to participate in state affairs to provide social services. Social public affairs between the two countries have had the government-led stage, and while the Japanese government now basically achieved function transfer, China also is trying to undertake the transformation of the government.

suggestions

Enhancing the level of the development of social organizations in China and helping private organizations to shoulder more social and public affairs, is good for achieving the functions of our government transformation, improving the level of people's social life and promoting social harmony. But at present, there are large gaps in the overall level of development of social organizations when compared with Europe, the United States, Japan and other developed countries, especially in the organization's independence, autonomy, the perfection of laws and regulations, service ability and the public awareness of public welfare.

Organization's independence

Folk and grassroots features of social organizations make it possible to meet the demand of national wide variety of public, to overcome the government provides the public service of oneness. In addition, as the third sector organizations, social organizations is a good way to exercise supervision over the first two departments and constraints. As a result, the autonomy of social organization is the important precondition for playing its role. If social organizations cannot with independent legal person status participate in social public affairs management, like an accessory of a government department, it will not have flexibility and the grassroots, and also unable to maintain a neutral stance on government power constraint.

To improve social organization independence, the first is to reduce social organization dependence on government funding.. Japan's "public funds" provides us with good reference through various channels to raise public welfare fund. Second, the authorities should not be involved in the day-to-day management of social organizations. Competent authorities should be in the form of supervision and guidance for the conduct of the social organization. Finally, the social organization should play a role in the international arena, as far as possible to raise their influence.

Perfect laws and regulations

Perfect legal system construction is helpful to the standardization of the social organization and management. Perfect laws and regulations to some extent can prevent part of the organization under the guise of public welfare of misappropriation of public funds. The key here is that the law must be more strict and definition is given enough, to define public welfare activities and social organization and classification. Only in the law of public welfare activities and social organization strictly classified these two concepts and definitions, which is advantageous to the subsequent specialized laws and regulations, the activities and behavior of the social organization can be protected by law. If you can't define exactly what kind of activities for public welfare activities, relevant preferential tax cuts which public welfare activities can enjoy cannot achieve. The cost of Social organization activities will rise, restricting the development of social organizations.

Service abilities

Social organization's ability to serve the society is the core competitiveness of the organization, as well as country's basic functions in the the public life. If social organization can give full play to provide public service for social functions, they can greatly reduce the financial burden on the work of relevant government department. To enhance the ability of social organizations to serve the society, the first is to rich social organization of the service areas, to refine each service, showing the flexibility of the social organization, and to satisfy the masses of the people demand the diversity of public service. Secondly, the key to enhance social organization lies in the cultivation of professional talents. On the one hand, students on the social work and other related professional should raise their professional skills; on the other hand, countries should accelerate the construction of the relevant professional qualification authentication mechanism. Finally, countries should set up relevant social organizations support center, to help society organizations to raise their ability of competition in business and service skills.

Public awareness of citizens

Enhancing the consciousness of the citizen's public welfare is helpful to enhance the level of social morality, which is one of the effective measures to construct a socialist harmonious society. Enhance the consciousness of the citizen's public welfare on the one hand, should strengthen the propaganda of the importance to social public welfare undertakings, helping teenagers from set up the concept of public-spirited. On the other hand, the social organizations shall strictly self-discipline to put an end to all the destruction of social organization image. Social organizations will get the public recognition by improving its image, and people will support social organizations in the public welfare activities.

CONCLUSIONS

Social organizations, as a third sector which are making up for government and enterprises are playing an increasingly important role today. Social organizations attract wide attention of researchers. In this paper, the fields of social organizations are analyzed based on the development of Japanese social organizations. Successful experience is summed up from three aspects (government, social organizations, citizens). In the end, four recommendations are put forward: developing organizational autonomy, improving laws and regulations, enhancing the service ability and strengthening public awareness of citizens.

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