Social Implementation Process of Information Technology in a Mountainous Community in Japan

This paper addresses the need for developing social implementation as a "process technology" for the purpose of introducing "information technology" into the process of vitalising mountainous communities in Japan. Here the term "social implementation" does not necessarily mean direct application to society of what has already been developed as a prototype model technology in a laboratory environment. Instead it refers to the heuristic process in which "in lab developed prototype technology "is being fostered and synchronised with the simultaneous process of exposing regional needs. With a case study currently being carried out in the Town of Chizu, Tottori Prefecture, this synchronisation process is modelled as interactive two-way parallel processes of innovation starting from invention, product innovation, process innovation and market innovation, and vice versa.

It is also pointed out that as a characteristics of community technology, social implementation process of information technology requires its initialisation by "simple, small and fundamental technology" and it should not be started by "complex, large and combined technology". Based on the interviews conducted with actual customers in the case study area, illustrations are made to examine the above points. The paper concludes with an assessment of further research need for keep observing of the ongoing process in the case study area and for examining the extent to which generalisation can be made on the findings of this study.

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