

Strategy of risk communication on empowering disaster prevention actions

~ A case study of Mashima Elementary School ~

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After Great East Japan earthquake, the significance of education for disaster prevention is confirmed further and improvement of current education is highly required at every school. On the other hand, countermeasures against disaster at each household depend on the awareness of parents and so the level of preparedness resulted in large variation compared to that of schools. This represents a severe problem for protecting children's lives because they spend more time at home than at a school. Therefore, education for disaster prevention at school should be designed to have effects over school kids' parents. This research will discuss a case study of Mashima Elementary School, located in Nagano prefecture. At this school, disaster prevention education was carried out in the means of action research beginning in July 2015 and going into the academic year of 2016. The practice aimed at not only empowering children to save their own lives, but for them to influence their families in taking preventive measures. In particular, the practice consisted of delivering disaster prevention lectures once or twice a year, distributing newsletters every month, and using the newsletters to facilitate monthly disaster prevention classes. As a result, the execution rate of people taking actions such as securing their furniture, significantly increased from approximately 10% to 50%.

As a result of analyzing qualitative data, this research also proved that the data obtained can be analyzed with the framework of the theory of "Communities of Practice" (Lave & Wenger 1991; Yamori, 2006). This effectively suggests new criteria within the field of disaster prevention education. Moreover, this study discusses instrumental and consummatory values implicated in taking part in disaster prevention activities. The utmost goal is to be prepared for coming disasters and to minimize future losses. However, people who take part already appeared to also seek value in being fulfilled.

Keywords: disaster prevention education, risk communication, disaster prevention actions