

Population Structures and Housing Markets in Major Core Cities:
A Life Course Approach

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[SYNOPSIS]

The purpose of this study is to discuss the futures of housing markets based on an analysis of the population structures in major core cities of Japan. We examined first the future process of population aging based on a population projection technique, then analyzed the present situation of residential areas employing questionnaire surveys carried at selected residential areas in Fukuoka, a typical major core city of Japan.

The results are following.

First, while residential areas in the central region of the city are graying down at the time-point of 2000, those in suburbs are not. A population projection reveals, however, that population ratio of aged residents will probably rise more in the suburbs than the central region. Residential areas built in the 1970s near to the city margins have a stronger tendency of population aging.

Second, most of the parent-generation residents of these residential areas belong to a particular cohort, and immigrated from the outside of Fukuoka City. Most of the child-generation residents have emmigrated out from their birthplaces, and have not come back yet near to their parents. Therefore, these residential areas will age and depopulate in the near future. Some difficulties to maintain the infrastructures for keeping the life quality may appear.

Consequently, two types of housing demands will grow in the future. One is a general demand for new residences. This type of new residences, which are relatively expensive and targeted at upper-income earners, will be built at the areas adjacent to railway stations of major commuting lines as well as the central areas of the city. The another type is a demand for second-hand residences mainly by low-income young families with kids, who cannot cover high housing costs. Corresponding this demand, low-price residences may be supplied from large housing stocks at the suburbs. Therefore, the establishment of an active second-hand housing market will be required.