

## COMPLETION REPORT

### **Post-Mining Communities: A multidisciplinary analysis of post-closure coal mining towns in Japan and their gentrification history**

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This study found that Japanese coal mining industry had its own unique country-specific characteristics/features. The first feature is the tailoring of different mining methodology for different coal mine situations based on the coal seams' unique condition at each coal field. In the case of Japan, the depth of mining areas made the mechanization process of extracting coal resources more difficult. Consequently, the Japanese coal industry did not succeed in coal mining modernization, and remained as a labour-intensive industry.

The second feature is, after WWII, companies like Mitsui, Mitsubishi and Sumitomo developed productive mines outside Japan, for example Australian and Canadian open-pit mines. They also moved into other industries (like chemicals and heavy manufacturing industries) in the immediate post-war period. The third finding is that Japanese coal companies offered a generous welfare system for its employees, for example, company housing. Therefore it could be said that miners and their families were an integral part of the company's production system.

When facing mine closures, most Japanese coal companies immediately evacuated from the coal producing regions, and as a result, discharged miners and their families lost their housing privileges and the way of life that they were accustomed to in coal mining areas. Consequently, most miners had to leave the coal mining regions, which rapidly declined after the mass exodus.

Despite the hollowing out effect of depopulation, former coal mines like Yubari studied in this research are instituting coping mechanisms to manage post-coal mining local economies and conservation work. Schools in Yubari continue to preserve and impart historical knowledge of Yubari's coal-mining past to its students. These schools also kept well-organized galleries or heritage corners of collected material artefacts that served as reminders to Yubari youths of the golden era of coal mining which served as the genesis of their city's formation.

Yubari's case study is observed keenly by international observers as an example of how cities are eased into declining gracefully in terms of lifestyle and elderly care and physically reintegrating abandoned parts of the city back to nature as a kind of demonstrative showcase of nature slowly reclaiming back formerly polluted lands. Future research can be carried out in this area as a follow-up to this project.

As for recommendation, in terms of gentrification, Yubari can be a showcase of creative urban revival and demonstrate how the state, local community and local industries can work together to create a new role for an aging city. Yubari can be an effective showcase model for other aging cities in both aging gracefully and providing a high quality of life for its residents still living in the city and possible future migrants.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)

Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)

Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)

Palgrave MacMillan, December 2019 (Projected), Coal Mining Communities and Gentrification in Japan, Tai Wei LIM, Naoko SHIMAZAKI, Yoshihisa GODO, Yiru LIM