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## A study on management for vacant houses in settlement of rural spaces : A Case study of Gotsu city, Shimane prefecture

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Today, the increasing number of vacant house is one of the remarkable problems in rural spaces. It is caused by the depopulating and aging society. This study clarified the current status of vacant houses management of rural spaces. The author carried out local surveys in Gotsu city in Shimane prefecture. From the results, the following conclusions were drawn.

Firstly, descendant or emigrated households continue to want to own their vacant houses. But they are not so eager to manage for vacant houses, because they live far from the settlement. And vacant houses tended to become neglected over the years. Therefore, the strong correlation was with the place of residence of the managers.

Secondly, the managers of vacant houses were not limited to descendant households or closely related blood relations. Therefore, if a relative or neighbor willing to do either of the above could be found in the settlement, the level of management was maintained regardless of the generation of the manager.

Lastly, there are two important factors for continual management of the many vacant houses in the settlements. The first important factor is whether or not the relatives and neighbors in the settlements have the capacity to be the managers of these houses. The next one is the presence of emigrated, descendant, or related households in the same or adjacent municipalities. In other words, it is very important to be the human network of residents in the settlement for management of vacant houses. It is included unrelated neighbors, and the human network of residents in the adjacent area consisting mainly of blood relations were found to be the supporting pillars of vacant houses management.

Keywords: rural spaces, vacant houses, settlement, Gotsu city, Japan