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Organizational Operations

In Knowledge-Collaborative Community

Kazuhiro Ooyama

School of Knowledge Science,
Japan Advanced Institute of Science and Technology
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The purpose of this paper is to clarify the mechanism of organizational operations in knowledge-collaborative community. In recent years, knowledge derived from collaborative efforts is increasing thanks to the growth of the information technologies like the World Wide Web, groupware, and many other factors. A knowledge-collaborative community is a social network of individuals who interact through specific media, and crossing geographical and enterprise boundaries in order to pursue mutual interests or goals. The followings show typical example; open source community like "Linux", an online collaborative intelligence project like "Wikipedia", and community of practices. These communities have some characteristics which differ from traditional organizations, "participants act voluntary, not compulsorily", "people's motivations are various", "the interpersonal relationship is basically the horizontal", "rules and division of labors are settled on to build cooperation". According to such reasons, the organizational operations in knowledge-collaborative community are complex.

This paper adopts a qualitative investigation by case study. The following three communities that act in Japan are treated as a target of the case study. The survey data is collected by the document analysis and the interview.
1. MOSA; the purpose of the activity is "Sharing of intelligence and information".
2. Bugzilla-jp; the purpose of the activity is "Support of open source software development, especially bug-fix".

3. OpenStreetMap Japan; the purpose of the activity is "Making of digital map data that can be freely used".

The value created in community is informed to outside of community to increase the number of participants. To achieve the purpose, investigated communities use information created by both inside and outside. For example, inside information means event reports and open contents (sharing the product the community creates collaboratively). Outside information means articles written in blogs, news.

The Motivation of participant and the purpose of the community have strong relativity. To solve the problem, all investigated communities have adopted the consensus building for the decision making. As a result, the division of labor and the rule are developed. The division of labor includes an adjustment work in order to support the entire activity. For the work, the contribution of the participant who has zeal and expertise is needed.