

# Effects of Communication Education for Employees of a Japanese Company to Support Elderly Community Residents First Report: From the Perspective of Human Resource Development toward Social Contribution

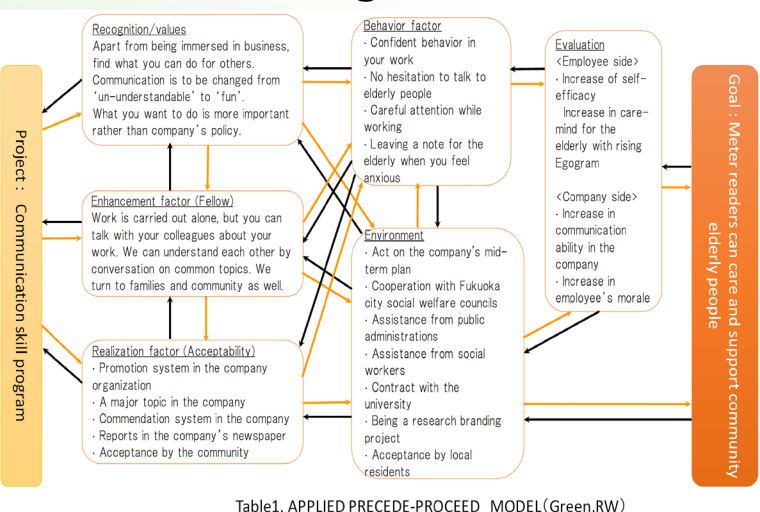
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**Background** In Japan's super-aging society, Asiatic family systems have collapsed, and the number of solitary elderly residents is increasing. As a solution, the Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare has launched the Community-based Integrated Care System. Our School of Nursing collaborates with a Japanese gas company that aims to develop human resources for social contribution and develop educational program for there employees. The company needed measures to educate their employees in charge of gas meter reading in communities\* ("employees") as supporters for elderly community residents (particularly those who are solitary and/or frail). Therefore, with a view to systematizing the Safe Life Creation Project, a project to help elderly community residents safely live, we held a communication seminar for these employees. \*Each gas meter reader visits households in the community once a month to confirm their gas consumption levels.

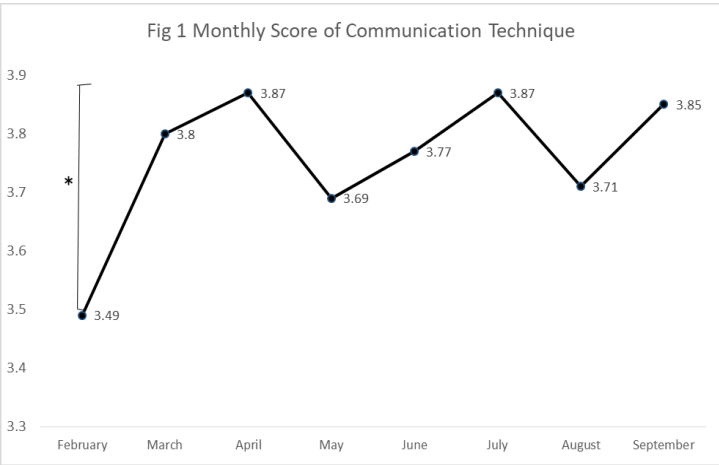
**Purpose** To clarify the effect of the communication seminar for employees as elderly community resident supporters through process and outcome evaluations, and provide a basis for the systematization of the Safe Life Creation Project.

**Methods** Twenty-four employees participated in the seminar (intervention group). During the first course between January and November 2017, 9 sessions, consisting of: lectures/practices, emergency care workshops, and experience-based learning in a salon for elderly residents at a community center, were held. In each session, group discussions were held to review the contents of education with the participants, reflecting their impressions, opinions, and demands. As a health education theory, the Precede-proceed Model was used, adopting a participatory approach. As part of process evaluation, the participants assessed their communication skills during each session.

They also submitted their monthly behavioral records. Outcomes were evaluated through comparison with 122 employees not participating in the seminar (non-intervention group). The 2 groups' scores from the Self-efficacy Scale before and after intervention were compared. The scale was developed by Bandura, and we used a Japanese version of it, created by Sakano. For both groups,the paired t-test was used,With the significance level set at 5%. As ethical considerations, the approval of the Ethics Committee of Fukuoka University was previously obtained.



**Results** In process evaluation, the intervention group's score related to communication skills increased from 3.49 in February to 3.85 in September ( $P<0.05$ ). The increase was particularly marked in scores for <attentive listening>, <nodding>, <repetition>, and <confirmation/summarization> ( $P<0.05$ ). In outcome evaluation, the non-intervention group's self-efficacy score significantly decreased after the intervention period from  $8.0\pm3.7$  to  $7.1\pm4.9$  ( $P<0.05$ ). The intervention group's scores before and after intervention were  $7.2\pm3.9$  to  $6.9\pm3.6$ , respectively, showing no significant differences. However, their score for <I have the ability to contribute to society> markedly increased from  $0.27\pm0.46$  to  $0.45\pm0.51$ . During a pre-intervention interview, they showed a negative response to elderly care/support, stating that they could <not afford> to provide such care/support. After intervention, positive changes in their attitudes were observed, as they stated: <Communication is enjoyable> and <I may be able to observe elderly people>.



**Discussion** Participating in the communication seminar, the employees began to understand the importance of observing elderly community residents. They became aware of their ability to contribute to society. Thus, the seminar may have been effective to promote cognitive and behavioral changes toward social contribution. From January 2019, a liaison system for employees to observe, care for, and support elderly community residents will be put into practice. This may also facilitate the systematization of the Safe Life Creation Project in Japan.