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## **Bricolage Perspective on the Practice of Local Cafeterias Launched in Disaster-stricken Areas**

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### **Abstract**

This paper aims to promote understanding of the dynamics of creative support in resource-poor environments for latent victims of disasters. The existing literature provides important insights on the practices of experts during disasters via the notion of improvisation, but also suffers a lack of systematic discussion of practices outside expert systems. Here case studies are conducted of two local cafeterias launched by private citizens in the aftermath of disasters that took place in Japan recently. From the perspective of bricolage, the idea of “making do with what is at hand”, both the outcomes and processes related to the cafeterias are discussed. By re-imagining the value of material and non-material resources, the cafeteria organizers were able to mobilize a creative disaster response that was beyond the abilities of experts and the existing system. The analysis of the two cases shows the importance of bricolage as a tool of value creation.

Key words: bricolage; disasters; local cafeteria

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## 1. Introduction

Disasters bring “the implicit assumptions of Japanese society [...] to the fore as critical situations” (Takebata, 2012: 142). In particular, the systemic deficiencies of professional groups and organizations, social welfare councils, local authorities, and other public and quasi-public institutions that are not able to commence disaster support because they lack the capacity to meet disaster-triggered needs have been revealed. In this way, a situation is created wherein people not normally concerned become involved. They think, “I must do something” for the victims not covered by existing support systems. Considering this current situation, disaster volunteers are garnering attention as actors involved in support activities that meet potential needs during disasters.

Regarding these disaster volunteers’ support activities, it has been observed that they tend to self-organize by uncovering the spontaneous and continuous needs caused by disasters as well as securing material and human resources. Atsumi (2009: 20) pointed out that the *raison d’être* of these volunteer activities is to present “fresh alternative options and stimulate opportunities to reconsider society as it is through negative capabilities in the sense of something not being your principal occupation and not being included in the market economy.” Atsumi (2001: 43) adds that the “real capabilities” disaster volunteers possess “reference expert knowledge provided and collaborate with various organizations, but always remain outside the existing systems.” Furthermore, they “resist being restrained by the logic intrinsic to the systems and respond as the situation requires with flexibility and imagination.” Konosu (2018: 49) describes the supporters’ position as “freelancers with nowhere to go,” as they are not subcontractors of public projects and do not belong to social welfare corporations or other organizations. She highlights that it is precisely because they have chosen this position that they are able to respond to various actors without the need for frameworks and demarcations as “agents of action who keep filling up *gaps* [in the systems] rather than creating *gaps*” (Konosu, 2018: 49). In this paper, I refer to these volunteers who actively assume responsibilities and broaden new options and possibilities outside existing structures as “new participants in disaster support.” I differentiate them from volunteers who help with support activities and assist the activities of existing volunteer organizations. I do not need to point out the difficulties in responding to needs such existing systems cannot cope with and in conducting support activities whose contents cannot be routinized as work tasks. This paper focuses on the practices these new participants engage in.

Many past studies discussed the processes by which support is generated. We have gleaned some aspects of these support-generating processes from records of trial-and-error engagement with support activities and approaches to overcome various challenges, including scenes of people sharing insights at shelters (Takezawa, 2013, etc.) and cases describing how disaster support groups are created (Atsumi, 2001; Kanai, 1996; Saijo, 2012; Tatsuki, 2016,

etc.). Characteristic of disaster response is “a situation where people gathered extraordinarily, who do not know each other, do work they do not normally do in a place they are not familiar with” (Hayashi, 2016: 3). Yamashita and Suga (2002: 182) also discuss impressions from the sites of support, reporting that they were “a parade of unexpected things and it felt like we just had to go for broke with no instruction manual to follow.” Situations in which “I have to try do something” and “I won’t find out unless I try” are faced constantly by new participants, anyone at a rescue site, government staff providing support, and experienced disaster support experts.

Atsumi (2001; 2008; 2014, etc.) theorized about practical knowledge that “implements rules while adapting them ad hoc” (Atsumi, 2008: 212), which is frequently seen in disaster support situations, using the concept “improvisation.” However, an issue with these studies is the lack of discussion on the bricolage aspect of improvisation, as Wang and Inaba (2019) point out<sup>1</sup>). The concept of improvisation is effective when analyzing cases involving players of optimal size that possess high expertise. However, it is limited when discussing the support activities of people and things that happen to have come together. That is, it does not properly address questions about the meaning of “ad hoc adaption” when it comes from persons without disaster support experience, and the process leading up to such adaption. As such, it cannot be claimed that the processes by which support activities are generated have been sufficiently elucidated, especially in the case of new participants. Thus, this study examines cases of local cafeterias in disaster areas run by new participants and uses the concept of bricolage, which has a similar meaning to improvisation, but emphasizes the work of “making do with what is at hand.”

Approaching the question of how support by new participants is conducted with the bricolage concept is also tantamount to recognizing the importance of each person and thing that emerges in the generative processes (Corbett-Etchevers et al., 2014). The new participants find new uses and roles for these persons and things that differ from the ordinary as they create their support. Naturally, we ought not to consider these practices, which lie outside existing systems and are rich in unexpectedness and randomness, as universal tasks that can be routinized. The reason is that the activities of new participants, which are triggered by the disaster itself, amount to “those who can, doing what they can, when they can,” even when the focus is on potential victims. Takebata (2012: 153-155) argues that “more than correct answers that can be normativized universally, the kind of ‘knowledge’ that is most needed

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1) While some studies view bricolage as an aspect of improvisation (Moorman & Miner, 1998; Cunha et al., 2003, etc.), others identify improvisation as an aspect of bricolage (Harper, 1987; Weick, 1993, etc.). Depending on the author, the words bricolage and improvisation are used interchangeably. However, since more researchers have been using improvisation more than bricolage in recent years, bricolage is often discussed as a feature of organizational improvisation (Di Domenico et al., 2010). In this paper, I use the concept of bricolage as distinct from improvisation as an analytical perspective. Bricolage depends on the existence of an accumulated repertoire (Duymedjian & Rühling, 2010). In this regard, bricolage emphasizes process and improvisation the results of actions—“improvisation can only exist from moment to moment” (Wang & Inaba, 2019: 68).

in real situations is *practical answers* [...] that are applicable and acceptable there and then.” This is also advocated by Yamori (2009: 32) in the sense of “lived knowledge” from personally having worked in the welfare field. He worries that you may lose the “flexibility of ‘coming up with one method that works’” even when “lining up 100 reasons why you can’t” because you are so intent on finding the correct answer (Takebata, 2012: 155). We have no answer to the question of who should assess the outcomes of non-profit organizations (NPOs) and private activities (Tanaka, 2011), and it is difficult to claim that there exists any “correct answer” with so many diverse agents involved, including multiple users in receipt of support, providers of funds and materials, and supporters. Even if referring to what are considered past “correct answers,” you end up with “what is optimal in the field in question,” meaning “practical answers” that depend on the time and place.

As such, the significance of this study is that it does not just highlight the existence of trial and error in support activities, but also elaborates the “making do with what is at hand.” This aspect is apparent in the generative processes of the activities of new participants. It shows the importance of the various elements that lead to and respect “practical answers” in every field rather than looking for universal “correct answers” for disaster support.

## 2. Survey overview

This study examines local cafeteria A in Kumamoto City, the site of the Kumamoto earthquakes, and local cafeteria B in Kurashiki City, the site of the July, 2018 torrential rains (hereinafter, “the rain disaster”). Both cafeterias were set up after the disaster to serve people living in temporary rental housing and those spending the life of evacuees in their homes. I pay attention to founder M who started cafeteria A and founder K who started cafeteria B, who are key persons in running these establishments.

I conducted participant observations at local cafeteria A on 10 occasions between October 2018 and January 2020, and at local cafeteria B on 6 occasions between May and December 2019. I also interviewed the founders of both cafeterias and their two co-managers. In addition to interviewing M and K several times, I accompanied them when participating in other local activities and observed their relations with other relevant persons. I also conducted interviews in settings where several people involved in the cafeterias discussed things, allowing others to complement the contents with aspects that did not come to the managers’ minds.

Next, I provide some information on local cafeterias A and B. Local cafeteria A in Kumamoto City has three staff members centering on M, who manages a nursery service, and is located in a meeting space owned by a Shinto shrine. Cafeteria A started in September 2017, one and a half years after the earthquakes, and as of September 2020, was still open once a month. The operating funds were covered using the small funds distributed by support network organizations after the earthquakes and membership fees (300 yen for adults, 100 yen

for elementary school students or older [free if you help out] [free for persons in temporary rental housing]). The menu consists of small dishes prepared by the three managers and their family members. There are 10–40 members, most of whom are currently child-rearing mothers living outside the cafeteria’s area. Otherwise, about 10–30% are residents of temporary rental housing, half of whom are men. Local cafeteria B is run in a couple-owned restaurant centering on K and her husband who have had a restaurant in the area for more than 20 years. They employ various funding tools including crowdfunding, membership fees (200 yen for adults), and fundraising. The cafeteria opened in December 2018 (about 6 months after the rain disaster) and closed in December 2019. It was open twice a month in the first six months, after which it became once a month. The menu consisted of hand-rolled sushi prepared by members together. The number of members fluctuated between 15–30 persons, of which 90% were residents of temporary rental housing, evacuees at their homes, and their family members and friends. Furthermore, half were men. I now explain my reasons for choosing these two cases by clarifying M and K’s goals for running their cafeterias and how they compare with other similar restaurants, considering the backgrounds of the two cafeterias.

### **3. Founding goals and positions of cafeterias A and B**

Recognition of activities known as the children’s cafeteria, local cafeteria, and community café has been growing, as they are easily approachable and expected to contribute to local revitalization (Sugioka & Hatakeyama, 2016; Asahi Shimbun, 2018). This social context is partly why the support activities of K and M, the focus of this study, have taken the form of cafeterias. Cafeterias A and B were started one year after the Kumamoto earthquakes and six months after the rain disaster, respectively. They refer to themselves as a local cafeteria and children’s cafeteria, initiating activities to create a place for victims and other local residents to meet and be.

When M first started the cafeteria, she advertised it without limiting it to local residents, child-rearing mothers, or other groups, although it was mainly run as a cafeteria for residents of temporary rental housing and evacuees at their homes. Looking back, M says that “the tentative goal” in the beginning “wasn’t food, but getting people to talk.” The number of people helping started with just 1 person in the beginning to 40 one year later. As M worked with a nursery service, she had anticipated that child-rearing mothers would come. I discuss this in more detail in Section 6, but it was difficult for private supporters to approach residents of temporary rental housing because their addresses are managed by the local authorities for personal information protection purposes. However, several elderly people living in temporary rental housing with whom M came in contact became members of the cafeteria. Each time they come, M asks them about their living conditions, checks on how the rebuilding of their houses is progressing, and gives advice. Since the rebuilding of the houses of the elderly

members was completed as of January 2020, they are now also able to help. Some have also continued to give support without M knowing they are residents of temporary rental housing. When I spoke to M and some elderly residents of temporary rental housing, a mother who had been a member of the cafeteria for a year suddenly said, “I actually live in temporary rental housing too.” M said that she noticed that people do not feel comfortable disclosing that they live in temporary rental housing: “Nobody volunteers that information.” This is because other victims sometimes say mean things like “it must be great to live rent-free.” This member started working after that and participated in the cafeteria less frequently. Here, support for residents of temporary rental housing ends when they recover or their living conditions improve.

Furthermore, thinking, “I’m sure adult society will keep changing from here on,” M is expecting gradual changes to the people served and goals of the cafeteria. Two and a half years since opening the cafeteria, M told me about her childhood memories and ideas for her life after retirement. She reminisced that she grew up in an environment where it was normal for neighbors to talk to each other, where people said things like “if your mother’s coming home late, eat at our place.” She stated that she “do[es]n’t want to eat lonely meals when I become old and live by myself.” Thus, she confessed her desire of “Why shouldn’t I be able to eat there like anyone else!?” in a few decades if the current cafeteria continues and expands. As evident above, M has flexible goals that adapt with the members and frames her disaster victim support in terms of the local activities she participates in as a member of the community.

Compared to cafeteria A, cafeteria B was urgently set up to meet the needs emerging immediately after the disaster. This is seen in how it was established and subsequently changed. After the disaster struck, the residents of houses that flooded on the ground level in the Mabi district were unable to cook at home for about three months. Thus, K participated in activities to provide evacuees and residents of temporary rental housing with provisions and food. Victims who learned the address of K’s restaurant during these activities later started to stop by there. There, K talked to the victims and heard about their challenges such as the lack of information when living in temporary rental housing and not having opportunities to speak to other victims living in the same apartment building. This motivated her to create a space where they could gather. As discussed later, she collected information from various volunteers, considered things she can do, opened her restaurant outside of regular hours, and started the cafeteria. K remembers that “in the beginning, all (the members) looked gloomy and nobody spoke.” However, now, members including local resident volunteers, residents of temporary rental housing, and regulars, men and women of all ages, engage in lively conversation. Especially parents were surprised at how their children started running around with bright expressions. Members from a few families would sometimes stay after the cafeteria closed to talk about issues related to child-rearing. Participation in the cafeteria helped form connections

between individual victims, and when they started coming less frequently because their lives and work returned to normal, K decided to close the cafeteria. The above shows that the initial goal for the cafeteria was to support disaster victims, but then it gradually involved a diverse range of local residents.

Next, I clarify the positions of cafeterias A and B by examining differences and commonalities with other cafeteria activities with similar operating models. Yuasa (2017) proposes the ideal types of children's cafeterias as those that provide care (individual support) and cooperative cafeterias (community building). We are also told that in reality, cafeterias "do not separate the two functions, but fulfill both" (Yuasa, 2017: 82). As mentioned, although a tendency is evident in the kinds of members the managers of cafeterias A and B had in mind, namely residents of temporary rental housing, victims of the disaster staying at their homes, child-rearing mothers, and local residents, they fundamentally did not restrict who was allowed to join. Moreover, while it was clear how they functioned as "cooperative cafeterias" that involved victims and other local residents, they also had the function of listening to victims and members. Furthermore, both M and K explicitly stated that they did not run their cafeterias in a way that specialized in helping poor children. According to M, "it's not the children who are poor. It won't do the children any good to specialize in helping *children*." K explained that when she advertised information about cafeteria B, "we would sometimes call it a 'children's cafeteria' because there's a lot of public interest in those,"<sup>2)</sup> but "our cafeteria is different from regular (children's cafeterias)." In fact, some elderly members of cafeteria B joked that "although it's a children's cafeteria, it's full of old people." Based on M and K's ideas about their cafeterias' names and tasks, and considering the attributes of actual members, I refer to cafeterias A and B as "local cafeterias" in this paper.

The characteristics and idiosyncrasies of each kind of cafeteria activity, including cafeterias A and B, are not a result of local competition but expressions of their managers' ideas and "unique" reflections of the managers' backgrounds, the locations, and surrounding environments. Likely, cafeterias are run across Japan because they are able to explore their own unique and diverse approaches. After the disasters struck, M and K moved between a range of options including one-off volunteer activities and material support. Ultimately, a children's or local cafeteria best accommodated the type of meeting space they wanted to create. After continuing the cafeteria activities for more than a year, the goals they initially set had gradually been accomplished. Naturally, their ideas and work in the field, as discussed in this paper, are rich with suggestions for community restoration and cafeteria management in normal times. However, the purpose of this paper is not to question how children's and local

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2) K thought about opening a "children's cafeteria" because many disaster victims told her they had "received enough support in meal distribution and such. If we're given free food on top of that, we'll feel sorry we can't go. If we're taking part, we'd rather pay money and eat proudly." M then "looked things up and heard about 'children's cafeterias' where you can eat cheaply. I then spoke to someone running a cafeteria and started thinking about the system and so on."



cafeterias ought to be run to deal with poverty issues or community building, but to suggest new improvement measures through the examples of cafeterias A and B.

As mentioned, M and K conducted proactive support activities with the help of work friends and family members on an individual level as residents of areas affected by a disaster. These activities do not include collective efforts that can quickly mobilize people and goods for disaster support. This paper clarifies how M and K, as new participants of disaster support, conducted such support in the cafeteria format. The paper offers suggestions for the social issue of a lack of knowhow about support activities for evacuees at their homes and residents of temporary rental housing, who are difficult to approach because of the barrier of a lack of access to personal information. As such, to address the question posed in this study, we organize the elements comprising the process starting from M and K conceptualizing the idea to run a cafeteria to the present time when they have accomplished their goals. For this, we adopt the concept of bricolage as a guide.

#### **4. Introducing the concept of bricolage**

Cultural anthropologist Lévi-Strauss (1976) proposed the concept of bricolage, which is used to differentiate between the scientific thinking of the engineer (scientist) and wild thinking of the bricoleur (tinkerer). While the engineer deliberately gathers materials for a purpose, bricoleurs (agent of bricolage) “makes do with ‘what they have,’ meaning whatever limited tools and materials they happen to have then” (Lévi-Strauss, 1976: 23). The concept of bricolage proposed by Lévi-Strauss has been theoretically developed in various fields including organizational and entrepreneurship studies.

According to Lévi-Strauss, “while the scientist uses structure to create events (change the world), the tinkerer uses events to create structure” (1976: 29). Regarding this, bricolage may be considered “the poor man’s weapon” (Inoue, 2011: 28), since the mindset is not “I have no choice because I am restricted” but “why can’t I help even though someone is in trouble.” This enables applying it to activities where those concerned are involved in a desire to resist structural violence. Genda (2018: 242) refers to bricolage-type responses as “adaptive responses,” explaining that “bricolage, which combines improvisation and instantaneous judgments, is highly correlated with tolerance of and curiosity about others, which are the consequences of diverse society, as well as rich communication among other things.” Reported instances of bricolage practice include discovering the excellent skills of persons with disabilities who cannot find employment because of legal definitions so that they can become key assets for their employers through training (Nguyen, 2019). In this way, the stance of resisting various restrictive walls, which is seen in bricolage practice, is shared by the new participants’ practices of responding to potential needs during disasters, as discussed in this paper.

Past studies considered how to explain seemingly chaotic processes where available resources are used to deal with new challenges. Bricolage's "repertoire consisting of usable resources" is at the core of bricolage theory. Bricolage addresses the repertoire and repeatedly "conducts a kind of conversation with tools and materials, lining up all answers that these materials can muster with regard to the task at hand" (Lévi-Strauss, 1976: 24). This involves recognizing "affinities" between resources, which means identifying and producing relationships between different resources. This work is intuitively expressed in the literary work of Tatsuru Uchida, who asks, "'But, can't this be used for something as well?' that is thrown at everything that humanity has collected, accumulated, and created so far" (Uchida, 2010: 108). Here, the issue is to the extent to which finite "things at hand" can be used not as "disposables" but by combining them with other things as "pestles" or reusing them in new contexts so they can "show a different side" and thereby, achieve new performance (Uchida, 2010: 102-109). To discover such "affinities," bricolage requires an awareness of exploring other possible forms of resources not constrained by common sense or conventions.

As mentioned, new participants not only supplement the functional deficiencies in responses by public institutions and professionals during disasters, but also provide creative support activities. They are able to extract themselves from the conventions and common sense of existing systems because they have elected a position outside these systems. As such, the bricolage repertoire consists of a "heterogeneous but finite store" (Innes and Booher, 1999: 15). That is, bricolage assumes the use of people and things that seemingly do not meet emerging needs (Wang & Inaba, 2019). More so than the people and things best suited to meet these needs, the use of people and things that seemingly do not meet them holds greater creativity. For example, according to Seki (2014: 73), "when the professional system is found to be lacking, the label 'amateur' applied to volunteers does not indicate their limitations as much as their potential." Here, Seki notes that volunteers who do not specialize in disaster support are likely professionals in some other field. Baker and Nelson (2005) also show that using skills acquired through self-study can lead to providing new and useful services. From the perspective of new participants not specialized in disaster support, the act of engaging in a field that differs from their regular work means a rediscovery of their own latent social role. The various elements in the bricolage repertoire are not "incorporated into any system in the sense of being fixed," so their "latent possibilities" come to the fore (Inoue, 2011: 24). Moreover, "why bricoleurs throw themselves into a critical situation where they have to employ bricolage" is not always clearly discussed in existing research. Thus, it is important to understand the practice of bricolage.

How is awareness of being able to provide disaster support on one's own and providing disaster support formed? Tanabe (2002: 12) uses the word "community" to highlight "a site where practice is continuously generated," differentiating it from conventional collectives that possess spatial continuity. Tanabe (2002) also builds on Heidegger's (1960) discussion

of “worldliness,” offering a viewpoint for pursuing the generation of everyday practices in recursive communities. He writes that “in recursive communities, practices are generated in the duality of sites where *one is thrown* and sites where *one throws oneself*” (Tanabe, 2002: 14)<sup>3</sup>. This recursive perspective suggests the importance of considering the communities to which the people in this study belonged before their desire to participate in support activities arose. Also noteworthy is the “collective dialog” that happens in communities that surround bricolage (Corbett-Etchevers et al., 2014). Contrasting the contention of past studies that the ability of bricoleurs to use resources should be considered as not only material and human resources but also “resources at hand” (Barney, 1991, etc.), Nguyen (2019) notes that there is plenty of space to elaborate these resources with the abstract unit of ability to use. For example, there is the importance of “the psychological facets of the bricoleur, notably on their resilience, self-efficacy, and capacity to overcome the biases involved in functional fixedness” (Duymedjian & Rüling, 2010: 149). We also need to pay attention to the bricoleur’s career until they introduce bricolage practices (Stebbins, 1996), and their “intrinsic necessity” of accumulating experiences of social activities prior to their support activities (Takebata, 2012). As such, this study examines the “resources at hand” of the two cafeteria managers including their personal histories until the cafeteria’s opening, the support community they engage with, convictions they adhere to in their practices, and their material and human resources.

Nguyen (2019: 38) contends that few studies have looked “at the processes of [...] how to extract candidates for new combination uses from the ‘resources at hand’ and how to best combine the resources.” One reason for this is the “perceptual asymmetry” between third parties and the bricoleur (Nguyen, 2019). In other words, both the restrictions on and potential utility of resources stem from the individual bricoleur’s subjective perception, which

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3) The subsequent discussion explores the concept of “communities of practice” (Lave & Wenger, 1991), where “practice is the main topic as ‘participation’ by throwing yourself into the community” (Tanabe, 2002: 14). While the discussion on communities of practice has some commonalities with this paper in that it employs concepts like “practice” and “repertoire,” it is also ill-suited for analyzing the subjects of this study. As indicated in “5.2. Contact with communities of practitioners,” one of the subjects of this study, the cafeteria manager M was involved in establishing and running other cafeterias despite being in a helping position. In contrast, K was in the position of being a service provider through her restaurant and gathered the necessary information through her contact with disaster volunteers coming to the area. The topic of this study is not so much “throwing yourself into communities” as it is communities “you find yourself thrown into.” Moreover, while knowledge and information were transferred between practitioners like cafeteria managers and volunteers for both K and M, there was no apparent hierarchical dynamic in these relationships. That is, the contents of this paper do not cover the discussion about “communities of practice” that tend to “be limited to certain skill groups” (Tanaka, 2002: 354). In addition, the theory on communities of practice proposed by Lave and Wenger (1991) focus on the acquisition of knowledge and skills by the acting subject as a “learner,” and is theoretically lacking in terms of explaining the creativity of the acting subject and their dimension as an “innovator” (Tanaka, 2002). This does not align with the contention in this study that cafeteria managers adapt to their circumstances while innovating and forming the distinctive features thereof. Furthermore, the concept of “repertoire” proposed by Wenger (1998) is explained by Tanabe (2003) as “a series of resources mastered through daily training and that consistently yield practices” (Tanabe, 2003: 118). This study also suggests that resources are accumulated and shared through interactions between people in a community, but I frame it as an approach to clarify learning processes. As such, my discussion in this paper fundamentally uses the concept of repertoire as proposed by Lévi-Strauss (1976) and related discussions.

cannot always be verbalized, so that the third party will only perceive the results of their making do. Furthermore, it is extremely difficult to understand how they are able to make do. Thus, Nguyen (2019: 37) uses the perceptual processes of Baker and Nelson's (2005: 333) definition of bricolage—"realizing a 'recombination of resources for new purposes' by only using 'resources at hand' and solving problems by 'making do'"—to organize and examine existing theories. He also takes a dissectional approach of further delineating the units of resources normally at hand for the bricoleur into smaller categories and reevaluating the components in diverse contexts. Similarly, past studies focused their discussions on the results of making do with the resources at hand, even when exploring the bricoleur's subjective aspects through recursive and collective dialog. For example, in addition to using existing resources for purposes other than those originally intended and as they are with the intention of substituting necessary resources (Lévi-Strauss, 1976), efforts to edit and expand the repertoire have been observed, including recombination by changing the positioning of multiple resources (Duymedjian & Rüling, 2010) and "compensation of [...] missing resources" (Nguyen, 2019: 44). Problem-solving thus "depends on [...] the existence of repertoires that have been built up over time" (Duymedjian & Rüling, 2010: 148). By analyzing how such resources are used in bricolage practice, we are likely able to approach what characterizes the ability and practices of resource use. As such, this paper depicts in detail the work of "repertoire editing and expansion" that re-perceives, utilizes, adds, and creates potential value in various human and material resources.

Based on the various arguments regarding bricolage above, I divide my discussion into Sections 5 and 6: "Resources at hand for the cafeteria managers: Repertoires of reusable resources" and "Making do with resources for new purposes: Efforts to edit and expand repertoires." The cases and my analysis thereof help us better understand the processes for generating support by new participants during disasters.

## **5. Resources at hand for the cafeteria managers**

### *5.1. Personal histories of managers M and K*

As mentioned, repertoires may change because of the bricolage process. Table 1 summarizes the repertoires of the two bricoleurs, centering on the resources they had before starting their activities. The "resources" used in this section and the next differ from those that result from repertoire editing and expansion, as they signify elements whose utility for new purposes has not yet been discovered.

TABLE 1. Personal histories and participation in social activities of cafeteria managers M and K

	M, founder of local cafeteria A in Kumamoto City	K, founder of local cafeteria B in Kurashiki City
Age, sex, occupation	Woman in her 50s, born and lives in Kumamoto, manages nursery service, former nurse	Woman in her 40s, born and lives in Okayama, manages restaurant that has been in the area for more than 20 years
Impact of disaster	Residence partly destroyed	Almost no damage
Qualifications	Nursery and mental care qualifications (food hygiene manager qualification 1.5 years after opening restaurant)	Qualification as food hygiene manager and fire protection manager as well as food business permit because she manages a restaurant
Experience	Cooperativity from working in various teams professionally and in private	Service techniques from many years as a restaurant manager
Participation in disaster support	Music volunteer, food distribution volunteer, membership in disaster support network, etc.	Providing restaurant parking lot for volunteers to sleep in their cars, food distribution, establishing a support group, procuring and distributing provisions, etc.
Social networks, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Local network of children’s school-related persons and friends</li> <li>•Nursery service users</li> <li>•Local cafeteria network</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Local network of neighbors, friends, classmates, etc.</li> <li>•Suppliers and regular customers</li> <li>•Having a restaurant space</li> </ul>

Both M and K come from the area affected by the disaster, experienced the disaster, had damages to buildings they own caused by the disaster, and were unable to work after the disaster. However, neither perceives herself as a victim of the disaster. After the disasters, both actively participated in various support activities. Both stated that they would “never have imagined” running a cafeteria or doing disaster support prior to when the disasters struck. Moreover, although having different job experiences, the foundation of their practices was the cooperativity and consideration they acquired through their work wherein they deal with service users. Therefore, they had relationships with friends and family before the disasters, and strong local networks of service users they had come in contact with through their work. The resources K could use for her cafeteria included numerous and diverse regulars and other customers, and the suppliers required to manage a restaurant. Likewise, M had her own diverse nursery service users as well as de facto connections with welfare and healthcare workers. M also joined a local cafeteria network immediately after the earthquakes. By understanding M and K’s subsequent activities, we may have the impression that their repertoires contained that needed for disaster support. However, there are many with the same personal histories as M and K who are not able to actively engage in disaster support. During my last visit to cafeteria B, I heard people saying, “I would personally help but never plan and do something from myself” and “because it’s totally different to help out from jumping into something.” Why were these two bricoleurs able to take the step into disaster support and how did they connect their own repertoires with that disaster support? I discuss this in the next section.

### 5.2. *Contact with communities of practitioners*

As mentioned, children's and local cafeterias have spread across Japan in recent years, gaining increased attention from society. Moreover, cafeteria networks, which aim to support new participants and facilitate interactions such as sharing ingredients and management experiences, are further stimulating this spread. M's cafeteria activities started in this context.

“The number of local cafeterias started growing a bit before the earthquakes [...] Several months after the earthquakes, I heard about a symposium about children's cafeterias, but I thought, ‘not a chance (so shortly after the earthquakes).’ [...] I was more or less dragged into it. XX told me that ‘I'm sure it'll be of use’ and dragged everyone there.” [M, 12/6/2018]

As suggested by the words “dragged into it” and “dragged everyone there,” M got involved in cafeteria management only passively. One year later, she started helping at several cafeterias, feeling that “those who want to should do it and I'll support them.” She said the following about how her mindset gradually changed during this time:

“It might be that people think I just suddenly felt I should start a cafeteria, but I think it took me a year. I helped here and there for a year and felt that (cafeterias) are necessary places. I got this weird confidence that I'm sure I could do it too. It's not that anybody told me how I should do it. I was able to start because of the things I had seen and experienced. To me, it feels haphazard, but maybe chance turned into destiny.” [M, 1/19/2020]

“Everything started with a snap decision, my own discretion, but everyone (colleagues in the nursery service business) followed me without complaining.” [M, 8/1/2019]

The start of her cafeteria business was “a snap decision” based on “weird confidence,” “the things [she had] experienced,” and “destiny.” While it seems contradictory, it suggests the need to have the mental preparation to take in various things. M considers the presence of her colleagues in the nursery service business the reason her cafeteria could be started based on her “snap decision.” In addition, when M was thinking about doing the cafeteria, she was a member of both the local cafeteria and disaster support network. Thus, she was conscious of “food education” and “disaster victim support”—the respective goals of the two networks—which seems to have stimulated her interest further. Meanwhile, more than the concrete things she learned during that year of practical work, she identified as important the experience of witnessing the processes by which the cafeteria managers she engaged with were finally accepted by those around them and local residents who had not initially understood them.

More than successes and failures in cafeteria management, her perception must have been “this is how it works.” This change is also evident in K’s narrative. We now examine the case of K.

Since the restaurant K runs is close to the station, it was visited by many returning from volunteer work after the rain disaster. In an interview, one regular told me that even before the rain disaster, K not only provided food from behind the counter, but also had a stance of sharing time and drinking together. During the months after the disaster, “she’d talk and drink (with volunteers) almost every night.” K looked back on that time as follows:

“I met many disaster volunteers for the first time, and we’d talk and drink for hours. I got to know more and more people. The same volunteer would come two or three times from outside the prefecture, saying, ‘Because I want to talk aunty (K).’ [...] After taking a bath and relaxing at night, I’d think it would be nice to talk with them next time as a fellow supporter. I’m not a victim and I really understand the mindsets of the people coming to volunteer. I wanted to be in the same position. [...] But my struggle every night was to come up with a way to do so. [...] I did it out of stubbornness.” [K, 7/21/2019]

The idea of “wanting to talk next time as a fellow supporter” was not forced on her, but likely developed naturally as she deepened her conversations and exchanges with volunteers. As she was having trouble deciding what to do, the disaster volunteers suggested activities and presented applications in other areas. When K, who was not sure what kind of activity to do, spoke to the volunteers coming to her restaurant, “a volunteer guy advised that it would be good to have a place to meet.” In addition, a woman staying in her car (in the parking lot of K’s restaurant) said, “How about joining the children’s cafeteria network?” In this way, suggestions and information found their way to her.

As described above, M took part in a loose cafeteria network and was involved in running multiple cafeterias. K was part of a highly fluid community of disaster volunteers coming to her restaurant. Their narratives reveal the process underlying a growing mindset of taking the lead in support activities and acquiring knowhow through contact with communities of practitioners. Furthermore, information intentionally obtained by belonging to a community of practitioners as well as information and experiences “somehow” acquired are seldom verbalized.

### *5.3. Volunteering that reaches the other person*

The support activities of new participants who get involved because of a disaster are usually met with distrust and protest from the people around them. When M had just started the cafeteria, the local district welfare officer asked her, “What do you intend to foist on the elderly!?” She would be discouraged: “It really decreases my motivation.” However, looking back now, flyers advertising the cafeteria were passed around with neighborhood circular

notices without her knowing as her efforts were gradually accepted by the locals without it being explicitly stated. In a similar situation, K also faced a headwind by continuing her activities.

“In the beginning, I went to talk to a support group because I wanted information about how to run a cafeteria. The person in the reception looked at me like I was garbage, like ‘You’re doing it too?’ The people in nearby stores were also bashing me harshly: ‘Is she that desperate to make money?’ [...] Right now, they (the local government) are even saying, ‘Please let us take part. Thank you for your constant hard work.’ [...] (The people bashing me) are now liking my posts on Twitter (about cafeteria information). After doing it for a while, people stopped grumbling.” [K, 7/21/2019]

Having provided meals and food after the disaster struck, K thought it necessary to tell people the name of her restaurant when doing support work so that the victims of the disaster could eat with peace of mind. She explained “who made the food where” and that “I won’t be going anywhere if something happens because I’m at the restaurant.” However, having supplied 10,000 taiyaki, a product she normally sells at the restaurant, for free, she was constantly told it is “self-advertisement.” This led her co-manager and husband to decide that “if they’re going to complain that much, let’s cut it at the root,” so they stopped selling taiyaki. The people who saw K’s activities posted the following comments on social media:

“When there’s a dandelion growing out of a crack in the concrete, there are those who say ‘well done for growing there’ and also those who say ‘look at that weed.’ I think K is a person who waters it and says, ‘It’s almost withering!’”

These positive comments positively evaluate K’s attitude of betting on various possibilities and not giving up despite the harsh looks society throws toward new participants. M and K received the misunderstandings and objections in different ways, but both chose to continue their activities. This choice reflects their unwavering conviction and clear purpose as to why they are doing what they are doing. The following statement clarifies this further. M and K said the following regarding how their initiatives differ from those of fellow supporters:

“There are those who look outwardly. Where are more dishes served? Who receives more subsidies? Who has more members? I don’t know why they do it. It’s no use competing about the number of menu items or people coming by. It makes no sense to compare these things. Anyone who agrees with the purpose is free to take part. It’s fine as long as you can help, like by giving some vegetables.” [M, 12/6/2018]



“Around January and February the year after the flooding, there were so many events [...] People were counting how many were gathering and checking what performances were on, basically making sales calls to (victims of the disaster), like ‘come to our thing, come to our thing.’ Support activities aren’t a popularity contest. [...] We’re not doing this to get something in return.” [K 7/21/2019]

They indicate that they cannot understand why people need to compete in terms of the numbers of people and performances when it is supposed to be support activities for individual victims of the disaster. The aforementioned narratives clarify that M and K do not negate their own activities from the pressure of the negative voices of the people around them, but separate themselves from such structures and discourses. K thought that participating in several activities in a short period burdens victims, so she decided to open the cafeteria less frequently when there are also many events. Her co-manager husband also did not want their cafeteria to be “associated” with money-making from attracting customers, saying, “It’s not a service business, so we don’t need to attract customers [...] It’s enough as long as struggling victims come.” Moreover, as K and her husband got more opportunities to interact with support groups, they decided to “get involved with people who are earnest in their work.” This was probably because of the earlier experience of the person who “looked at me like I was garbage” and an attitude of “volunteering that reaches the other person.”

## **6. Making do with resources for new purposes**

As discussed in Section 4, the bricoleur engages with a repertoire consisting of usable resources, reviews the latent and apparent functions of those resources, and repeatedly comes up with alternative plans and complements what is available. It also goes beyond “doing something with what you have,” as it usually requires efforts to add new resources based on “I really want to obtain that.” Based on the survey data, Table 2 summarizes the results of M and K’s repertoire editing and expansion as they recognize the utility of material and human resources, and add new resources. This section examines how resources are used in management, starting with those at hand, and how missing resources are obtained.

TABLE 2. Repertoire editing and expansion by cafeteria managers M and K

	M, founder of local cafeteria A in Kumamoto City	K, founder of local cafeteria B in Kurashiki City
Rediscovering the utility of resources: Material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coming up with menu items using ingredients donated by farmers and NPOs</li> <li>• Making lunch mats from old sashes brought by victims</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing private parking spaces as a place for volunteers to sleep in their cars</li> <li>• Making a dish out of fish caught from the sea by regulars</li> <li>• Distributing leftovers as provisions</li> </ul>
Rediscovering the utility of resources: Changing relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asking farmer contacts for ingredients or other help</li> <li>• Cafeteria space provided by shrine where the family member of a childcare service user is parishioner representative</li> <li>• Change of mindset from worrying about having the right certifications and cooking space to “cafeteria = extension of family meals”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drinking and conversing with disaster volunteers visiting the restaurant. Going from being restaurant customers and service provider to being seniors and junior</li> <li>• Asking suppliers for help, from transactions to disaster support help</li> <li>• A regular who works for the Council of Social Welfare joins the cafeteria privately and gives advice to victims</li> <li>• A boy in temporary rental housing who was bullied performs in front of other children at the cafeteria</li> </ul>
Adding resources (victim information, victim trust)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Victims participate more if you become acquainted with them at various support activities and festivals held after the Kumamoto earthquakes</li> <li>• Connecting victims with people in charge of support networks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many people participating in meal distribution and support activities after the rain disaster. Looking back and thinking, “you never forget the taste of the food you ate when you were suffering the most.” Victims join the cafeteria as volunteers</li> <li>• Calling on people through social media and at Mabi garbage stations (where residents of temporary rental housing come to read noticeboards)</li> </ul>

### 6.1. Rediscovering the utility of material resources

The bricoleur does not necessarily use all the resources in their repertoire in every situation and for every task. Regardless of whether the bricoleur is aware of the latent utilities of the various resources, they are saved and lie dormant as stock, ready to be applied in the next situation. Why was the bricoleur able to discover the utility of resources? By questioning the legitimacy of what is provided by existing systems, they may sometimes become aware of the superiority of alternative resources. For example, K gave the following explanation of how she ended up offering the parking lot of her restaurant as a place for people to stay in their cars:

“Hotels were full since victims were staying there as well, so there was no place for volunteers to go. I went to look at the place designated by the local authorities for car stays, but it was near a factory, without a convenience store, and pitch dark at night. This was completely out of the question for a woman by herself. Our restaurant has a parking lot and is close to a convenience store, so it made sense to have people stay there.” [K, 7/22/2019]

K was aware of the limitations of the location provided by the existing system and the advantages of her own parking lot when she came up with the idea to offer it to the volunteers. This may be considered a discovery that emerged from her sincere desire for the volunteers to be able to stay in a more comfortable environment.

Moreover, both M and K used not only what they already had prior to starting their cafeterias, but also creatively arranged and used things gathered through donations. For example, M made lunch mats out of old sashes that victims brought, and used them to ensure members saw, explaining that “this is what personal relations is all about.” Engaging with donations as not just “things” feels like a richly human endeavor, as it forms a response to the feelings of the person with whom you have a connection through that thing. In this way, the two bricoleurs prioritized using the things donated to them. Surpluses were distributed via social media contacts, and a policy of “not letting goodwill go to waste” was implemented. In the interviews with K, she often said, “There are those who want to do something but can’t.” Here, you could say she provided opportunities to “help just a little bit” as if speaking on behalf of such people.

In bricolage practice, what is more needed is not selecting things based on a predetermined plan, but rather making do in a cumulative manner while having some awareness of the plan. I now discuss a situation that left an impression on me during my investigation. After the cafeteria had closed for the day, I went with M to a meeting elsewhere, where another supporter who also provides meals to disaster victims asked for advice from M. It was about the human relations deteriorating among volunteers participating in the activities. The direct cause was differences in opinion between two volunteers in the kitchen on how to cut sliced and dried daikon strips, although the deeper reason their unwillingness to yield to the other, as “it has to be my way of cutting.” Regardless, either way of cutting would not likely make much difference for the support activities’ goal of benefitting the victims. To make do in actual support activities, it is important to have a mindset of “accepting mistakes” beyond the efforts and sense of responsibility of individual supporters, not of being bound by tasks and duties. Regarding this, I frequently observed that when M cooked at cafeteria A, she would ask the cafeteria staff and elderly members living in temporary rental housing questions like: “How should I flavor this?” “Try this. Is something missing?” Likewise, at cafeteria B, I often saw middle-aged men and children, who seemed to have little experience of cooking, preparing the ingredients for the hand-rolled sushi together. As they were rolling sushi with burnt or unevenly sliced ingredients, they made that a fun topic of conversation, revealing an atmosphere that allows mistakes and interprets failure as diversity.

## *6.2. Rediscovering the utility of human resources through changing relations*

It is also evident that they were using work-related human connections and networks: M through the people using her nursery service and K through the customers at her restaurant.

For example, regarding the location of the cafeteria, when a user of M's nursery service heard about her activities, she spoke to the manager of a Shinto shrine whose parishioner representative is a family member, and they decided to offer a meeting space owned by the shrine. Moreover, as mentioned in Section 5.2., K obtained information about past support activities in disaster-affected areas through volunteers visiting her restaurant as customers, creating relationships between senior and junior disaster supporters in addition to those between service users and the provider. K emphasized, "I had never heard the word Council of Social Welfare before the flood damages"; however, after talking to her co-manager husband, she discovered that one of the regulars worked at the council, so they started to come to the cafeteria privately. They would sometimes consult victims about rebuilding, who gave answers they normally would not have been able to at work, saying, "I'm just thinking aloud." Numerous examples of such rediscoveries of the utility of human resources through changing relations are evident in the management of cafeterias A and B.

Also needed to keep activities going is a shift in mindset to give members new roles or have them find roles themselves. M told me about her concerns right after she started: "No organization has your back, so you have to come up with all kinds of escape plans." Having worried about getting the right certifications and finding a place to cook, she says she started thinking of "the cafeteria as an extension of family meals." As a result, M explained hygiene-related aspects in advance and asked to sign a consent form. After the rain disaster, an NPO distributed lunchboxes to houses that had been flooded in Mabi, and K took over the cooking, making around 3,080 meals in 2 months. On the last day, K went to say hello to people in the distribution area, and one of the persons whose house had been damaged said, "You never forget the taste of the food you ate when you were suffering the most." After that, they joined the cafeteria as volunteers alongside some friends. In addition, the cafeteria activities allowed K to continue supporting a young boy and his mother who lived in temporary rental housing, whom she had met when doing activities other than the cafeteria. Once when the boy was handing out candy at an event, saying that "even though we were affected by the disaster too, let's do what we can," he was bullied when someone else said, "You have money to buy candy even though you're a victim of the disaster?" When K met the boy and his mother, she said, "I'll take the lead so no one is allowed to bully you." She suggested that they join the cafeteria: "Come to the cafeteria. The children (of the members) will be happy if you just talk to them." After that, they helped making goods that children enjoy, and the boy dressed up a popular character and supported the contact with children. People stopped saying bad things to the boy after he joined the cafeteria's activities.

These changes in relations are not simply the result of the self-emergent actions of people brought together. They stem from the trust of the two bricoleurs, which was cultivated with workplace contacts over many years, and from using local networks. There were also situations in which they "somehow wanted to involve" the people they met through support

activities and those gathering at the cafeterias. When the cafeterias opened, I was impressed that M and K changed their positions at times to check up on and speak to each member, staff, and temporary volunteer, taking time for them regardless of their age or how often they came. K thinks she was able to do this because she already had the habit of ensuring the customers drinking by the bar in her restaurant were not feeling lonely.

### 6.3. *Adding resources*

Previous studies claim that the bricoleur achieves problem-solving solely through finite resources such as a “closed” world of resources (Lévi-Strauss, 1976: 23) or “only resources at hand” (Baker & Nelson, 2005). However, many researchers also note that it is possible to strengthen or supplement resources through accumulated practice based on finite resources depending on the subject’s environment (Hatton, 1989; Nguyen, 2019, etc.). I observed in M and K’s cafeteria management an “adding of resources” predicated on the aforementioned “rediscovery of utility in material resources” and of “utility in human resources through changing relations.”

Neither M nor K had only information and knowhow experienced and learned in their respective communities of practice. They also had things acquired through their own actions, including information and the victims’ trust. In particular, since the addresses of people living in temporary rental housing and evacuees at their homes are not publicized for personal information protection reasons, it is difficult to provide support to individuals and groups who do not belong to companies tasked with watching over certain people or public agencies. One reason for the support disparity between residents of prefabricated temporary housing and temporary rental housing is the lack of consideration given to how information can be disclosed to private actors.

Because of this, new participants who desire to support potential needs must know where these needs exist, or according to M and K: “Victims don’t go to places where they don’t know anyone.” “If it’s a restaurant, they worry it’s just to get customers, so the challenge is how to persuade elderly residents of temporary rental housing to let their guard down.” Also evident in K’s words is that if you lack information about what needs exist, then you need to “work with your feet.” Both participated in various support activities and festivals following the disasters, through which they got to know residents of temporary rental housing and were able to invite them to join the cafeterias. For example, on her way home from an event where M had participated as a music volunteer, she spoke to an elderly resident of temporary rental housing while waiting for the bus. M told him: “I’ll be opening a local cafeteria, so please come by if you’d like.” Since they had seen each other at several other events, the elderly man said, “We have some connection since we keep seeing each other.” Thereafter, I heard the elderly man brought relatives and friends also living in temporary rental housing. Moreover, K told people at the newly built bus stop in front of her restaurant about the distribution of

provisions. Since there were victims getting off at the bus stop for a temporary housing area as well, that information spread very quickly.

In addition, as mentioned, we have examples like K asking a regular customer who works at the Council of Social Welfare to speak to victims about rebuilding their houses and M connecting a victim who had missed the deadline to apply for a damage certificate to the disaster support network she belonged to. These facts indicate that they incorporated specialized knowledge about disaster support and welfare systems into their cafeteria work and worked to provide care to the disaster victims.

## 7. Summary and prospects

In this paper, I used the concept of bricolage to examine cases of local cafeterias established in disaster-affected areas to understand the processes by which the activities of new participants are generated as they start to provide support after a disaster. First, I discussed the two managers' personal histories, their lessons and experiences from belonging to fluid communities of practice, and stances of consciously "reaching the other person" from the perspective of the "resources at hand for cafeteria managers: Repertoires of usable resources," which is the topic of this investigation. Moreover, I confirmed the "rediscovery of the utility of material resources" and "rediscovery of the utility of human resources through changing relations" as well as "adding resources" as an extension of the first two. This was from the perspective of "making do with resources for new purposes: Efforts to edit and expand repertoires." Last, I summarize the insights of this study and complement them with the following two points.

### *7.1. What the bricolage approach brings into sight*

As a result of making do with resources at hand for new purposes, the two new participants could re-perceive and combine the latent utilities of the elements of the social networks they possessed pre-disaster in the context of disaster support. We also saw how they acquired various resources to deal with restrictions, as they were able to approach potential victims through happenstance and provide victim care by incorporating specialized knowledge.

What they saw and heard in their communities of practice and the experience they built over many years in situations outside disaster support frequently brought about "outcomes" in ad hoc responses, usually "unconsciously." However, the processes leading there were filled with warmth and a sense of handmadeness that comes from giving added value to material and human resources while "accepting mistakes" in interactions with volunteers and members. To handle resource restrictions, it is necessary to take on risk while making improvements through agreement with members. Since "no organization has your back" in disaster support, the foundation of their practices is the "discretion" (Takebata, 2012) peculiar

to new participants as well as self-serving leadership.

As discussed until now, their practices have been about “making do with whatever is available,” but have not been “makeshift” or “irresponsible.” Instead, I believe it has been supported by “ideas sometimes coming to mind” and “constant creative solutions.” I consider this is a result and process of not just the two bricoleurs’ own desires, but also them seriously engaging with material and human resources as well as the feelings of victims and everyone supporting these activities.

In my first interviews, both M and K called their cafeterias “haphazard.” However, as I interviewed M and K more, there were situations that “weren’t really haphazard after all.” In fact, when I took a draft of this paper to M for checking, she said the contents “surprised” her. She reflected, “I’m doing this without being aware of it, but it might seem like this in other people’s eyes. But that’s true too.” Both have been asked to speak about their experiences and challenges with running the cafeterias in various situations. However, adopting a new perspective, this study focused on things that were left out in those talks, and although my efforts have been insufficient, I think some headway has been made.

## 7.2. *“Better disaster support” and “something better than disaster support”*

In this paper, I discussed the two new participants’ practices not as “correct answers” but as “practical answers” (Yamori, 2009). The unexpectedness of the resources used in generating their support and randomness of the routes by which they acquired them widen our perspectives. The meeting space of a shrine, the mutterings of restaurant regulars, bus stops, “family meals,” a boy who was bullied... These fragmentary elements of daily life allow them to rediscover the “alternative” possibilities of disaster support.

Studying through the bricolage perspective the support provided to various persons concerned provides an opportunity to inquire about “something better than XX” rather than “better XX” (Inoue, 2011). Although we should respect the “better disaster support” that staff and professionals in existing systems inquire about through their subjective efforts and goodwill, we must also focus on “something better than disaster support,” which exists outside the framework thereof. An example in this regard is “disaster prevention not called disaster prevention” (Atsumi, 2001: 52), which has long garnered attention. Likewise, Sugano (2020: 17) feels uneasy about the growing “echo-chamberization” of disaster support as it becomes too professionalized, worrying that “when post-disaster restoration becomes narrowed down to specialized institutions and cultures too much, we will miss out on usable resources and arrangements, becoming unable to secure the best means” (Sugano, 2020: 17). If we are too concerned with “better disaster support,” we might end up standing idly by despite the existence of potential victims who are isolated, the type of situation we must avoid the most.

Finally, I want to reiterate that neither of the two examples of bricolage-type practices discussed in this paper are “extraordinary,” although they are “distinctive.” I am certain

various distinctive practices by new participants will emerge and develop when new disasters occur in the future. M and K consciously approached potential victims without considering disaster support as the final destination of their activities. Rather, they ensured their activities could continue in normal times in accordance with the attributes of the members gathering. At this stage of my investigation, I have yet to encounter a statement suggesting that their bricolage efforts, indispensable to their cafeteria management, are considered a “burden.” These efforts to “let’s use what is available” and “let’s involve the people gathered here somehow” were likely things they practiced before opening their cafeterias. Having updated their repertoires and acquired confidence through their cafeteria management, they are engaging with their own respective new bricolage practices<sup>4)</sup>.

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4) In fact, the story about the two new participants continues. During the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, M is providing food pantries with handmade toys and kits instead of meals. Similarly, K is selling face masks with users of a support business for persons with disabilities that she started with disaster victims after the cafeteria closed down. Again faced with an unprecedented situation, they both engaged in new forms of bricolage practice. Bricolage practice is sustained through what remains after making and destroying what used to be. If given the opportunity, I am certain their practice stock will be updated too. These forms of bricolage-type practice are the active movement of social components when facing certain stimuli and continue to exist while changing their functional significance.



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