

In this research, we focus on value for care workers and try to understand what are they and what factors promote the value co-creation. Firstly, we examine the precedence research regarding non-monetary value and value for care-workers. Then, we introduce Reciprocal Value Co-creation model. Thirdly, we examine a case of care service provider to see how the reciprocal value co-creation happen in the real setting. Finally, we discuss promotion factors of reciprocal value co-creation.

2 Value co-creation in social service

In this chapter, we will first examine precedence researches of value co-creation and propose a “Reciprocal Value Co-Creation Model”, where both service users and providers each create their own value.

2.1 Non-monetary value

Toya classifies co-created vales in three categories as Monetary Value (MV), Knowledge Value (KV), and Emotional value (EV). She also emphasizes on the importance of non-monetary value such as KV and EV [2]. KV is knowledge accumulated in both service providers and users and make them possible to increase vale. EV is emotions generated through the interaction of users and workers such as excitement, joy and trust. As Mayeroff suggests, non-monetary value created in care services are like well-being or trust, we focus on EV in this research.

2.2 Value for care workers

(1) Employee satisfaction: One non-monetary value for service workers prevalent in conventional discussions is the satisfaction of the employee. Employee satisfaction is often talked about in the context of internal marketing or service-profit chains. The service-profit chain states that employee satisfaction leads to the improvement of the service value to customers through increasing employee loyalty and motivation [3]. Employee satisfaction can be considered as one of the elements to improve the quality of service provided to the service users. In other words, employee satisfaction is a method of creating value for service users, whereas the idea of it creating value for employees themselves is weak.

(2) Well-being: According to Baba’s research [4], value of “the act of taking care of someone” is to gain something that is “only brought about through a relationship with that person, something that is necessary for well-being.” Furthermore, “The act of taking care of someone is a relationship that is established through human interaction. It can be considered as a reciprocal relationship between the caregiver and the care receiver. It is not a one-sided act from the caregiver, there is something to be given from the care receiver to the caregiver, it has a reciprocal framework,” wrote Baba, suggesting a reciprocal value co-creation relationship.

2.3 A reciprocal value co-creation model

3.1 Outline of L'Arche Kananoie

The L'Arche Kananoie Social Welfare Corporation (hereinafter referred to as Kananoie) is the only community affiliated with L'Arche International in Japan. L'Arche International is a NGO which promotes to develop communities where people with and without intellectual disabilities are living together. L'Arche is operating 147 communities in 35 countries on world-wide [5].

Kananoie was started when the intellectually-disabled persons and facility staff living at a large-scale facility felt many problems living at the large facility and moved into a normal home in Shizuoka City in 1978 in order to live a more humanly life [6]. Later, the founder of Kananoie, Yoshihiko Sato, became aware of L'Arche. The activities of L'Arche resonated with him, and Kananoie became a member of L'Arche International in 1991. Currently, as a social welfare business, Kananoie operates group homes (communal living support) and multi-functional welfare service for the disabled. There are about twenty-something users and between 10-20 workers at Kananoie. At Kananoie, service users are referred to as “Nakamanohito (Friends)” and workers are referred to as “Assistants.”

3.2 Value recognized in the L'Arche community

After a preliminary investigation, the values provided by Kananoie to its Nakamanohito and the Assistants can generally be summarized into the following five values.

(1) Care services for the disabled: The care provided for daily life, employment support, assistance in communal living, etc. to disabled persons offered by social welfare corporation. Nakamanohito pay the compensation mainly for these services. These are value that is provided one-sidedly by the Assistants to Nakamanohito.

(2) Job opportunity: To the Assistants, Kananoie provides job opportunities as ways to earn income. To Nakamanohito, job assistance services offer opportunities for production activities (producing soaps, farming, miscellaneous jobs, etc). Users receive wages for their work.

(3) A place to belong: A place where one feels accepted. Where a person can be who he or she is and can express themselves. A place for an active life. A place to belong is created together by the Assistants and Nakamanohito. Kananoie is able to provide a place where they can both acknowledge each other's presences.

(4) Human growth: The Assistants are exposed to the qualities of the Nakamanohito, like “ability to accept others,” “ability to become friends,” and “ability to accept weaknesses.” Through this, they learn to reconsider their way of lives and shared values, as well as move forward in the pursuit of human growth and self-actualization. Through their experience at Kananoie, the Assistants also grow personally. Furthermore, they reinforce their own growth and self-actualization through providing care services to Nakamanohito. This human growth and self-actualization is achieved via the interactions between Nakamanohito and the Assistants. In other words, they are co-created.

	Extreme importance (Intermediate)	Very strong importance (Intermediate)	Strong importance (Intermediate)	Moderate importance (Intermediate)	Equal Importance (Intermediate)	Moderate importance (Intermediate)	Strong importance (Intermediate)	Very strong importance (Intermediate)	Extreme importance (Intermediate)	
Care Services		○								A place to belong
Care Services			○							Human growth
Care Services				○						Job opprtunity
Care Services							○			A connection the society
A place to belong								○		Human growth
A place to belong									○	Job opprtunity
A place to belong								○		A connection the society
Human growth									○	Job opprtunity
Human growth							○			A connection the society
Job opprtunity						○				A connection the society

Figure 4. AHP questionnaire asking about value for care workers

Using the AHP method, the weight of each value, in other words the level of importance accorded, of each questionnaire response was calculated.

Then, the average values across all responses were calculated. The average weight calculated using all responses is considered the levels of importance of each value as perceived by the Kanoie Assistants. Figure 5 shows the importance of each value to the care workers (Assistants) and to the users (Nakamanohito).

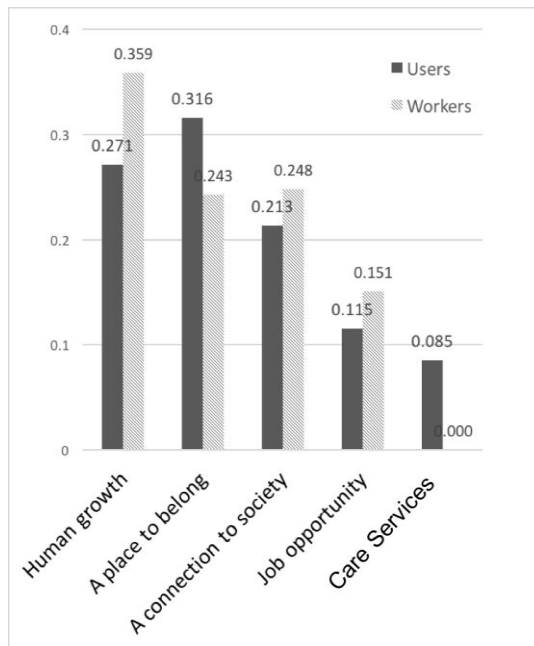


Figure 5. Importance weight of values

person who helped me. But after seeing that, I came to humbly accept myself as someone with seizures, with no choice but to have someone help me. I can say ‘thank you’ to them. I let my shortcomings and helplessness be exposed. I think having people recognize that you have shortcomings and deficiencies is a form of growth. We don’t change, but we can come to understand ourselves.”

Value for workers (A place to belong): “Because there is no competitiveness amongst Nakamanohito, for them, happiness isn’t work success, but who they become friends with. What I like about being with them is, even though I’m not successful, they still say they like me when I am just being myself. Actually, we are also seeking that, but Nakamanohito tell it to us straight, and in that way, I feel warm and happy when I’m with them. They teach me that actually that’s enough.”

Through the interviews, we are able to reconfirm that Assistants feel the value of “Personal Development” and “A place to belong”.

3.4.2 Literature Survey

Existing literature about L’Arche was surveyed to confirm the reciprocal value co-creation relationship. One of literature is written by Vanier, the founder of L’Arche. He addresses the personal growth of the Assistants and the value of Nakamanohito in his statement below [7]:

“I am touched by the stories of young men and women who have been in L’Arche for three or four years living in a house with people with intellectual disabilities. So many affirm that they have been transformed by the people they live with, by their simplicity, their trust....In spite of the difficulties, I can truly bear witness to the power of love that attracts many assistants and anchors them in L’Arche.... There is something that reveals to them the fundamental beauty of their humanity.”

3.4.3 Participant Observation

One of the authors is a member of the Board of Kananoie for over 10 years. His experiences and observations make it clear how a sense of values that stresses reciprocal value co-creation is shared and in what form value co-creation is promoted. Followings are an example of mechanisms that facilitate sharing sense of values within Kananoie:

A “Sharing meeting” is conducted daily. In the meeting, Nakamanohito and Assistants can share what they are thinking about or what is troubling them. The sharing session isn’t just a meeting conducted by the Assistants. It is a chance for the Assistants and Nakamanohito to share thoughts, and by thinking together, discover solutions. It is also common for the Assistants to be exposed to the gifts of Nakamanohito through this sharing.

4 Discussion

We have seen above the actuality of the co-creation of reciprocal values at Kananoie. We also found that reciprocal value co-created in Kananoie are “A place to belong,” “Human growth,” and “A connection to society.” In this section, we will discuss factors that promote reciprocal value co-creation based on Figure 6, the summary of the case study findings with reciprocal value co-creation model.

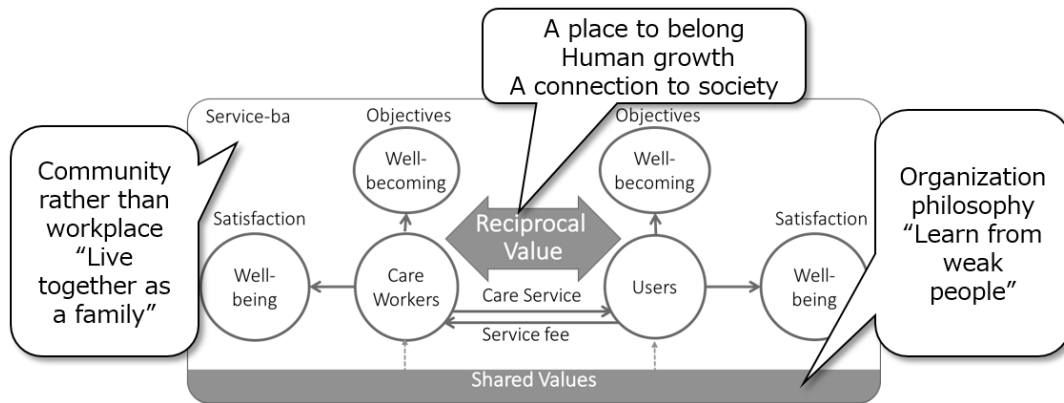


Figure 6. Summary of the case study findings

According to the McKinsey’s 7S Framework [8], shared values impact all aspects in the organization and play a central role in defining the direction of the organization. In our model, shared values are part of the service-ba. Shared values define the nature of the service-ba, and at the same time, through the service-ba, shared values impact the ways of thinking and behavior of the users and care workers.

The shared values held by the organization play a very important role in deciding whether a reciprocal value co-creation relationship is established or not. For example, if a service provider prefers “fuss-free service users”, they would avoid forming deep relationships with users as much as possible. In this situation, a reciprocal value co-creation relationship will unlikely be established. In case of Kananoie, as found in interviews, when an Assistant encounter a situation in which a Nakamanohito is incontinent, he doesn’t think, “It’s more work for me.” In order for them to realize the previously undeveloped greatness within themselves, it’s important for them to share the values such as “learning from weak people.” Furthermore, organization culture and training, along with daily events such as sharing meeting, are important for helping Assistants take this awareness and these skills to heart.

We believe that design of service-ba is also an important factor for promoting reciprocal value co-creation. Especially, how the users and workers perceive the service-ba is important. Whether the worker perceives it as a workplace or a community to spend time with friends, or whether the user perceives it as a place to receive services or a family to live together, how the constituent members perceive the service-ba affects the establishment of a reciprocal co-creation relationship. Through interviews and literature study, We can see that Kananoie has created a family-like service-ba successfully and has made Assistants feel that Kananoie is a place that they belong to.

5 Conclusion

Based on the above quantitative and qualitative research, we could confirm that reciprocal value co-creation occurs at Kananoie. The care workers and users at Kananoie live like a family and while interacting with one another wholeheartedly, they are able to realize the well-being of one another. We were also able to confirm that the three specific values in the aforementioned well-being are “A place to belong,” “Human growth,” and “A connection to society.” In addition, we also found out that the philosophies of L’Arche, i.e. “Learning from weak people” and “Living together like a family” play an important role in establishing a reciprocal value co-creation relationship, and it is important to incorporate these philosophies with the service-ba and to make sure that the all stakeholders are always aware of them.

We believe that in order to establish the co-creation of reciprocal values in a service provider, it is important for that provider to choose a value system that incorporates elements of reciprocity, then align every aspects of organization such as management system, organization structure, and decision making process, with that value system. Those aspects are difficult to change in a short period of time. It is necessary for service providers to use every opportunity to construct the value system persistently over time. By carrying out service providers’ operations in such way, this leads to the improvement of employee satisfaction as well as the increase in the quality of services provided to users.

Acknowledgment

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