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Hakuhodo Institute of Life and Living: *Dynamics of Japanese Sei-katsu-sha** 2012

Ken: Toward New Social Capital

The future of relationships: Groups of widely varied people gathering spontaneously for a purpose or goal

- One in two people have *ken*
- *Ken* are groups and networks of 13.4 widely varied people
- 76.8% of those that have *ken* are happy

In the months since the Great East Japan Earthquake, interpersonal relationships, *kizuna*, altruism and giving encouragement to others have been in the spotlight. When we at Hakuhodo Institute of Life and Living (HILL) studied *sei-katsu-sha*'s associations and relationships, we discovered that new groups and networks that differ from traditional ties of family, network and community are starting to take root. In this year's *Dynamics of Japanese Sei-katsu-sha*, a future outlook on emerging lifestyles published by HILL at the beginning of each year,

we have dubbed these new purpose-specific, open and fluid groups and networks *ken* (literally meaning *spheres or realms*), and named the act of forming these relationships *ken*-building. We believe that the reorganizing of relationships into self-selected new lifestyle *ken* that go beyond existing norms will continue. This paper reports on the number of *sei-katsu-sha* that have *ken* and how *ken* differ from traditional associations and relationships.

(Source of all data below: HILL's Survey on the Structure of *Ken*)

1 One in two people have *ken*

For the purpose of this survey, a *ken* is defined as "a group or network of people with a specific goal or purpose that you created or joined or that was spontaneously formed by people at a particular place to experience something together." When we asked, 47.6% of those surveyed said they have such a *ken*. 20.5% of those that have *ken* hoped to increase their number in the future. 28.9% of those that do not have *ken* reported a desire to have them in the future. Together, 49.4% of people hoped to increase or have *ken*.

2 *Ken* are groups and networks of 13.4 widely varied people

On average, each *ken* is comprised of 13.4 people who vary widely by gender, age, geographic area, occupation, etc. In addition, the purposes of *ken* vary widely, from the serious, such as community revitalization and contributing to society, to the casual, including hobbies and interests. 44.1% of those who have *ken* reported using their talents and skills or work specializations in their *ken*. The various purposes of *ken* bring out the talents of their members.

3 76.8% of those that have *ken* are happy

A high 76.8% of those that have *ken* say that they are happy, a figure 15.5 points higher than that for those that do not have *ken* (61.3%). Those who have *ken* undertake sensible, altruistic actions toward their *ken*'s purpose of goal, giving them great energy. This energy seems to make them happy.

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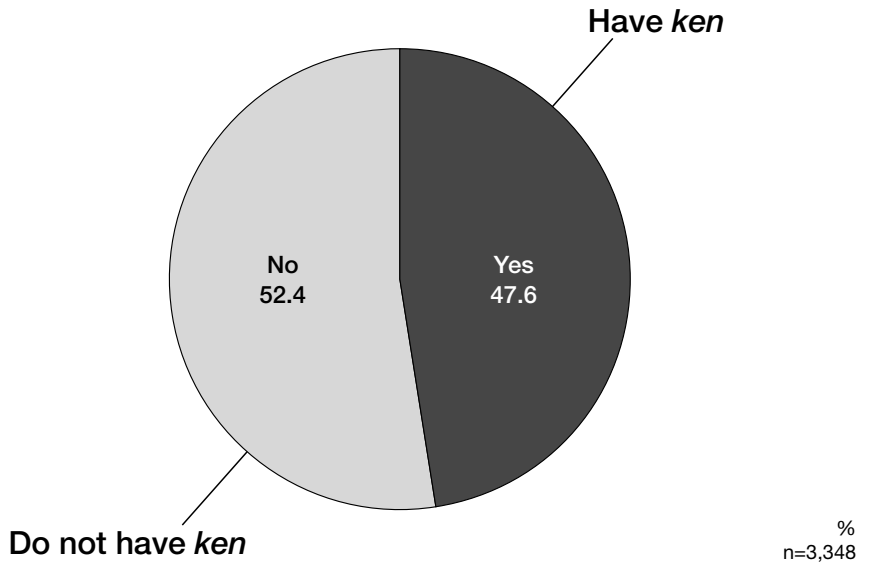
**Sei-katsu-sha* are more than simply consumers, just as people's lives and lifestyles include more than just shopping. Hakuhodo introduced this term in the 1980s to emphasize its commitment to a comprehensive, 360-degree perspective on consumers' lives.

1 One in two people have *ken*

One in two people have a *ken* comprised of various people who spontaneously gather around a purpose or goal

An ad-interim Seikatsu Teiten Survey conducted in May 2011 after the Great East Japan Earthquake showed that *sei-katsu-sha* were seeking to link arms with others while maintaining their autonomy. In our Survey on the Structure of *Ken*, which was conducted in October 2011 to better understand these new groups and networks, 47.6% of respondents said that they have *ken*, which we defined as “a group or network of people with a specific goal or purpose that you created or joined or that was spontaneously formed by people at a particular place to experience something together.”

Q Do you have a group or network of people with a specific goal or purpose that you created or joined or that was spontaneously formed by people at a particular place to experience something together?



One in two people also want to have or increase their *ken*

We questioned those that have *ken* whether they wanted to increase or decrease their number and those that do not have *ken* whether they would like to have them or not. 20.5% of those that have *ken* reported that they wanted to increase their number, and 28.9% of those that do not have *ken* wanted to have *ken* in the future. In total, 49.4% of people wanted to increase or have *ken*. That is close to one in two.

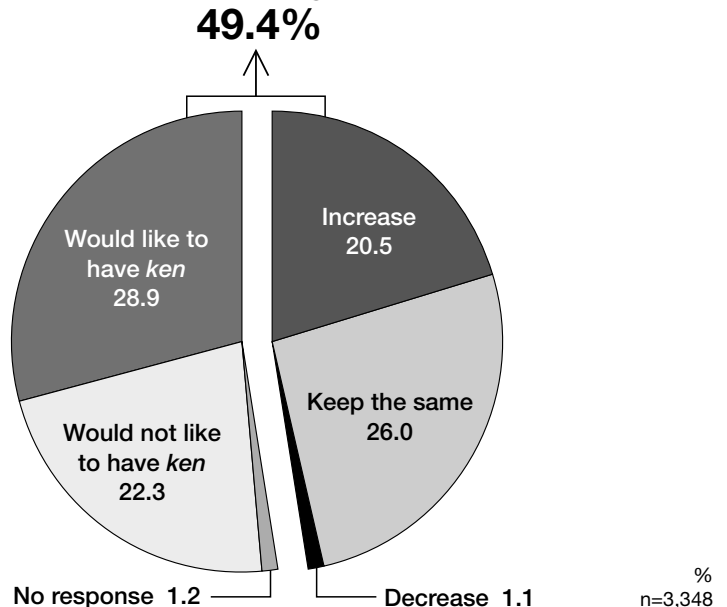
Intention of having *ken* among those that do not have them

Q In the future, would you like to have groups or networks of people with a specific goal or purpose that you created or joined or that were spontaneously formed by people at a particular place to experience something together?

Intention of increasing or decreasing *ken* numbers among those that have them

Q In the future, would you like to increase your groups or networks of people with a specific goal or purpose that you created or joined or that were spontaneously formed by people at a particular place to experience something together?

Intention of increasing *ken* numbers



② Ken are groups/networks of 13.4 widely varied people

Groups of 13.4 people of varied backgrounds that gather for a specific purpose or interest

When we asked those that have *ken* how many people make up their *ken*, we found that the average *ken* has 13.4 members. *Ken* members vary widely by gender, age, geographic area, occupation, etc.

Q Describe the gender, age, place of residence and other characteristics of the members of your *ken*.

- **The youngest is in their teens, the oldest in their 40s. They live around Japan, and there are some in Korea. Gender is mixed, too.**
(Male, 23, Kumamoto Pref., Net game community)
- **40s–60s; Miyagi, Saitama, Tokyo, Yamaguchi, Nagano and other places nationwide.**
(Female, 48, Nagano Pref., fan club of a favorite artist)
- **Males and females from Tokyo to Kyushu.**
(Male, 31, Fukuoka Pref., group of people looking to live in Vancouver)

The purposes of *ken* are varied, from serious to casual

Ken have various purposes, ranging from the casual, like hobbies and recreation to the serious, such as community revitalization and contributing to society. There is no noticeable trend toward the casual among young people and the serious among middle-aged and older people: men and women, young and old participate freely in *ken*.

Q What is your *ken*'s purpose or goal and what do you do?

Serious purposes

Youth perceptions survey group

We give opinions about problems and trends in modern society.

(Female, 25, Tokyo)

Renewable energy promotion NPO volunteers

Events and member recruitment drives for the effort to promote the popularization of solar and other renewable energy sources.

(Male, 48, Aichi Pref.)

“Space killifish” breeding group

We try to breed killifish exclusively among those that traveled around the earth 236 times in the space shuttle.

(Male, 63, Kyoto Pref.)

Casual purposes

Calorie group

We're a group of high-school girls who eat nothing but high-calorie foods.

(Female, 18, Aichi Pref.)

Magic group

We aim to improve our magic skills while experiencing the joy of magic.

(Male, 38, Hyogo Pref.)

Harley (tandem) riders group

We're a group of Harley fans that ride together. We post videos of our rides on the Web.

(Female, 64, Kanagawa Pref.)

The variety of *ken* purposes brings out *ken* members' talents

44.1% of those that have *ken* believe their talents, skills and work specializations are being utilized by their *ken*. A broad array of talents and qualities, including special talents, personal qualities and past experiences are utilized in *ken*, not just high-level specializations or obscure knowledge.

Q What talents, skills or specializations are utilized in your *ken*?

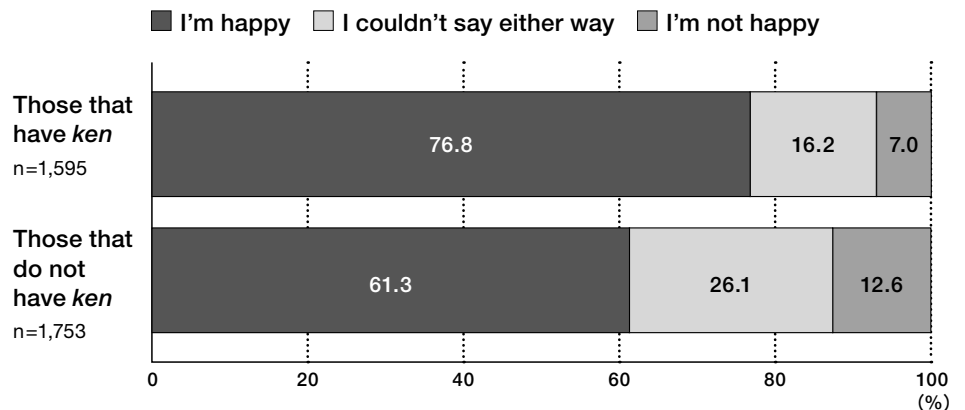
- **I'm in charge of the intricate parts of our handicrafts because I have dexterous fingers.**
(Female, 43, Kanagawa Pref., hand-made knick-knack group)
- **My talent as an initiator and mood-maker is put to use.**
(Female, 21, Osaka Pref., high school friends' problem and future path discussion group)
- **I use my rich travel experience to plan recreational activities that maximize cost performance.**
(Male, 63, Chiba Pref., group that has fun with Vietnamese affiliate colleagues)

③ 76.8% of those that have *ken* say they are happy

Large numbers of those that have *ken* report being happy, some 15.5 points higher than those that do not have *ken*.

A high 76.8% of those that have *ken* say that they are happy, a figure some 15.5 points higher than that for those that do not have *ken* (61.3%).

Q To what degree do you consider yourself happy?



Those that have *ken* seem to feel happy as a result of the energy they gain from *ken*-building

When we asked those that have *ken* what kinds of energy they gain from these valuable groups and networks, we discovered that they gain a great deal of energy from undertaking reasonably achievable altruistic actions toward the purposes and goals of their *ken*. This energy seems to make them happy.

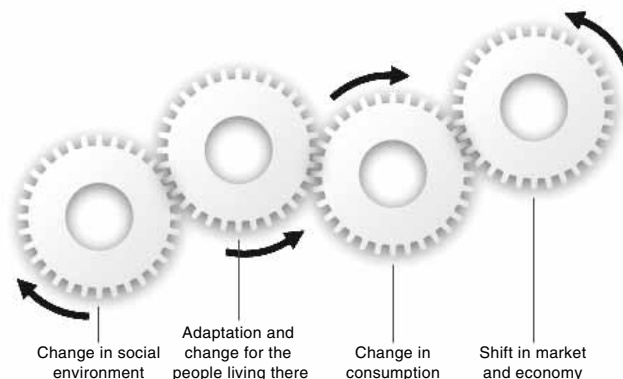
Q Fill in the blank to complete the following sentence.
 "I gain [] energy from my (valuable groups and networks*)."

*On-screen question shows the groups and networks that the respondent gave in an earlier question.

Ken purpose	Altruistic actions for the <i>ken</i>	Energy derived from the <i>ken</i>
Revitalizing our community	Various activities at the residents' association	I gain great energy from day-to-day peace of mind, even though global disputes are never-ending. (Male, 63, Shimane Pref.)
Discussing what it means to be happy as a woman	Sleepovers at friends' houses	I gain the energy I need as a woman. (Female, 24, Osaka Pref.)
Increasing children's interest in science	Conveying my passion for work in the space field to the next generation	I gain the energy I need to review myself. (Male, 39, Ibaraki Pref.)

About HILL's *Dynamics of Japanese Sei-katsu-sha*

Sei-katsu-sha are constantly changing with the ebbs and flows of population and the economy, advances in technology and the changing of the times. People are adaptable and flexible to such social change. As their environments evolve, they adapt the way they live to suit their will and desires. This brings forth new consumer markets. At HakuHodo Institute of Life and Living, we call these the dynamics of Japanese *Sei-katsu-sha*. Our outlook on emerging lifestyles titled *Dynamics of Japanese Sei-katsu-sha* is published at the beginning of every year.



About the publication of *Dynamics of Japanese Sei-katsu-sha 2012*

Ken: Toward New Social Capital

Published: December 15, 2011

Language: Japanese

Dimensions: 213 x 155 x 82 mm (3-item boxed set)

Format:

- Main text: 127 A6 cards held together by a ring
 - General theory section 100 Keycards
 - Background to *ken*-building • 30 Numbers Symbolizing Changes in Society
 - Characteristics of *ken* • 20 Feelings People Experience as They Undertake *Ken*-Building
 - The future of *ken*-building • 50 Scenes that Ensur from *Ken*-Building
- *Sei-katsu-sha* Map for Understanding 2012: A2
- Notice concerning survey data from the Survey on the Structure of *Ken*

Price: 8,400 yen (including tax)

Publisher: HakuHodo Institute of Life and Living, HakuHodo Inc.

For further information and to purchase: <http://seikatsusoken.jp/publication/> (in Japanese)



From 50 Scenes that Ensur from *Ken*-Building

Source: 50 Scenes that Ensur from *Ken*-Building in *Dynamics of Japanese Sei-katsu-sha 2012*

Farewell to pigeon-holes

Dividing people by gender, age group or marriage status. This kind of pigeon-holing based on social prescriptions is on the way out. If it is disappearing, then there is no longer a need to grit one's teeth and bear it. Like yesterday's "men who cook" and today's "lunch-box guys," people no longer stick to the socially expected, but go what they think best for themselves.

Changing love *ken*

New ways of relating between men and women are emerging. Cases have been reported of uncoupled men and women sharing apartments, relationships blossoming between people of the earthquake ravaged Tohoku region and Tokyoites who volunteered to help them, couples divorcing and re-marrying each other multiple times, and men continuing to live with their former parents-in-law after divorce.

Extra-generational connections

"Inter-generational marriages" between couples of different age groups. "History girls," the young women who are mad for feudal warlords from pre-Edo Japanese history. Online recipe communities where information on cooking is shared across generations. Connections that cross generations, eras and age groups are proliferating. "Communities of interest" are being formed freely around people's pursuits.

"Mixed-dwelling" ventures

Shared offices, where people doing totally different work sit side by side, are a hot topic. There are even instances of unrelated individuals that are neither corporate workers nor freelancers building a place for themselves and going on to create new businesses together. And it's not just in the workplace. At home and in the classroom, new ideas arise when vastly different people spend time alongside each other.

Flash good deeds

Following the Great East Japan Earthquake, groups of people formed spontaneously for various specific purposes. Neighbors used e-mail to arrange their own "shared taxis" to save fuel and groups formed to visit evacuation centers to promote evacuee health and teach about disaster prevention. More and more people are coming together to achieve a purpose on a project-by-project basis.

From lone to shared child-rearing

Shared child-rearing between several families rather than each raising their kids alone is a growing phenomenon. New-style large "families" are emerging that have pot-luck lunches to save food money and that spend their weekends together. "Twitter Moms" exchange tweets like "My kid is bawling," and "Mine, too!" The advent of such new families could mean new markets, too.

About the Survey on the Structure of *Ken*

Territory: All 47 prefectures of Japan

Method: Internet survey

Target population: 3,348 males and females aged 15–69

Allocated to 8 geographical areas across Japan according census population data.

Allocated equally by age, in 10-year increments. However, as the teen cohort is aged 15–19, the allocation is half the size of other cohorts.

Males: 1,674 (154 males aged 15–19; 304 males each aged 20–29, 30–39, 40–49, 50–59, 60–69)

Females: 1,674 (154 females aged 15–19; 304 females each aged 20–29, 30–39, 40–49, 50–59, 60–69)

Area	Prefectures	Samples
Hokkaido	Hokkaido	154
Tohoku	Aomori, Iwate, Miyagi, Akita, Yamagata, Fukushima	232
Kanto	Ibaraki, Tochigi, Gunma, Saitama, Chiba, Tokyo, Kanagawa	1,144
Chubu	Niigata, Toyama, Ishikawa, Fukui, Yamanashi, Nagano, Gifu, Shizuoka, Aichi, Mie	606
Kinki	Shiga, Kyoto, Osaka, Hyogo, Nara, Wakayama	550
Chugoku	Tottori, Shimane, Okayama, Hiroshima, Yamaguchi	198
Shikoku	Tokushima, Kagawa, Ehime, Kochi	100
Kyushu	Fukuoka, Saga, Nagasaki, Kumamoto, Oita, Miyazaki, Kagoshima, Okinawa	364
Total		3,348

Survey period: Friday, October 14–Monday, October 17, 2011

Planning/Analysis: Hakuhodo Institute of Life and Living

Implementation/Tabulation: Macromill, Inc.

About the Survey on the Structure of *Ken* Report

A report on the new groups and networks that people have been creating spontaneously. The report looks at the proportion of *sei-katsu-sha* who have *ken*, the characteristics of *ken*, and the kinds of people who have *ken*. It presents quantitative analysis from the survey as well as real comments from respondents.

Characteristics of <i>ken</i>	1. <i>Ken</i> are gatherings of an average of 13.4 widely varied people
	2. <i>Ken</i> have diverse purposes
	3. <i>Ken</i> draw on the talents of over 40%
	4. <i>Ken</i> entail the use of Internet services for 30%
	5. <i>Ken</i> generate active consumption
Profile of people who have <i>ken</i>	1. Those that have <i>ken</i> mix easily with anyone
	2. Those that have <i>ken</i> are clever selectors
	3. Those that have <i>ken</i> are users of multiple channels
	4. Those that have <i>ken</i> attract others and spread news
	5. Those that have <i>ken</i> have confidence in their own abilities and gain confidence from belonging
	6. Those that have <i>ken</i> gain happiness from the energy created by their <i>ken</i>

See the Survey on the Structure of *Ken* Report for details.