

# Review of: "How Social Infrastructure Saves Lives: A Quantitative Analysis of Japan's 3/11 Disasters"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

This paper provides insightful view on DRR and will be beneficial in elevating our resilience.

I would like to raise two points regarding the shrines. Firstly, it would be true that many people could survive through evacuating to and staying at shrines, but there's a possibility that it doesn't have to be a shrine, and that the point was just their location. If more convenient facilities had been built on such high ground, more people may have been able to survive. Secondly, such religious facilities functioned as shelter often without national or local government's physical support. Due to strict interpretation of the separation principle between church and state in Japan, before the 3/11 disaster only a few facilities had had an agreement with a local government for emergency. Regardless of the situation, many religious facilities including shrines functioned as shelter. If governments had been more aware of the reality of people's evacuation, running such shelters would have become smoother and more people could have survived.

The other point I would like to mention is the importance of involving local communities in decision makings relating to building of gray infrastructure. A few years after the 3/11 disaster, such decision makings became a hot issue in the affected area. In some areas local communities proactively accepted the government's plan and renewed its evacuation plan and other relevant policies accordingly. There is a possibility that the mortal rate would become lower in such areas. On the other hand, if a gray infrastructure is built against local communities' intention, the situation became worse and complicated.