

Abstracts

Protection of Employment of Young Workers: Analysis of Cases on Withdrawal of Employment Offers of Regular Employees and Termination of Employment of Fixed-term Employees and Temporary Agency Workers

Hisashi Takeuchi-Okuno (Rikkyo University)

This article makes an analysis of recent cases on withdrawal of employment offers of regular employees and termination of employment of fixed-term employees and temporary agency workers. Increasing numbers of young workers are encountering these problems as their employment status becomes more precarious. While the courts provide reasonably adequate protection to workers who face withdrawal of a job offer as a regular employee, they afford limited employment protection to fixed-term employees and temporary agency workers: some recent cases indicate the possibility of narrowing the application of the case-law protection against refusals to renew fixed-term employment contracts; the case law provides temporary agency workers with almost no protection against termination of employment at the end of their contract term.

Trends and Issues on Youth Policies after the “Plan for Independence and Challenges of Youth”: Focusing on Career Education Policy

Koichiro Komikawa (Hosei University)

The “Plan for Independence and Challenges of Youth (PICA)” (2003) declared by the Japanese government suggested the arrival of new stage in the field of youth policies. In this paper the analysis pays attention to the fact that PICA was the first comprehensive (inter-governmental offices) youth policy in Japan, and that it was actualized in the midst of the second stage of the neoliberal social reform. First, the features of PICA are clarified in comparison with former youth policies. It was epoch-making in that the ministries of education, employment and industry cooperated for the empowerment of young people for the first time in this country. Second, why PICA was framed in the first half of 2000s is considered in connection with the developmental phase of neoliberal social reform. In Japan the process of neoliberal social reform has developed from the stage of “market fundamentalism” to that of a “developmental state”, from the stage of “social inclusion” to that of “social exclusion.” The latter phase of neoliberalism brought serious conflicts into Japanese social system, especially in the “school to work” transition of young people. PICA was introduced as a remedy aimed at this problem. Third, the career education policy among the many agenda of PICA is focused upon to examine the execution process. As a result it is critically pointed out that the role of vocational education and training is quite vague in the current career education, and that the budget is very tight.

What do We have to tell to Non-Elite University Students? The Social Meaning of the “Marginal University”

Koh Igami (Kobe International University)

Higher education in our country converted its policy from “planning-oriented” to “market-oriented” over the last 20 years from the '90s. Accordingly, we now can see widely that students, who vary widely in their degree of social skill development such as understanding and making social relationships with things/others, can easily enter university without any competitive selection in entrance examination. This makes it difficult to think that universities are to serve only as institutes to provide a societal elite, and therefore we now need a new concept, such as that universities are to serve also to provide for the non-elite of the society. I would like to conceptualize the new type of universities as “marginal universities,” in the meaning that they are situated in a “peripheral” position whereas traditional universities are in the “core” position. The relative inferiority of mental development of students in such “marginal universities” deprives them of the possibility of getting a decent job in this society, and many of the graduates are obliged to have to develop a non-elite career. What sort of educational contribution can teachers in the marginal university offer to students to get a recognized job in this

society? In this paper, I would like to consider the possibility of enhancing “employability” with thoroughgoing re-acquisition of basic education, and emphasize the necessity in university education of helping to foster their indispensable ability to state “objections” against the society as a non-elite.

Changes in Recruitment by Japanese Manufacturing Companies: Evidence from two Case Studies

Park Hongmoon (Kobe University)

This paper examines changes in the behavior adopted by manufacturing divisions through case studies on two manufacturing companies. In this paper, a major steelmaker and a major machinery maker are investigated. The findings are summarized as follows: First, both companies share similar issues such as supervisor development and skill succession, because of the inhibition of recruitment during past recessions. Second, according to their human resources policies, they have taken different adjustments. In order to develop its human resources from a long-term perspective, the steelmaker has maintained regular employment and has increased its mid-career recruitment. On the contrary, the machinery maker with job standardization focused upon non-regular employees and converted some of such personnel into regular workers. These findings suggest that collective recruitment of new graduates as Japanese practice is only valid under stable conditions such as a high economic growth period, and the Japanese companies' adopted modes will diversify with the increase of uncertainty in the business environment.

Career Development through Non-Regular Employment: An Analysis of Prescribed Factors in the Transition to Regular Employee Inclusive of Promotion

Reiko Kosugi (The Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training)

When viewed from the perspective of career development, the current situation whereby the proportion of young workers involved in non-regular employment with poor opportunities for skills development is a problematic one. Not only improving the conditions of non-regular employment but encouraging the transition from non-regular employment to regular employee is a vital policy issue. In this paper, the status of transitions from non-regular employment to regular employee is clarified through a work history survey of workers in the 25-44 year old age group, and analyzed the factors separating work histories which make this transition compared to ones which do not. The results showed that 13.9% of all current regular employees had experienced a transition from non-regular employment to regular employee, 20% of such cases being through promotion within the same workplace. Factors separating a transition to becoming a regular employee from failure to make such a transition were categorized as (1) conditions for higher possibilities emphasized in recruitment by the corporation, (2) the attributes and awareness of the individual, and (3) conditions governing the strength of demand for employment. (2) and (3) were set as control variables, while a quantitative analysis based upon the conditions of (1) was carried out. The result of this confirmed that the transition to regular employee usually occurred in the early twenties, while promotion occurred as often in the late twenties, and that job training outside of work and personal development were effective in the case of promotion, and further that those working hours equivalent to regular employees were promoted. Utilizing these points, I put forward proposals to expand further mechanisms for promotion to regular employees, support and consultation based upon the twenties as a period of career searching, and support for skills development.

The Relationship between Part-Time Work Experience and Career Development of College Students

Tomoki Sekiguchi (Osaka University)

Using data from surveys conducted in national universities, this study investigates the relationship between the quality (job characteristics and work behavior) and quantity (working hours) of students' part-time work experience and the degree of their career

development. It was found that students who engaged in part-time work that requires a variety of skills and who exhibited high degree of proactive behavior in their part-time work were more likely to develop their career. In addition, there was an inverted U-shaped relationship between working hours per week and the degree of career development, suggesting the importance of keeping appropriate working hours. Furthermore, with a high skill variety situation, the degree of career development tended to be high for shorter working hours and the optimal working hours were also shorter. These findings suggest that increasing the quality of part-time work experience and keeping appropriate working hours would be critical for students' career development and their school-to-work transition.