

Abstracts

Aging and the Labour Market in the 21st Century

Junichi Goto (Kobe University)

This paper analyzes the likely impact of aging on the Japanese labour market early in the 21st century. We argue that the government-recommended prescription, i.e., to increase the birth rate, will not relieve the expected burden of the working-age population. Because it takes 15 to 22 years for a newborn to become a worker, and because society must support a newborn for 15 to 22 years, a higher birth rate would *increase* the burden on the working population during the next twenty years or so, when aging in Japan is projected to increase rapidly. In order to cope with the labour shortage that is expected early in the 21st century, the most promising solution seems to be to mobilize female workers.

Social Participation of Older Adults in the Workplace and in the Community: A Comparison of Japan and the United States

Hidehiro Sugisawa (Tokyo Metropolitan Institute of Gerontology) and **Hiroko Akiyama** (The University of Tokyo)

This paper addresses four questions concerning the social participation of older Japanese men in the workplace and the community: 1) What are the reasons for continuing working?; 2) Is retirement a stressful event?; 3) What conditions make for a smooth transition from occupational to community participation?; and 4) Do we find similar patterns when we look at Japanese women and older American men? Analysis of cross-national survey data suggests that both American men and Japanese women are more likely than Japanese men to find their work meaningful and interesting, and to identify life satisfaction with job satisfaction. For men and women, in both countries, a successful transition depends on involvement in community activities before retirement.

Major Issues regarding Continued Employment of Older Workers in Japanese Firms

Hiroyuki Fujimura (Hosei University)

Because the age to receive government-managed pensions for corporate employees is raised to 61 years old in April 2001, there is increasing interest about what should be done to employ people until age 65. This paper summarizes problems expected to be solved by each firm to realize continued employment of their workers until age 65. It is generally assumed that there are too many problems with continued employment after the retirement age. However, these problems are minor when individual cases are observed. This is because the number of people who want continued employment is small and there are many more jobs suitable for older workers in a company than generally thought. In this paper, the author discusses answers to the following three questions: What kinds of jobs can be prepared to fit the skills of employees from age 60 to 65? How much should they be paid? What is a desirable method to develop ability of employees to remain active until age 65?

Economic Analysis of Age Discrimination: The Impact of Mandatory Retirement and Age Limitations in Hiring on the Utilization of Human Resources in an Aging Society

Atsushi Seike (Keio University)

Promoting employment of older workers is an important policy in an aging society. Mandatory retirement and age limitations in hiring are two major obstacles in that effort. Mandatory retirement has a negative effect on the utilization of older employees, while age limitations in hiring prevent middle-aged and older workers from finding jobs. To eliminate these barriers, it is necessary to establish measures against employment discrimination based on age. However, the current seniority-based wage and promotion systems requires mandatory retirement and age limitations in hiring. Therefore, substantial reform of seniority-based wage and promotion systems is necessary.

Age Discrimination Law in Employment: What Can We Learn from the United States?

Hideyuki Morito (Seikei University)

The introduction of an age discrimination law in Japan has been proposed recently by renowned economists. This article seeks to address the issue from a legal perspective by examining the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA) in the United States. It begins with brief comparative research on the retirement process for employees in Europe and Japan, and then describes the contents of the ADEA, its legislative history, the realities facing older Americans' retirement under the law and features of ADEA disputes. What can we learn from the United States?