

Abstracts

The School-to-Work Transition in Japan: What Lies behind the Job Choices of Young People?

Masako Kurosawa (Meijigakuin University) and **Yuji Genda** (Gakushuin University)

Using retrospective data concerning young people's work experiences in Japan, this study found that labor-market conditions at the time when workers first enter the labour market after permanently leaving school have a significant lasting impact on their later employment experiences. A high unemployment rate at the time of their entry into the labour market reduces the probability of their gaining full-time regular employment, and, more important, increases the probability of leaving their employers in the future, due to lower quality of job matches made during higher unemployment period. The study also found that the vocational guidance or recommendations that workers receive at school could increase the possibility of their gaining suitable jobs. The adverse effects of poor initial labour market conditions on employment opportunities later on were most profoundly observed among female college graduates.

Structural Changes in the Youth Labour Market and Employment Policies: Experiences in OECD Countries

Naoki Mitani (Kobe University)

This paper describes the structural changes in the youth labor markets in Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) member countries in the last two decades and evaluates the effects of youth employment policies. In conclusion, we have found that: (1) youth employment and wages have not improved despite favorable structural changes such as decreases in the number of young workers; (2) youth employment policies have generally been unsuccessful. In contrast, Germany's dual system and Jisseki-Kankei in Japan have received high evaluations; (3) some intensive active labor market policies for disadvantaged youth may have certain efficiencies and are desirable from the equity point of view.

The Problem of the Increasing Number of Young Non-Regular Employees

Reiko Kosugi (The Japan Institute of Labour)

The number of "freeters", young people who work as part-time or temporary employees in low-skill jobs, is now increasing rapidly. They are forming a career path for the young that is the opposite of that of traditional Japanese employment practices, which emphasizes stable, long-term employment. Based on some original surveys, we tried to clarify who became freeters, and how and why they did so, and when they will become regular workers. One of the problems relating to freeters occurs because Japan has had a model for transition from school to work, but outside the model there is little way for someone to get occupational skills or to start on a career path.