

Abstracts

Conditions and Issues Involved in Utilizing Childcare Leave in the Workplace

Akira Wakisaka (Gakushuin University)

The focus of the issue of childcare leave, which forms the pillar of family-friendly policies, has shifted to actual adoption of the system in the workplace. The two problems of finding substitutes and the specific handling procedures for such substitute personnel in the workplace, are considered in terms of the results from two hearings. Two methods are in operation: Share method and forward rotation. The former involves the apportioning of a slightly increased volume of work among co-workers. The latter resembles a chain-reaction, wherein existing employees are shunted forward when an individual takes childcare leave. If a female employee takes maternity (childcare) leave, responsibility for her work passes into the hands of the man or woman immediately below her; that individual's work in turn being taken on by the person below them and so on. The former method will yield increased productivity in the short term, but the latter is considered to be superior in the long term.

Family-Friendly Policies and Equal Opportunity Policies

Akira Kawaguchi (Otemon Gakuin University)

This paper analyzes the relation between family-friendly programs and equal-employment programs. A theoretical model is developed under the assumption that family-friendly programs lower the quit rate of female workers and equal-employment programs increases their productivity. The model shows that these programs are complementary to each other, but the effect of these programs on the employment of female workers is indeterminate. An empirical study using micro data of firms supports the model. Family-friendly programs promote equal-employment programs, and vice versa, but there is no significant effect of these programs on the female/total workers ratio.

Impacts of Family-Friendly Practices on Employee Attitude and Organizational Performance

Hiromi Sakazume (Wako University)

This study examined adoption and impacts of family-friendly practices on employee attitudes and organizational performance. Results from a sample of 206 Japanese firms and their 911 employees suggest that family-friendly practices have statistically significant positive impact on employee attitudinal outcomes, and reduce turnover of female employees. In addition, significant interaction effects were found, indicating that extensive implementation of family-friendly practices may not necessarily reward organizations. Along with other practices, internal consistency among family-friendly practices is likely to be important.

A Family-friendly Workplace and Labour Union Efforts

Masako Maeda (Life Design Institute)

As the female workforce increases, the issue of creating family-friendly workplaces that enable women to combine both work and their private lives is becoming more important. This paper aims to identify how the labour unions evaluate the institution of family-friendly workplaces and what attempts are being made to establish related systems. It also examines the factors that influence labour union efforts in this area and elucidates the actual circumstances of the family-friendly systems that have been introduced by individual labour unions. Findings indicate that the labour unions assign low-level priority to the issue of supporting women, and that union leaders have mixed opinions regarding the introduction of family-friendly systems. Nonetheless, this study revealed that the presence of at least one union member in charge of women's support issue would accelerate the handling of such issues in the workplace.

Career Stress and Work-Life-Balance

Atsuko Kanai (Nagoya University)

In recent years, we have seen changes in the relation between organizations and individual workers. As a result, stress related to developing one's career has become an issue of concern. In this paper, it was postulated a career-stress model that took into account stress resulting from work-family conflicts. An empirical study examining the work-life-balance found the importance of active participation in workplace as well as home that would allow for an adequate balance between the two. The paper discusses how individuals and organizations deal with the issue of work-life-balance from a view point of integration and differentiation of multiple careers.