

Abstracts

Globalization of Japanese Companies and Expatriates: Investigation from the Assessment of Superiors by Local Subordinates in Asian Subsidiaries

Mitsuhide Shiraki (Waseda University)

Japanese overseas subsidiaries have many problems and issues. This paper examines and sheds light on Japanese expatriates who are in charge of the operation of overseas subsidiaries. We examined several aspects of Japanese expatriates. What kind of human resources are they? What are their roles? What are the main issues they face? According to our research results, Japanese expatriates, who are sent abroad especially as middle management, are assessed more severely than those who are sent as top management by local subordinates and receive inferior assessment results compared to their counterparts in local middle management, especially in terms of job ability, leadership, and relationship with subordinates. These results indicate that Japanese expatriates, especially in ASEAN, not only have many problems related to the operation of business, but also problems related to language, the maintenance of the motivation of local staff, and the acquisition and retention of new staff. Thus, Japanese multinational corporations, which are working to develop new business in newly emerging markets, need to construct a human resource management system which includes and treats equally both Japanese personnel and local personnel. They especially need to utilize foreign talent at Japanese headquarters and in their main stream businesses, and then utilize them globally as soon as possible.

Expedition for Designing Global Human Resources Development Systems in Japanese Companies

Hirohisa Nagai (University of Tsukuba)

According to recent empirical studies, demand for GHRD (Global Human Resources Development) both for foreign employees and Japanese expatriates has been rapidly increasing to cope with the advancement of globalization among Japanese companies. In this paper, issues in GHRD based on prior studies are summarized in three demanding features, as follows: 1. Developing competent global human resources regardless of their nationalities, 2. Developing Japanese overseas expatriates, and 3. Designing an international GHRD standard by unifying systems for foreign and Japanese employees. In addition, four practices are proposed as plans to improve the current situation: 1. Implementation of international collaboration such as a task force and project team, 2. Whole company movements to permeate organizational policies through vision and leadership demonstrated by top executives, 3. Customization of GHRD program by adjusting to each country and regional cultural differences, and 4. Developing global management abilities to manage heterogeneity by learning culture-based competency. Furthermore, the usefulness of multiple GHRD training programs based on the transformation of mental maps in proportion with the product of learning experience and amount of feedback proposed by Oddou et al. (2008) is examined. Lastly, the ongoing development of the contingency-based GHRD tool by author et al. (2011), which is designed to facilitate global leadership competency by managing critical incidents in cross-cultural environments and based on a meta-cognitive approach, is introduced.

An Examination of the Employment of Foreigners, such as International Students, in Japanese Companies

Takashi Moriya (Ritsumeikan University)

This study makes clear the problems associated with job hunting and the circumstances and challenges surrounding career support for international students in Japanese companies in Japan. It analyzes the circumstances surrounding the employment of foreigners, such as international students, in Japanese companies and it also looks at the gap between Japanese companies and foreign employees who were formerly international students. Also, in addition to touching upon problems associated with career development and cross-cultural adaptation in Japanese companies employing international students in Japan, in the end, it argues that the differences in recruitment/

employment, between Japan and European, North American, and Asian countries, are the fundamental causes for gaps between Japanese companies and international students. It indicates that the main point of difference is that recruitment exams for new graduates for Japanese companies in Japan do not test the applicants' expertise in their principle duties, rather the exams look at the overall principles of a person to determine if an applicant has the basic qualifications of a businessman/businesswoman who would be a candidate for a management position in the future. This study makes clear the point that there is a difference in human resource management techniques between Japanese companies' recruitment/employment management for foreigners and European, North American and Asian companies' recruitment/employment management of foreigners, and this makes foreign employees uncomfortable when they are recruited by, or work for, Japanese companies.

Human Resource Development for Production Workers in Japanese Affiliated Companies in ASEAN, and the "Local Context"

Ikuro Yamamoto (Kinjogakuin University)

This paper aims to make clear the actual conditions and problems of human resource development (HRD) systems at Japanese affiliated automotive companies (JACs) in Indonesia. Most of the JACs have changed their strategic position from a "domestic market-oriented supply basis" to a "global one" coping with Monetary Crisis in 1997. Accompanied by such change, raising product quality up to a global level and reinforcing cost competitiveness have become major issues for JACs. One of the major targets of HRD at JACs was also laid out as to cultivate the "ability to improve" essential for a "lean production system." Now the acquisition of wider job experiences based on a "rotating system" and the preparation of manuals can be widely found at JACs. It is worth noting that HRD systems at JACs are done based on "explicit knowledge" everyone can understand, not on the "implicit knowledge" used in the so-called Japanese style of HRD. However, instances of production workers also taking part in the handling of unusual affairs such as troubles of machine/equipment and the change of dies and so on can hardly be found. In this sense, the arising of the "ability to improve" at JACs appears to be restricted. One of the factors that causes such restriction is the wall of organizational power connected to the "academic background-oriented society" that is "local context" widely found in Southeast Asian countries. On the other hand the significance of "off-the-job-training" is thus becoming higher and higher, and the training practices at Japanese head offices are also increasing in importance in connection to the concrete missions required for "global strategy."

Countermeasure against Collective Labor Dispute of Rural Migrant Workers in China

Noboru Yamashita (Kyushu University)

China is now experiencing an outbreak of collective labor disputes by rural migrant workers, especially in the manufacturing industry of Guangdong Province and other area in South China. In China, the term rural migrant workers refers to those who are part of the rural-hukou (household registration) population even though they work and live in urban areas. The new generation of rural migrant workers born after 1980 prefers to stay in urban areas. They are better educated than the elder generations with diversified values and excel in information utilization. On the other hand, they are impatient, sensitive to discrimination, and are more likely to switch jobs frequently. Because most of them are not members of trade unions (which do not really function as the representative of labor in China), most of the collective labor disputes by rural migrant workers have happened unexpectedly and in a way out of the control of trade unions in China. Also, legal procedures for labor dispute resolution have not yet developed well, so that when collective labor disputes arise, the parties have to seek help from the local labor-administration, and even their response to the disputes are often on an ad-hoc basis. Therefore, China is currently promoting enterprise mediation for labor disputes, and is improving daily communication between labor and management to prevent disputes.

Globalization and Japan's Domestic Employment: International Trade, Offshore Production and Offshore Outsourcing

Eiichi Tomiura (Yokohama National University)

The Japanese economy is globalizing through its international trade in goods and services, offshore production by Japanese multinational corporations and the offshore outsourcing of various corporate activities. Although no simple significant correlation is found between import and domestic employment, the impact of import on domestic manufacturing employment is estimated as significantly negative. Especially substantial impacts are observed in production labor. Import penetration also tends to disperse regional industrial agglomeration by weakening regional input-output linkages. While the firms active in offshore production tend to keep employment at home, employment overseas by Japanese multinationals has become sizable compared with declining domestic manufacturing employment. Although only a fraction of large-sized firms are involved in outsourcing across national borders, the scope of offshorable tasks has expanded due to the spread of information and communication technologies. However, high R&D-intensity appears to alleviate the negative impact of import on domestic employment and leads firms to choose domestic outsourcing over offshore outsourcing. This might suggest a clue for the Japanese economy in retaining domestic employment amid intensified global competition. As Japanese firms are likely to accelerate offshore operations, it will certainly become more critical for us to examine this issue based on detailed data.

Taking Family Leave from Employment: Does a System Compatible with Family Care and Employment Exist?

Mayumi Nishimoto (Hannan University)

This study performed an empirical analysis of the reasons given by employees when applying for leave. The purpose is to clarify the types of employment leave, more easily measure the compatibility between employment and family care, and explore the characteristics of workers who choose to obtain leave from work to care for their family members. In addition, I also discuss if the recently established 'Family Leave' works effectively. The results of the analysis elucidated the following points: First, the probability of leave from employment, particularly absenteeism, increases with the employee's proportion of family caregiving and responsibility toward their family members. Absenteeism becomes more prevalent for (1) spouses whose tenure of employment is longer and (2) positions with a low level of control over working hours. In addition, not only does absenteeism increase for spouses who are permanent employees but also the probability of taking allocated days off is higher for both permanent and temporary employees who do not have spouses. Further, the probability of taking leave from employment, particularly family leave or annually allocated time-off, increases when the care receiver is in a hospital or nursing facility. Moreover, absenteeism increases for non-permanent employees and caregivers earning low salaries.