

Abstracts

The Evolution and Legitimacy of the Employment Support Laws

Shinpei Ishida (The University of Kitakyushu)

The slogan 'the realization of a society in which all people participate', closely linked to promoting economic growth, is being emphasized based on the idea of social inclusion or securing good opportunities of employment. In conformity with this slogan, laws for specific workers to support participation in the workplace or to continue working, or in other words 'the employment support laws', have been increasing. In this article I provide an overview of the history of the employment support laws and try to make it clear that the coverage and means of these laws have been expanded and reinforced, so that they have tended to interfere into private autonomy in the employment sphere. I reflect, moreover, on the constitutionality of the employment support laws in having the tendency described above, thereby pointing out that (1) the constitutional foundation of them lies in the right to work, (2) the protective degree of them for pregnant women, single parents and workers taking care of children or other family members is too low to be consistent with the constitution of Japan, because hiring discrimination on such grounds is not regulated, and (3) the Act of Promoting Active Participation of Women and the Act on Advancement of Measures to Support Raising Next-Generation Children are considered to be inconsistent with the constitution of Japan in terms of excessive interference into private autonomy in the employment sphere.

Problems in Reemployment Support and Labor Movement Subsidies Seen in One Case

Masahiro Abe (Chuo University)

This study discusses how the labor movement support policy that was expanded in 2013 exerts influence on the reemployment of workers who were obliged to leave their jobs by looking at cases of reemployment support. Provision of the labor movement subsidy is one governmental labor movement support policy, however only some companies use the subsidy, since the companies which are adjusting employment have low incentive to promote reemployment support. Therefore workers who can receive the reemployment support are limited to only a small number. Meanwhile, among workers who have a chance to receive the reemployment support, some prefer not to receive it. As a result, there are cases where workers cannot find suitable places of employment. To address such an issue, it is necessary to design a system to directly support workers who had no choice but to quit their jobs, but not the companies which discharged them.

How Do Japanese Companies Deal with the Aging Population? A Case Study of Applying Service Learning to Develop Middle-aged Employees

Yutaka Nakashima (Chuo Business School)

Due to the recent change of the labor law regulating the re-hire obligation for senior employees over the age of 60, many Japanese companies are now reviewing their pay systems to reduce seniority factors in them. The conclusion of this paper is that existing pay systems are fair for the employees and necessary for fulfilling the corporate social responsibilities. Instead of abandoning the current systems, this paper recommends a focus on developing middle-aged employees by applying Service Learning (SL). SL is a commonly used development method in school education, which initiates the learnings of the students through their serving social activities. This paper introduces the case of Toppan, one of the largest printing companies in Japan, which conducts talent development programs at Minami-Souma in Fukushima, a place heavily damaged by the Great East Japan Earthquake. It discusses the effectiveness of SL training for the purpose of developing middle-aged employees and concludes it could be a possible solution for the issues associated with the aging population in organizations.

Support to Temporary Agency Workers for Career Development : Centering on Attitudes Required for Staffing Agencies

Akiko Ono (The Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training)

The Amended Worker Dispatching Act came into force on September 30, 2015. The amended act prescribes the items related to career development for the first time. Temporary agency workers were once regarded as temporary or ad hoc staff, however this law requires the staffing agencies to realize a task that is more than a little theoretically difficult, that is, “to develop their careers.” Specifically the amended act requires the staffing agencies to give the temporary agency workers (i) education and training so that they can gradually and systematically acquire the necessary knowledge and skills and (ii) career consultation to those who are interested (iii) gainfully without compensation. In addition, (iv) this program shall be subject for all temporary agency workers. Based on the hearing survey, this paper discusses the effect and problems of the requirement centering on the “education and training” and “career consultation.” Some staffing agencies have already started the approach toward support for gradual and systematic career development. As seen in a career ladder, they have sorted the skill levels by job category and moderately linked them with wages. The staffing agencies systematically consider such sorting and linkage in connection with training courses including education and training or career consultation. The importance of career consultation is increasing in staffing agencies, and therefore “matching between temporary agency workers and jobs” considering their career development has begun to be carried out. A future issue will be whether the career ladder by job category can be shared among the industry and the region.

Outsourcing of Employment Support Undertakings from Municipalities to Commissioned Organizations: The Coordination of “Projects in Motion” and the Training of Employment Supporters

Miki Tsutsui (Hosei University)

How can municipalities continue to supply better public services? Because of the importance of this theme, the author clarifies the reality and the challenge of outsourcing employment support undertakings through a case study of a commissioned organization to show how to understand what employment support is or should be. Employment support is not an activity which deals with the needs supposed at a planning stage without any ups or downs, but in fact is an activity which tries to restructure the arrangement and method to deal with the various needs actualized each time, including differences of views. That is, it should be understood as “project in motion,” with much more importance put on in-process coordination, rather than at a prior point. Also, employment support can be an opportunity for institutions and policies to interact with social movements. In other words, an outsourced organization might be no part of the system, but have an existence which finds the limitations and problems of the institutions and policies, and proposes alternative meanings to them. In order to perform employment support, first, both municipalities and outsourced organizations should have the will and ability to make in-process coordination. Without this, outsourced organizations will become weak in social movements and municipalities will become insensitive to the cultural messages from outsourced organizations. Second, the length of the undertaking should be at least three years, and desirably five years, because a one-year undertaking causes a dizzying change in the composition of projects every year, which causes a negative influence on human resource development of the organization to worsen the quality of the public service.

Functional Roles and Quality Management of Career-consultants in the Near Future

Hiroshi Takahashi (Youth Career Research Institute)

In April 2016, registration for national career-consultant certification was started. Career-consultants have to fulfill the expectations of employees. The purposes of this article are to clarify career-consultants' functional roles in order to overcome career difficulties in employees, and to suggest a quality management system for career consulting. As a result of classifying career difficulties about individuals who were younger, middle-aged, aged people, women, disabled, and people with mentally disorders, it became clear that the difficulties are in six factors, which are career readiness, career skills, self-concepts, environments of work, environments outside of work, and handicaps. Furthermore, it was considered that these six factors have one structure interacting with one another. From the above, the needed functional roles of career-consultants include: (a) individual interventions such as advice, counseling, and coaching; (b) training for career readiness; (c) various support methods such as collaboration, consultation, and coordination; and (d) interventions in clients' environments. In order to establish high quality career consulting, the author proposes systematic quality management which incorporates clients' feedback. Making reference to the feedback, career-consultants and supervisors would be able to appropriately assess and effectively improve their career consulting.