

Abstracts

A Comparative Study of Persons with Disabilities Targeted by Employment Policies

Gaku Terada (Hitotsubashi University)

In Europe, the statutory employment rate of persons with disabilities in the private sector is 6% in France and 5% in Germany. In Asia, it stands at 3.1% in South Korea, 1% in Taiwan, and 1% in Thailand. It has been noted that Japan's statutory employment rate (2.3%) is lower than the rates in France and Germany, which were used as references when designing the system. However, it is not meaningful to simply compare these rates, because the size of the disabled population may vary from country to country and the definitions of persons with disabilities differ among nations. Therefore, this paper estimates the potential size of the disabled population in Japan, France, and Germany in a manner that allows for meaningful comparison, and then compares these three countries in terms of how they define the scope of persons with disabilities covered by their policies, the extent of policy coverage, and the level of workforce inclusion for persons with disabilities. The results reveal that Japan has a relatively wider range of potential disabled persons who are not covered by the policy. At the same time, it is evident that Japan provides employment opportunities for disabled persons with more severe functional disabilities than France and Germany.

Effects of Paternity Leave Acquisition Rates in Spouses' Industries on Women's Employment and Health

Mao Nakayama (Japan Women's University)

Yumi Ishikawa (Kobe University)

This study examines the effects of changes in the paternity leave acquisition rate in a spouse's industry on women's employment rates and health, using individual panel data from the Japanese Panel Survey of Consumers. Our study finds that an increase in the paternity leave acquisition rate in a spouse's industry boosts women's employment rates. However, the magnitude of the effect is limited. In addition, there is heterogeneity in the effects based on the age of the child. Women with children under 7 years old have a relatively larger effect, compared to women whose youngest child is 7 years old or older. The results further suggest that a spouse's involvement in child care could be a mechanism through which the paternity leave acquisition rate increases women's employment rates. On the other hand, we find that changes in the paternity leave acquisition rate in a spouse's industry have no effect on women's health outcomes, including mental health.

Advancing Women with Interrupted Careers: Focusing on Women's Motivation for Autonomous Skill Development during Middle Age and Older

Kota Tagami (The Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training)

Despite the typical pattern of "interrupted employment and re-employment" in women's life courses, labor policies often overlook women with career interruptions, particularly in the context of women's advancement in the workplace. Prior research indicates that women, especially in middle age and older, are often motivated to enhance their occupational skills even without instructions from their company. This study examines this self-development tendency among middle-aged and older women with career interruptions, hypothesizing that they are more proactive in self-improvement than their younger counterparts. Key findings reveal that middle-aged and older married women demonstrate higher rates of interactive self-development compared to younger women, and this is unrelated to career mobility or job specialization. Also, this trend is observed among middle-aged and older married women who have changed jobs and are currently working as regular employees or as non-regular employees, and it is particularly pronounced among the former. To support the advancement of women with career breaks, it is essential to recognize their heightened self-development motivation in their later years. Policy recommendations include fostering an environment encouraging skill enhancement through interaction with others and reconfiguring external labor market

evaluation systems to ensure that these women can assume central roles in company endeavors.