ISSN 1348-9364

Japan Labor Review

Volume 8, Number 1, Winter 2011

Special Edition

Current Study on Career Education in Japan

Articles

The Concept of the Right to a Career: How to Protect the Careers of Workers
Yasuo Suwa

The Current State and Future Tasks of Japan's Career Education Promotion Policies—Embarking on the Road Less Traveled
Teruyuki Fujita

Issues of the Learning through Work Experience Program for Junior High School Students: "The 14-Year-Old's Challenge" in Toyama Prefecture
Satomi Terasaki

Career Education in High Schools: Focusing on "Guidance in Ways of Being and Ways of Living"
Yuki Mochizuki

Career Support in Universities
Mitsuko Uenishi

Articles Based on Research Report

Working as an Independent Contractor in Japan and the U.S.: Is It a Good Option for Married Women with Young Children?
Yanfei Zhou

Human Resources Development at Companies in the Service Industry
Makoto Fujimoto

JILPT Research Activities

The Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training

Japan Labor Review

Volume 8, Number 1
Winter 2011

CONTENTS

Current Study on Career Education in Japan

Articles

6 The Concept of the Right to a Career: How to Protect the Careers of Workers
Yasuo Suwa

26 The Current State and Future Tasks of Japan's Career Education Promotion Policies—Embarking on the Road Less Traveled
Teruyuki Fujita

48 Issues of the Learning through Work Experience Program for Junior High School Students: "The 14-Year-Old's Challenge" in Toyama Prefecture
Satomi Terasaki

67 Career Education in High Schools: Focusing on "Guidance in Ways of Being and Ways of Living"
Yuki Mochizuki

85 Career Support in Universities
Mitsuko Uenishi

Articles Based on Research Report

103 Working as an Independent Contractor in Japan and the U.S.: Is It a Good Option for Married Women with Young Children?
Yanfei Zhou

125 Human Resources Development at Companies in the Service Industry
Makoto Fujimoto

150 **JILPT Research Activities**

NEXT ISSUE (Spring 2011)
The spring 2011 issue of the Review will be a special edition devoted to **Japan's Minimum Wage**.

Introduction

Current Study on Career Education in Japan

This compilation deals with career education, which has become a particular focus of attention since the beginning of the 21st century, and related issues. We took up this topic in this Journal which deals with labor issues, because we recognize that the link between the education system and Japan's system for fostering human resources, which seemed to be functioning so effectively until this point, has become unstable, and that we are now in a realignment phase. The abundance of career education can be understood as a product of the changes in both the school education system and the labor market.

In Japan's post-war education system, junior and senior high schools began to take on career guidance based on Japanese labor practices, which will be mentioned later. This career guidance faced a variety of criticisms, the most representative of which was that rather than respecting students' interests and wishes, it leaned more toward working to allocate human resources. Be that as it may, although a variety of issues filled the first half of the 1990s, career guidance up until that point had contributed to making young people's transitions from school to work go more smoothly.

However, as Japan moved into the 1990s, the link between the education system and the labor market began to grow unstable. The papers compiled here are closely tied to this instability, which can be outlined as follows.

(1) The spread of individualization and diversification into the educational policies

The education policies began to move forward under the banner of individualization and diversification, and in career guidance, as well, individuals' wishes began to be prioritized over placing every student into any higher-level school available.

(2) Transformations in higher education policies and easier university entrance due to the declining birthrate

Transformations in higher education policies and the declining birthrate broadened opportunities for young people to continue on to university, a chance which until that point had been competitive. The prevalence of students entering university without a clear goal and postponing the decision of their future career until a later time increased, and universities were also put under pressure by this change.

(3) Changes in Japanese employment practices that had been the basis for career guidance

Starting in the mid 1990s, symptoms of a change started to materialize in Japanese employment practices, which until then had offered employees long-term, stable employment within the same company. At the head of this change, companies began to ease up on hiring new graduates. In Japan, however, where the mainstream practice is for companies to hire new graduates all in one block, the inability to secure employment immediately after graduation leads to career instability thereafter. The result was an increase in the number of young people who were unable to find work in a stable job, even after graduation. The unemployment rate rose among young people, and there was an increase in the numbers of those who were jobless or who worked with the unstable employment status of "freeter."

There was a call for measures to respond to these changes in the education system and the labor market, and career education can be seen as one of such response measures. So far, sufficient information on career education in Japan has not been provided to the international community. To this end, we have taken care in this compilation to present a concrete picture of Japan's career education system.

Suwa's paper examines the changes in Japanese employment practices upon which career education is based from a legal standpoint. Because the entity that has decided people's careers has been the organization they belong to, an individual's guarantee of a professional career and personal fulfillment through a professional career have not been sufficiently considered either in legal or pragmatic terms. Today, with the dramatic changes that are occurring in the employment environment, a call is being made for legal support to be extended to the various individuals who face difficulties in career development within a single organization. The "right to a career" is a valid legal concept but has little basis in positive law, and legal precedent is as yet undeveloped. However, the seeds of this concept can be seen to have sprouted in recent years' revisions of the Human Resources Development Promotion Act, which is a move in the direction of securing career formation based on an individual's professional career.

Fujita's paper looks at the flow of career education, which was cited as a policy matter for the first time in the Central Education Council's 1999 report, and related issues. Initial career education was not concerned with the transition from school to work alone, but also with resolving educational issues in the transition from compulsory education to high school and from high school to university, such as articulation between levels of schooling and mitigating the competition of entrance exams. However, along with the worsening employment conditions for young people, career education became keenly aware of the transition from school to work, and its character started to change into guidance that influenced young people's perceptions of jobs. Moreover, the success of the Career Start Week campaign (a five-day work experience program implemented by junior high schools) from 2005 to 2008 led the schools to the misunderstanding that the true essence of career education was to implement such programs. Following this, in undertaking the policy of enhancing career education under the 2008 Basic Plan for the Promotion of Education, the Central Education Council's Task Force on Career Education and Vocational Education stressed the importance of the ways of fostering "the basic and versatile competencies required for students from elementary and secondary schools through higher education in order to make a smooth transition into society and work," and there has been a visible change in career education from the formation of desirable job consciousness to the creation of job abilities.

Terasaki's paper is a case study on Toyama Prefecture's vanguard program "The Learning through Work Experience Program: The 14-Year-Old's Challenge," a program for junior high school students to experience life in the workplace (see also Fujita's paper for Career Start Week). The "14-Year-Old's Challenge" program began in 1999, and is a program for 14-year-old students in their second year of junior high school to go out into society and participate in five days of activities in local workplaces or to do social services or volunteer activities. The original purpose of these activities was not to make it easier for the students to choose a future job, but to allow them to experience different interpersonal relationships outside their schools. However, Terasakis's paper points out the issue that from the vantage point of this experience preparing students for their future jobs, there is a limit to what junior high schoolers can do, and as a result of this, all that the students are experiencing is unskilled labor or simple "helper" type activities. As can be seen in Fujita's paper, this paper also shows us the degree to which an aspect of career education, which originally began as an educational activity, has changed into an activity for getting students to form strong perceptions about jobs in their futures.

Mochizuki's paper looks at "guidance in ways of being and ways of living," a concept in career guidance that emerged in the 1990s and that is linked with career education in high schools with general education curriculums, which account for more than 70% of all high schools in Japan. "Guidance in ways of being and ways of living" aims to switch away from 1990s career guidance, which stressed feasibility, to guidance that emphasized individuality. According to surveys, "guidance in ways of being and ways of living" results in a more developed awareness of career paths in students who wish to continue on to college, ignites their aspirations to get into more selective universities, and allows them to be satisfied with their choices. However, Mochizuki also points out the issue that if they are only able to get into universities that are different than the ones they had chosen for themselves, they can easily become reluctant entrants, and this does not necessarily lead to their sufficient understanding of the self.

Uenishi's paper asserts that increasing proportion of students continuing on to university, decreasing graduate employment rates, and changes to the graduate recruitment process in corporations have given rise to the importance of university career education. Because of the increase in university advancement rate, university students have come to have many different levels of academic ability and graduates have lost their edge in the job search after graduation. The previously existing link between designated universities and specific companies has disappeared, and the Internet has become the focus of students' job search activities in the application and hiring processes. Companies do not seek students with specialized skills, but proactive and positive people with high levels of communication skills. However, as the selection criteria are ambiguous, students become confused and are at the mercy of their employment activities. In response to this situation, universities have begun to implement career education beginning from the first year of entrance. The greater variety among the students has also given rise to students who do not study autonomously. Because of this, Uenishi describes, many universities have put their efforts into learning assistance, and the influence of career education has started to extend over a longer period of time, impacting even on the ordinary curriculum.

Career education has only just begun in Japan and it is not easy to evaluate it at the present time. Broadly speaking, in the midst of the worsening employment conditions for young people, career education which used to be a purely educational activity became regarded as a tool to smooth the transition from school to work. But presently, we may be seeing this swinging back toward an emphasis on original educational activities such as the formation of academic abilities. Whatever the case may be, we anticipate that career education in Japan will continue to develop from this point on.

Yukie Hori
The Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training

The Concept of the Right to a Career: How to Protect the Careers of Workers

Yasuo Suwa
Hosei University

A system that aims to secure and guarantee “employment” with a focus on internal labor markets of a certain size has led to Japanese-style employment practices and legal principles. Accordingly, although the system does not necessarily guarantee that a worker will be able to continue to be employed in the same occupation or job, it aims for career development within the same organization, that is to say, within a single internal labor market. If the organization is maintained and develops constantly, career formation and development will also progress smoothly. Thus, the legal measures that have been devised in Japan have been exclusively aimed towards securing and guaranteeing employment. However, if dramatic changes occur in the employment environment, career development in the same occupation or job, or within the same organization becomes difficult. People are shaken by instability. Young people worry about what sort of working life they should lead, while middle-aged and older people suffer distress as a result of the cessation of the career that they have spent a great deal of time and effort developing. Even in the case that the country is moving away from the traditional principle of versatility in internal labor markets and undergoing a transition to an employment system reliant on fluid external labor markets, if both career development directly linked to an occupation or job and career development directly linked to a specific type of employment become difficult, what sort of working life should people lead? What should people do in order to ensure that their career formation and development are guaranteed even if they undergo several changes of job? There will be a growing need to use not only employment practices, but also legal means to ensure the dynamic potential for career development that transcends jobs, occupations and specific types of employment. This is because, if no measure is provided, there will be increased anxiety and frustration among people for whom skill formation and career development is not progressing smoothly, leading to social instability and a fall in the efficiency of an economy that has failed to utilize human resources. The concept of “the right to a career,” which was introduced in provisions that had their origins in Japan’s Employment Countermeasures Act and Human Resources Development Promotion Act, is one of the proposals for fundamental concepts that seek to respond to this issue. The author will discuss this concept in this paper.

I. Introduction

If the formation, development and maintenance of a career does not progress smoothly, people become unable to expect adequate remuneration or job satisfaction, the economy suffers from the depletion of human resources and social instability increases. How can one secure the formation of skills that form the core of a career? How should careers be utilized? This paper seeks to investigate labor law issues relating to these problems from the perspective of “the right to a career."[1]

1. Japanese-Style Employment Practices

It is not the case that long-term employment was the only form of employment in Japan hitherto, and it might be that the seniority-based employment system in its literal meaning was actually an exception rather than the rule. In the "three major employment practices" in Japanese-style employment, the formation of in-house unions was the most common form of entity, but the estimated unionization rate is only 18.5% (2009), and the formation of such unions is remarkably disproportionately slanted towards the public sector and regular employees of large and medium-sized enterprises. There are also labor union forms other than in-house unions, but they organize rather small numbers of workers.

Consequently, Japanese-style employment practices had the basic attribute that they were frequently developed in common forms of employment that were deemed to be good, rather than having spread universally throughout society. However, the model effect of good employment opportunities raised such employment practices to the level of a socioeconomic philosophy. Repeated tragicomic stories have been told about the competition for university places in order to have good employment opportunities, single-minded loyalty to the company and the pressure not to lose the employment opportunity that one has finally obtained, various forms of behavior predicated on long-term employment, and the major lifestyle changes that occur when people reach mandatory retirement age.

State employment policy has also been undertaken on the basis of the keywords "securing employment" through long-term employment. In order to build, maintain and develop internal labor markets, various support measures aimed at maintaining employment were put in place and a skills development system based on the premise of in-house training was promoted, but these were all measures targeted at companies. In other words, the objective was to provide development and guidance for the employers who were the organizers of the internal labor markets and to form better internal labor markets and labor relations between management and workers within the company, thereby leading to the creation, maintenance and development of employment, as well as achieving more stable labor relations between management and workers. Naturally, the principles of labor law exist and function consistently in relation to this, being based on the premise of Japanese-style employment practices.[2]

There is no need to reiterate the fact that such response measures involving workers, managers and the state have yielded reasonable results. At the same time, we cannot overlook the fact that they have also had negative aspects, such as the creation of a dual structure of reg-

---

[1] This paper is based on the following papers by Suwa (1999), Suwa (2004) and Suwa (2010) (all detailed notes in the original text have been omitted). In addition, the issue of "careers and the law," including the perspective of "a career is property," was discussed fully in Suwa (1996a), and the discussion subsequently continued in greater depth in Suwa (1996b) and Suwa (1998).

[2] To have comprehensive information on recent labor law system and labor practices, see Araki (2009), Araki et al (2008), Ouchi (2009), Sugeno (2010), and Yamakawa (2008).

ular and irregular employment, the creation of employees conditioned by the company, loyalty that leads to a lack of vision, and a culture of long working hours.

2. The Transformation of Employment Practices

The employment practices that seemed to have been fully established by the time the bubble economy developed began to change amidst the prolonged economic slowdown. Initially, there was the idea of making minor alterations in the seniority-based employment system in order to respond to the aging of the employee structure and deviations from conventional working conditions. In order to respond to the lack of posts and the heavy wage burden, systems such as a merit system, performance-based system or results-based system were advocated, and the flattening of the organizational structure and development of specialist positions were recommended, with management by objective and the annual salary system spreading through companies. Following this, moves emerged that sought boldly to rework Japan's long-term employment system. Furthermore, as the recession became more prolonged, measures for shedding excess personnel also naturally spread. "Rationalization" was once the word used to describe reducing the workforce, but this subsequently changed to "restructuring." As a result of such developments as the declining birthrate and aging of the population, which are becoming structural problems, as well as the increasing prevalence of information technology, the shift in the economy towards the tertiary sector, and growing internationalization, further revisions of employment practices are imminent.

Thus, the theory of the increasing mobility of employment emerged. This theory points out that it is nonsensical to maintain employment in ailing companies in declining industries by pumping subsidies into them, and that allowing employment to flow from declining industries with excess manpower to developing companies in growth industries that are eager for personnel is actually the sensible strategy. It recommends seeking to revitalize the functions of external labor markets. Of course, powerful counter-arguments have been expressed in relation to the theory of the increasing mobility of employment, and there are those who advise careful verification of this theory.

The path that sought to revise external labor markets and increase their functions was an idea that was common to the revision of both the Employment Security Act and the Worker Dispatch Act. This did not focus on ignoring the internal labor market and using the external labor market as an alternative. If one takes into consideration such matters as increases in the youth unemployment rate, the tendency to change jobs and the trend towards increased professional specialism, as well as the fact that women's life cycles and labor patterns cannot always converge with long-term employment, the growth in the number of elderly people, for whom the idea of working only at one company for their entire lives is not realistic, and changes in industrial and occupational structures, it is certain that the number of areas that will rely on the functions of external labor markets will grow in the future. Accordingly, the legal policy that has been exclusively aimed at internal markets and which has rather neglected external markets, like the one in place hitherto, is inconsistent with the actual situation, and will cause a great many disadvantages to people who fall outside the conventional pattern, which will be shrinking in any case; consequently, this is an idea that could turn a blind eye to the development and utilization of human resources across society as a whole.

3. New Points for Discussion

If we focus on external labor markets, a number of problems emerge that had hitherto tended to be disregarded, of which the most important are those relating to skills development and training.

The skills development that can be provided by school education is, generally speaking, that relating to basic skills and one cannot completely rely on schools for the cultivation of vocational skills that are required when working in a particular industry, company or profession. At best, schools only provide basic vocational kowledge and skills; actual professional skills can only be acquired while doing a specific job for a certain period of time. Then, in the same way that equality of opportunity appropriate to their skills and motivation in relation to school education is important for schoolchildren, who will be the workers of the future, equality of opportunity appropriate to the skills and motivation of workers is important in order for workers to acquire socioeconomically useful vocational kowledge and skills.

Furthermore, if the opportunities for skills development provided by internal markets are curtailed because they cannot be integrated into internal labor markets and external labor markets cannot fully supplement them either, the question of how to provide opportunities for skills development for workers will become a major problem. The older a worker is, the more that professional skills influence remuneration; at the same time, the burden of skills development also increases, so if those who have repeatedly found work in external labor markets and have reached middle age end up having a tendency to be inferior in terms of skills development, this will have unfortunate results not only for the individual concerned, but also for society. Moreover, as much as possible must be done to avoid a situation in which the professional skills that the individual has taken the trouble to acquire do not meet a company's requirements or are not valued and he/she has difficulty in changing jobs or being re-employed.

It is difficult for securing and guaranteeing employment in a specific company to be the guiding principle if the emphasis is placed on external labor markets. This is a principle for a situation in which internal labor markets are the target of policy. If it is not even possible to avoid the bankruptcy of major companies in an era of change, other viewpoints will increasingly become necessary. The objective of this paper is to investigate the fundamental principles guiding employment policy, above all professional skills development and training, and to position this in legal terms. With regard to the following sections, section II raises the question of the concept of "the right to a career," while section III explores the scope for its specific application and relevant problems. Section IV provides an overview of the status of its incorporation into positive law, and section V sets forth considerations in relation to the conclusion and the issues that remain.

II. The Right to a Career as a Principle

Why is the concept of the right to a career necessary? Moreover, what is the meaning of incorporating it into labor law? This section seeks a renewed understanding of the meaning of a career, and then endeavors to establish the legal concept of the right to a career.

1. A Career is Property

The Industrial Revolution shook up agrarian societies and marked the beginning of the modern age. In order to resolve the issues emerging in this era of major change, it was necessary for each country to develop a succession of new policies over the course of the 19th century. The school education system, the beginnings of labor law, such as factory acts, and the precursor to the social security system were all developed during this era.

In relation to employment, the wave of technological innovation gradually redrew the map of occupations. In opposition to this, the Luddite movement arose, focusing on destroying machinery, and movements that sought to protect the traditional occupations also flourished. In the labor movement, the slogan “a job is property” was frequently intoned. However, amidst the trends of the times, it was difficult to ensure the survival of all traditional occupations, and jobs that were not compatible with the industrial system based on technological innovation were fated to disappear without a trace, sooner or later.

This situation cannot necessarily have been pleasant for many people. This is because although they had worked hard at their apprenticeships since their childhood and had striven to hone their skills as craftsmen, the situation changed dramatically just when they were on the point of becoming master craftsmen. Naturally, this was not their fault. Consequently, people must have lamented the situation, wondering “What was I making the effort for?” and cursing technological innovation. When the skills that we have acquired over many years become obsolete, we find it difficult to earn our bread and butter, we feel anxious about the future, and we mourn the past, wondering what the point of our lives was. This is because, as a result of our job disappearing, the career that we had built up until that point is broken off and we cannot continue on the same path.

It was during this era that the concept of “the right to work” was born. This principle states that the state has responsibility to provide people with opportunities to work, and if people cannot do so, the state should guarantee their livelihoods at a certain level. While traditional occupations disappeared and it became difficult to develop careers further, it was a proposal for measures to deal with a situation in which the communal social security system had collapsed. This was difficult to achieve, but the principle was handed on to the next era.

The bitter experiences of the 19th century changed the strategic goal of the labor movement. This was a shift towards the approach that “employment is property.” Even if it were not possible to guarantee existing individual jobs as they were into the future, perhaps it would be possible to guarantee the employment that currently existed and seek the continuation of a career therein. This was the strategy. The dismissal regulations of the countries of Europe and the seniority rule (the continuous service criterion) of the USA were manifestations of this. Guaranteeing employment was an important theme throughout the 20th century.

In this respect, Japan, which has developed internal labor markets within companies and guaranteed long-term employment, as well as promoting the formation and development of careers, has experienced the epitome of success based on the "late-developer effect," in which the party that started later learns from the experiences of their predecessors and actually then takes the lead. Long-term employment, which has been dubbed "a job for life" and the system for the development of career and benefits called the seniority-based system, attracted attention from across the globe during the 1970s and 1980s, as a result of the extraordinarily high growth and excellent economic performance of Japan also after the oil crises.

However, just like the strategy of "a job is property" during the 19th century, as the end of the 20th century approached, the strategy of "employment is property," which sought to guarantee current employment at one's company, ran headlong into the incisive question of whether, in an age of change, it was possible to continue to maintain this employment and whether it was appropriate to do so. This is the theory of the increasing mobility of employment.

So where should we look for the basic strategy to guide the 21st century?

If we consider this question in light of the experiences of the 19th and 20th centuries, the pursuit of "permanence" in an age of change is fairly difficult. Rather, it seems that we ought to accept and respond to change, integrating with it while aiming for an approach that will not cause people unhappiness. So, what is this approach?

The slogans "a job is property" and "employment is property" incorporated three meanings. One is the "guaranteeing of a livelihood" that this brings about. This asserted that jobs and employment should be protected as "property" that provides a foothold for maintaining one's livelihood. Another is the guaranteeing of a "professional career." Both jobs and employment relate closely to the formation and development of a career. Jobs and employment were forums for guaranteeing a career. Thirdly, there is "personal fulfillment." People grow through work, and can become fulfilled. At the same time, a person's career is the biography of that personal fulfillment.

If we revise our understanding of the purport of the slogans of the past in this way, we will doubtless notice that, no matter how much the times and approaches to employment might change, one should not deny that the crux of the matter is "granting opportunities to guarantee one's livelihood, ensure a career and achieve personal fulfillment." One also thinks of a structure that guarantees one's livelihood and opportunities for personal fulfillment, through the guaranteeing of a career.

Thus, the new strategic goal of "a career is property" is discovered. The era has arrived when people place themselves in the world of work for almost half a century, from their 20s until the age of 65 or over. In spite of this, given a situation in which the life-span of an excellent company is around 30 years, it is difficult to imagine that it will be possible to guarantee a job or employment that relies on a single company. Rather, we should adapt to the fact that, over the course of a long working life, we will have to experience changes of occupation, job or company, and perhaps examine what we should do in order to ensure that people's careers develop, rather than being curtailed because of this situation. The basic principles of employment policy and, consequently, labor policy will also likely need to be based on this.

In a society in which the relative importance of external labor markets is increasing, what should be emphasized in their development is preparing as many opportunities as possible for forming and developing careers, in order to minimize the occurrence of cases in which individual people's careers are cut off because their careers cannot be formed smoothly or because they have changed jobs or been unemployed. Otherwise, individual workers, employers and, ultimately, the whole of society will suffer from declining vocational skills and the depletion of human resources. If this occurs, the country would be unable to bear the burden of an aging society, let alone maintain the level of economic activity.

The fact is that the focus of employment policy and labor law will change from securing employment to securing careers, and from the guaranteeing of employment to the guaranteeing of careers. At the very least, rather than a single guiding principle of securing and guaranteeing employment, it will be necessary to give greater consideration to securing and guaranteeing careers.

2. The Right to a Career and the Constitution

Even if there is an awareness of the importance of guaranteeing careers, how can this be incorporated into the legal world? What methods can be devised to structure careers as a legal right (the right to a career) in some sense?

In relation to guaranteeing the right to a career, if we go back to the basics of employment policy and labor law, the most fundamental cornerstones are the independence of the individual and the right to pursue happiness (Article 13 of the Constitution of Japan); in addition, from the perspective of securing a social role in the workplace and ensuring personal fulfillment, this guarantee can be read as having its foundations in the freedom to choose one's occupation, as prescribed in Article 22 of the Constitution, and the right to work, as prescribed in Article 27, paragraph (1) of the Constitution. Moreover, if we consider preparation for and the formation of a career, this also relates to Article 26 of the Constitution (the right to receive an education and the obligation to ensure that an education is received). In this sense, the nature of the right to a career is that it is a right that integrates the freedom to choose an occupation and the right to an education, centered on the right to work. Thus, the right to a career emerges as a key concept that can become an important core of employment policy and labor law.

Accordingly, if we firstly examine discussions that have taken place hitherto, what formed the basis for discussions on securing and guaranteeing employment was both Article 25 (the right to life) and Article 27, paragraph (1) (the right and obligation to work) of the Constitution. As well as discussions since the 19th century, the content of this was influenced by the Employment Policy Convention (No.122) and related Recommendations (No.122) of the International Labour Organization (ILO), which was adopted in 1964 and has been ratified by

Japan. This convention requires “an active policy designed to promote full, productive and freely chosen employment” (Article 1.1) and states that “The said policy shall aim at ensuring that there is…the fullest possible opportunity for each worker to qualify for, and to use his skills and endowments in, a job for which he is well suited...” (Article 1.2 [c]).

The prevailing view does not perceive the right and obligation to work as a specific right and obligation for workers in relation to the state. Still less is it seen as a right that can be used to request employment from a specific employer as a private individual, or as a right that will, in the future, impose the obligation to work. This is because there is a significant discrepancy with the basic principles of the market economy system, and this also could correspond to the prohibition of forced labor (Article 18 of the Constitution). Moreover, this is also because it has limited feasibility and even if it is realized, there are many problems in relation to cost and performance as a policy, as there are in the case of unemployment relief measures. Forcing people to work is reminiscent of Japan’s experience during the war, when there were disparities in the quality of compulsorily recruited employees and problems in regard to how little will to work they had.

Consequently, the right and obligation to work is basically understood as a provision for programs guiding state labor policy, binding the state to develop legal systems relating to labor markets and occupational training, as well as establishing legal systems such as unemployment insurance, while also obliging it not to adopt laws and policies that ignore the right to work. Moreover, in designing systems such as unemployment benefit and vocational training, the state is permitted to make an allowance for workers’ will to work. Furthermore, it has been pointed out that provisions and objectives relating to the right to work will become the guiding principle, even in the event that legislation restricting the freedom of employment and dismissal are introduced, or any legal interpretation is attempted.

With regard to this, the concept of the right to a career is positioned as follows in relation to the right to work and the freedom to choose one’s occupation.

Firstly, the right to a career is an important constituent element that forms the core of the right to work. In fact, given that the means of existence (one’s livelihood) is secured through guaranteeing the formation and development of a career, and given that a concept of labor without the formation and development of a career is poor and unattractive, it is appropriate to understand the substantive content of the right to work as containing the right to a career. With regard to what the right to work should guarantee, it must guarantee not only the opportunity to work, which should be secured in quantitative terms, but also the opportunity to work that includes qualitative factors that take into consideration the skills, aptitude and will to work of the worker.

Secondly, even if we understand part of the specific content of the right to work as incorporating the right to a career, it is not the case that the legal nature of the right to work will change significantly. There is no change in the basic nature of social rights as a program provision. However, as will be stated later in this paper, just as the right to work has come to provide a certain conceptual basis for the introduction of the legal principle of misuse of the right to dismiss workers and legislation concerning equality of opportunities for employment, different responses from those employed hitherto are required in terms of the right to work, including the right to a career, in some aspects concerning labor relations.

Thirdly, with regard to the relationship to the freedom to choose one's occupation (Article 22, paragraph [1] of the Constitution), the right to a career clearly demonstrates attributes of respecting the independence and freedom of the individual. It recognizes the possibility that an individual can, at their own initiative, choose the occupation that best embodies their abilities, aptitudes and ambitions. This is because, if otherwise, preparations for and the formation and development of a career will not progress smoothly. When considering a long working life, whatever good intentions one may have, and even if one were an expert in occupational relations, there are many risks inherent in someone other than the individual concerned allocating them to an occupation, while disregarding their own wishes. This is because nobody can bear complete responsibility for an uncertain future. One cannot maximize the satisfaction of the interested party other than by taking responsibility oneself for one's own future. Even if one were to argue that the right and obligation to work is enshrined in the Constitution of Japan, a legal system that would secure the opportunity to work by means of enforced recruitment and allocation would not be permitted other than in extremely exceptional cases.

Fourthly, what about the relationship to the right to education (Article 26, paragraph [1] of the Constitution)? If one acknowledges the right to request that the state give economic consideration in order to achieve equality of opportunity in regard to education, and the right of children to learn—that is to say, the right to learning that will guarantee the right to growth and development—then if we do not restrict this to "children" and substitute the word "people," so that adults can also be included, then it is evident that the content as it is refers totally to the right to a career. In the age of lifelong learning, there is no need to restrict the focus of education to children or young people; indeed, it is inappropriate to do so.

Fifthly, if the system comes to be composed in this way, we should be able to understand properly that the right to a career truly is the right of human beings to personal fulfillment in relation to their jobs. It does not make sense, if this right to a career is acknowledged only in employment in a narrow sense (Article 623 of the Civil Code) or in cases where people are working in similar forms of work to this. Even if the proportion of employed workers in the total number of persons holding jobs is in excess of 85%, restricting the scope of labor policies and labor law to employment will make them too narrow. Working methods such as SOHO (running a business from a small office or home office) and teleworking (working from home) are becoming more widespread, and in cases such as network-style project work, there is increasingly a mixture of employment, subcontracting and outsourcing. Furthermore, in labor markets, the operators of small and ultra-small enterprises, contract and outsource workers, and employed workers are all mixed together. Careers built up in a single occupation will, not infrequently, be cut off, irrespective of the form of employment. In the future, it is conceivable that an approach to labor law that may cover all these will be required.

III. The Right to a Career as a Standard

What should be done in order to ensure that the right to a career is meaningful not only in employment policy but also in workforce management in individual cases? This section firstly considers the main actors involved in designing the formation and development of careers, then considers a number of individual points for discussion, and finally sets forth the challenges for realizing this right.

1. The Right to a Career and the Main Actors Involved in Designing a Career

The attached table (p. 24) lists the main trends that result, according to whether the main strategic actors in determining careers are management or workers. The left-hand column shows the trends in cases where the "decision is made by the organization," while the right-hand column shows the trends in cases where the "decision is made by the individual." Conventional Japanese employment practices belong to the former category, while the US pattern of career determination is close to the latter. Naturally, this is one form of ideal type, and the reality is a mixture of the two in the majority of cases.

Firstly, if we look at the left-hand side, which is more-or-less the conventional pattern in Japan, we can see that it is usual for employers, as represented by personnel and labor service divisions, to make decisions about career strategy on a systematic, centralized basis. The hiring of new graduates forms the core of employment, with a focus on long-term employment. Guaranteeing employment plays an important role in implementing proper personnel development and ensuring that both management and workers enjoy its results. It is difficult to specify a job when employing someone in the long term, so the employment of generalists is most common. With regard to education and training, the cultivation of basic skills through school education is conducted outside companies, but subsequent vocational training focuses on abilities specific to each company, and even training in general skills is provided by the employers in most cases. The standard is for decisions about job type through placement and changes of position to be determined by the employers according to the organization's goals and personnel strategy. With regard to decisions concerning promotions, salary increases and benefits, continuous service, which represents the degree of formation of professional skills in internal labor markets, is an important indicator. In addition, decisions are mainly uniform, standard ones based on work rules or employment regulations. Long-term employment is the basic premise, so in many cases, companies do not demonstrate a profound interest in such matters as non-competition requirements and the protection of secrets after leaving the company. As employment is guaranteed, there is also little interest in the necessity of the right to request employment, in which workers request the right actually to work (opportunities for career formation, development and maintenance). With regard to the handling of complaints, there is a tendency towards collective handling and it is easy for relationships between management and workers within the company to be established, on the basis of the internal labor market. Concerning support measures implemented on the basis of employment policy, there is a reliance on the company for the maintenance of employment and skills development. As far as responses to changes in the environment are concerned, career strategy also relies on the organizational strategy of the specific company, and even though it is easy to make adjustments in internal labor markets, such adjustments are difficult to implement in external labor markets.

In relation to this, in the right-hand series, which the US is said to closely resemble, the main actors in career strategy are the individual workers. Companies employ "work-ready" employees, who have vocational skills formed through school education and occupational training outside the company, or experience at other companies. If individuals formulate the strategy that they believe to be the best for their careers and act on the basis of this, they will not necessarily want a long employment period and to form their skills and demonstrate their abilities at their own pace, and they do not care even if there are no employment guarantees in the short term, as long as the experience will be a part of their career path. They thus require a guarantee of a career (formation and development) rather than a guarantee of employment. Individuals aspire to specialist positions (specific occupations and jobs) in order to build up their own careers, and generalists are unpopular, with a common saying being "a Jack of all trades is good for nothing" (management posts are also operated as specialist positions). With regard to skills development, both school education and general vocational training depend on the initiative of the individual worker, but specific training for the company is the responsibility of the employer. Workers are also the main actors in deciding on positions, and it is not the case that any position is fine as long as it is with a major company. Changes of placement also operate in the same way, and the consent of the worker is required if the location changes, even if the job type remains the same, as well, of course, as for job rotation between different types of job. Promotions, pay rises and decisions concerning benefits are not completed within the internal labor market, and tend to reflect trends in external labor markets (market rates according to job type or occupation), with a strong tendency towards individual decisions through agreement with workers. Changes of working conditions are the same, and measures such as change and termination notifications are required. It is common for workers who are engaged in important jobs to suddenly quit, due to their own career strategies, and to move to other, competing companies, so the prohibition of competition and the preservation of secrecy after employees leave their posts are important matters of concern for companies. There is a strong interest in their own careers, so for workers, the right to request actual work is important. Complaints tend to be handled on an individual basis and collective labor relations do not necessarily fit in with this. Career support through employment policy targets individual workers. In relation to environmental changes, the focus is on adjustment through external labor markets, and it is sometimes not easy to achieve adjustments within the company.

If we consider the matter in this way, the transition from decisions made on an organizational basis to those made on an individual basis is not easy at the level of individual companies and workers, but it is even less easy for society as a whole. In fact, the long-term trends amidst the myriad of options according to industry, region, company, job type and occupation, and worker are expected to be for the characteristics on the left-hand side of the table to fade, gradually shifting towards the right-hand side. In addition, as the transition to the right-hand side progresses, career guarantees (the establishment of the right to a career) will become more important than employment guarantees.

2. The Challenges Presented by the Right to a Career

The right to a career is currently an abstract right of a conceptual nature with its basis in the Constitution, but it is limited to program provisions that lead the employment policy and labor legislation, and there is still little basis in positive law.[3] The doctrine of case law is still as yet unexplored, as well. This reflects the fact that career guarantees and the concept of the right to a career have not been formed and established as employment practices to the extent that they supplement the content of labor law in Japan, which is often generalized through legislation that provides broad frameworks for important areas. These have been absorbed into employment guarantees, or are hiding behind them and have not yet surfaced.

Consequently, in order to establish the right to a career, it is important for concerted efforts to be made in employment policy and labor legislation that reflect those principles; at the same time, attention will focus on the degree to which a stance of emphasizing careers will be adopted by both management and workers in practical labor relations. The right to a career is not only an issue for external labor markets, but also involves internal labor markets. Against the background of the movements involved, it is likely that the essence of the right to a career will gradually be formed.

Thus, in order to ensure that the right to a career has a robust status in labor law, a number of preconditions must be fulfilled. Let us list these in more detail.

Firstly, in personnel and labor management, it is necessary to have a clearer awareness of the concept of a career. If both workers and managers are indifferent to career preparation, formation and development and it does not become oriented towards the practical world, career practices will not be formed. Employment of new graduates by job type, a system of specialist occupations, and contract employees employed on projects will not become widespread and yield results without the perspective of career guarantees. What is required is the approach of emphasizing occupational careers, which has emerged not only in foreign companies, but also in Japanese companies; in other words, it is necessary to match the ideas of employers and workers, while seeking the formation of skills and development of a work history in line with career prospects. Moreover, in the event that the concept of a career is introduced in individual labor contracts, one should not interpret it solely in terms of conventional employment guarantees, but also bring the perspective of guaranteeing a career more to the forefront. An interpretation that achieves a balance between guaranteeing employment and guaranteeing a career will be required.

---

[3] As it will be discussed later, there are some new legislations on the issue. Concerning the case law, recently a decision was made by Tokyo District Court, February 8, 2010, *Rodo Keizai Hanrei Sokuho* [Flash Report on Labor and Economic Cases], vol. 2067, p. 21 (2010). It gave more attention to the career judging the legal effect of a job transfer.

Secondly, even in cases where conventional employment practices and labor contracts are still in place, it will be necessary to reconsider whether or not career guarantees are needed if there are guarantees of employment. As a means of hedging employment risk in an age of change, the accumulation of a career that will be the "property" (human capital) of a worker cannot be downplayed. It may be possible that personnel policies that prioritize only the needs of the organization and which conspicuously ignore the careers of individual workers could, depending on the circumstances, be deemed to constitute an abuse of right over personnel issues (Article 1, paragragh [3], of Civil Code). It is also believed that consideration of such matters as education and training, placement, changes in placement, secondment, promotions and pay increases, and employment requests by workers will need to be approached from a different angle from that employed hitherto.

Thirdly, there is the fact that career formation and development must be considered individually, respecting the independence of the individual. From the perspective of the right to a career, organizational composition that emphasizes the individual to a greater degree, self-development that requires self-motivation on the part of the individual, various systems of qualifications, and career counseling that deals with the viewpoints of individual careers will become the focus of attention. Above all, with regard to the formation of skills, it will be necessary to enhance support in employment policy for skills development that targets not only companies, but also individuals; moreover, it would be preferable to implement measures that enhance training opportunities and provide financial and time-related support for the development of skills. An initiative based on skills development vouchers is also conceivable. With regard to skills development, achieving a good balance between costs and benefits is an issue, and if considering in whom limited educational resources should be invested, one would have to say that it should mainly be young people. For middle-aged and older people, the question of how to avoid changes of career and, in the event that this is inevitable, who should bear what level of cost burden is an important point for discussion.

Fourthly, the training provided by companies includes such matters as the formation of skills and the deployment in the workplace with a view to career development, on-the-job training that provides opportunities for skills formation, participation in training courses, subsidies for self-development and leave in order to participate in training, but it is necessary to reconfirm the legal issues relating to these. Until now, the limits of "the right to training" of companies through employment contracts and the right to give orders have often been discussed, but from the perspective of the right to a career, "the right to learning (right to receive training)" of workers through employment contracts is also important. In judging equal treatment and the prohibition of discrimination (Article 3 of the Labor Standards Act, Article 6 of the Gender Equality in Employment Act, and Article 7, paragraph [1] of the Labor Union Act), as well as the granting of opportunities in line with contracts, this is a point that should be borne in mind.

Fifthly, as employment, placement and benefits that emphasize careers become more widespread, there will be a stronger flavor of individual management, and there will be a greater need for contractual treatment. With regard to the content, management, revision or changes in content and resolution of labor contracts, a different approach from that employed hitherto will be required. Above all, notification of changes and dismissal will become an issue. Discussions about the regulations required as legal systems also seem likely to surface in the future.

IV. The Right to a Career Established as a Positive Law

In the sense that interest in professional careers has become the focus of regulation under labor law, the 2001 revision of the Employment Countermeasures Act and the Human Resources Development Promotion Act (through Act No.35 of 2001, Act Concerning the Partial Revision of the Employment Countermeasures Act, etc. in Order to Promote Smooth Re-employment in Response to Socioeconomic Changes) was truly worthy of note.[4]

1. Vocational Life Planning and Legal Restraints

First of all, Article 3 (Basic Principles) of the Employment Countermeasures Act, which is the basic law concerning employment policy, is a provision that is worthy of attention.

"Through appropriate vocational life planning, the development and improvement of skills in line with that plan, and the promotion of smooth re-employment in the event of a change in job, as well as the effective implementation of other measures, over the course of a worker's working life, consideration shall be given to ensuring the security of employment."

The Employment Countermeasures Act, which is the basic law on laws relating to labor markets and employment policy, is positioned squarely with working life, that is to say occupational careers, as the "basic principle." Article 4, paragraph (1) of this law (State Measures) stipulates that "The state…must formulate the requisite measures in an integrated fashion…in line with the basic principles prescribed in the preceding Article." There can be no doubt that respect for vocational careers forms the conceptual basis of this positive law, and this marks the first step towards its embodiment, which will have repercussions on various laws and measures.

Next, the revision to the Human Resources Development Promotion Act (hereinafter referred to as the "HR Development Act") has the following provisions.

Article 2, paragraph (4): "The term "vocational life planning" as used in this Act shall mean that workers set their own vocational objectives throughout their long-term vocational life and make their own plans for their efforts and other matters for selecting jobs and for developing and improving their vocational abilities, in accordance with their individual aptitude, vocational experience and other circumstances, for the purpose of realizing those objectives."

Vocational life planning is the design of a career relating to one's job. The planning of one's own vocational career cannot be left up to someone else, so ultimately, the only thing to be done is for individual workers to plan it themselves. This law affirms this fundamental rule and proclaims the basic principles that underpin it.

---

[4] Sugeno (2010) attributes these amendments on "vocationl life planning" or career desighn to the concept of right to a career developed by Suwa (1999) and other papers.

Article 3:"In view of the fact that having workers exercise their abilities effectively throughout the entire period of their vocational lives is indispensable for their security of employment and an improvement of their status and will constitute a basis for the development of the economy and society as a whole, the development and improvement of human resources pursuant to the provisions of this Act shall, as a basic principle, be carried out systematically by stages throughout the entire period of workers' vocational lives, while giving due consideration to their vocational life planning, so as to make them more adaptive to changes in their duties caused by changes in industrial structures, advances in technology, and other changes in the economic environment, and to contribute to their smooth reemployment in the case of job transfers."

There is an additional paragraph.

Article 3-2, paragraph (1): "In accordance with the basic principle prescribed in the preceding paragraph, the voluntary development and improvement of workers' vocational abilities shall be promoted by way of ensuring opportunities for them to receive the necessary vocational training and educational training on the job, in line with their vocational life planning, having them have the necessary work experience, and conducting an appropriate evaluation of the trade skills they need for their jobs that they have acquired through such training and experience and of their knowledge thereon."

2. The Significance of the Revised Human Resources Development Promotion Act

These provisions point out the following and focus clearly on a system of lifelong learning (education) from the viewpoint of individual workers:

i. The fact that it is essential for workers to be able to "exercise their abilities effectively throughout the entire period of their vocational lives";

ii. The fact that the development of human resources should "be carried out systematically by stages throughout the entire period of workers' vocational lives, while giving due consideration to their vocational life planning";

iii. The fact that "the voluntary development and improvement of workers' vocational abilities shall be promoted";

iv. The fact that it should make workers more adaptive to changes in the employment and industrial situations surrounding them;

v. The fact that "opportunities to receive educational training," "work experience" and "appropriate evaluation" are required.

In other words, the HR Development Act does not simply set forth short-term measures designed to treat the symptoms, providing support for the development of vocational abilities to enable workers who are currently unemployed to find jobs, or to promote vocational training by the companies where workers are currently employed; rather, it sets forth a stance of deploying a variety of measures to facilitate the development of workers' vocational abilities "systematically by stages throughout the entire period of workers' vocational lives," from a broader and deeper perspective.

Thus, the right to a career relating to one's occupation is no longer solely a theoretical principle, but is also beginning to take root as a modern concept of rights in positive labor law that has its foot in the door of positive law.[5]

3. Significance for Labor Law in the Future

As pointed out in the statement "labour is not a commodity" (ILO Philadelphia Declaration), even if human labor is placed in a transactional relationship of demand and supply in labor markets, based on the market economy, one cannot treat it in the same way as a normal commodity exchange. With regard to the reality in which market transactions with workers and management on an equal footing are hardly expected, policy intervention is indispensable, which gives consideration to the safety nets that are deemed necessary for the maintenance and development of a society and economy having humans at their heart. In this sense, the roles of labor law and social law in the form of social security law are unlikely to disappear in the future.

With regard to this point, the question of how to position the careers or vocational lives of workers in labor law and how to reflect these in legislation and judicial precedent is likely to become an important challenge for the future. Legal policy that bolsters those in a subordinate position in negotiations in labor markets has been adopted hitherto, and is likely to continue to be adopted in the future. However, just as there are two types of basic attitudes in employment policy law regarding market intervention, that is to say passive policy (policy that responds passively to the results of market trends, such as providing benefit for unemployment and the like) and active policy (policy that seeks an active intervention, such as adjusting the preconditions of the market and seeking to intervene in market trends), regulations in labor law in general fall into one of two categories: the passive policies concerning labor law and the active policies concerning labor law.

If we take the example of equal employment opportunities law, one can categorize such measures as the ban on discrimination as a policy that adopts a passive response, and affirmative or positive action as a more active response measure. In labor law from the 19th century to the first half of the 20th century, the main focus had been on raising the status of workers, who were in a subordinate position in market transactions, to the basic minimum level, and it had been left at the mercy of the formation and development of labor relations and trends in labor markets to a considerable degree to enable those workers who had reached that legally-defined basic minimum level, to obtain stronger bargaining power. However, currently, with the realms in which industrial relations function becoming narrower, as seen in the decline in the unionization rate, and the areas of labor markets with secure employment (employment of so-called permanent employees) becoming more limited, it is likely that the government will be com-

[5] In Japan, currently as of November 26, 2010, there are at least 22 labor and social laws which stipulate articles concerning "vocational life planning" or career design (Web site on Japanese laws and ordinances, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications: http://law.e-gov.go.jp/cgi-bin/idxsearch.cgi). Ouchi (2008) gives us a brief outlook of the concept in various laws.

pelled to implement new responses – above all, more active policies concerning labor law.

In particular, support measures to strengthen the bargaining power of workers in labor markets are required. For that purpose, more proactive support for the formation of their vocational skills is indispensable. In that case, it is not sufficient to only provide them with educational training in a narrow sense; rather, it is absolutely vital to ensure career development (vocational life), that is to say, educational training and the formation of vocational abilities through work. Attempts to conceptualize "the right to a career" are moves that are linked to the fundamental rules and basic principles that form the foundations for the systematic development of response measures relating to this aspect.

V. Concluding Remarks

1. Summary

As a result of envisaging the right to a career in one's occupation, the author has reached the following conclusions.

Firstly, it was fine for the guiding principles of employment policy that emphasized internal labor markets to be "securing and guaranteeing employment," but if we also take external labor markets into consideration and seek measures that respond to an era of change, a more coherent viewpoint emerges by focusing on careers. This is the resurfacing of securing employment, with a response that emphasizes the concept of a career at the core of this.

Secondly, when citing the slogan "a career is property," it is not the case that the human capital represented by a career becomes "property" in a legal sense. This itself cannot be disconnected from the human being and turned into the object of the transaction. It is necessary to envisage the right to a career in a different form.

Thirdly, in this case, this paper has focused on the right to education and learning (Article 26 of the Constitution of Japan), the freedom to choose one's occupation (Article 22 of the Constitution), and the right to work (Article 27 of the Constitution), in relation to their links to occupations, against the background of respect for the individual and the right to pursue happiness (Article 13 of the Constitution) and the right to existence (Article 25 of the Constitution). In doing so, the prospect has emerged of the right of individuals as the main actors to prepare for and form a career at their own initiative (the right to learn), the right to choose a job in order to form and develop own career (the freedom to choose one's occupation) and the right to request various measures aimed at securing career opportunities (the right to work).

Fourthly, however, at this point in time, even if a comprehensive concept were introduced, in the form of the right to a career relating to an occupation, and even if the content of the right to education and the right to learning, the freedom to choose one's occupation and the right to work were clearly stipulated and enriched, it is unlikely that it would go so far as to change their fundamental legal nature. Consequently, it is still difficult for an individual to demand a certain level of job or pay from the state or employers, on the grounds of the right to a career. It only goes as far as taking on the role of the clarification and modernization of principles in program provisions.

Fifthly, having said this, in terms of positive law, it is believed that there is, even now, scope for the right to a career to become the guiding thread in the interpretive theory, by following a particular path; moreover, it seems likely that this will develop further in the future. For example, there is consideration for careers in the standards for selecting personnel for educational training, placement, changes of placement and secondments, and dismissal in order to reorganize the company, as well as consideration for careers when deciding whether or not to recognize the right to request actual work. With regard to personnel measures that run counter to the wishes of the workers themselves and ignore their career, putting them at a disadvantage from which it will be difficult to recover, it is believed that there is scope for this to be judged to be an abuse of right over personnel issues. In forming a legal principle of misuse of the right to dismiss workers, it seems that there are things to consider in relation to the concept of the right to work, along with the actual state of employment.

Sixthly, in light of the concept of the right to a career, one can see actual examples of legislative amendments being carried out. These are still, perhaps, no more than provisions focused on spiritual and conceptual objectives or provisions obliging those concerned to make efforts, and may only have a meaning as "soft laws." However, the meaning of the phrase "vocational life," which is scattered around many labor-related laws and ordinances, has become part of the network and, when forming a comprehensive interpretation, the essence of the right to a career will likely become more concrete and be enriched further.[6]

2. Issues Remaining

What are the issues that remain? There are three.

Firstly, the concept of the right to a career is still only a roughly-hewn one, so in order to ensure that it is consistent with the various legal doctrines and principles of labor law, it will be necessary to do some work to refine it as a solid theory of interpretation. This is because, unless this is done, it will not become a useable legal concept.

Secondly, there is the need to establish the right to a career as one of the basic concepts of employment policy. Even if it is a social right as a program provision, it is still important to ensure that the right to work, which is a basic concept guiding laws and policies, is reborn with the concept of the right to a career, and that it provides a good foothold for people in times of change.

Thirdly, there is a need to ensure that the concept of the right to a career is understood in practical terms and is honed through practice in the field, in order to make it a more practical, user-friendly concept. With regard to this point, there is still a great deal of scope for further consideration of the issues raised in this paper.

---

[6] JILPT(2007) discusses the importance and possibility of the concept of right to a career from various points.

Comparison of Differences between Two Types of Strategic Actor in Career Formation and Development

Item	Decision Made by Organization	Decision Made by Individual
Actor with responsibility	Employers	Workers
Employment form	Centering on hiring new graduates	Centering on hiring those with vocational skills
Employment period	Primarily long-term	Primarily short- to medium-term
Employment guarantee	Essential or top priority	Not necessarily the top priority
Career guarantee	Derived from guarantees of employment	Primary priority
Career form	Primarily general positions	Primarily specialist posts
General basic skills education (school education)	Worker, family and society	Worker, family and society
General occupational training (general skills)	Mainly considered by employers	Mainly considered by workers, their families and society
Special occupational training (restricted to the company)	Mainly considered by employers	Mainly considered by employers
Decision concerning jobs	Agreed by workers at the initiative of employers	Agreed by employers at the initiative of workers and their families
Changes of placement	Determined strategically by the employer	Independent wishes of workers are important
Promotions and pay increases	Rely on continuous service in the internal labor market	Rely on value placed on the specialist skills of workers (employability)
Decisions concerning benefits	Uniform decisions based on work rules	Individual decisions based on labor contracts
Changes in conditions	Uniform handling based on work rules	Handled individually based on labor contracts (notification of change or cancellation is also required)
Competition prohibition and secrecy maintenance measures	There is little interest in special response measures	There is a great need for appropriate response measures
Right to request work	Little necessity (degree of interest)	Great necessity (degree of interest)
Handling of complaints	Dealt with collectively through worker – management discussions	Dealt with individually with individual workers
Collective labor relations	Easy to form from company strategy and the need to control internal labor markets	The degree of reliance on individual strategy and external labor markets is increasing, and there are cases where collective labor relations are not formed
Support policies (subsidies, etc.)	Support measures centered on companies	Support measures centered on individuals
Responsibility for responding to environmental changes	Reliance on strategic responses by employers (while it is possible to adjust within the company, it is hard to adjust outside the company)	Reliance on strategic responses by workers (while it is possible to adjust outside the company, it is hard to adjust within the company)

Referemces

Araki, Takashi. 2009. *Rodo ho* [Labor law]. Tokyo: Yuhikaku.

Araki, Takashi, Shinya Ouchi, Fumio Otake, and Ryu Kanbayashi, ed. 2008. *Koyo shakai no ho to keizai* [Law and economics of employment society]. Tokyo: Yuhikaku.

The Japan Instutute for Labour Policy and Training (JILPT). 2007. *Korekara no koyo senryaku: Daremo ga kagayaki wo motte kizuku yutaka de katsuryoku aru shakai* [Employment strategy of the future: Prosperous and energetic society in which everyone is shining and motivated]. JILPT Research Report, no. 63, the Japan Instutute for Labour Policy and Training , Tokyo.

Ouchi, Shinya. 2008. Kyaria ken[Right to a career]. *Bizinesu Gaido*[Business guide] 678:68-76.

———. 2009. *Saishin juyo hanrei 200: Rodo ho*[200 important cases on labor law]. Tokyo: Kobundo.

Sugeno, Kazuo. 2010. *Rodo ho*[Labor law]. 9th ed. Tokyo: Kobundo.

Suwa, Yasuo. 1996a. Koyo Kankei no henka to rodo ho no kadai [Changes in employment relations and issues concerning labor law]. *Chuo Rodo Jiho* [*Journal of the central labor relations committee*] 901: 3-24.

———. 1996b. *Technological change/innovation and social protection.* General report presented to the 6th Asian Regional Congress of the International Association of Labour Law and Social Security, Hobart (mimeo).

———. 1998. Career is property: A core concept or an impossible dream? Proceedings of the 11th World Congress of the International Industrial Relations Association, Bologna, vol. 1, 1-25.

———. 1999. Kyaria ken no koso wo meguru ichi shiron [One theory concerning the concept of the right to a career]. *The Monthly Journal of the Japan Institute of Labour* 41, no. 7:54-64.

———. 2004: Kyaria ken wo do Jitsugen suruka [How to cultivate the right to a career]. *Quarterly Labor Law* 207 (Winter):40-49.

———. 2010. Rodo hogaku ni okeru kyaria no ichizuke: Atarashii hogenri no tansaku [Career and the law: In serach of a new labor law principle]. *The Japanese Journal of Labour Studies* 52, no. 7:59-63.

Yamakawa, Ryuichi. 2008. *Koyo kankeih ho*[Employment relation law]. Tokyo: Shinseisha.

The Current State and Future Tasks of Japan's Career Education Promotion Policies—Embarking on the Road Less Traveled

Teruyuki Fujita

National Institute for Educational Policy Research

This paper looks at the current state of, background to, and future tasks related to career education promotion policies at Japanese elementary and secondary education levels. The Introduction describes the particular features of Japan's school education considered necessary in order to understand the state of career education, such as the class or homeroom teacher allocation throughout elementary and secondary school education and the entrance examination system for senior high schools. Subsequently the first half of this paper discusses about a proposal, with reasons, for career education in Japan, in particular, the increase in young people either without work or in insecure working arrangements, and the effects of relaxing the formerly highly competitive entrance examinations system. In the second half, the author describes the impact of "Career Start Week" campaign (2005-2008), which has revitalized work experience programs within junior high schools, and of the "Basic Plan for the Promotion of Education" (2008), and both summarizes and provides verified data-based results relating to policies promoting career education. Finally, this paper looks at the division of roles between the central government and regional governments, which is in a period of transition, and picks up important issues for the future relating to the creation of new frameworks to improve the quality of career education practice. In working towards this, the author concludes that Japan is truly embarking on the road less—or perhaps almost never—traveled.

I. Introduction: Who Is Implementing Career Education in Japan's Schools?

Within American schools—particularly high schools—the school counselor plays a central role in operating a range of programs to support students in career development. Finnish secondary schools' activities center on a career counselor known as *Opinto-Ohjaaja*, while in England, career formation support is provided through partnerships between schools and advisors that belong to regional organizations known as Connexions Services. In Europe, in fact, many countries provide career support through partnerships with organizations outside the schools. Particular examples of this are the *UU-center* (*Ungdommens Uddannelsesvejledning Center*: youth guidance centers) in Denmark, or Germany's BIZ (*Berufs Information Zentrum*: job information centers).

Japan, on the other hand, gives the responsibility for career education to members of school teaching staff, each of whom has their own subject to teach. Individual career counseling is also implemented by general members of the teaching staff. Schools with their own career counselor are extremely rare exceptions to the rule, and partnerships with external organizations are nowhere near as developed as they are in Europe. In cases where partnerships are entered into, the organizations involved offer a widely varying degree and type of services, which are decided upon by the respective schools by trial and error.

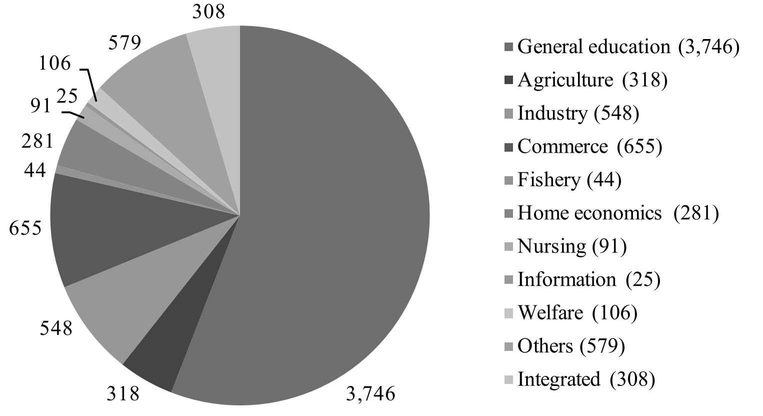
This situation comes about mainly because of the class teacher system universal throughout elementary and secondary schools in Japan. During compulsory education (which consists of six years of primary schooling followed by three years of lower secondary, or junior high schooling) and also during the three years of upper secondary or senior high school education, which is the major form of continuing education engaged in by Japanese students after their compulsory education ends, students take the majority of lessons in their own designated "homeroom" class. It is rare to find a school in Japan, other than a few senior high schools offering what is known as "integrated course," where students move classrooms in the break between each lesson as they do in American high schools, filling the corridors as they transfer to their next class. In other vast majority cases, students move classroom only for subjects such as physical education, art, or science classes where experiments are being carried out. For the rest of the time, they are taught almost exclusively in their homerooms. The maximum number of students who may occupy one homeroom is 40, and these students will spend much of the school year being taught in the same group in the same classroom.

In addition to the above, an educational program known as "class activities" (in elementary/junior high school) or "homeroom activities" (in senior high school) takes place once per week in all schools. This involves group work and discussion-based activities, during which students learn how to form positive relationships, plan how to enjoy class and school activities as a member of a group, and think about their own futures. The person leading these activities is the class teacher (known in senior high schools as the homeroom teacher). Class teachers are chosen by the principal/headmaster from among regular teachers, who each teach their own curriculum subject, and most class teachers work hard to ensure they create a relationship of trust with the students in their class. It is usual for such teachers to refer to the students in their class as "my students" or even "my children." Emotionally, they are truly "in loco parentis" for these students. The class teacher is aware of the home situation and living environment of each student in their class, and for this reason the class teacher is given responsibility for providing career counseling to students during lunch breaks and outside of school hours.

To understand part of the background of the class teacher system, which extends into senior high school, we need to look at the entrance examination system for senior high schools. 98% of junior high school graduates move on to senior high school, and each senior high school has its own entrance examination process, which students have to pass in order to be given a place at the school.[1] More than 70% of Japanese senior high school

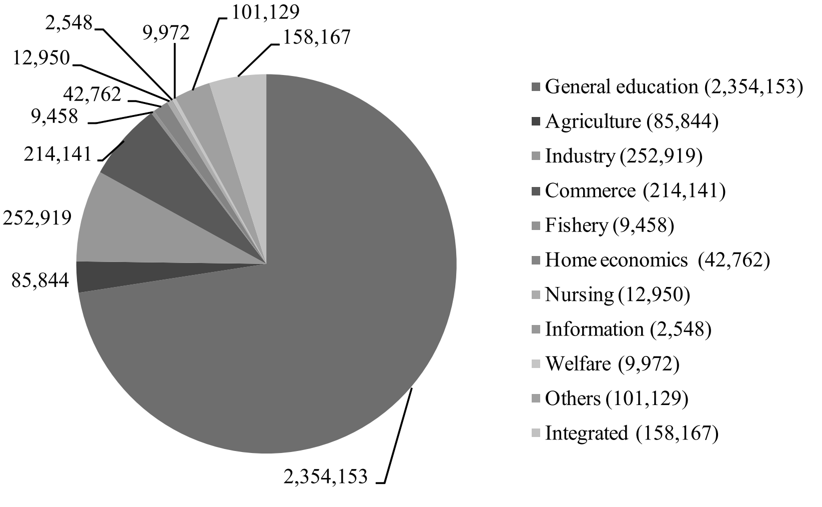
---

[1] The actual process of selection of students for entry to public senior high schools differs from prefecture to prefecture. In general, students who do not pass the entrance examination for public full-time senior high schools have the following options: (i) to take the entrance examination for a private high school, (ii) to take the entrance examination for any public high school implementing second-stage selection procedures, (iii) to take the entrance examination for entry to a part-time or



Source: Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, *School Basic Survey Preliminary Report FY 2010*, table 16.

Figure 1. Number of Full-Time Senior High Schools by Course (2010)



Source: Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, *School Basic Survey Preliminary Report FY 2010*, table 16.

Figure 2. Number of Full-Time Senior High School Students by Course (2010)

students are taught non-vocational, basically academic subjects at general education course (Figures 1 and 2), but there is a significant range in both quality, content and standards between schools, even those classed as providing a "general" curriculum. Each prefecture has a small number of senior high schools where the highest achievers will gather (the tip of the

correspondence course-based senior high school or (iv) to take a year "out" and prepare for re-examination in the following year.

pyramid), while more academically disadvantaged students will largely attend schools in the middle or lower part of the pyramid. In other words, as a result of entrance examinations, each school will be populated by students with similar levels of academic achievement, which enables the school to place students in the same year into classes of around 40 people, and teach the same curriculum to each class unit.

This type of senior high school entrance examination system is a huge event for junior high school students. Most students face their first public selection examination at the point where they enter senior high school, and whether or not they succeed at this examination can have a not insignificant effect on their future lives. The Japanese culture of judging people by their academic qualifications (or by the history of their school), which has for so long been the basis of employment practice, has ensured that no one doubts the value of climbing as high up the pyramid as is possible. Various evidences show that this so-called "academic qualification-based society" has loosened its hold in recent years, but parents of junior high school students still hope to see their children enter high-level high schools if at all possible, and the entrance examinations therefore remain to be a major source of worry for the students. Of course, even now, the entrance examinations continue to be one of the most serious concerns for the class teachers at the junior high schools as well, since they have the responsibility to support their students' career formation.

This paper will therefore set out the current state of, and issues relating to, the promotion of strategies for career education in Japan, based on the assumptions given above associated with the particular features of the Japanese education system.

Around 30 years ago, during the time when Japan was experiencing extraordinary economic growth, the Japanese education system was the focus of admiration all around the world, as one of the factors supporting the growth. The problems now faced by the Japanese economy today have the potential to threaten global economic recovery (as pointed out by Tasker [2010]), and it is no longer true that the world praises Japanese education—least of all its career education. A Russian proverb, however, says "The darker the night, the brighter the stars shine, lighting up a path to the future." With Japan in its current difficult economic state, the country is now working towards revitalizing career formation support for the children who will have to support its future. Firstly, let us take a look at how this is occurring.

II. Proposal and Reasons for Career Education in Japan

1. The Appearance of the New Term "Career Education"

An awareness of the need to promote "career education" as a policy matter arose within Japan no more than 10 years ago. To be more accurate, in December 1999, the Central Educational Council,[2] the Education Minister's consultative agency, published a report

[2] Currently the consultative agency to the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and

entitled "Improvements in Articulation between Elementary and Secondary Schools, and Higher Education Institutions." This report contained the following points.

> There is a need to implement career education from the elementary school level, in line with each stage of a child's development, in order to provide smooth transitions between school and society, and between different levels of schooling. (This education should help students to gain a desirable perspective of employment and work, as well as knowledge and skills related to work itself, and at the same time, encourage them to understand their own personalities so as to foster their abilities and attitudes and allow them to select their own careers independently.) Families and regional community should work in partnership with schools to implement career education, and the focus should be on experience-based learning. Each school should establish targets, and ensure that the education is implemented in a planned way as part of the curriculum. It is also important that the implementation status and results are consistently evaluated.

The focus of this report is, as the report's title suggests, "Improvements in Articulation between Elementary and Secondary Schools, and Higher Education Institutions" and the following points are made in explaining the "perspectives for consideration" that underpin the report.

> During the period of high economic growth, university entrance rate rose, and against this background of high demand for postsecondary education, a situation occurred in which many children and parents were subjected to "excessive entrance examination competition." This situation continued subsequent to date. Before the Second World War, only a few students were subject to "entrance examination competition," but this became a problem for far more Japanese nationals with the post-war increase to the rate of university entrance. [text omitted] Japan has a strong awareness of horizontal equality, but once a majority of people of the same generation began to proceed into higher education institutions of some form or another, there is inevitably the possibility that increasing numbers of students will be unable to progress to tertiary education based on their own objective selection. If steps are not taken to change the current attitude of "if everyone else is going (to university) then I'll go too," there is the possibility that objective decisions regarding students' futures, based on their individual abilities, aptitude, eagerness and interests may not be sufficiently implemented.

Today, three quarters of all students leaving senior high schools proceed to higher or further education institutions, but there are indications of an increasing danger that fewer

Technology. The Minister has several consultative bodies, but the Central Education Council is responsible for the most comprehensive considerations regarding education.

and fewer people progress into such institutions with any firm objective or sense of choice. The career education proposed in this report does not simply focus on the process of moving from school to employment, it also includes issues relating to the transition between compulsory education and senior high school, and from senior high school to university or other higher education institution. In contrast to Europe and the USA, where there is a strong trend towards recommending the enrollments in colleges and universities in order to ensure future employment stability, a particular feature of Japan's approach is the desire to correct the current situation whereby students have an attitude of merely "going with the flow" in regard to their progress, along with their peers, into higher education.[3]

Despite taking the tone described above, the report does push for greater interest to be taken in the transition from school to work. The reason for proposing career education that includes the important element of "education to help students to gain a desirable perspective of employment and work, as well as knowledge and skills relating to work itself" appears to lie in the increasing number of young people out of work, and those who spend their time on part-time, mostly unskilled work, who are known in Japan as "Freeters."[4] The report points out the following in regard to this:

> An increasing number of new school graduates show an interest in becoming "Freeters," and currently around 9% of senior high school graduates clearly leave school without progressing to higher education or entering employment. In addition, according to a survey by the Ministry of Labour,[5] 47% of new senior high school graduates and 32% of new university graduates leave their employment situation within three years. This phenomenon is profoundly related to changes in both the economic situation and the labor market, and as such is a difficult problem to assess, but it is certain that there are outstanding issues in connecting school education and working life.

The reason why part-time work and a high frequency of job changing is a problem for young people is the fact that in a country that bases its employment practices on lifetime

---

[3] In fiscal 2009, 98.2% of junior high school graduates moved on to senior high school, and the drop-out rate from senior high school during the same year was 1.7%. Furthermore, 54.3% of senior high school graduates moved onto higher education (university or junior college), with a further 23.0% moving on to continuing education (vocational colleges or public employment skills development facilities) (MEXT, 2010). As of 2008, an international comparison of educational attainment among adult populations revealed that 43% of Japanese people have completed tertiary education, significantly ahead of the OECD member country average (28%) (OECD 2010, table A1.1a).

[4] "Freeter" is a made-up Japanese word, created in 1987 by Hiroshi Michishita, editor of a classified employment advertising magazine by mixing the terms "freelance" and "Arbeiter" (the German term for worker). The German term "Arbeit" has been used for around a century by students as a kind of "in" term to describe part-time jobs taken while at university. Nowadays it is used as a general term for part-time work done by young people. This is the background to the wide adoption of the newly-coined term "Freeter."

[5] Currently the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.

employment, such practices can lead to social disadvantage. The immobility of workers is so deeply entrenched in Japan that it could even be described as a part of the country's culture (Fujita 2006). In other words, young people who transfer between multiple part time jobs, or who, despite being hired as full employees, leave their jobs within a short period of time, risk being labeled as unreliable or lacking social common sense by mainstream society, which sees immobility as a given. Such young people risk being stuck in unstable, low-paid employment even at their post-adolescent life (Hori 2007). Furthermore, the premise of immobility has led to Public Employment Security Offices commissioning a certain part of their work to senior high schools, with the schools undertaking the job placement functions for their students. Since this system ensures full-time students moving immediately to full-time permanent work as regular employees, the fact that increasing numbers of students do not benefit from this system is beginning to be acknowledged as a social problem.

The situation in the USA is in stark comparison to that of Japan. American young people experience a wide range of short-term activities between leaving schools and obtaining full-time permanent positions. They may participate in vocational skill training programs that promote employment, be temporarily unemployed or lose their jobs, return to student status, take part time jobs, or be employed full-time for short periods of time (OECD 2000). This sort of "milling and churning" is all considered experience that will count in the process of becoming regularly employed, and is understood as completely normal path to the adulthood. For this reason, there have been various debates regarding the creation and operation of support programs for young people engaged in insecure work, or those who are out of work.

In Japan, on the other hand, since it has always been assumed that young people will move from full-time study directly to full-time work, there has never been, and still is not, a particularly developed support system for young people who take any other path. Career education could be said to have emerged under a burden of need to prevent such "deviant behavior."

2. Another Reason for Creating a New Term: The Functional Failure of "Career Guidance"

It is, however, not the case that there was absolutely no guidance or support for students leaving school and entering employment (or progressing to higher level of education) prior to the emergence of career education in Japan. The concept of "vocational guidance (*shokugyo-shido*)" was first proposed in the early 1900s. This was changed to the term "career guidance (*shinro-shido*)" in the 1960s. Such guidance practices were considered to be a part of school education from the early period. Despite the various reforms implemented to the system, however, the career guidance practices based on the authentic principles never have taken root in schools in Japan. The main reasons for this are given below.

(1) American Roots and Japanese Culture

The primary reason why career guidance failed to function appears to be that its principles were based in ideas imported directly from the USA, and were not subject to any sort of localization.

The term "vocational guidance" is said to have been first introduced into Japan in 1915 by Munetoshi Irisawa, based on the principles of vocational guidance carried out in the USA, and translated directly into the Japanese term *shokugyo-shido*. Directly after the Second World War, in 1947, when the first national curriculum guidelines were defined, the term "vocational guidance" was included, based on a translation of the definition adopted by the American National Vocational Guidance Association in 1937.

Subsequently, theories of career development proposed by Eli Ginzberg and Donald E. Super were highly influential in developing Japanese career guidance policies. The self-realization theories of Abraham H. Maslow and Carl R. Rogers and the federal government's Career Education Movement of the 1970s were introduced at an early stage into Japan, and garnered significant attention.

The principles and philosophies that made up the basis for Japanese career guidance could be said to have developed from the principles and theories brought over from America. Insufficient attention, however, was paid to the particular features of Japanese education and human resources practices, which were based on lifetime employment systems—for example, the simultaneous en-masse recruiting of new school graduates, the system of firm-wide on-the-job training subsequent to employment, and the periodic transfer of employees within companies. In addition, there was almost no debate regarding the differences between Japan and the USA in terms of social practices based on gender roles and social awareness of such, typified by the role of full-time housewives in both countries.

Sowing the seeds of American ideas, and attempting to develop these processes within Japanese social practice without any perceptible improvement or adjustment, may well have led to some subsequent problems with realizing functional career guidance.

(2) The Impact of Entrance Examination Competition

The second reason why career guidance did not function sufficiently in Japan lies in the impact of the country's deeply-rooted academic qualification-based society, and specifically, in the tough entrance examination competition faced by Japanese students aiming to progress to more highly-regarded senior high schools and universities.

As noted above, many companies periodically transfer their full-time workers, especially white-collar workers, to different sections/departments, and offer continuous on-the-job training. Most companies hire solely new graduates without any professional experiences or skills, and train them from scratch. The trainability has been the key factor which enables a jobseeker to secure a position. Graduates from well-known universities, who are highly competitive to be enrolled, have a great advantage in the job-hunting race. Top-ranking university students are considered to have stronger trainability because of the fact that they passed the entrance examinations at least twice: once somewhere at K-12 level, most often at senior high school level, and the second time at university level (Ishida 1982; Byham 1993; Dore and Sako 1998). Companies saw the skills acquired in this range of entrance examinations—balanced consideration, memory skills, and the ability to bear the pressures of tough examination study, as demonstrating skills that can be utilized in a range of different company departments, and as such they welcomed these abilities.

Against this background, large numbers of parents tried to get their children into competitive schools, and demonstrated a lack of interest in career guidance, since they did not consider it would help them to create a promising future career plan. The more famous companies and larger companies are particularly prone to transferring their employees between departments, and for this reason it did not matter to them whether or not students had an individual career plan. Rather, they would prefer it if employees simply gave them free range to do as they wished, without having a particular desire to become one thing or another. During junior high school, students merely thought about getting into senior high school, and during senior high school, they thought only about entering university. Beyond this, they rarely held opinions about what they wanted to do. Since the majority of students were in this mold, parents tended to think this was the norm.

Furthermore, the assessment of senior high schools within society is decided by the proportion of students that they send to well-known universities. Evaluation of class teachers in third year classes at junior high schools is also largely dependent on how many students in their classes pass examinations for competitive senior high schools. For this reason, many teachers are passionate about getting their top-year students through entrance examinations, but few of them spend any time in assisting their students to consider their lives of post-graduation and compare that life to the realities that exist within society.

(3) The Ironic Results of Relaxing Entrance Examination Competition

The tough entrance examination competition described above was subject to guidance by the Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and Culture (now the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology) that attempted to rectify the situation from the 1960s onwards, but in reality, the situation in regard to entrance examination competition, which was so tightly bound up with employment practices, was never truly relaxed. Against this background the Ministry of Education took the decision to make some significant policy changes in regard to junior high schools in 1993.

Until this point, the majority of junior high schools participated in mock examinations implemented simultaneously throughout the prefecture in which they were situated. These tests were created by specialist private-sector companies, and on test dates, schools cancelled all regular classes and implemented the applicable tests instead. In the final year of junior high school, for example, it would be normal for this sort of mock examinations to be implemented several times—perhaps up to 10 times—per year. The test results would be marked by the companies in question, using a system which ranked each of the core subjects (those required in entrance examinations) according to their position within the prefecture, as well as clarifying deviation scores. Japan has public elementary and junior high schools established in each of its local municipal boards of education, but senior high schools are established by the prefectural boards, and as such entrance to senior high schools involves competition beyond the boundaries of one's home town. For this reason, the prefecture-wide mock examinations are an extremely important resource, used to predict a student's achievement level or otherwise to pass future entrance examinations for senior high schools. Moreover, in some cases, junior high schools report the results of such examinations to senior high schools to be used as the de-facto criteria to select in-coming students.

The Ministry of Education, however, issued a circular notice prohibiting all public junior high schools to participate in this kind of mock examinations. The purpose of doing this was to improve the distortion created by spending so much time preparing for such mock examinations, which resulted in students losing track of the essence of learning, and to facilitate them in making decisions regarding their progress after graduation, through acquiring basic abilities and competence, and the passions and interests to plan their futures. The following is a quote from the notification in question:

> The selection of students for entry to senior high schools should be done based on resources appropriate for public education, and the selection of students using the results of private-sector tests should not be allowed.
>
> Furthermore, career guidance in junior high schools should be implemented in an integrated way, through day-to-day study results and activities, based on students' abilities, competencies, and interests, and career guidance should not be offered dependent on deviation scores etc. resulting from private-sector testing.

This move, however, did not achieve the anticipated results. Junior high schools did stop using private-sector testing, but in place of junior high schools, private cram schools went into partnerships with the testing companies, and students continued to undertake mock examinations as before. For many children, this meant that they were still able to obtain resources that allowed them to judge their position within the prefecture, and their achievement level to pass or otherwise senior high school entrance examinations. Junior high schools, who had lost the way to implement the mock examinations that were so highly trusted by students and their parents, tried to respond by implementing a new type of in-school testing, but obviously these were not as convincing as the mock tests, which allowed participants to obtain prefectural data.

Subsequently, after receiving strong guidance from the Ministry of Education, junior high schools began gradually to implement the sort of career guidance that had originally been required. As indicated above, however, it did not solve the problem of the lack of consistency between the principles of career guidance and Japanese social norms, including employment practices. In other words, while there was a need to implement career guidance that allowed each student to create a career plan that fits with the realities of society, and work at verifying the possibility of realizing such a plan, no framework or theory had been developed as a basis for the implementation of this. In addition, the reality was that most teachers were engaging in career guidance without the sufficient cooperation of specialists or external organizations, meaning that effectively, career guidance was being implemented in such a way as to have little connection to the realities of society. For example, inventories on personality, interest and work compatibility, all of which can be done within the classroom, are widely utilized, and teachers often ask their students to write essays regarding their dreams for the future, which are read out to the class as a whole, but there is a lack of accompanying activities that may provide a reality check by comparing these "dreams" to the realities within society. As a result, even teachers have gone on record as saying that career guidance is too weighted towards focusing on the individual dreams and personalities of the children, and not sufficiently connected to reality (Shimomura 2004).

III. Reforms Brought about by Career Education

The proposal by the Central Educational Council regarding the promotion of career education includes some preventive measures that relate to the increasing number of young people who are removed from conventional mainstream assumptions (i.e. the idea that they will move directly from full-time education to full-time work), but it also sought to generate improvements in regard to the issues created by career guidance described above.

Subsequently, however, with the stagnation of Japan's economy, employment prospects for young people have worsened. Career education promotion strategies have developed as if in response to this situation. For example, in 2002, the National Institute for Educational Policy Research released a research report entitled "Promoting Education to Develop a Perspective regarding Employment and Work among Students," and in 2003, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), along with the Ministry of Health, Labour, Welfare, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry and the Cabinet Office, published the "Youth Independence and Challenge Plan," a comprehensive human resources scheme that aims to strengthen education, employment and industrial strategies. Subsequently, in 2004, the "Integrated Cooperative Research Committee on the Promotion of Career Education," which was established within MEXT, published a report entitled "Educating Students to Develop an Individual Perspective regarding Employment and Work," among other measures that were implemented at short notice in order to promote career education.

Now, let us focus on the detailed strategies taken by MEXT to promote career education, to bring the reform trends in light particularly at the elementary and secondary school level.

1. Initial Budget Setting

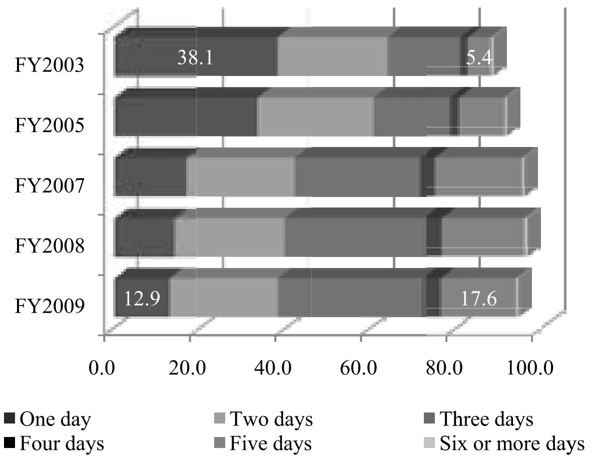
MEXT first allocated a budget to specific promotion measures for school-based career education in fiscal 2004. At this time, 140 million yen was allocated to (i) the establishment of an Internship Links Council (national council), (ii) the implementation of a Career Education Promotion Forum (in two locations nationwide) and (iii) the definition of career education promotion areas (definition of a unified career education program for elementary, junior and senior high schools [one area per prefecture]). MEXT explained the thinking behind the budgets as follows:

> The diversification and increased flexibility of employment practices that has taken place with recent changes to the structure of both industry and the economy, along with an increased demand for better academic qualifications, a less clear perspective on work and careers, and the rise of the “Freeter,” all contribute to a worsening awareness regarding career progress and objectives among all students—whether they are graduating from junior or senior high school, or in fact university—and the problem that increasing numbers of young people are entering further education or work without really considering where it will lead. In order to deal with this situation, and to provide integrated human resources training through strengthening links between education, employment and industry policy, the “Youth Independence and Challenge Plan” has been compiled by four government agencies, including MEXT, requiring the promotion of career education at every stage of a child’s development, from elementary school onwards.

While mentioning the “diversification and increased flexibility of employment practices that has taken place with recent changes to the structure of both industry and the economy,” it is notable that the report focuses on the more serious problems in awareness and recognition among students, caused by an increased demand for better academic qualifications, a less clear perspective on work and careers, and the rise of the “Freeter,” along with a worsening awareness of objectives in regard to further education and/or employment. Rather than working out a specific national strategy to deal with this, the government’s response has been to provide seed money so that society as a whole aims to increase momentum behind the promotion of career education and the sharing of information at prefectural level.

2. Proposal and Rollout of “Career Start Week”

During 2005, however, MEXT began to formulate far more specific policies with the aim of rolling out career education. A nationwide campaign was rolled out with a strong emphasis on a five-day work experience program at junior high schools. This program continued until fiscal 2008. For this purpose, a budget of 460 million yen was allocated during fiscal 2005, and over the four years of its implementation, the project was funded to a total of more than 1.1 billion yen.



Source: National Institute for Education Policy Research (2010), *Results of Survey into the State of Work Experience and Internship Implementation during Fiscal 2009.*

Figure 3. Rates of Implementation of Work Experience Activities (by number of days implemented)

The impact of this campaign, which was allocated such an enormous budget, was enormous. As shown in Figure 3, work experience activities in junior high schools were increasing, both in the extent of implementation and the number of days used.[6]

First of all, we should look at the excellent results achieved by this campaign. Prior to the proposal of Career Start Week, almost 90% of all junior high schools already implemented some sort of career experience program, but around 40% only offered the program for a single day. One-day implementation did not produce the anticipated results. Firstly, this was not significantly different to the workplace visits implemented broadly across elementary schools. Secondly, the more cooperative the workplace to school visits, the more likely they were to try to create an enjoyable experience for the children—one that would remain in their memories for a long time—resulting in them treating the children as guests and entertaining them. If the students were visiting a bakery, for example, the staff may prepare Danish pastry dough, and prepare the bread right to the last stages, so that when the children arrived they were given egg to wash onto the top of the bread, dark cherry compote to place inside the pastry, etc., and effectively given only a small "experience" of baking, before being offered the finished product to taste. The students would write in their reports that "we made our own Danish pastries and they were delicious," but they had not in fact made anything at all, and had hardly touched upon experiencing the day-to-day real work of

[6] The decline in the implementation rate in FY2009 was mostly due to temporary closing of schools and suspension of activities caused by the outbreak of H1N1 swine flu.

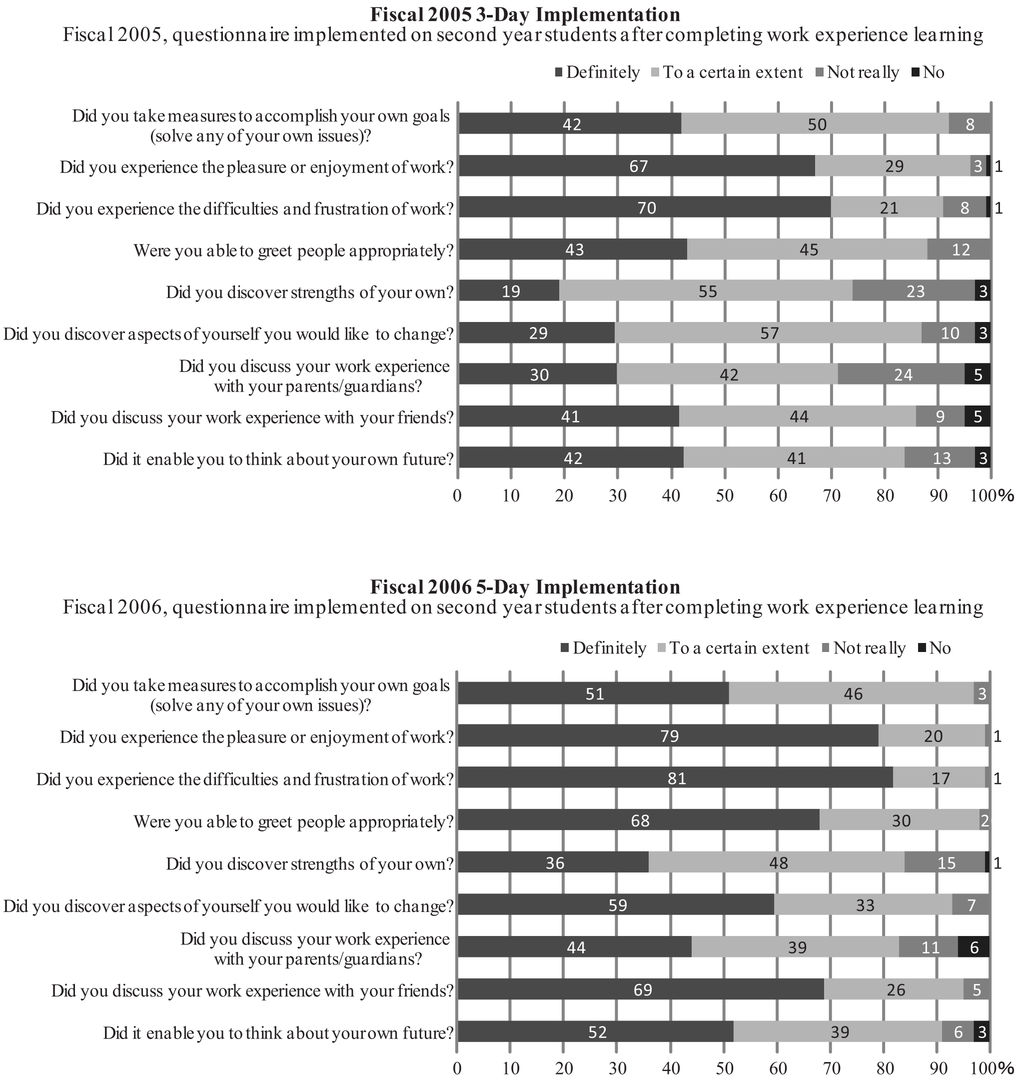
a baker. Thirdly, and in complete contrast, there were some cases reported where businesses took the line that “since they are only here for a single day,” the children should only be shown the most peripheral aspects of work. For example, cases were reported of children who visited a wholesale fish market, or an old people’s home, but the only “experience” they were given was that of weeding the outdoor garden.

Within only a few years of this situation occurring, the fact that the new program raised the number of three-day or longer work experiences to around 60%, and the number that lasted for five days or longer to close to 20%, should be acknowledged for the success it represents. The fact that this allowed students to experience the day-to-day running of a workplace at first hand—even if they only saw part of what was done—meant that they experienced something that contributed to their internal development, and as such, the increase in the number of days involved in the project was significant (Figure 4).

The fact that this project offered a significant opportunity to change the content of career education as it had been implemented to date—lacking reality and being mainly classroom-based—into something based on social experience, should be viewed in a positive light. If this MEXT-devised campaign had not been implemented, there may well have been no improvement in the rate of implementation of, or the number of days used in, work experience programs.

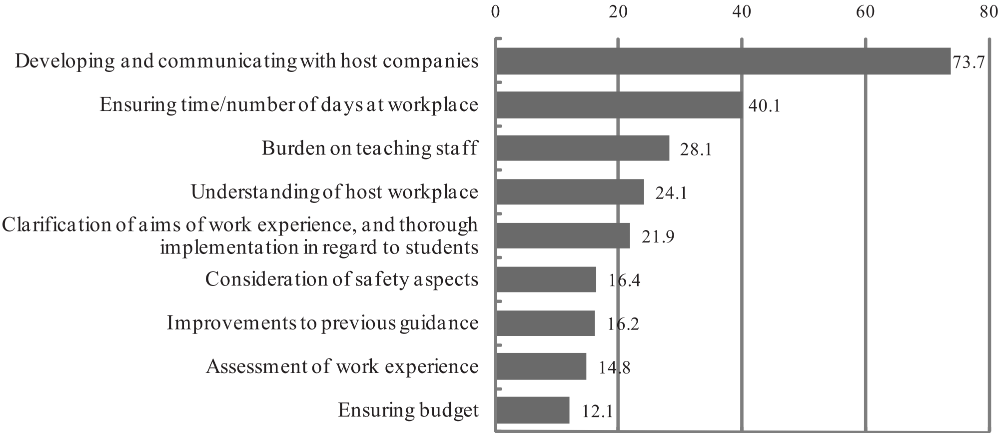
On the other hand, there were several negative aspects to this campaign. The first one lies in the fact that MEXT invested a large amount of money into budgeting for a national program of work experience activities, which could be said to have encouraged the misunderstanding that the fundamental aspect of career education was the implementation of work experiences. Put another way, the strong demand for tangible outputs in the form of work experience caused a tendency to ignore the debate regarding what outcomes were in fact vital in career education. Work experience was implemented against a less-than-clear understanding of why it was being done, and many people pointed out that it had not been rolled out as a sufficiently systematic project (Osaka Prefectural Board of Education 2005; Expert Conference on Career Education/Council of Directors in Government Departments Involved in Promoting Career Education 2007; General Education Center of Iwate Prefecture 2008). It is still the case that many junior high schools consider they have met the requirements of implementing career education if they have taken part in one of the work experience programs promoted so strongly by MEXT and the prefectural education committees.

Furthermore, since the responsibility for policies regarding the promotion of partnerships with external (non-school) organizations was given to each school, the significant problem arose of ensuring that sufficient companies, etc., were recruited to implement work experience (Figure 5), while it has also been pointed out that without specific support from the state, the creation of partnerships by individual cities, towns and villages, which has been indicated as required in the future, will be impossible (Komikawa 2007).



Source: Re-compiled from data included in Niigata Prefectural Education Council (2009), *Towards Career Education that Allows Niigata's Children to Realize Their Dreams—Measures Taken as Part of Niigata Prefecture Career Start Week, Fiscal 2008.*

Figure 4. Results of Questionnaire Completed by Students of Johoku Junior High School, Joetsu City, Niigata Prefecture, Regarding Their Activities under Work Experience Programs (comparison of three-day experience [fiscal 2005] and five-day experience [fiscal 2006])



Source: National Institute for Educational Policy Research (2004), *Survey to Understand the State of Work Experience/Internships.*

Figure 5. Issues Relating to Work Experience Activities, as Indicated by Junior High School Teachers

3. The Impact of Defining the Basic Plan for the Promotion of Education

In 2008, career education was given a further boost through the cabinet resolution adopting the Basic Plan for the Promotion of Education,[7] which announced that career education would be promoted as one of several "strategies to be implemented in an integrated and planned manner over the next five years."

> Promote career education from the elementary school level, through partnerships with related government departments and the cooperation of economic bodies, PTAs, non-profit organizations, etc., to develop children's views of work and society, in order to equip them with self-awareness in regard to their future careers and life paths. In particular, promote work experience programs within junior high schools, and career education within senior high schools that solely offer general education course.

The Basic Plan for the Promotion of Education, which passed through the official process of cabinet decision, raised the promotion of career education from the elementary school level, implemented in partnership with the offices and departments of central government, as a major issue. In addition, the highlighting of "work experience programs with-

[7] The Basic Act on Education was given its first full post-war revision in 2006, which led to the definition of the Basic Plan for the Promotion of Education. The Basic Act on Education is the most important law in Japan relating to education, and as its name suggests, defines the basic tenets of education. Article 2, paragraph (1) (Objectives of Education) of the Basic Act on Education includes the phrase "foster an attitude to value labor while emphasizing the connections with careers and practical life." This emphasis on careers was added for the first time to the Act during the 2006 revision.

in junior high schools" and "career education within senior high schools that solely offer general education course" has come to have a significant impact on subsequent career education.

(1) Subsequent Promotion of Career Education in Senior High Schools

As has already been stated, the abolition of private-sector tests by junior high schools in 1993 led to some significant reforms, and the Career Start Week, which began in 2005, also played a central role in promoting career education at junior high schools.

There were, however, no specific developments in regard to the promotion of career education policy within senior high schools, and compared with junior high schools, the level of career education implementation has remained insufficient. There are significant differences in the level of senior high school student participation in internships,[8] and in the length of such internships, when compared to the work experience activities provided in junior high schools (Figures 6 and 7). There is, in particular, a significant delay in implementing career education in regard to general education course, in which 70% or more of senior high school students are enrolled and accordingly, the Basic Plan for the Promotion of Education clearly demanded the improvement of the situation. In fiscal 2008, MEXT supplied a budget for pilot studies in relation to career education promotion at senior high schools in each prefecture, and subsequently pressed ahead with plans to create specific strategies to promote career education in senior high schools, based on the results of these pilot studies, which were to be reported in 2010.

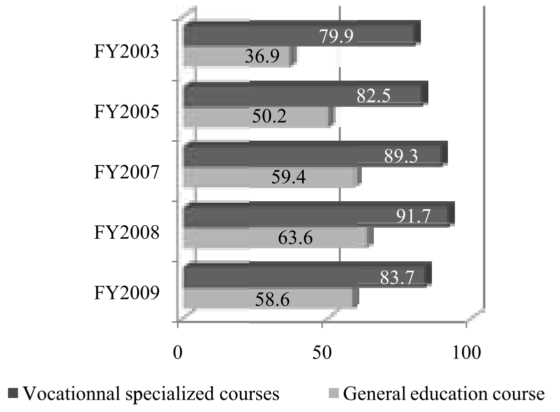
In this regard, the Basic Plan for the Promotion of Education clearly demanded for improvement of the situation.

(2) Startup of Central Education Council's "Task Force on Career Education and Vocational Education"

The impact of the Basic Plan for the Promotion of Education was not limited to that already described. As a result of the reforms introduced by the Basic Plan for the Promotion of Education, the Central Education Council established a "Task Force on Career Education and Vocational Education." The Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology allocated the following two topics of consideration to the Task Force:

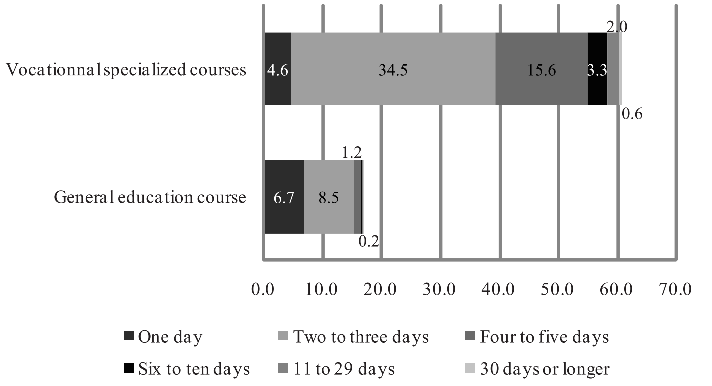
> Firstly, to clarify the basic and versatile competencies required for students from elementary and secondary schools through higher education in order to make a smooth transition into society and work, and to consider a full strategy of systematic career education with guaranteed quality, that facilitates verifiable training in line with each level of their development.

[8] Junior high school work experience programs are generally implemented with the participation of all students in the target year, but senior high school internships may only apply to students studying certain majors, or students who request participation.



Source: National Institute for Educational Policy Research (2010), *Results of Survey into the State of Implementation of Work Experience Programs and Internships, Fiscal 2009.*

Figure 6. Trends in Rate of Implementation of Internships in Senior High Schools (extracted results for general education course and vocational specialized courses only)



Source: National Institute for Educational Policy Research (2010), *Results of Survey into the State of Implementation of Work Experience Programs and Internships, Fiscal 2009.*

Figure 7. Rate of Participation in Internships by Senior High School Students (extracted results for general education course and vocational specialized courses only, FY 2009)

Secondly, to ensure the acquisition of professional and practical vocational knowledge and skills throughout the upper secondary through higher education.

The most important thing to notice here is the "full strategy of systematic career education" noted as part of the first issue. This is a significant change in awareness of issues compared to 2004, when career education was first promoted and allocated a budget. In 2004, awareness of problems was limited to that of the perception of students, who were experiencing an increased demand for better academic qualifications, a less clear perspective on work and careers, and the rise of the "Freeter," all of which contributed to a worsening awareness regarding career progress and objectives. In the new strategy, the central focus was shifted to the development of "the basic and versatile competencies required for students from elementary and secondary schools through higher education in order to make a smooth transition into society and work." In other words, the competencies required for both social and career independence, and for life within society and employment, are defined, and career education is to be implemented working towards these goals, with improvements to be implemented based on the outcomes achieved through the establishment of a PDCA cycle.

The "Task Force on Career Education and Vocational Education" published its second Committee Report in May 2010, but its final report will not be available until the winter of 2010. At present, it is anticipated that the final version will be completed by January 2011 at the latest.

IV. Future Tasks

Around ten years have passed since 1999, when the Central Education Council pointed out "the need for career education to be implemented from the elementary school level, in line with each stage of a child's development." The main progress during this period has been as described above. During the decade, promotion strategies were developed in rapid-fire succession, and the term "career education" became widely spread, but there were still a mountain of remaining problems related to improvements in implementation. The main problems are those given below.

1. Division of Roles between State and Regions: Which Way Forward?

In terms of the promotion of career education by MEXT, November 2009 is likely to be remembered as something of a bolt out of the blue. The change of administration to a Democratic Party government led to a screening of 449 state projects, in attempts to correct the difficult financial situation the country was in. Specifically, the newly formed Government Revitalization Unit discussed the necessity or otherwise of each different project, in order to reach a decision on their future. A period of nine days was set for decisions regarding 449 projects. The discussions were broadcast live over the Internet, and decisions were reached at a rapid pace regarding reductions in wasteful spending.[9]

[9] This screening process was the focus of much debate by interested citizens. While most agreed that wasteful spending of public money must be reduced and appreciated the transparency created by open discussion, there was also criticism of the fact that the time allocated was so short that it could not possibly result in properly verified decisions.

As a result of this process, projects relating to career education were judged as “to be left to the decision of local authorities.” The decision stated that the state, in the form of MEXT, should not be responsible for promoting these strategies. Just as proposals were about to be put through to further promote career education in senior high schools, where it was acknowledged that developments had been insufficient to date, the need for further progress appeared to be denied.

At the same time, however, the Basic Plan for Promotion of Education, which had been passed by cabinet decision, stated the need for the promotion of “career education from the elementary school level, through partnerships with related government departments,” and in response to this, the Central Education Council’s Task Force on Career Education and Vocational Education is still considering what strategies should be put in place by the state as a whole.

There is a need for serious debate in the future regarding the division of roles between state and local governments in regards to career education.

2. Creation of an Improved Implementation Framework: The Road Less Traveled

The Central Education Council’s Task Force on Career Education and Vocational Education produced its Second Interim Report in May 2010, in which it stated that the reasons behind the lack of smooth transition between school and society/employment “are not restricted to problems within school education alone, but rather can be seen as structural problems that exist throughout society.” The report also states “merely placing the responsibility on our children and young people will not lead to a solution to this problem.” This comment is worth noting, since it represents a significant change in basic direction in regard to career education promotion strategies, which up until this point focused on the problems in awareness among children and young people, and attempted to effect changes in that area. The Interim Report views the situation as caused by structural problems throughout society, and points to issues with school education, stating “school education must overcome the issues relating to the transition between school and society, and respond to society’s demands by ensuring that it is developing human resources who can be independent in society and employment, even as the social environment becomes more complex and diverse.”

Based on this statement, the Interim Report lists the following tasks with school education in regard to the promotion of career education in the future:

(i) Preparation of clear strategic plan relating to career education in all schools
(ii) Ensuring that career education is seen as part of the curriculum in all schools
(iii) Developing wide-ranging and diverse interpersonal skills
(iv) Promotion of understanding of social and economic structures
(v) Effective utilization of experience-based learning activities
(vi) A review of learning conditions and outcomes of career education, and implementation of improvements

Detailed discussion of these issues must be held off until the publication of the Central Education Council's final Report, but it is certain that the creation of frameworks and systems to accomplish these tasks will be a serious issue for the future.

In terms of developing a systematic learning program for career education, for example, and positioning it within the curriculum, discussions must be held regarding who will implement this, in partnership with what organizations, when, and based on what theoretical background. When entering upon such discussions, the classroom-based or homeroom-based systems inseparable from Japanese schools must be taken strongly into account. The burden placed on class or homeroom teachers needs to be eased, and at the same time, a system that is consistent with the classroom-based system, which is so deeply rooted in Japanese elementary and secondary schools, should be developed.

This sort of debate has hardly been entered into in Japan to date. As stated in section II-1 of this paper, during the period of high economic growth that followed the Second World War, the need for debate itself was hardly acknowledged.

Based on the forthcoming Final Report from the Central Education Council, there will need to be a broad debate among all stakeholders, including not only national and local policymakers, but also school administrators, teachers and other school employees, parents and guardians, representatives of industry, specialists in youth employment, etc., regarding the sort of frameworks that require building, and how to maintain a balance between national guidelines and local autonomy. Japan's career education is just about to embark on the road less—or perhaps never—traveled.

References

Byham, William C. 1993. *Shogun management: How North Americans can thrive in Japanese companies.* New York, NY: Harper Business.

Central Educational Council. 1999. *Shoto Chuto Kyoiku to Koto Kyoiku tono Setsuzoku no Kaizen ni tsuite* [Report on improvements in articulation between elementary and secondary schools, and higher education institutions]. http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/shingi/12/chuuou/toushin/991201.htm (accessed November 22, 2010).

Conference with Relevant Professionals Regarding Career Education/Council of Sectional Managers in Government Departments Involved in Promoting Career Education. 2007. *Dai 3-kai Giji Gaiyo (2007-nen 2-gatsu 15-nichi)* [Summary of third council meeting (February 15, 2007)]. Cabinet Office, http://www8.cao.go.jp/youth/suisin/career/kondan3/gijigaiyou.html (accessed November 22, 2010).

Dore, Ronald P., and Mari Sako. 1998. *How the Japanese learn to work*. London: Routledge.

Fujita, Teruyuki. 2006. The role of the mobility in enhancing the quality of professional training: Japanese experience. A presentation at a G8 Expert Meeting: Knowledge and Competencies for Innovative Society (April 18-19), Moscow.

Fujita, Teruyuki, and Fumiaki Nakajima. 2004. Amerika ni okeru jakunensha shushoku shien shisaku no tokushitsu to kadai [Particular features and issues regarding employment support strategies for young people in the USA]. In *Shogaikoku no wakamono shugyo shien seisaku no tenkai: Doitsu to amerika wo chushin ni* [Development of youth employment policies in other nations: Germany and the United States as case studies], JILPT Research Report, no. 1, Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training, Tokyo.

General Education Center of Iwate Prefecture 2008. 'Chugakko kyaria kyoiku' jissen no tebiki [A guide to the implementation of junior high school career education]. http://www1.iwate-ed.jp/tantou/kyouka/seika/career_jhs/h20_11a5-2.pdf (accessed November 22, 2010).

Hori, Yukie. 2007. *Furita ni tairyu suru wakamonotachi* [Young people living as 'freeters']. Tokyo:Keiso Shobo.

Ishida, Hideo. 1982. Nippongata hyuman risosu manejimento: Katei to kozo [Japanese-style human resource management: Its processes and structures]. *The Monthly Journal of the Japan Institute of Labour* 24, no. 12: 13-22.

Komikawa, Koichiro. 2007. Nippon ni okeru 'kyaria kyoiku' jissen no tenkai (2) [Developments in Japanese 'career education' (2)]. *Lifelong Learning and Career Studies*, no. 4.

Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. 2010. *School Basic Survey (Preliminary report FY2010)*. Compiled by Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Tokyo.

Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD). 2000. *From initial education to working life: Making transitions work.* Paris: OECD.

———. 2010. Education at a glance 2010: OECD indicators. Paris: OECD.

Osaka Prefectural Board of Education. 2005. Kyaria kyoiku wo suishin suru tameni [Requirements in order to promote career education]. http://www.pref.osaka.jp/ kotogakko/seishi/kyari-honbun.html (accessed November 22, 2010).

Shimomura, Hideo. 2004. Koko ni okeru shinro shido no genjo [State of career guidance at high school]. In *Kigyo ga sankaku suru jakunensha no kyaria keisei shien* [Corporate participation in career development assistance of youth: Partnership with schools, NPOs and government], JILPT Research Report, no. 11, Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training, Tokyo.

Tasker, Peter. 2010. The scariest economy: Japan, not Greece, is the real worry. *Newsweek*, August 25.

Issues of the Learning through Work Experience Program for Junior High School Students: "The 14-Year-Old's Challenge" in Toyama Prefecture

Satomi Terasaki

Fukuoka University

There are two perspectives on the junior high school students' learning through work experience: one focuses on how such an experience effects vocational selection activities, and the other on how current school education should be carried out. In this paper, we examine the effects and challenges of learning through work experience programs as part of a school education by focusing on a program called "The Learning through Work Experience Program: The 14-Year-Old' Challenge," which is being implemented in Toyama Prefecture and is in a transition from the former perspective to the latter. This paper used data collected through the "Survey on Junior High School Students' Outlook on the Future and Job Consciousness," which was conducted by Ochanomizu University in 2006. The analysis showed that the learning through work experience program enhances junior high school students' motivation for learning by providing them with opportunity to gain a variety of experiences. However, from the perspective of how the learning through work experience program affects the vocational selection, the analysis indicated that sufficient effects cannot be expected due to the limited range of program activities available, as the program is aimed at junior high school students. More detailed debate is necessary on what the purpose of this experience for junior high school students should be and on what kind of activities are appropriate under this program.

I. Introduction

In this paper, we examine the effects and challenges of learning through work experience program as a part of school education by looking at a five-day program introduced for all junior high schools in Toyama Prefecture as an example. Given that more than 98% of junior high school students advance to schools beyond junior high, it is difficult to evaluate career education and learning through work experience programs that are implemented by junior high schools within the same framework as those implemented by senior high schools and universities, whose students are likely to enter the labor market soon after graduation. Therefore, before moving on to our analysis, let us first organize the perspectives for evaluating career education and learning through work experience programs at junior high schools, and then describe the emphasis on the learning through work experience in junior high school students' career education.

1. Two Perspectives on Career Education

Around 10 years have passed since the Central Council for Education, in a report entitled "Improvements in Articulation between Elementary and Secondary Schools, and

Higher Education Institutions" (referred to as the "Report on Articulation," below) and issued in 1999, argued for the need to provide career education from elementary school upwards in accordance with the students' stages of development. "Career education," a phrase which was used in a public document for the first time in the Report on Articulation,[1] has since then attracted attention as one of effective measures against the deterioration of young worker's employment situation and an increase of youth unemployment. There are two perspectives of evaluating the promotion of career education over this period: one is perspective of measures against the problem of the transition from school to work and the other is as reflecting a change in how school education—career guidance in particular—should be carried out.

Taking the viewpoint of people who had called for measures against an increase of youth unemployment and early stage turnover under the deterioration of economical situation and changes in the labor market in the 1990s, the Report on Articulation prompted the implementation of various measures for the purpose of career education. Among those measures are the promotion of career education by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and programs implemented by other ministries, including the "Youth Independence and Challenge Plan" (2003) and the "Youth Independence and Challenge Action Plan" (2004), both of which featured career education as the pillar.

On the other hand, taking the viewpoint of people who saw the promotion of career education as reflecting a change in how school education should be carried out, it is considered that the career guidance was back on form to aim at a lifelong career development by the Report on Articulation. Career guidance, which aimed at finding employment or going on to school after graduation based on academic achievements, had already started to change around 1990 into guidance that valued individual students' interests and concerns. The following events can be considered as an event that shows this shift: a decision of not using class curve at career guidance in 1992 (Saitama Prefecture), and an enhancement of way of life guidance in each school stage such as elementary, junior and senior high schools in course of study in 1998.

We give this explanation because these two viewpoints differ not only on the way of assessing the Report on Articulation and the references to career education in it, but also on what kind of people should be the subjects of career education and what measures should be taken to promote career education. From the former viewpoint, the subjects of career education should be people who have exactly faced the vocational choice and the labor market entry, such as high school students, university students and unemployed youth. Meanwhile, the latter viewpoint focuses mainly on career education for junior high school students. In Japan, where high school advancement rate exceeds 98% of high-school aged youths, junior high school students are regarded as still having some time to spare before choosing a specific job or doing any practical life planning.

[1] As researched by Mimura (2004).

Interest in finding the effects of career education—learning through work experience programs and internships in particular—to the vocational selection is observed mainly among people who take the former viewpoint. Past research papers have studied which people took advantage of school career guidance on the transition to work and which failed to do so, and what traits are seen in those who failed to do so as well as what kind of career guidance would be effective. (e.g., Kariya et al. 1997; Mimizuka et al. 2000; Kosugi 2002, 2003, 2005; Honda 2005).

On the other hand, many research papers that have studied career education and learning through work experience programs for junior high school students from the latter viewpoint have focused on very practical matters, such as how career education and activities under these programs should be positioned within annual plans for school career guidance, and how to evaluate the results of such activities and use them for future career guidance (Mimura 2004; National Institute for Educational Policy Research 2007). Most of the cases cited in those research papers are highly practical activities conducted by individual teachers who actually educate students at their schools. There are two reasons why this trend is seen among research papers concerning junior high school students.

First, it is widely recognized that the career education being promoted now, unlike career guidance on post-graduation careers aimed merely at enabling the choice of a school, is intended to enable students to think in their own way about life based on an individual's interests and concerns. However, in the current situation in Japan that almost all junior high school students go on to higher levels of education, if the effects of career education are to be measured in terms of concrete results, the concern might concentrate only on the school choice, and is likely to turn back to the old career guidance that was able to abandon at last. Therefore, it is difficult for the effect measurement at the time of graduation of the junior high school to find the effect of the career education as the way of life guidance.

Second, it is also recognized that the scope of career education as part of school education extends beyond career guidance, and that it should be provided in a comprehensive, systematic, and organized way through all of a school's educational activities. For example, learning through work experience programs, which are carried out to meet social needs related to human resource development, are also treated as part of moral education intended to develop sound minds and bodies in young people (under the Basic Plan for Promoting Education). In other words, career education and learning through work experience programs at elementary and junior high schools may be provided for various purposes and through various methods. It has been thought that any debate on the effects of such activities should give consideration to their desirability from the perspective of education, and that it is inappropriate to attempt to evaluate their effects from any single perspective. Because of this, there has been no attempt to find the effects of career education from the perspective of career guidance alone.

2. Emphasis on Learning through Work Experience

The above explanations should also help understand why career education places an emphasis on the learning through work experience. Under the course of study in 1998, the year before the Report on Articulation was written, career guidance (way of life guidance) was enhanced at elementary, junior, and senior high schools. In elementary school, career guidance is not treated as a separate field of education in the curriculum. However, general provision 5 of the course of study, “matters to which consideration should be given in designing the syllabus” stipulated that “in providing instructions concerning each of the subjects, schools should use specific measures, such as providing children with the opportunity to find learning tasks and activities on their own and think about their own futures.”

Under the general provisions of the course of study, junior high schools are required to provide “systematic and organized career guidance through all educational activities so that students can think in their own way about life and choose their career proactively.” The cultivation (establishment) of a view of career and work is regarded as an important link between an understanding of the significance of learning, the cultivation (establishment) of an attitude toward learning, and the examination (understanding) of career aptitudes so as to “enrich school life and enable appropriate choice of a way of life and a career (decision).” Although the phrase “career education” was not used in the 1998 course of study, the emphasis on proactive career choice based on an individual’s interests and concerns can be viewed as the first step toward the implementation of career education.

However, it should be kept in mind that the proactive career choice emphasized in the 1998 course of study was interpreted as a policy change in relation to the existing career guidance, but not as a policy shift toward promoting a smooth transition from school to work. There occurred a significant policy change in career guidance, from a meritocratic approach based on academic achievements to counseling focusing on students’ own personalities, interests and concerns. From the former viewpoint that places emphasis on “work,” this shift may be regarded as a step toward incorporating career education into all curriculum subjects. However, from the latter viewpoint that emphasizes “education,” it was invariably seen as a change in school education in relation to career choice.

And yet at the same time, it is worth noting that following this policy shift, learning based on first-hand experience came to be regarded as important for cultivating students’ view of career and work, making it necessary to secure opportunities for enlightened experience related to jobs and career. This is because the importance of learning based on first-hand experience was emphasized again in the Report on Articulation. Behind the argument for the need to provide systematic career education from elementary school upwards was the recognition that appropriate view of career and work had not been cultivated in accordance with children’s development. The Report on Articulation placed particular emphasis on learning through work experience, acknowledging it as a problem that children lack life experience and social experience in highly urbanized local communities and in families with fewer children, where they can only experience limited human relationships and limited roles. The National Institute for Educational Policy Research (2007) pointed out that even more than the need for children to develop view of career and work, which is the purpose of career education, children lacked experience with the reality of society and experience in building an extensive relationships with different generations, both of which are essential to their growth, and that they are faced with a situation in which it is difficult for them to find models for the ways they want to live their lives.

There are now strong expectations that learning through work experience programs in elementary and junior high schools will have effects for young people's future vocational selection from the viewpoint of placing an emphasis on "work." However, when they were introduced at such schools, experiential activities were expected to help secure the opportunity for the life and social experiences that had been lost. Rather than providing the opportunity for children to feel the difficulties and joys of working and to learn about its significance, learning through work experience programs were expected to have a broad range of effects, including enabling children to have the experience of forming human relationships while recognizing their own positions and roles in a group and giving them the motivation to learn based on their first-hand experience (Guidance and Counseling Research Center, National Institute for Educational Policy Research 2002). In this respect, the programs run in elementary and junior high schools are different from the learning through work experience programs and internships in high schools and universities, which are strongly linked with the vocational selection.

3. Implementation of Experiential Activities and Toyama Prefecture's Program, "the 14-Year-Old's Challenge"

According to the "Survey on the Implementation of Experiential Activities in Schools" (fiscal 2006, sample survey[2]) conducted by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, the total annual credit hours for experiential activities related to production, workplaces, jobs, and employment[3] totaled 12.6 hours at elementary schools and 20.1 hours at junior high schools (See Table 1). Given that in fiscal 2003, the total credit hours for such activities totaled 10.3 hours at elementary schools and 13.8 hours at junior high schools, the time allocated for experience-based learning increased significantly over a short period of time, indicating that measures to secure opportunities for such learning had been taken promptly.[4]

[2] Survey subject schools: A total of 564 schools—188 each of elementary schools and junior and senior high schools

[3] Average of the total annual credit hours for fifth graders at elementary schools and for junior high and high school students in their second years.

[4] Excluding experiential activities related to community service such as volunteer visits to social welfare facilities. The total credit hours for this activity stood at 3.1 hours at elementary schools and 2.5 hours at junior high schools.

Table 1. Implementation of Experiential Activities at Schools

	Elementary schools		Junior high schools	
	Fiscal 2003	Fiscal 2006	Fiscal 2003	Fiscal 2006
Experiential activities related to community service	**4.3**	**3.1**	**2.9**	**2.5**
Experiential activities to foster familiarity with nature	**13.1**	**13.3**	**5.4**	**5.0**
Experiential activities related to production, workplace, jobs and employment	**10.3**	**12.6**	**13.8**	**20.1**
Primary industries	9.2	10.6	1.9	2.4
Secondary industries	0.4	0.8	1.9	4.9
Tertiary industries	0.7	1.2	10.0	12.8
Experiential activities to foster familiarity with culture and the arts	**5.5**	**3.6**	**3.2**	**3.7**
Experiential activities related to exchanges	**5.3**	**5.0**	**2.7**	**2.3**
Other experiential activities	**3.4**	**3.3**	**3.2**	**2.3**
Total	**41.9**	**41.0**	**31.2**	**35.9**

Notes: 1. Compiled from “Collection of Data Related to the Current Circumstances Surrounding Child Development” by Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology.

2. Details of the above activities are as follows:

- Experiential activities related to community service: Cleanup activity on the streets and beaches, improvement and beautification of local environment, visits to social welfare facilities and other volunteer work.
- Experiential activities to foster familiarity with nature: Field excursions, field camping, observation of wild birds and other wild life, nature school, etc.
- Experiential activities related to production, workplace, jobs and employment.
- Primary industries: Experience activities related to agriculture, forestry and fishery such as rice planting, cutting grass, beach seine, etc.
- Secondary industries: Workplace experiential activities at factories, internships, etc.
- Tertiary industries: Workplace experiential activities and internships at local business offices, stores, etc.
- Experiential activities to foster familiarity with culture and arts: Wall painting, Experiential activities related to Japanese and foreign cultures and the arts, etc. Activities to maintain local traditional events, performing arts and industrial arts.
- Experiential activities related to exchanges: Exchanges with young children, elderly people, people with disabilities, foreign nationals and people in other regions.

The increase in the time allocated for experience-based activities at junior high schools was due in large part to an increase in the hours spent on learning through work experience programs. Of the 10,089 public junior high schools, 9,667, or 95.8%, implemented such activities in fiscal 2007, according to the Survey on the Implementation of Learning through Work Experience Programs and Internships in Fiscal 2007 (Outline), which was conducted in March 2008 by the Guidance and Counseling Research Center of the National Institute for Educational Policy Research. The implementation ratio came to 100% in seven prefectures, Ibaraki, Toyama, Ishikawa, Fukui, Nagano, Gifu, and Shiga, and in two of them—Toyama and Shiga—all schools implemented five days or more of activities under the programs. Irrespective of the initial purpose of their introduction, almost all junior high schools implement some kind of learning through work experience program as a part of the educational activities.

In Toyama Prefecture's program, "The Learning through Work Experience Program: The 14-Year-Old's Challenge," 14-year-old second-year junior high school students do work experiences or welfare activities and volunteer works for five days, mainly in the local community of the school district. Such activities, which have been implemented in the name of "The Learning through Work Experience Program: The 14-Year-Old's Challenge," since 1999, are implemented by municipalities supported by subsidies from the Toyama prefectural government. According to the implementation guidelines, the purpose of this program is to "enable junior high school students in their second year, whose activities broaden in scope and increase in intensity, to become tough enough to overcome the challenges typical of that period of growth for young people, such as developing a consciousness of social norms and becoming more social, as well as thinking about their own futures, by participating in activities that allow them to experience of the world of work and social services and volunteer activities outside their schools for one week" (Fiscal 1999 Implementation Guidelines for the 14-Year-Old's Challenge Program).

In recent years, this program has come to be taken up as a part of a career education initiative that is effective in developing students' job consciousness. However, as indicated in the implementation guidelines, initially, the main purpose of this program was not to develop students' view of career and work. Around 1995, as school bullying emerged as a social problem, each municipality launched and implemented a Community-Wide Program to Prevent School Bullying (in fiscal 1996 through 1998). The purpose of the program was to deal with an increase in school bullying and school truancy through community-wide efforts, by encouraging the recognition that the local community should be responsible for children's upbringing. This program continued as it evolved first into the "Activities for a Mental Education Network in Junior High School Districts" (in fiscal 1999 through 2002) and then into the "Implementation Program for Heartfelt Activities" (in fiscal 2003 through 2005). The 14-Year-Old's Challenge Program started in 1999 as part of these activities.

Therefore, if the situation in Toyama Prefecture is to be understood within the framework of "work" and "education," it can be said that the 14-Year-Old's Challenge Program, which was initially introduced for the purpose of providing education to junior high school students through community-wide efforts, is being forced to change into a work-oriented activity. In this respect, the situation in Toyama Prefecture is different from that in other regions that have started learning through work experience programs in recent years.[5] The current challenge for the 14-Year-Old's Challenge Program is how to adapt to the shift in its purpose from education to work.

Shown below are the results of a survey of students on the effects to be gained if learning through work experience program are treated as activities to facilitate the vocational selection. We will also explain the problems related to experiential activities as identified through interviews with local business establishments.

II. Data Used for Analysis

This research uses data collected through the Survey of Junior High School Students' Outlooks on the Future and Job Consciousness, which was conducted as part of the "Communication System Development Program," a project implemented by Ochanomizu University with special educational research funds.

1. Student Survey

The survey of students was conducted in two areas—Area X and Area Y—in Toyama Prefecture in September and October 2006, with the questionnaires distributed to students through their schools.[6] Questionnaire A asked the students about their school lives and learning environments and about their job consciousness and the career choice they had for their futures. Questionnaire B asked the students about the details of their activities under the learning through work experience program, how they felt about them, and their consciousness of family and workplace norms. These questionnaires were distributed and collected twice, both before and after the students surveyed had participated in the activities. The same questions were asked with regard to norm consciousness before and after the experience so as to make a comparison. The results of Questionnaires A and B were matched by student number. The collection rate and the matching conditions for Questionnaires A and B are as shown in Table 2. In this paper, we treat the survey results in Area X and Area Y[7] as a unit, with no distinction made between them.

---

[5] This provides a contrast to "Work, Work Week Tokyo," a workplace experience activity for junior high school students in Tokyo that started in 2005, whose purpose was, from the beginning, to encourage students to develop appropriate perceptions of jobs and work (Implementation Guideline for "Work, Work Week Tokyo").

[6] For details of the survey, see Terasaki and Mimizuka (2007).

[7] The system of implementing the "The 14-Year-Old's Challenge" program in each area is as follows:

❖ Area X (four schools): Implemented jointly by neighboring junior high schools.

- Organization: Prefectural education board → City education boards and promotion committees → Groups of implementing organizations → Schools and steering committees
- Businesses that accept students: Schools dispatch teachers to local businesses in their school districts to ask for their cooperation. After the number of students to be accepted has been finalized, each junior high school determines the number of students to be allocated to each. Accordingly, under the program, some students may take part in activities outside their own school district, but

Table 2. Collection Rate and Matching

	A	B (before the activities)	B (after the activities)	Matching
Number of students	556	556	556	556
Number of collected replies	522	523	517	500
Collection rate (%)	93.9	94.1	93.0	89.9

2. Local Business Survey

Until now, few surveys have been conducted on the local business establishments that accept students from workplace experience programs and internship trainees. The "Survey of Business Establishments about Learning through Work Experience Programs and Internships," conducted in 2005 by the Guidance and Counseling Research Center of the National Institute for Educational Policy Research, did not ask business establishments whether or not they had accepted students for learning through work experience program. Although cooperation from local businesses is essential to the implementation of these programs, there had not been any survey, other than simple questionnaires prepared by the schools that asked them their frank opinions on the program. In this research, we asked local businesses that accepted students to cooperate with our survey via the schools, and we accordingly conducted semi-structured, 60 to 90-minute interviews with nine local businesses within one month from the end of the 14-Year-Old's Challenge Program. The data used for the research is based on the records of the interviews as compiled from tape recordings and written notes. The attributes of the interviewees and establishments are as shown in Table 3.

III. Analysis

1. The Learning through Work Experience Program in Student Survey

When implementing learning through work experience programs, schools ask their students about what kind of works they wish to do, and allocate them to local businesses in accordance with the number of students the businesses can accommodate, in a way that reflects the students' wishes as much as possible. Table 4 shows the distribution of

---

within the districts of either one of the other three partner schools in Area X.

❖ Area Y (one school): Implemented independently by the school.
- Organization: Prefectural education board → Town education board and promotion committee → School and steering committee
- Businesses that accept students: Teachers visit local businesses to ask for their cooperation. After the number of students to be accepted has been finalized, the school determines the number of students to be allocated to each. As the number of business establishments and type of businesses available in the school district are limited, businesses outside the school district are also asked for cooperation.

Table 3. Outline of Interviewees and Business Establishments Surveyed

	Interviewees			Business establishments	
	Gender	Position	Age	Business type	Years of cooperation
A	Female	Instructor	30s	Sales	4 years
B	Female	Manager	60s	Social services	3 years
C	Male	Instructor	50s	Construction	Approx. 10 years
D	Male	Manager	50s	Manufacturing	Since the start of the program
E	Female	Part-time worker	50s	Food service	3 years
F	Male Male	Association chief Instructor	60s 30s	Agriculture, forestry and fishery	5 years
G	Female	Manager	50s	Social services	Since the start of the program
H	Male	Manager	30s	Manufacturing & sales	1st time
I	Female	Instructor	50s	Agriculture, forestry, and fishery	Since the start of the program

Table 4. Contents of Activities

(%)

	Overall	Male	Female
Production, engineering & construction	15.8	28.2	3.2
Services, sales & food service	28.4	30.2	26.6
Child care	30.0	19.2	40.9
Medical & health service	5.1	3.1	7.1
Social services	4.9	1.6	8.3
Cultural experience	2.2	2.4	2.0
Public service	10.8	12.9	8.7
None of the above	2.6	2.4	2.8
No reply	0.2	0.0	0.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	507	255	252

Note: Excluding the respondents who did not reveal their gender.

students by type of business. The largest percentage of students, 30.0%, participated in childcare, followed by 28.4% for services, sales, and food service, and 15.8% for manufacturing, engineering, and construction. It should be noted that there was a gender disparity by type of business in that more female students participated in childcare and a greater number of male students participated in manufacturing, engineering, and construction.[8]

How, specifically, did the difference in the contents of their activities under the program affect the students' overall impressions? We examined the effects of these activities by focusing on the three most popular business categories: childcare; services, sales, and food service; and manufacturing, engineering, and construction.

Figure 1 indicates the results of a question that asked students about what was required of them in their activities. Most of the students who took part in childcare replied that they had been required to think of how to do the job for themselves and be creative (80.7%) and that they had been required to give due consideration to other people's feelings (96.0%). Meanwhile, of the students who participated in manufacturing, engineering, and construction, 91.1% replied that they had been required to exercise their physical strength. This shows that what was required of them differed depending on the type of business they experienced.

Figure 2 indicates the results of a question that asked students about their findings from their activities. After participating in the experience, many junior high school students found that long-term training would be necessary to make it possible to do the job properly. This suggests that these experiences have potential as an opportunity that motivates students to pursue further learning. However, the ratio of students who felt that way varied somewhat according to the type of business; the ratio was slightly lower for services, sales, and food service compared with the other two business categories. [9]

2. Problems Related to the Learning through Work Experience Program in the Local Business Survey

(1) Significance of the Experience: "Heart" Is More Important Than "Skills"

Here, we examine whether the learning through work experience program are recognized as being geared toward the students' future employment or are seen as a part of the students' educations. The results of the interviews show that all business establishments regard it as important that students put themselves in the workplace and have a first-hand experience doing a job. Some business establishments pointed out that the roles that children have in their families are too limited, as did the Report on Articulation.

8 The percentage of students who replied that the contents of the activities had not satisfied their wishes was 17.9%. This number did not differ significantly according to the contents of activities.

9 The impact on the perception of a student's future career or the motivation for learning did not differ significantly according to the contents of the activities.

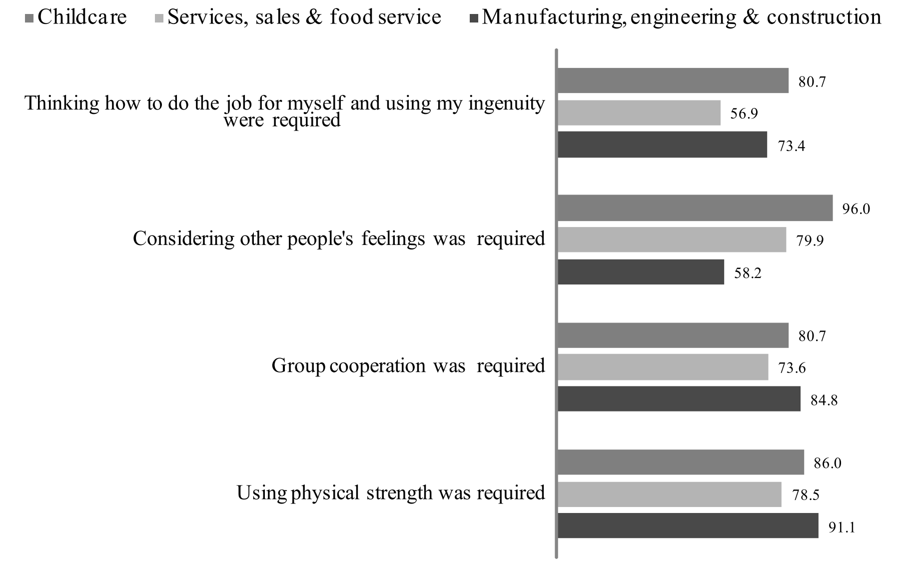


Figure 1. What was required in the Experiential Activities
(“Yes” + “Yes, to a degree” [%])

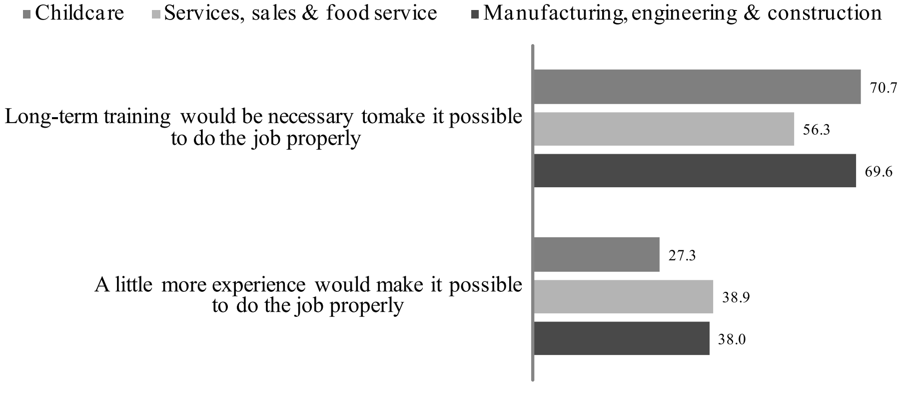


Figure 2. Students’ Findings from the Experiential Activities
(“Yes” + “Yes, to a degree” [%])

Interviewee A: It's important to provide an opportunity for the kids to work, and more than that, it's also important for them to learn how to act in society – to learn about social norms. It doesn't seem like most kids really know how to act anymore. Parents don't do anything about it, and more and more kids expect their parents to do everything for them and don't think about trying to learn that kind of thing by themselves. We have to encourage them to want to try.

In our interviews, it was only once that we heard the view that the activities that the students participate in under the learning through work experience program help to provide information about a job. Rather, these activities are expected to promote communications between parents and their children by providing young people with opportunity to get a feel for the real world and gain first-hand experience in society. Having the children gain experience on what a given job is like is not seen as the top priority.

Interviewer: The 14-Year-Old's Challenge Program has two purposes. The first is to provide the opportunity for young people to gain the experience of working and the second is to provide them with the opportunity to have contact with adults other than their parents and teachers through work. Which of the two do you think is more important?

Interviewee I: Well, I would say the second, if I had to pick. If we're talking about engaging in a job… I think probably the schools' education policy places more emphasis on the second one. Having the kids be engaged in society, so to speak… It seems like the schools' policy is to broaden the kids' perspectives, of course to show them the right ways to behave in school and in their classes, but also to show them what the real world is like. That's what it seems like, anyway. Also – and I think a lot of the local businesses want this too – I really want to do something to keep an eye on them and help them grow, you know, to develop as people.

Interviewee C: Giving 14-year-olds their first opportunity to have contact with working people… I'm not real sure, but I guess that's one of the purposes. It seems like the goal is to get the students not just to talk with other students and teachers but to communicate with working people, not so much to get them to learn how to do a job. What's important is giving them that experience.

(2) Problem 1: Insufficient Labor

The problems related to the implementation of activities, which were identified on the basis of frank opinions expressed by local businesses, can be divided into two categories: problems that are inevitable for activities undertaken by 14-year-old junior high school students and problems that could be improved upon if some measures are taken.

A decrease in business efficiency is a problem that cannot be avoided when junior high school students are accepted into the workplace under the supervision of an instructor.[10] In Toyama Prefecture, many of the local businesses that accept students under the program are small and medium-size companies with relatively small workforces, and the activities presumably impose a significant burden on such companies. However, in most cases, this problem was overcome because of the goodwill of local businesses that believed in the importance of the effects of learning through work experience.

Interviewee D: Teachers will ask us if their students are doing it right. But, frankly speaking, there's no way that they can be doing it right. We wouldn't be able to accept students if we didn't allow for the fact that this is learning through work experience. It's been 14 or 15 years since this program started, but it wasn't until a few years ago that our employees started to be willing to really accept the students. No matter how you look at it, it's just faster for us to do the work ourselves.

Another inevitable problem is that although the business establishments would like to have students engage in jobs useful as experiential activities, it is difficult to do so because they cannot afford to allow product quality to deteriorate from the perspective of their commercial interests. Consequently, students tend to be assigned to do peripheral jobs—which are not directly related to business—such as cleaning and dish washing, and this tendency is particularly notable in the manufacturing industry.

Interviewee H: First of all, we took care to ensure—if I may say so—that the quality of our products would not change. We were also careful to prevent the kids from sustaining any injuries.

Interviewee C: To tell the truth, I know that the kids want to work with a hammer and nails while the carpenters supervise them. But if we let them do that and our customers see it, it would turn into a big thing about 'How could you be letting kids do that!' I guess they used to let the kids do it, wearing a helmet and all. So we at least let them wear the helmets this time, too. I couldn't believe how happy it made them to put on those helmets. So they wore their helmets and we had them clean up a bit, and this and that. But I don't think that letting them work with a hammer and nails would be a very good idea. We're talking about products that customers are going to buy, so that's asking a little too much.

[10] Toyama Prefecture requires the local businesses to appoint an instructor to supervise junior high school students accepted into the workplace. One person we interviewed stated that compensation ranging from several hundred yen to 1,000 yen is paid to the supervisor. The precise amount of compensation was not revealed.

(3) Problem 2: Poor Communications

The problem cited most frequently in interviews with business establishments was poor communication with the students' parents. In both Areas X and Y, junior high schools prepare notebooks for the students to use specifically for the activities under the program. These notebooks list matters related to directions to be provided to students before and after the program. It also contains a section for students to write down what they did each day and a section for comments by the instructors and the parents. However, in the worst cases of neglect, the notebooks were crumpled, with nothing written in them. When the students and parents take this attitude, it discourages the receiving businesses.

Interviewee C: I want them to make sure that the students understand what it means for them to participate in the 14-Year-Old's Challenge Program and what they need to do as a part of it. And I want the students to communicate with their parents. The kids bring the notebook to record their activities every day and the instructors go to all the trouble of writing down an explanation of the activities on that day, but the section for the parents' comments often comes back blank. I just can't understand it.

It has also been pointed out that since surveys of the business establishments conducted by the schools after the activities are completed have become a nothing more than a formality, the problems pointed out by the local businesses are not reflected in future activities. From this, we may presume that state of communications between the local businesses, families, and schools is poor. The poor state of communications was indicated by the comment that the 14-Year-Old's Challenge Program has become a matter of formality and by the doubt expressed about the significance of the activities under the program.

Interviewee D: Every year, I'm more and more at a loss about how the kids really feel. There are things that I can't tell, like whether they appreciate the experience of doing a job or whether they understand how difficult it is. I know it's partially because there's a bigger age gap between me and them every year, but they seem to be apathetic about these things, whereas every year I become more aware of these changes in the kids. So I wonder whether the fact that they become quicker at doing a job or better at selling products is really an effect of the 14-Year-Old's Challenge Program.

IV. Conclusion

The 14-Year-Old's Challenge Program in Toyama Prefecture started as part of community-wide efforts to help children's development, as importance was placed on giving children the opportunity to get the feel of society and to gain first-hand experience in it through learning through work experience program. Implementation of out-of-school activities is regarded as a change in how educational activities should be conducted and as a positive development. This is evidenced by what we have heard through interviews with local businesses, such as that children should grow through community-wide efforts and that it is good for students to form relationships with people with whom they usually do not have contact. Local businesses expected not that these activities would lead directly to future career choice or career plans, but that it would help to facilitate smooth communications between parents and their children by providing the opportunity for students to get the feel of society and gain first-hand experience in the real world—even though the results may sometimes be disappointing for them because of poor communications between schools, business establishments, and parents. The 14-Year-Old's Challenge Program in Toyama Prefecture is an activity that has been conducted as part of efforts to study how school education should be carried out from the viewpoint of "emphasizing education."

Fundamentally, businesses operate based on a rationale that is different from that on which school activities are based, such as the realities of economic rationality and profitability. Nonetheless, local businesses have cooperated with the 14-Year-Old's Challenge Program, because they see educational value in schools' efforts to improve the state of education. As schools and businesses have shared the idea that the purpose of activities under the program is to raise children through community-wide efforts, no questions have been raised about the difference between the rationales of businesses and those of schools, nor about specific effects—such as acquisition of skills and improvement of the quality of labor. The efforts to reconfigure the 14-Year-Old's Challenge Program from an educational activity implemented by the schools into a career education activity with a view to helping students' smooth transition to the labor market is directing attention to these issues, about which questions had not previously been raised.

In interviews with the local businesses, some of them pointed out that the role of this program is limited to providing an opportunity for students to gain new experiences that they cannot have at school, rather than providing vocational training and increasing familiarity with jobs, because of the practical constraint that the program is aimed at 14-year-old junior high school students. A decrease in work process efficiency caused by the acceptance of junior high school students into the workplace imposes a significant burden on the local businesses. In addition, although these businesses would like to have junior high school students engage in jobs that provide them with a useful experience if possible, the range of jobs that can be assigned to them are limited when considering their commercial interests. If the 14-Year-Old's Challenge Program is to be positioned as an activity related to the vocational selection from the viewpoint of "work," it will be necessary to review how to evaluate the insufficient aspects of the program, because of which the students are unable to be involved in a full share of the work. Through our survey, we identified a case in which a student who took part in activities at a construction company under the program only engaged in cleanup of the site every day, and a case in which a student who participated in activities at a university did nothing more than keeping parked bicycles in order all day long. Of course, for some types of business, students cannot be allowed to do jobs that require special training, jobs that would bring them into contact with private information or those that may involve company secrets. As a result, their activities are limited to simple jobs, making it difficult for students to gain a variety of experiences and professional knowledge. This situation, which has been accepted from the viewpoint of placing an emphasis on education, that is, from the viewpoint of placing importance on having the students form relationships with people outside school, can no longer be easily tolerated from the viewpoint of placing an emphasis on "work," namely, from the viewpoint of stressing the effects of the activity on vocational selection. From now on, it will be necessary to consider how to enhance the contents of experiential activities.

Gaining the cooperation of business establishments with the program is also an important task. Junior high school students have learned many things through these experiences, such as thinking about how to do a job for themselves, giving consideration to other people's feelings, and exercising their physical power, and found out that they would need education and training to do the job properly. It is evident that the program has increased their interest in jobs and given them the motivation to learn. However, these results depended heavily on the goodwill of local businesses and their expectations about the educational effects of the experience as allowing children to feel and experience the real world and facilitating smooth communications between them and their parents. As a problem related to the program, some local businesses have already pointed out the poor communication with parents and with schools. If the schools continue to rely on the local businesses' generosity, they may soon lose the community's support. In fact, some companies have refused to accept students due to the increased burden of the recession in recent years. While 95% of schools nationwide are now implementing some sort of experiential activities, business establishments that accept students have come to feel an increasing burden. Finding out how to reward cooperative businesses and how to secure the cooperation of the parents through appropriate communications will be the key to the success of learning through work experience activities.

In conclusion, the question bears raising: Is it possible to set specific benchmarks and goals for junior high school students in terms of their view of career and work? In Japan, where almost all students who complete junior high school continue their educations, to answer this question, it will be necessary to overcome the difference between the perspective of placing an emphasis on "education" and that of placing an emphasis on "work," and to discuss in detail what kind of activities junior high school students should engage in under this program and for what purpose.

References

Guidance and Counseling Research Center, National Institute for Educational Policy Research. 2002. *Jido seito no shokugyokan, rodokan wo hagukumu kyoiku no suishin ni tsuite* [Promotion of education fostering school children's view of career and work], a research report compiled by Guidance and Counseling Research Center, NIER, Tokyo. http://www.nier.go.jp/shido/centerhp/sinro/sinro.htm (accessed November 25, 2010).

———. 2005. *Shokuba taiken, intanshippu ni kansuru jigyosho chosa, chosa gaiyo (soku-ho-ban)* [Outline of the survey of business establishments about learning through work experience programs and internships (preliminary version)], a research report compiled by Guidance and Counseling Research Center, NIER, Tokyo. http://www.nier.go.jp/shido/centerhp/intern/jigyosyo.pdf (accessed November 25, 2010).

———. 2008. *Heisei 19 nendo shokuba taiken, intanshippu jisshi jokyoto chosa kekka (gaiyo)* [Survey on the implementation of learning through work experience programs and internships in fiscal 2007" (Outline)], a research report compiled by Guidance and Counseling Research Center, NIER, Tokyo. http://www.nier.go.jp/shido/centerhp/i-ship/h19i-ship.pdf (accessed November 25, 2010).

Honda, Yuki. 2005. *Wakamono to shigoto: "Gakko keiyu no shushoku" wo koet*e [Youth and work: Beyond "employment via school." University of Tokyo Press: Tokyo.

Kariya Takehiko, Kaoru Tsuburai, Masaaki Nagasu, and Masaya Inada. 1997. Shinro mi-kettei no kozo: Kosotsu shinro miketteisha no sekishutsu mekanizumu ni kansuru jis-shoteki kenkyu [The rise of uncertain future plans among Japanese high school stu-dents]. *Bulletin of the Graduate School of Education, the University of Tokyo* 37: 45-76.

Kosugi, Reiko. 2003. *Furita to iu ikikata* [The freeter's way of living]. Tokyo: Sokei Shobo.

———. 2005. *Frita to nito* [Freeters and NEETs]. Tokyo: Sokei Shobo.

———, ed. 2002. *Jiyu no daisho: Furita—Gendai wakamono no shugo ishiki to kodo* [The price of freedom: Freeters—Modern youth's perception of employment and behavior]. Tokyo: The Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training.

Mimizuka, Hiroaki, Masami Omichi, Masaaki Nagasu, Yuko Morota, Kaori Tuburai, Yukie Hori, and Reiko Kosugi. 2000. *Kosotsu mugyosha no kyoiku shakaigakuteki kenkyu* [Study on unemployed high school graduates from the perspectives of education and sociology], a report funded by the Fiscal 1999-2000 Science Research Subsidy (Basic Research) (c) (2).

Mimura, Takao. 2004. *Kyaria kyoiku nyumon: Sono riron to jissen no tameni* [The basics of career education: Theories and practices: Tokyo: Jitsugyo no Nnihonsha.

Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. (2008). Kodomo no soda-chi wo meguru genjoto ni kansuru detashu [Collection of data related to the current circumstances surrounding childrearing]. http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/shingi/chousa/shotou/053/shiryo/__icsFiles/afieldfile/2009/03/09/1236114_3.pdf 2009/05/01 (accessed November 26, 2010).

National Institute for Educational Policy Research, ed. 2007. *Kyaria kyoiku e no shotai* [Invitation to career education]. Tokyo: Toyokan Shuppansha.

Terasaki, Satomi, and Mimizuka Hiroaki, 2007. Chugakusei no shorai tenbo to shokugyo ishiki ni kansuru chosha: gaiyo [Survey on junior high school students' outlooks on the future and job consciousness (outline)], a research report compiled by Ochanomizu University, Faculty of Letters and Education, communication system development program office, Tokyo.

Career Education in High Schools: Focusing on "Guidance in Ways of Being and Ways of Living"

Yuki Mochizuki
Ochanomizu University

The enhancement of career education in high schools, especially in those with general education curriculums, which account for more than 70% of the total, is becoming a pressing issue. With regard to "career guidance," which has undergone a great many changes in response to social demands and which in recent years has been expected to play a core role in career education, after discussing the functions peculiar to Japan, this paper looks back over developments up to the 1980s, dividing them into "pre-war" and "post-war" periods, as well as discussing the various theories that influenced career guidance at the time. Furthermore, with regard to the reality of "guidance in ways of being and ways of living," which emerged in the 1990s as a new concept in career guidance and is linked to career education, this paper discusses such guidance from the perspectives of the background to its promotion, its fundamental nature, its pros and cons, and related issues, and presents recommendations for career guidance—and, by extension, career education—in high schools in the future.

I. Introduction

In recent years, against the background of issues concerning the links between high schools and society, issues concerning the links between high schools and tertiary education, and the problem of the tendency of recent graduates to leave their jobs comparatively soon after taking them up, the enhancement of career education in high schools, especially in those with general education curriculums, which account for more than 70% of the total, is becoming a pressing issue.

What is expected to play a core role in this is career guidance. Career guidance has, up to the present day, undergone a great many changes, in response to social demands. After providing a brief explanation of the functions of career guidance, this paper summarizes the developments in high school career guidance up to the 1980s, and then discusses the impact and reality of "*Arikata-Ikikata Sido* (Guidance in Ways of Being and Ways of Living)," which subsequently emerged as a new concept in career guidance and is linked to career education.

II. The Functions of Career Guidance

Japanese schools and teachers are heavily involved in the process of students selecting their career options, through instruction called career guidance. The approach to this career guidance is a unique mechanism that differs from that employed in other countries.

Moreover, because schools are the main organ of social choice in Japanese society, career guidance in schools does not only have an educational significance, but also contributes to decisions about future socioeconomic status, so it plays an extremely important role.

According to Senzaki (1991), the functions of career guidance include “educational functions (cultivating independence and increasing the ability to make decisions, fostering views of work and increasing the ability to achieve self-fulfillment, and nurturing social skills and increasing social adaptability)” and “social functions (distributive functions, adaptive functions, and developmental functions).”

The field that mainly focuses on the “educational functions” of career guidance is the realm of psychology. As pointed out in comments such as “Career guidance is an intervention activity in relation to the process of choosing a career path, and thus is a form of support (Tsukuda 1988),” in the realm of psychology, career guidance is seen as “an intentional educational activity conducted in relation to the formation of students’ career paths,” and since the introduction of career guidance, a close relationship has been built, by such means as providing basic knowledge.

In contrast, the field that mainly focuses on the “social functions,” above all the “distributive functions” of career guidance is the realm of educational sociology. In the realm of educational sociology, career guidance is taken in its broad sense as “potential encouragement in relation to the formation of students’ career paths,” and is understood in an extremely broad scope as differentiation functions both within school and outside, including the socialization, selection and distributive functions fulfilled by school education. Of these, a considerable amount of research has been accumulated in relation to the functions that career guidance can fulfill with regard to students’ career path selections, focusing primarily on high schools, which have been the final career path differentiation institutions for most people (Mimizuka 1993).

III. Pre-War Career Guidance

This chapter firstly discusses the development of career guidance before the war (when it was known as vocational guidance).

What had a significant impact on career guidance before the war was the trait and factor theory propounded by Parsons (1909), who was one of the originators of vocational guidance. The trait and factor theory was linked to the congruence theory, and, as the theory of “putting the right person in the right place,” became an influential theory in career guidance in schools and related institutions, due to the development of psychological testing to grasp people’s abilities and aptitudes, the gathering of job information, and the development of theories concerning directive counseling.

1. Sociopolitical Guidance Led by Employment Placement Organizations

In the USA, from the early 20th century, in response to rapid industrialization and the development of urbanization, intensive activities aimed at the effective utilization of human resources and the protection of youth labor—in other words, the vocational guidance movement—took place.

In Japan as well, thanks to Irisawa (1915), US-style vocational guidance was introduced as "vocational education," and for the next 40 years or so, the term vocational guidance (*shokugyo shido*) was used. However, the initial awareness was that "employment placement organizations took the initiative and amidst a situation in which guidance in schools was still in its infancy, it was sociopolitical vocational guidance centered on work placement and career selection guidance for young people (Shibayama 2003)," and it was also a form of public and social support for the many employment problems faced by young workers amidst the developing economic slump.

2. Guidance Based on the Spirit of Respect for Human Dignity

In school education, a proactive interest in vocational guidance developed after the establishment in 1926 of the Tokyo Society for Vocational Guidance. Working in partnership with job placement agencies, the Ministry of Education, which was aware of the importance of vocational guidance, issued Ministry of Education Directive No.20 (1927), entitled *Matters Concerning Vocational Guidance and Respect for the Individuality of Schoolchildren*, which formally positioned vocational guidance in school education. This directive stipulated that consideration would be given in schools to the individuality, environment and resources of each person, and that appropriate guidance would be provided with regard to career choices after graduation or the selection of an institution of higher education. As an independent government order based on the requirements of educational administration, the directive was a landmark development in the history of vocational guidance in schools, and is generally seen as the starting point for the development of a curriculum for vocational guidance. It provided an opportunity to disseminate vocational guidance in school education, and marked the formal introduction of vocational guidance to schools.

As a result, awareness that vocational guidance was an important educational activity in schools increased; vocational guidance focused on selecting the appropriate career path based on a spirit of respecting human dignity took the lead, overshadowing the sociopolitical vocational guidance led by employment placement organizations that had been the main form of such guidance hitherto.

3. Guidance Based on Nationalistic Attitudes to Work

In 1937, war broke out between Japan and China and the National Mobilization Act was enacted the following year; in response to this, the Ministry of Health and Welfare and the Ministry of Education issued *Matters Concerning Vocational Guidance for National Elementary School Graduates* (1938), leading to the further strengthening of vocational guidance. This document requested compliance with national requirements concerning jobs for children after graduating from elementary school and, as pointed out by Nobuchi (1990), vocational guidance in schools underwent a major turnaround, becoming nationalistic and militaristic vocational guidance.

Subsequently, memoranda entitled *Guidelines on Vocational Guidance Lessons in National Elementary Schools* and *Matters Concerning Vocational Guidance in National Elementary Schools* (1941) were issued by the Vice-Minister of Education, and a new textbook entitled the *National Elementary School Vocational Guidance Textbook* was published, to replace the *Vocational Guidance Reader*, which had been used up to that point as the educational material for group instruction in vocational guidance. Moreover, vocational guidance was established as an additional subject, with a compulsory one-hour lesson taking place each week for students in the first and second years of the advanced course in national elementary schools.

Thus, based on the demands of society and the state, vocational guidance became a means of selecting and allocating manpower in a time of war, amidst stringent labor controls, becoming guidance aimed at allocating elementary school graduates to various workplaces. With "devotion to one's job" and "selfless devotion" being emphasized, it was completely incorporated into the state regime in a form that suited the requirements of the government, and the concept of respect for individuality completely disappeared from view.

IV. Post-War Career Guidance

This chapter continues the discussion of the development of career guidance, looking at how it evolved from the post-war period to the 1980s.

As discussed in the previous chapter, although vocational guidance in pre-war Japan was buffeted by the winds of change transforming Japanese society, it more or less maintained its basis in the trait and factor theory. However, this theory perceived the relationship between individuals and jobs in a fixed way, and it was criticized as lacking the perspective of interaction between them, so a paradigm shift took place in post-war career guidance, in favor of career development theory.

Career development theory was developed by Ginzberg (1951) and Super (1957); rather than focusing solely on phenomena at the time of selection, it emphasizes the process of forming self-concepts, as a long-term, ongoing process, and seeks to explain vocational behavior by humans over the course of their lives.

According to Super (1957), vocational guidance provides support for "developing and accepting an integrated and adequate picture of oneself and of one's role in the world of work," "testing this concept against reality" and "converting this concept into a reality, with satisfaction to oneself and benefits to society." Senzaki (1991) reinterpreted his points as "forming and testing a concept of oneself and a way of being, and transforming this into reality, while taking an overview of the working life of a human, which ultimately results in supporting 'lifelong career development' with the aim of achieving individual satisfaction and social development."

1. Basic Educational Guidance Concerning Future Employment Activities

The prerequisites for a society that requires career guidance are that freedom to choose one's job is guaranteed, and that the diverse abilities and aptitudes of individuals are adequately valued (Sakamoto 1994). Accordingly, one would have to say that the consideration and organization of the principles, content and methods of career guidance took place after Japan became a modern society, in the post-war years.

Post-war career guidance swept aside the nationalistic and militaristic vocational guidance seen under the wartime regime, and made a fresh start as "new vocational guidance" based on the principles of democracy (Nobuchi 1990).

After the freedom to choose one's occupation was prescribed in the Japanese Constitution, "vocational guidance" was implemented as a curriculum subject through the legal positioning of career guidance in schools via the School Education Act (1947), and a textbook entitled *Vocational Guidance* was published.

In 1947, the *Curriculum Guidelines on Vocational Guidance* was issued by the Ministry of Education, in which vocational guidance was defined as "the process of supporting an individual in selecting an occupation, preparing for it, entering it and progressing in it." This definition was based on the definition published in 1937 by the U.S. National Vocational Guidance Association ("Vocational guidance is the process of assisting the individual to choose an occupation, prepare for it, enter upon and progress in it. It is concerned primarily with helping individuals make decisions and choices involved in planning a future and building a career – decisions and choices necessary in effecting satisfactory vocational adjustment.")

Furthermore, as a result of the Teachers' License Act (1949), "vocational guidance" also became a subject for which a teachers' license was required in junior high and high schools. Thus, career guidance in school education came to be undertaken as a full-scale activity firmly positioned in law.

In the publication *Career Counseling Conducted by Schools*, which was issued by the Ministry of Education in 1951, vocational guidance is defined as follows: "Vocational guidance is the process in which, as part of the educational process, teachers help students to plan their future career path, go on to higher education or find a job, and adapt better to and progress in their subsequent lives, through such functions as the personal resources of each individual student, information about progressing to higher education or finding jobs, educational experiences, consultations, mediation and additional guidance." It also contained concrete stipulations about the content of career guidance in school education.

Moreover, as a result of the *Ministerial Ordinance for Partial Revision of the Ordinance for Enforcement of the School Education Act* (1953), the vocational guidance supervisor system was established – the first of the supervisory positions established in schools.

However, in general, perhaps because of the term "vocational guidance," guidance during this period has come to be seen as an activity aimed at placement service activities, or vocational or technological education (Tsukuda 1988).

As pointed out in Fujita (1995), “The necessity of vocational knowledge and skills education in the sense of responding to social demands was acknowledged and the focus was placed on the cultivation of career path selection skills on the ground that a larger number of people would find jobs rather than go on to higher education, there was no concept of positioning self-actualization as a guiding concept in career guidance,” thus, the demands of post-war society at the time were strong.

2. Systematic, Organized Guidance throughout School Education

In the Central Council for Education report entitled *Concerning Measures to Promote Science and Technology Education* (1957), the term “career guidance” was used for the first time in an official document, instead of “vocational guidance,” and vocational guidance in schools was thereafter called “career guidance.” In response to this report, it was stipulated in the Curriculum Guidelines (guidelines for junior high schools published in 1958, and guidelines for high schools published in 1960) that guidance in schools was “career guidance” and not “vocational guidance.” According to Tamura (1986), the reforms during this period marked a shift away from “guidance concerning advancement to higher education or obtaining a job at the time of graduating from school,” toward an emphasis on the goal of “cultivating the ability to choose one’s future career path.”

Moreover, with the abolition of “vocational studies and domestic science,” career guidance moved away from being part of the taught curriculum, and was positioned instead as part of the newly established category of special educational activities, focusing primarily on class activities and homeroom activities. It was not a learning activity organized with a focus on taught subjects, but among special educational activities, which were important school activities aimed at achieving the general objectives of education, career guidance became a systematic task for school education as a whole and came to be positioned clearly in the curriculum. The sentence below, which is set forth in the 1961 *Career Guidance Manual*, is the concept in which school career guidance is rooted, even today:

> “Career guidance is the process through which teachers provide ongoing, systematic guidance and support through the personal resources of each individual student, information about progressing to higher education or finding jobs, educational experiences, and consultations, in order to enable each student to select and plan their future career path themselves, go on to higher education or find a job, and develop the ability to adapt better to and make progress in their subsequent lives.”

Takeuchi (1988) analyses this definition and argues that it is necessary for the practice of career guidance to take place through activities in six fields, namely “student understanding,” “the provision of career information,” “educational experiences,” “consultations about career options,” “support in selecting and deciding upon a career path,” and “additional guidance.” Moreover, Sakamoto (1997) sets forth the flows of these six activities as organically integrated activities, and states that “individual understanding,” “educational experiences” and “career information” are integrated in “consultations about career options,” which is in turn linked to “support in selecting and deciding upon a career path.”

Thereafter, in the Ministry of Education *Guidelines on Junior High School and High School Career Guidance: Manual for Career Guidance Supervisors* (1977), which was heavily influenced by the theory of vocational development, school career guidance is described as “activities focused on providing guidance and support in relation to the series of processes involving arousing students’ interest in their career paths, broadening their knowledge of the world of careers, planning their career path and striving to realize this plan.” In this definition, as can be seen in the references to “future ways of living” and “future prospects,” the concept of career development rather than career selection is clearly set forth (Kikuchi 1993).

Furthermore, in the Curriculum Guidelines (guidelines for junior high schools published in 1977, and guidelines for high schools published in 1978), as well as highlighting the importance of special activities, conducting planned, systematic career guidance across all educational activities was emphasized, and the positioning of career guidance in school education became clearer, while the content of such guidance was also set forth in a more specific form.

3. Guidance Focused on the Exit Point

Education in post-war Japan has been particularly successful in terms of quantitative expansion, but the trade-off for industrial and economic development has been that schools have become focused on efficiency, with the effect that flexibility has been lost.

According to Amano (1995), in 1979, when the Japan Vocational Guidance Association changed its name to the Japanese Society for Study of Career Guidance, progressing to higher education was already beginning to become the main future career choice for students at both junior high and high schools. Guidance specializing in and concentrating on the “exit point” (so-called “examination guidance”), i.e. finding a job or progressing to higher education, came to be conspicuous in career guidance in high schools as well, against the background of the emergence of a society with an emphasis on academic background as a result of high economic growth and a rise in the rate of students going on to high school.

Examination guidance had a positive effect in the form of promoting learning by students, as well as a social allocation effect, as a means of selection (Tamura 1986). However, due to the impact of the slowdown in economic growth and criticism of a society focused on education, examination guidance came to be criticized as cross-sectional instruction that laid too great an emphasis on test results, which was the cause of excessive frustration in students, leading to many cases of them dropping out or failing to adapt after going on to higher education; in addition, there was strong criticism that it implanted a mentality of contentment with one’s lot among students, leading to the cooling of their aspirations and preventing the internalization of the principle of making an effort.

For example, the Ministry of Education's *Commentary on High School Curriculum Guidelines: General Provisions* (1978), based on the actual state of career guidance, which was, at that time, called "guidance focused on the exit point," set forth the following request for improvements.

> "It has been pointed out that career guidance in high schools concentrates on issues relating to the selection of a workplace by students at the time of graduation or progress to university, etc., and there is a tendency to place disproportionate emphasis on this in a single academic year, so it is necessary to strive to carry out career guidance in a planned, systematic fashion from the time when students enter school."

Moreover, in the First Report of the Ad Hoc Council on Education, entitled *Concerning Basic Measures for Implementing Necessary Reforms Relating to Educational Measures* (1985), in describing the state of education at that time, it was pointed out that parents, teachers and children were all caught up in education that placed too great an emphasis on test results and knowledge, amidst a social trend toward excessive emphasis on academic credentials (Tamura 1986).

V. The Reality of "Guidance in Ways of Being and Ways of Living"

1. Background to the Promotion of This Concept

In the 1990s, attention came to be focused on the educational significance of the development and cultivation of an internal awareness, which will be the basis for "career selection," with a view to the student's future (Ito 1990), and a switch was undertaken toward "guidance in ways of being and ways of living (in junior high schools, this is called 'guidance in ways of living')" as conventional career guidance, while being complemented by the strongly criticized "examination guidance."

With regard to the background to this shift, the impact of the social background at the time cannot be ignored. Until that point, Japanese school education had cultivated "cooperation over individuality" and "adaptability to the group over the independence of the individual." However, uniform management education and education that aims exclusively at conveying expertise have been noted as factors contributing to the problems that have surfaced amidst industrial and economic development.

From the 1990s to the early 2000s, against a background of neoliberalism in the West, Japanese education policy took as its keywords "education with latitude," "individualization" and "diversification," as well as "zest for living" and "ways of being and ways of living." The goals of exercising one's individuality and personal fulfillment were introduced into school education as a whole, not solely into the field of career guidance.

Against the background of the promotion of the diversification and increased flexibility of the education system itself, debate around career guidance has sought to achieve a switch away from guidance that emphasizes feasibility within one's limits, revamping it to focus on guidance that places the emphasis on cultivating the abilities and attitudes required for “self-selection, self-determination, and self-fulfillment,” based on the individuality and humanity of the individual students. Amidst this situation, “guidance in ways of being and ways of living” became an important theme in school education.

The shift toward “guidance in ways of being and ways of living” was not only a paradigm shift at the policy level, but can also be described as a radical transformation in career guidance values in the classroom that was forced on the Japanese education system. With regard to the background to this, career development theory had a major impact, as it changed the concept of career guidance in Japan, spreading it to “guidance in ways of being and ways of living” throughout all educational activities, instead of confining it to career path selection in a narrow sense.

2. The Term “Guidance in Ways of Living”

According to Ogawa (1992), the term “ways of being and ways of living” emerged in response to the developmental stage of high school students. Rather than being perceived separately, “ways of being” and “ways of living” are concepts deeply rooted in ways of being as a human; in other words, they go back to the basic nature of humanity, and education that induces students to think about better ways of living as humans is education about “ways of being and ways of living (as humans).”

The following describes the developments that led to the term “guidance in ways of living” coming to be used, with reference to the policy-related arguments raised by Yoshida (2005). From the following policy-related arguments, we can see the developments that led to “guidance in ways of being and ways of living” being emphasized in the basic policy on education reforms formulated in response to numerous reports published by the Ad Hoc Council on Education.

(1) Central Council for Education Report: *Concerning Lifelong Learning* (1981)

This report states that “In recent years, competition in school entrance examinations has become more intense and in teaching there has been a tendency to emphasize instruction focused on progressing to the next level of education,” and acknowledges the situation at the time in which career guidance was carried out as part of education to prepare students to take examinations. Moreover, the report states that “It is important to identify a better way of living, in order to enable students to choose their career path for themselves,” and stipulates the necessity of enriching career guidance in order to enable students to choose their own career path, as well as giving adequate consideration to the growth of the students’ individuality and abilities.

(2) Central Council for Education Report: *Report on the Progress of Deliberations by the Subcommittee on Educational Content* (1983)

This report points out a wide range of problems, including problems relating to social changes and school education, and family and community expectations concerning the functions of education; it then describes the composition of subjects in primary and secondary education, as well as the ideal content of education. In the content directly relating to career guidance, it stipulates content relating to "approaches to guidance concerning ways of living for young people" and states that "consideration for guidance concerning ways of living during adolescence, including enhancing moral education, can be said to be extremely important in school education as well."

(3) Ad Hoc Council on Education: *Second Report on Education Reforms* (1986)

This report sets forth the basic policy for high school education, as well as the significance and necessity of career guidance. It points out that in secondary education, an emphasis on the pursuit of one's self and education in "ways of living" as a human is proposed, suggesting that "guidance in ways of living" does not simply mean the ethics of how to live as a human and the meaning of human existence, but also that it is necessary to develop practical learning in school education, aimed at establishing one's self and one's career path.

(4) Curriculum Council Report: *Concerning the Improvement of Curriculum Standards in Kindergartens, Elementary Schools, Junior High Schools and High Schools* (1987)

This report broadly uses the term "ways of being and ways of living (in junior high schools, the term used is "ways of living")" as a human, in relation to the content of such subjects as Japanese language, civics, moral education and special activities. Ogawa (1992) points out that, based on this content, "It is expected that 'education relating to ways of being and ways of living as a human' will be undertaken as part of education in civics and special activities; to put it in narrower terms, 'ethics' and 'homeroom activities' are expected to be at the core of this."

(5) *High School Curriculum Guidelines* (1989)

With regard to the positioning of career guidance in the curriculum, the general provisions of these guidelines prescribe that "planned, systematic career guidance shall be undertaken throughout all educational activities in schools, in order to ensure that students think for themselves about ways of being and ways of living, and can independently choose their career path." The Curriculum Guidelines state that "matters relating to future ways of living and deciding on appropriate career choices" should be taken up as part of the content of high school homeroom activities, setting forth specific targets that emphasize "education in ways of being and ways of living as a human," and seeking to achieve progress in the classroom. According to Amano (1995), these provisions evoked a sense of a major era change in approaches to career guidance.

3. Basic Nature

Senzaki (1988) has summarized the basic nature of career guidance into the following five points, based on the definition of career guidance in *Manual on Career Guidance in Junior High and High Schools* (1974). The following points can be understood as the basic nature of "guidance in ways of being and ways of living."

i. It is an educational activity that provides instruction and support concerning the ways of living of the students themselves
ii. It is an educational activity that promotes the vocational development of individual students
iii. It is an educational activity that values each and every student, and develops their potential
iv. It is an educational activity that is conducted in each academic year from when students first enter school, on an organized, planned and systematic basis
v. It is an educational activity in which cooperation and partnership with households, the local community and various relevant institutions are particularly needed.

While describing career guidance as support for selecting and deciding upon a career path, from the perspective of "how to live one's life," that is to say, making "how to live" a constant basic stance, Naito (1991) states that initiatives that seek to make students face up to their choices regarding progress to higher education or seeking a job are "school career guidance as education in ways of living." In undertaking career guidance as guidance in ways of living, Kashima (2000) emphasizes three types of guidance: "guidance in awareness and development of the individuality of students"; "guidance in understanding the diversity of future ways of living and career paths"; and "guidance in forming the values that should become the standards based on which ways of living are selected."

In addition, various definitions of "guidance in ways of being and ways of living" have been formulated, but they all have in common the general definition that "based on career development theory, this guidance promotes a deeper interest in future ways of living and appropriate choices and decisions about career paths."

4. The Pros and Cons of "Guidance in Ways of Being and Ways of Living" and Relevant Issues

Based on Mochizuki (2007), this chapter summarizes the pros and cons of "guidance in ways of being and ways of living," through its impact on the career choices and awareness of career paths of those wishing to progress to university, and adds some considerations concerning relevant issues.

(1) The Achievements of "Guidance in Ways of Being and Ways of Living"

Mochizuki (2007) notes the following three points as the achievements of "guidance in ways of being and ways of living."

The first achievement is that it has had the effect of extending the career prospects of students, ensuring that they make considered decisions about progressing to university and giving them a deeper understanding of their university choices. In other words, guidance that emphasizes experiences of their possible destination clearly has the effect of promoting more considered decisions about whether or not to go on to university.

The second achievement is the fact that it has had the effect of overcoming students' sense of "their limits," and igniting aspirations to enter higher-ranking universities that are hard to get into.

The third achievement is the effect of ensuring that the selection of their university of choice is made independently and that students are satisfied with their choices.

These achievements are clear, irrespective of gender or academic performance, but among those with higher grades, it has been noted that such guidance has had the effect of deepening understanding of university options and increasing aspirations to enter higher-ranking universities that are hard to get into.

In other words, irrespective of gender or academic performance, "guidance in ways of being and ways of living" can be said to have the merit of increasing the awareness of career and university options among those wishing to progress to university, overcoming a sense of "one's limits" and enabling them to select their university of choice independently and be satisfied with their choice. The education reforms currently underway seek to have students understand the self in positive terms. The advantages seen in "guidance in ways of being and ways of living" are in line with the intention of policy discussions which, through the transformation of career guidance, aim to increase the occurrence of a state in which students understand the self in positive terms and achieve development that will make it possible to select their career paths independently. To put it another way, "guidance in ways of being and ways of living" is guidance that is effective in "promoting the development of the hyper-meritocracy that is advancing in Japanese society, which is entering the 'postmodern society' stage" (Honda 2005).

(2) The Problems of "Guidance in Ways of Being and Ways of Living"

There are also questions about the effects of "guidance in ways of being and ways of living."

Honda (2000) states that "In education policy and guidance in high school classrooms, the importance is stressed of a student's 'aptitude' and 'individuality,' and, for individual students, 'what they want to do' as a standard or pointer when selecting a career path, but there are many cases in which these are vague and cannot actually adequately function as selection standards," and points out that "guidance in ways of being and ways of living" is not functioning adequately in the field of selecting a career path. Kariya et al. (2001) state that "Although guidance policy is shifting toward an emphasis on understanding of the self, it has been pointed out that there are problems in that the formation of an awareness of career paths in the actual guidance situation is inadequate. Irrespective of the fact that guidance aimed at promoting understanding of the self is being implemented earlier or in a more planned manner, there are quite a few cases in which this does not yield results" and the authors are ambivalent about the approach to "guidance promoting understanding of the self" within "guidance in ways of being and ways of living."

Mochizuki (2007) also points out the following two problems with "guidance in ways of being and ways of living."

The first problem is that it has the effect of igniting students' aspirations to enter higher-ranking universities that are hard to get into. In the sense that this overcomes students' sense of "their limits," it can also be said to be a positive achievement. However, because "guidance in ways of being and ways of living" emphasizes overcoming students' sense of their limits in life and developing individual values, one cannot deny the possibility that students' aspirations are merely abstract. Moreover, "guidance in ways of being and ways of living" might fan the flames of the competitive spirit in students, in relation to a small number of highly selective universities that are hard to get into.

The second problem is the fact that it could be difficult to ensure that students are satisfied with their university selection. Looking at the issue from the perspective of policy discussions that have criticized "examination guidance" as one of the factors in students' failure to adapt after entering university, this is an unintended consequence. "Guidance in ways of being and ways of living" can increase students' awareness of career paths, above all their awareness of going on to university, and can ignite their aspirations to enter a higher-ranking university that is hard to get into. This result is a positive one in the sense that it overcomes students' sense of their limits. However, it also increases awareness of career paths before the selection of university entrants takes place, and the more that it succeeds in igniting students' aspirations to enter a specific university of their choice, the harder it becomes to cool those aspirations after selection takes place, and as a result, it can be difficult to ensure that students are satisfied with the university that they have actually selected. This result is a negative effect of "guidance in ways of being and ways of living," and this can be described as an unintended consequence from the perspective of policy discussions that rely on developmental theory.

(3) Issues Relating to "Guidance in Ways of Being and Ways of Living"

If, theoretically, "guidance in ways of being and ways of living" is going to continue to promote moves to ignite aspirations to enter "the university I want to enter" rather than "the university I can enter," it is believed that it will become more difficult to ensure that the university of choice based on the ignited aspirations corresponds to the actual university entered on the basis of the results of meritocratic selection based on academic ability, and it is feared that there will be a further increase in reluctant university entrants.

Amano (2005) points out that in an industrialized society, a social structure is required for motivating people in relation to their status and roles, and then selecting and allocating them, and states that this kind of structure must fulfill the following contradictory roles.

Firstly, there is the role of motivating more people to competition aimed at securing a higher status or role, so that the appropriate allocation can be achieved in accordance with people's abilities and qualities.

Secondly, there is the role of disabusing people of their aspirations, which had been raised with the aim of achieving a higher status. While "igniting" aspirations in order to ensure more people participate in competition, it is also necessary to reduce (or "cool") these aspirations in accordance with the number of statuses and roles that are available.

After the war, "examination guidance," which formed the core of school career guidance, fulfilled these contradictory roles. However, "guidance in ways of being and ways of living" was promoted in response to criticism of these roles, and is an activity that emphasizes the individuality and values of students, as well as supporting them in making independent choices concerning their career path.

Omura (1972) points out that, even if the aspirations of students are abstract, there is a possibility that the various forms of selection in the school curriculum at that time might bring about a change in their aspirations, turning them into more realistic aspirations. However, as "guidance in ways of being and ways of living" can actually have the opposite effect, there is, in fact, the risk that students' aspirations will remain abstract and indeed, become even more abstract. If the aim is to form aspirations with the aim of actual educational and vocational achievement, it is perhaps necessary to give realistic consideration to the institutional and structural context in the form of academic selection and the structure of the labor market. If students' aspirations are abstract, it is difficult for them to enter their university of choice and there are fears that the number of students dropping out of or failing to adapt to the university that they actually enter, which was not their first choice, will increase. As Kariya (1991) points out, there are similar fears about the increase in workers leaving their jobs or failing to adapt to them after finding a job.

According to Mimizuka (1988), teachers played a role in establishing a link between students' academic performance relative to the group average and their university of choice, and were "gatekeepers" who strictly checked the students with ambitions that deviated from this correlation, and guided them onto the career path appropriate to their abilities. However, there has been a transformation in the role of teachers in "guidance in ways of being and ways of living." If, rather than fulfilling a role as "gatekeepers," teachers fulfill a role as "advisors," students who have been subject to "guidance in ways of being and ways of living" may well end up in the same situation as the US high school graduates referred to by Kariya (1991), whether they wish to go on to higher education or wish to find a job.

Kariya (2003) points out that "the things that can be achieved by career guidance that renounces the role of cooling out, in order to value the independence of the student and avoid crushing their dreams, are limited," and seeks a more realistic response. One wonders to what degree career guidance undertaken on the basis of idealistic concepts can meet realistic requests.

VI. Conclusion

The high school years are a transition period when individuals develop from children into adults, worrying and engaging in internal debate, while seeking a way of being in society and making plans for one's future. Conducting realistic and effective career guidance for high school students who are at this stage in their lives is extremely important.

Finally, based on the arguments outlined above, this paper presents some proposals for career guidance that can play a core role in career education in the future.

Firstly, there is the establishment of career guidance based on the social background that is unique to Japan. It cannot be denied that there has been a sense that discussions of career guidance in recent years have been preoccupied with increasing high school students' awareness of career paths, based on developmental theory. However, higher education is becoming more popular, and meritocratic selection based on academic ability is still involved in progressing to university, which has become the choice for the majority of high school students. Consequently, in progressing to university, even if students have a high awareness of career paths and stronger aspirations for their university of choice, it is not necessarily the case that they will be able to progress to their university of choice.

The background to this is Japan's unique university entrance examination system. Career guidance in Japan has been greatly influenced by psychological theoretical development in the USA. However, in order to ensure that it is a realistic and effective method, what is required is perhaps career guidance based on Japan's unique social background, rather than relying solely on developmental theory. To put it in terms of this discussion, the idiosyncrasies of the Japanese university entrance examination system in relation to the selection of career paths by high school students are not taken into account in the theories developed in the USA.

Secondly, there are revisions of the "examination guidance" function. Hitherto, both at the policy level and the academic research level, school career guidance has been perceived in terms of the dichotomy between "guidance in ways of being and ways of living" and "examination guidance," due to career guidance policy and practical activities, and these have been presented as though they are antithetical concepts. However, in terms of making career guidance more effective in the future, it might perhaps be necessary to incorporate the functions of "examination guidance," which has been seen as an opposing concept.

Thirdly, there is a switch in "the view of high school students" in Japanese society. In discussions concerning career guidance, an approach and directionality focused on supporting independent choices of career path by students, rather than school- or teacher-led guidance, have been clearly presented. In education policy in recent years, rather than being limited to career guidance, a tendency has been seen toward cultivating the abilities and attitudes required for self-selection, self-determination and self-fulfillment, based on the individuality and humanity of each individual student.

However, after stating that "if one hopes that students will make their own judgments and choices, and do something independently with a sense of responsibility, one must give them training as 'little adults'," Amano (1995) points out that in fact, basically nobody seeks to view children of this age (high school students) as "little adults." As Katase (2004) points out, there are grave doubts about whether modern high school students can engage in "self-determination" concerning their own career paths and demonstrate strength of will to the extent that they can take responsibility for themselves. Accordingly, it is possible that the neoliberal education policy that compels them to "self-determination and self-responsibility" will only lead to confusion in the career choices of modern high school students.

Even if the systems and organizations are altered, it will be difficult to reach a solution to these problems, unless there is a change in the "view of high school students" that has been rooted in Japanese society and culture for many years.

References

Amano, Ikuo. 1995. *Kyoiku kaikaku no yukue: Jiyu to koseika wo motomete* [The prospects for education reforms: In search of liberalization and individualization]. Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press.

———. 2005. *Kyoiku to senbatsu no shakaishi* [Social history of education and selection]. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo.

Fujita, Teruyuki. 1995. Shinro shido ni okeru "shinro" gainen o meguru ichikosatsu [A Conceptual Analysis on "Career" in Career Guidance]. *Bulletin of the Japanese Society for Study of Career Guidance* 16:30-39.

Ginzberg, Eli, Sol W. Ginsburg, Sidney Axelrad, and John L. Herma. 1951. *Occupational choice: An approach to a general theory*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Honda, Yuki. 2000. *Shinro Kettei wo Meguru Kokosei no Ishiki to Kodo: Kosotsu "Furita" Zoka no Jittai to Haikei* [High school students' awareness and behavior concerning decisions on career paths: The reality of and background to the increase in high school graduates subsisting on casual part-time jobs]. JIL Report, no. 138:3-11, the Japan Institute of Labour, Tokyo.

———. 2005. Tagenka suru "noryoku" to nihon shakai: Haipa meritokurashi-ka no nakade [Diversifying 'abilities' and Japanese society: Amidst the development of a hyper-meritocracy]. Tokyo: NTT Shuppan.

Irisawa, Munetoshi. 1915. *Genkon no kyoiku* [Modern education]. Tokyo: Kodokan.

Ito, Ryuji. 1990. "Ikikata" kyoiku towa nanika [What is education in 'ways of living'?] *Kyoiku Shinri* [Educational psychology] l38, no. 1:6-15.

Kariya, Takehiko. 1991. *Gakko, shokugyo, senbatsu no shakaigaku: Kosotsu shushoku no nihonteki mekanizumu* [The sociology of schools, employment and selection: Japanese-style mechanisms in the employment of high school graduates]. Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press.

———. 2003. Senbatsu to shinro sentaku [Selection and career choice]. In *Gakko rinsho shakaigaku: "Kyoiku mondai" wo do kangaeruka* [School clinical sociology: How to regard "educational problems"], ed. Takehiko Kariya and Kokichi Shimizu. Tokyo: Nippon Hoso Kyokai Shuppan Kyokai.

Kariya, Takehiko, Yoshitaka Hamanaka, Shogo Chiba, Kazuo Yamaguchi, Miki Tsutsui, Masao Oshima, and Shuhei Araya. 2001. Posuto senbatsu shakai no shinro bunka to shinro shido [Career path differentiation and career guidance in the post-selection society]. *Bulletin of the University of Tokyo Graduate School of Education* 41:127-54.

Kashima, Kennosuke. 2000. *Shinro shido wo ikasu sogoteki na gakushu* [Comprehensive learning that utilizes career guidance]. Tokyo: Jitsugho no Nihonsha.

Katase, Kazuo. 2004. Posuto modan jokyo ni okeru ausupireshon anomi wo koete: Gendai kokosei ni okeru asupireshon no henka. [Overcoming aspirational anomie in the postmodern situation: Modification of the aspirations of modern high school students]. *Tohoku Gakuin Daigaku Ronshu [Tohoku Gakuin University Annals]* 139:61-89.

Kikuchi, Takekatsu. 1993. Shinro shido towa [What is career guidance?]. In *Shinro shido* [Career guidance], ed. Takekatsu Kikuchi. 1-20. Tokyo: Chuo Hoki Shuppan.

Mimizuka, Hiroaki. 1988. Chugakko, koko no kyoiku shido [Educational guidance at junior high schools and high schools]. In *Oya to kyoshi no tame no shishunkigaku (4. Gakko)* [Ephebology for parents and teachers], ed. Hiroshi Inamura, 283-302. Tokyo: Kyoiku Kaihatsu Kenkyujo.

———. 1993. Gakko shakaigaku kenkyu no tenkai [The sociology of the school: A review]. *The Journal of Educational Sociology Research* 52:115-36.

Mochizuki, Yuki. 2007. *Shinro keisei ni taisuru "arikata ikikata shido" no kozai: Koko shinro shidono shakaigaku* [The merits and demerits of "guidance in ways of being and ways of living" in relation to the formation of career paths: The sociology of high school career guidance]. Tokyo: Toshindo.

Naito, Yuji. 1991. *Ikikata no kyoiku toshiteno gakko shinro shido: Seito shido o fumaeta jissen to riron* [School career guidance as education in ways of living: Practice and theory based on student guidance]. Kyoto: Kitaoji Shobo.

Nobuchi, Tatsuo. 1990. Shinro shido no kiso riron [Basic theory of career guidance]. In *Seito shido: Ikikata to shinro no tankyu* [Student guidance: The pursuit of career paths and ways of living], ed. Takeshi Senzaki. Tokyo: Gyosei.

Ogawa, Ichiro. 1992. *Arikata ikikata shido no riron to jissen* [Theory and practice of guidance in ways of being and ways of living]. Tokyo: Shimizu Shoin.

Omura, Eisho. 1972. Asupireshon to anomi: Shakaiteki ido to itsudatsu kodo tono kanren nioite [Aspiration and anomie: In the relationship between social mobility and deviant behavior]. *Japanese Sociological Review* 23, no. 1:25-43.

Parsons, Frank. 1909. *Choosing a vocation*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Sakamoto, Akira. 1994. Shinro shido no riron to hoho [Career guidance theory and methods]. In *Seito shido no kenkyu* [Research into student guidance], ed. Tetsuo Takahashi, 108-18. Tokyo: Kyoiku Shuppan.

———. 1997. *Shinro shido no riron to jissen: Ikikata shido o shiza to shite* [Theory and practice of career guidance: As a viewpoint on guidance in ways of living]. Tokyo: Nakagawa Shoten.

Senzaki, Takeshi. 1988. Gakko dewa do jissen subekika [How career guidance should be practiced in schools]. In *Shinro shido wo manabu* [Studying career guidance], ed. Kihachi Fujimoto, Nobuo Nakanishi, and Tokio Takeuchi, 113-52. Tokyo: Yuhikaku.

———. 1991. Shinro shido no igi to riron [The significance and theory of career aguidance]. In *Seito shido, sodan no shinri to hoho* [The psychology and methods of student guidance and consultations], ed. Nobuo Nakanishi and Shin-ichi Jinbo, 69-89. Tokyo: Nihon Bunka Kagakusha.

Shibayama, Shigeo. 2003. Shokugyo (shinro) shido no rekishiteki tenbo [Historical perspectives on vocational (career) guidance]. In *Kyaria gaidansu: Shinro sentaku no shinri to shido* [Career guidance: Career selection psychology and guidance], ed. Shigeo Shibayama and Kazumi Komura, 133-56. Tokyo: Gakujutsu Tosho Shuppansha.

Super, Donald E. 1960. *Shokugyo seikatsu no shinrigaku* (The psychology of careers). *Trans.* Nihon Shokugyo Sido Gakkai. Tokyo: Seishin Shobo.

Takeuchi, Tokio. 1988. Shinro shido wo do susumeruka [How to conduct career guidance]. In *Shinro shido wo manabu* [Studying career guidance], ed. Kihachi Fujimoto, Nobuo Nakanishi, and Tokio Takeuchi, 27-61. Tokyo: Yuhikaku.

Tamura, Shojiro. 1986. *Ikikata pni semaru shinro shido* [Career guidance and the approach of ways of living]. Tokyo: Gyosei.

Tsukuda, Naoki. 1988. Shinro shido wo do kanagaeruka [How to consider career guidance]. In *Shinro shido wo manabu* [Studying career guidance], ed. Kihachi Fujimoto, Nobuo Nakanishi, and Tokio Takeuchi, 1-26. Tokyo: Yuhikaku.

Yoshida, Tatsuo. 2005. *Kyaria kyoikuron: Shinro shido kara kyaria kyoiku e* [Career education theory: From career guidance to career education]. Tokyo: Bunkendo.

Career Support in Universities

Mitsuko Uenishi
Hosei University

As increasing proportion of students continuing their education to university level, the mere fact of being a graduate no longer provides a significant advantage within the youth labor market. In addition, with job search activities becoming more individualized, complex, starting earlier and taking longer to complete, universities are increasingly required to provide career support. This was initially considered to be supporting students through job search activities, but more recently demands have been increasing for curricular and extra-curricular educational activities to provide integrated career support for students. As part of this, the contents of curriculum have also been called into question, with the relevance of current university education to work being particularly under scrutiny.

I. Background to the Calling into Question of Current University Career Support[1]

Currently, what kind of career education and support should be offered to students is being questioned at Japanese universities. In order to understand why university career support is being called into question at this time, it is necessary to look at two significant background changes that have taken place in post-graduation employment. These are firstly, the increasing proportion of students who continue their education to university level and the decreasing ratio of graduate employment, and secondly, the changes that have taken place in the process of university graduate recruitment in corporations. These changes have led to calls for improvements in the way that universities provide career support.

1. Increasing University Entry and Decreasing Graduate Employment Rates

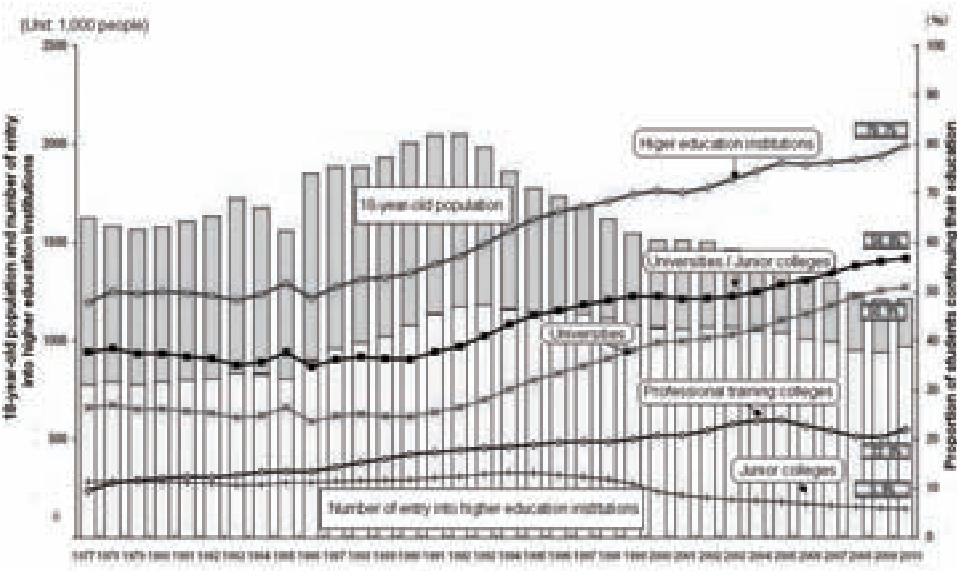
(1) Increasing University Entry

As shown in Figure 1, the proportion of students continuing education to university level[2] was steady between the late 1970s and around 1990 at 24% to 27%. This subse-

---

[1] This issue of the Journal *Japan Labor Review* relates to "career education," but it is important that curriculum is implemented in conjunction with extra-curricular programs implemented by staff organizations (excluding teaching staff) of the employment department/career center. It is usual to refer to both of these activities together "career support" and in this paper, in the main, the phrase "career support" is used.

[2] The proportion of students continuing education to university level shown in Figure 1 shows the proportion of students continuing education in each category of universities, junior colleges and professional training colleges to the 18-year-old proportion, including those students who graduated high school a year or more earlier. Using these figures means that the statistics include students who left high school but subsequently spent a period of time studying for entrance examinations before entering university. In fiscal 2007, 2.7% of university entrants were aged 25 or above, which is an extremely low proportion compared to other OECD countries (Central Education Council [2008, figure



Source: Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, *School Basic Survey*.

Figure 1. Trends in the Size of the 18-Year-Old Population and the Number and the Proportion of Entry into Higher Education Institutions

quently began to rise swiftly, exceeding 50% for the first time in spring 2009 (50.2%).

There are three factors influencing this rise in the proportion of students continuing to university. The first was an expansion in student capacity at universities. During the 1990s, the trend towards the easing of regulations led to the relaxation of criteria for university foundation, leading to various junior colleges converting into universities, and a range of new university establishments, creating greater capacity for student entry. The second factor was a sudden worsening in employment opportunities for high school graduates. Subsequent to the bursting of the economic bubble in 1991, the ratio of jobs to applications for high school graduates (as of end November in the third year of high school) dropped swiftly from its peak in 1992 of 3.3:1 to 1.74:1 in 1995, and subsequently maintained a low level of around 1:1 between 2000 and 2005. Alongside this, the number of high school graduates who neither continued education nor entered employment grew swiftly, and began to become a social problem. For this reason, families with even a small amount of spare economic capacity have begun to send their children to university, considering that being a university graduate would provide an advantage in recruitment, thereby strengthening the trend towards students continuing to higher education. The third reason is the decline in the size of the 18-year-old population, as can be seen in Figure 1.

1-9]).

(2) Reduction in University Selection Function

The fact that universities' student capacity has increased at the same time as the 18-year-old population is decreasing means that the competition to acquire students among private universities, which make up around 80% of all institutions, has become severe. Many private universities have increased the proportion of students they attract through admission office entrance or referred entry, rather than through academic subject testing, so that now fewer than half of students (48.6%) enter university via standard entrance examinations (Central Education Council [2008, figure 2-26]).

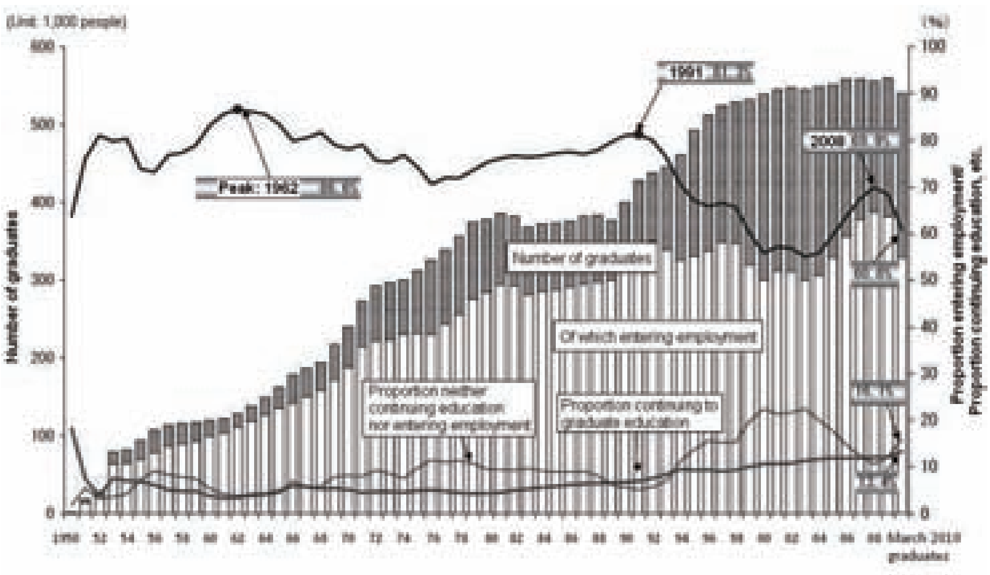
Standard entrance examinations at private universities have also reduced the number of test subjects. To sit general entrance for national and public universities, students are required to take first-stage tests in seven subjects, but conventionally, private universities only examine in three subjects, and an increasing number of universities and faculties now only examine in one or two subjects. Furthermore, in fiscal 2008, 47.1% of private universities (266 institutions) were under-enrolled, and in a certain number of universities where the number of students enrolled is significantly lower than the number of places available, it is true to say that the entrance tests are no longer playing a valid function in selecting students.

Conventionally, Japanese universities are said to be "difficult to enter, but easy to graduate from." The requirements for graduation may have been relatively relaxed, but the function of entrance tests to select students was highly effective. At present, however, other than a few top-level institutions, the situation has become one in which university is "easy to enter and easy to graduate from." This has led to a decreasing amount of study being done by high school students. According to research done by Motohisa Kaneko et. al., the time spent in studying by students at senior high school on weekdays during the autumn of their third year was, even in the case of those students who decided to continue their education to university level in March of their third year, reported as "up to 2 hours" by around half of them, which includes those studied "almost none" by around 20%. (Center for Research on University Management and Policy, Graduate School of Education, University of Tokyo 2007). As a result, universities are now accepting students who do not have enough basic academic abilities, and lack any desire to learn proactively.

(3) Reduced Rate of University Graduate Employment

This vicious spiral has also been reflected in the situation regarding recruitment and employment of university graduates (Figure 2). In a survey of students graduating in March 1990, in May of the same year (two months after graduation), 6.8% of students had carried on into graduate studies, 81.0% had found employment, and 5.6% had neither entered graduate studies nor found a job. The proportion of graduates finding employment fell drastically, however, to 55.0% by 2003, with 27.1% of students entering neither graduate education nor employment in the same year (including those entering temporary work).

Of course, the long-term period of recession following the bursting of the economic bubble, which caused a sudden decrease in job offers to graduates, is also a factor in the



Source: Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, *School Basic Survey*.
Note: "Neither continuing education nor entering employment" indicates those clearly not engaged either in continuing education (graduate school, professional training college or study overseas) nor entering employment, but rather living at home and helping with chores, etc. Of those people, figures for before 1987 include those who entered "temporary employment," and figures for before 2003 include those studying at "professional training college or overseas."

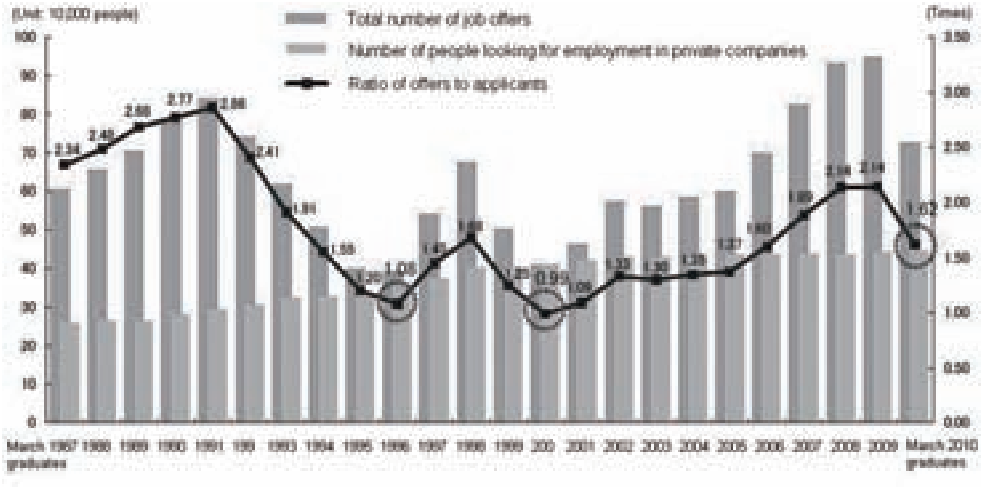
Figure 2. Progress by University Graduates

background to this decrease in employment rates (Figure 3). As seen in Figure 2, however, during this period, the actual number of university graduates who began employment did not decrease particularly significantly. A bird's-eye view of the situation shows that the increase in number of university graduates in the 1990s may have manifested itself almost entirely in the increased number of graduates neither "continuing education" nor "entering employment."

Subsequently, as seen in Figure 3, the number of job offers began to recover in the late 2000s, and as seen in Figure 2, the proportion of students engaged in neither education nor employment began to fall. The global economic recession beginning in 2008, however, resulted in a significant depression in the number of job offers for graduates in March 2010, and the employment status of graduates has taken another sudden turn for the worse. As a result of an increase in university graduates, the proportion of graduates entering employment has become far more sensitive to prevailing economic trends.

2. Changes to the Graduate Recruitment Process in Corporations

Next, let us take a look at the changes that have taken place in the graduate recruit-



Source: Recruit Works Institute, *The 26th Survey on Ratio of Offers to Applicants for University Students*, news release, April 13, 2009. http://c.recruit.jp/library/job/J20090413/docfile.pdf.

Figure 3. Total Number of Job Offers, Number of People Looking for Employment in Private Companies, and Ratio of Offers to Applicants, in Regard to University Students and Graduate Students Expected to Graduate the Following Spring

ment process in corporations. To summarize, these changes have resulted in a switch from a situation where universities and corporations had a semi-institutional linkages that provided strong and comparatively stable matching, to one in which students are uncertain and confused as they engage with a longer-term job search activities without any firm prospects for the future.

(1) The Semi-Institutional Linkages between Universities and Corporations

Until the 1970s, a proportion of graduate recruitment was covered by corporations that recruited only from their preferred universities (the “reserved university”) (Kariya and Honda 2010). Subsequent to this, the reserved university system for the recruitment of science graduates remained in place, but it became standard for universities not to contribute in a systematic way to job search activities by arts and humanities students, but rather let students and corporations engage in recruitment and job search activities in a freer way (“open recruitment”).

Despite this, at the start of the 1990s, there were, in fact, a significant number of semi-institutional linkages between universities and corporations. An “information gap” existed, where recruitment information was sent only to students of their preferred universities (Toyoda 2007), and a system known as “Visit to Alumni,” whereby current students visited their university graduates prior to recruitment selection processes and initiated informal contact, effectively played the function of connecting students of designated universities (particularly top-level institutions) with designated corporations (Kariya and Honda 2010).

The fact that only students at relatively high-level universities had the opportunity to be recruited by top-level corporations presented some restrictions to individual students, but it is possible to think that the system has had the merit of facilitating relatively stable matching, allowing students who had been admitted to universities with high selection standards to be recruited by equivalent companies. With the growth of the Internet, however, in the late 1990s, "open recruitment" became more common, leading to greater individualization, but also greater instability.

(2) Increasingly Individualized, Complex and Long-Term Job Search Activities from 3rd Year Onwards

Nowadays, university students gradually begin activities related to job search from around the June of their third year. In June, internet sites that support third-year students in finding employment "pre-open," and begin to distribute information about companies that offer summer vacation internships.[3] In October, the Internet employment support websites open fully. There are three or four major sites, and it appears quite difficult to proceed subsequently with job search activities if a student does not register with one or more of these sites.

Students register their personal information on these sites, and can then search through companies wishing to hire university graduates. If they find a company in which they are interested, they can implement "entry" procedures, which notify the company in question of their interest. From the autumn of their third year, the companies hold corporation or industry explanatory meetings either at the university or at their offices. Subsequently, students select companies by which they wish to be screened, and from around December onwards during their third year, they begin submitting their entry sheets and résumés. If they pass the selection process involving entry sheets and résumés, they will next undertake written tests and be interviewed. Most interviews with major companies take place between March of the third year and April—June of the fourth year in several stages. Students who do not achieve a formal appointment during this time continue their job search during the summer holidays and from the autumn onwards.

In this way, if the internship in the summer vacation of the third year is included, stu-

3 Internships began to be widely used in Japan at the end of the 1990s, but most of the internships on offer are not long-term internships to which the university contributes, which are linked to a student's faculty education. Rather, these internships are provided independently by corporations, and range from a few days to a week, or for only one day in some cases. The contents of internships are also less geared to allowing students to experience actual work, and in many cases consist more of implementing mock proposals, undertaking various miscellaneous tasks and visiting different departments. For students, even this type of internship, which is perhaps lacking in content, appears to offer advantages in job search, and most of them will try quite hard to experience some sort of internship.

dents' job search activities nowadays begin in the early stages of the specialist study period of a university course, and continue over a long period of time, taking between a year to a year and a half.[4]

The increasing use of the Internet has led to increasing levels of recruitment information from companies that students can access individually. It is extremely difficult, however, for students to determine which company they might like to work for, or by whom they may have the possibility of being employed, from that information. As a result, many students end up spending a large amount of time and effort in trying to make sense of their own job search.

At the same time as these processes become more complex and start to take place over a longer period, students are also increasingly required to implement them individually. Some corporations still implement company explanation meetings within universities, but students can also engage with individual companies through applying to explanation meetings, internet "entry," submitting entry sheets and résumés, taking written tests or interviews, etc. For this reason, students are required to be highly proactive and have decision-making skills in a range of areas, in order to understand what industry or company they should apply to, how many companies they should engage in job search activities with, and how to balance job search activities with their university studies, etc.

(3) Recruitment Screening in Which Screening Criteria Are Unclear

Often, students are not sure what is required during screening processes, such as in document screening via entry sheets and résumés, written tests or interviews, etc., as information relating to what they majored in, at what university is not clearly cited as an important part of the evaluation process. The selection criteria are often very difficult for them to understand. When applying to the screening process, students of the arts and humanities are not restricted by clear limits on what university they belong to and what they majored in the first place. Nevertheless, it appears that many companies merely implement first-stage screening by looking at the name of the university during entry sheet screening. Since this process happens behind closed doors, most applicants who do not make it through the entry sheet screening process never find out whether they were rejected because screening was

---

[4] Around 1990, there existed "recruitment agreements," which detailed the schedule for employment selection, between universities and corporations. According to these, students would begin to visit companies from August 20 in their fourth year, and from November 1, the companies were able to make formal appointments. In many cases, however, these "Recruitment agreements" were not abided by, and many companies in fact offered formal appointments to students at an earlier stage, leading to Keidanren, the leading integrated economic organization in Japan, to abolish the system in 1997. Subsequently, from 2004, Keidanren proposed an "Ethical constitution," aiming to introduce order to the recruitment process for newly graduating students, calling for it to be widely adopted by member corporations. The "Ethical constitution" published in October 2009 stipulates that no "interviews or other actual screening activities" are to be implemented during a student's third year. In fact, however, many companies that have signed up to the "Ethical constitution" still accept entry sheets and implement written tests, in order to select students for interview, during the third year.

done based on the name of their university or their major, or because the contents of their entry sheet were not evaluated highly enough.

In some cases, the questions asked on the entry sheet relate to areas such as "things you worked hard at while a student," "your strengths and weaknesses," "the reason you are applying to this company," and other issues, and nothing is asked relating to "the theme of your seminar class[5] and research." Many students tend to enter their experience in part-time jobs and club or group activities,[6] rather than in their studies, to questions relating to areas in which they have worked hard while in university, trying to show their "communication skills" and "independence," which corporations expect from them.

Other than for a small number of industries, such as the publishing industry, written tests tend not to be examining specialist knowledge required for the type or sector of work, but rather be weighted towards numerical problems examining a student's theoretical reasoning skills and/or calculation skills, reading comprehension skills or general knowledge, or (depending on the company) his or her English ability. In most cases, they do not test the knowledge a student has acquired from his or her major, but rather examine his or her basic academic abilities. They are often accompanied by personality tests.

At interview, students will be questioned on their motivation, and in addition, on the activities they focused on as students, and how they engaged with such activities. There is no particular restriction placed on the type of activity discussed. Regardless of the activity, students will be asked whether they engaged in it proactively, what role they played, what they thought about different aspects of the activity, and what efforts they made in regard to it. It is said that the company will try to assess a student's competency through these questions.

In this way, companies do not clearly state that their screening criteria include the university where students studied or their major, or even what they learned, but rather what sort of person they are, through a process of evaluating the whole person before making recruitment decisions. For this reason, while companies do include written tests, students do not see these as particularly assessing them on their academic abilities or specialism, and there is a tendency to try to "play" the sort of person the student imagines a company wishes to hire, both in written submissions and at interview. In general, the sort of person a company is looking to hire is someone proactive and positive with high levels of communication skills. Some companies also emphasize theoretical reasoning skills, but many com-

[5] The university seminar classes in Japan begin in a student's third year (second year in some universities). Most students belong to a seminar class operated by one particular member of the faculty, and the class involves proactive research by the students based on the specializations of that faculty member. In some universities/departments, seminar classes may be restricted in numbers and therefore only a proportion of students may belong to certain seminar class.

[6] "Club" activities are official university groups, mainly based on sport, while "group" activities may include sports, cultural activities, volunteer activities, or activities designed to promote the social lives of students. "Group" activities may be officially approved by the university and in receipt of support for their activities, or they may be unofficial groups.

panies do not state clearly that this is important. In terms of the specialist knowledge required of students of arts and humanities, many companies state that "none is required, since we will train them once they enter the company."

If students try to perform in interview in such a way as to align themselves with the type of person they think the company wishes to hire, however, this can lead to the contents of the interview being very unoriginal. Many students find themselves discussing the aspects of their part-time work, club or group activities that emphasize how proactive and positive they are, or how they have communication skills. Manuals have even been published, which explain how to talk in this way. Despite the fact that the contents of their interviews are similar, one student may be dropped while another may progress to the next stage of the screening process. Students often struggle to understand where the difference between these two results lies. For this reason, many students become confused by fragmented information relating to what techniques may allow them to pass the interview. Since students who fail at the interview level are not told the reason why they did not succeed, it is difficult for them to learn from their failure, and they often lose confidence, since they feel that their personality has been rejected in a process that focuses mainly on personality.

(4) Students at the Mercy of Job Search

Since the screening process is unclear to students, they often fear that they may end up with no formal appointments of employment, and as a result, become engaged in job search activities from an earlier point and over more time. Students are also applying to more and more companies for screening. As a result, they enter screening processes without spending sufficient time in researching either industries or companies, resulting in them either failing the screening process or being concerned that the company they are accepted by may not be the company they wanted to work for. On the other hand, as the job search process becomes more complicated, some students find it impossible to get going, and some give up at the early stages.

The extent to which the job search process has become so stressful is increasingly being identified as a problem. In 2008, a book was published under the title "*Shukatsu no Bakayaro* (stupid job search)" (Ishiwatari and Osawa 2008). It became a bestseller, and was widely read by many students. The title perfectly expressed the honest feeling that many students had about the stresses of the job search activities, and its subtitle ("The farce played out by companies, universities and students") expressed the distortion of the current job search/recruitment activities situation.

II. Measures by Universities to Support Student Careers

1. Switching over from Job Search Support to Career Support

(1) Measures by Universities That Are "Good at Employment"

Finally, we are ready to discuss career support offered at universities. As stated above, the proportion of students continuing into further education is increasing, and the mere fact of being a graduate no longer provides a significant advantage within the youth labor market. Job search has become more complicated, it begins earlier and takes longer, and this means that there is a strong possibility that without career support from the university, many students may not be able to reach a formal appointment. In addition, since the bursting of the economic bubble, with employment restrictions in place with many companies, the reality is that there is now a significantly reduced rate of graduate employment.

Against this background, at the start of the 21st century, high school students and their parents began to look to universities that were "good at employment," in other words those universities that posted good graduate employment figures. Many universities also began activities to position themselves as "good at employment," seeing it as a way to survive the competition. So what makes a university "good at employment"?

The first thing that many universities have done is to introduce support activities that assist with the job search itself, such as giving guidance on writing entry sheets and taking interviews, offering individual guidance, creating and strengthening networks with alumni, corporations and the university, putting together internship and various other job search support programs, supplying information regarding job offers, implementing job search guidance over a number of sessions, etc.

As noted above, however, due to the individualization and complexity of, early start to and long time spent in job search, universities have also identified a need to support students in becoming engaged in the job search process itself. For this reason, some universities have begun implementing aptitude testing as early as in the first year, in order to consider what sort of job each student is suited to, and encouraging students to think about work from their first year, through implementing programs under which human resources managers and young employees from corporations come to speak to students. Effectively this means that they are implementing "career support" from the first year onwards, not just "job search support" from the third year.

(2) The Role of the Career Center, and the Issue of Cooperation with Teaching Staff

In many cases, the measures introduced by universities to become "good at employment" have included a staff organization known as the "career center." Career centers are a restructured version of the "employment department" that has conventionally been found in most private universities.

Ritsumeikan University, which is a prestigious private university in the Kansai region, restructured its employment department into a career center in November 1999. It was the first high-level university to implement these changes, and many other universities followed suit, changing their employment departments into career centers.

In this way, many universities sought to become "good at employment" through the leadership of their career center, but encountered the problem of it being extremely difficult to implement changes to the curriculum, due to the fact that it required the agreement of the faculty council. The career center may implement its own independent programs, but this support will not reach the students unless they make their own way to the career center, and for this reason, an increasing number of universities have now begun programs in which career support has been introduced to the curriculum. These include programs inviting human resources managers and young employees from companies as guests, to assist students in thinking specifically about the issues relating to work, programs that seek to assist young people who will begin work in the future to understand the changes that are occurring in society, such as globalization, diversification of employment formats, etc., and practical programs that improve communication skills through group work, as well as internships that allow students to gain credits. Even if these programs are, however, implemented as part of curricular education, they will still tend to exist as something of an “enclave” within the formal curriculum structure of the major subject implementing them, under the category of “career education courses,” and since many of the classes are taught by external specialists, or by full-time teaching staff with a limited range, they tend not to link enough to the rest of the formal curriculum. In many cases, this has resulted in teaching staff in the rest of the department paying scant attention to what is being taught.

Here, I should like to introduce some data that allows us to consider this situation. In November 2005, the Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO) implemented a “Survey into the state of student lifestyle support by universities” (JASSO 2006). According to this survey, whilst more than 70% of universities were implementing some sort of career support, only 41.4% of universities responded “Implementing systematically” when asked “Are you systematically implementing measures to support employment and career formation?”

Furthermore, when the author of this paper implemented a survey in March 2006 in regard to career support managers for higher education institutions, despite the fact that 85.1% of institutions responded that “It is desirable for elements of career support and career education to be integrated with the education offered in the major subject,” only 47.5% responded that “Full-time teaching staff are proactively contributing to career support/career education.”

2. Toward Integrated Career Support

(1) Progressive Measures toward Integrated Career Support

As seen above, university career support has been led by efforts by career centers, which are staff organizations, and has not reached a state of being able to support student career activities throughout the whole curricular and extra-curricular programs. It is not as if the need for integrated support had not been pointed out. In 2006, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) defined “promotion of practical, integrated career education” as one of the themes of its “Support Program for Contemporary Educational Needs (Contemporary Good Practice),” and MEXT is now engaged in a promotional strategy whereby universities that engage in excellent measures are selectively awarded subsidies. In many universities, however, it is a fact that involving the faculty and establishing the integrated career support cooperated with curriculum content have proved difficult.

Within this, however, there are some examples of situations in which the staff have been strong enough to influence the faculty in order to ensure the inclusion of career support elements in curriculum. One representative of this movement is the aforementioned Ritsumeikan University, which took the lead in restructuring its employment department into a career center, and where career education courses developed by the career center were included in curriculum as early as 2000. Subsequently, students at Ritsumeikan have been encouraged to think about their own career paths from their first year, and career education courses have been gradually included into curriculum in order to improve their motivation to learn (Uenishi 2007).

Furthermore, the private Kyoto Sangyo University has been noted for its cooperative education measures, which involve the formation of an internship system as part of the curriculum. This program, which received a subsidy from MEXT in fiscal 2004 as part of the "Support Program for Contemporary Educational Needs," puts their students in small-group career-related lesson programs from their first year onwards, as well as ensuring their participation in internships each year, resulting in the implementation of a sandwich-style program of education that involves coordinated on-campus educational programs and off-campus corporate and organizational internships.

(2) Strengthening of Demand for Integrated Career Support

More recently, MEXT has strengthened its demands on universities to provide integrated career support. The criteria for university establishment was changed in February 2010 (to be enforced from April 1, 2011 onwards) requiring all universities to include "Guidance etc. relating to Social and Vocational Independence (Career Guidance)" both within and outside their educational courses. Furthermore, applications were invited in April 2010 for a subsidy program entitled "Support for University Programs Developing Employment Skills of University Students," demanding universities to proactively get engaged in measures, both within and outside of the curriculum, which facilitate students in developing their employability that assists them to social and vocational independence.

Subsequent to these demands, it appears that various universities are beginning to engage in a range of trial measures.

3. Curriculum Called into Question

(1) Developing Versatile Basic Abilities

These trial measures, however, have raised the question of what and how students should learn as a part of their university education.

The area on which various stakeholders are agreed is that students should learn "versatile basic abilities." In relation to this point, MEXT's advisory agency, the Central Education Council (2008) defined in December 2008 some reference indicators for the "academic ability" required to obtain a bachelor's degree, which should be developed in all major courses focusing on learning outcomes. These were (i) knowledge/understanding, (ii) versatile skills, (iii) attitudes/orientation, (iv) integrated learning experiences and comprehensive reasoning skills. The versatile skills required included i) communication skills, ii) quantitative skills, iii) information literacy, iv) theoretical reasoning skills, and v) problem solving abilities. The "attitudes/orientation" required included i) self-management, ii) teamwork and leadership, iii) ethical perspective, iv) social responsibility as a citizen, and v) ability to engage in lifelong learning.

The need for students to acquire these "learning outcomes" is unlikely to be disputed by anyone. The problem, however, is how to engage students in the process of acquiring such "learning outcomes."

(2) The Difficulty of Motivating Students to Acquire Versatile Basic Abilities

As stated in I above, many universities in Japan currently exist in a state of being "easy to enter and easy to graduate from." In this situation, outside of a certain number of top-level institutions, it appears to be easy to find students who may attend lectures, but have no real involvement in autonomous study. Motohisa Kaneko and his fellow researchers implemented surveys of university students, which showed that while attendance at lectures averaged 87.4%, more than 60% of students reported that they had "no interest or engagement with the lessons being taught," and that 70% of students considered that the statement "I attend lectures after implementing the required preparation or revision" either "did not apply at all" or "did not particularly apply" to them. Furthermore, 40% of students reported that they spent "0 hours" per week on study that "has no direct relationship to lectures" during the school term (Center for Research on University Management and Policy, Graduate School of Education, University of Tokyo 2008).

Detailed guidance will be necessary for such students before they will be able to acquire the "learning outcomes" described above. Many universities have implemented their education via large-group lecture-style lessons, based on an assumption that students are self-motivated to study. The reality is that this system has continued to create graduates that leave university without ever achieving the "learning outcomes" above. These students are highly unlikely to achieve results in their job search. From the perspective of career support, therefore, they require not only job search support, but also support in acquiring basic academic skills.

(3) Measures Taken at Various Universities

This sort of learning support can take many forms. Universities that are "good at employment," such as the private Kanazawa Institute of Technology, implement academic abilities testing of students on entry, and where students do not demonstrate sufficient ability to undertake specialist education in areas such as mathematics, physics, chemistry, etc., they are required to take lessons in basic mathematics. The institution also provides individual teaching, group guidance and e-learning systems, in order to ensure that individual students gain the basic academic abilities they require.

Some universities are providing training at even more basic levels. At the Kansai-based private university to which Igami (2010) is affiliated, many students enter the university lacking basic techniques and abilities for study, and student opinions of university lectures includes honest expressions of lack of interest, describing teaching as “boring” and “meaningless.” In general, many teaching staff merely complain about the attitude of students, but Igami and his colleagues are engaged in measures to correct the problems these students face, so as to ensure that they gain basic academic abilities they are lacking from primary education such as the concept of proportion, and that they establish good learning habits.

In other examples, one university has full-time teaching staff who teach first year students compulsory practical courses in small groups to ensure that students learn how to write reports, and another offers support for students acquiring official vocational qualifications as a method of ensuring they acquire learning habits and self-confidence. In another example, a university uses an information system to ascertain the individual learning status of students from their first year, in order to prevent students from dropping out or having to retake a year, and encourage systematic learning.

Of course, universities that only take students with higher levels of academic achievement are also engaging in practical programs, such as project-based learning that aims to contribute to specific regional problems, or research themes in collaboration with corporations, which they anticipate will give good “learning outcomes.” However, I should like to stress here that many universities are engaged not in highly progressive activities of this sort, but rather in much more gradual measures.

Furthermore, it is also important to draw attention to the fact that it is not always easy to engage students in such gradual measures. This is because, as mentioned in I-2-(3) above, many companies do not assess the actual study engaged in at university by students when recruiting, and that students feel that “even if they work hard at studying, this will not be appreciated in the process of recruitment selection.” Additionally, as stated in I-2-(2) above, the increased complexity, early start and long duration of job search means that many students unavoidably spend a large proportion of their time in job search, and that once they become third year students, they quickly start to prioritize job search over and above study. It can be assumed that many companies do in fact include “academic achievement” as part of their evaluation of the “integrated whole person,” but this in itself is too uncertain an objective to motivate students towards extending their abilities.

For this reason, some universities are now trying to guarantee an improvement in student abilities through making certain things obligatory, such as defining remedial education and basic education for academic skills as compulsory courses, or dictating that students who do not achieve a certain level of score in either TOEIC or TOEFL will not be able to move into the next academic year. At Hitotsubashi University, one of Japan’s highest ranking national universities, students who enter after April 2010 are required to achieve a minimum GPA as part of the condition of their graduation. Up until recently, students were able to graduate from Japanese universities merely by achieving the required number of credits, even if the results achieved to gain those credits were barely acceptable, but this becomes impossible in cases where a particular GPA is required for graduation. It remains to be seen whether other universities begin to adopt this same system.

(4) “Flexpeciality”

In addition to “versatile basic abilities,” should faculty education have more relevance to work? This topic is attracting attention as a significant area of discussion, but it appears to the author that no agreement has yet been reached among stakeholders.

Conventionally, with the exception of teacher training departments, it appears that arts and humanities departments at Japanese universities paid scant attention to the issue of providing an education that would equip students for a career in a designated sector of employment. This was partly due to the fact that many teaching staff were out of touch with business trends, but it was also to do with the fact that corporations hired new graduates with little or no attention to the specialist knowledge they possessed, and without restricting them to a particular post, subsequently engaging them in both on-the-job and off-the-job training that enabled them to acquire the required skills. Companies that would require a level of specialist knowledge from science graduates simply did not look for this among arts and humanities graduates. This situation has hardly changed today.

As stated above, however, since it is no longer possible to ignore the proportion of students who graduate from university without being engaged as full employees of a company, it appears unrealistic for universities to only count on post-employment training from the view point of ensuring students’ interests. This highlights the issue of the relevance of education to work.

Yuki Honda is a leading figure in this debate. Stating that Japanese education is extremely lacking in vocational relevance when viewed from an international perspective, she coins the term “flexpeciality” (a combination of the words “flexible” and “speciality”), and states that this ought to be taught to students as part of their educational courses (Honda 2009). “Flexpeciality” is a specialism that is studied in order to act as a stepping-stone to broader related areas, and Honda states that such specialities are those that enable people to keep up with the changes in society. She recommends “flexpeciality” not only as a hedging of risk against the possibility of not being engaged as a full employee, but also as a means of protecting oneself against the trend in society that requires “versatile basic abilities” and excessive pressures of the recruitment screening process that evaluates the “whole person.” While she accepts that communication skills and versatile basic abilities will be required in order to survive in the future, she criticizes current career education, which she says does not provide direction or indicators for how to acquire these abilities.

These opinions of Honda’s are becoming more and more influential, and as its name suggests, the Central Education Council's "Career Education/Vocational Education Special Working Group," which was formed in December 2008 being consulted by MEXT, began to look seriously at the theme of "vocational education." Commissioned by MEXT, the Science Council of Japan also carried out a "Study of Quality Assurance by Sector of University Education,"[7] the results of which (Science Council of Japan 2010) showed that there is currently no functioning link between universities and work, and that there is a need for this link to be recovered through improving the relevance of university education to work.

However, the concept of "flexpeciality" of this type and the current emphasis on vocational education, have so far been met with a cool reception within industry, and the future of this movement is unclear.

(5) "Application" and "Resistance"

Another notable aspect of university career support is the need for students to learn the basic knowledge to protect themselves at work while still in school, such as gaining knowledge of labor law and labor unions. Honda (2009) states that, in order to be prepared for the world of work, students need to be taught both methods to "apply themselves" and methods to "resist." "Flexpeciality" is a method for applying oneself, while basic knowledge of labor law provides a method for resistance when, for example, unreasonable demands are placed upon one at work. Nowadays many people encounter serious problems in the workplace, such as long working hours, unpaid overtime, unjust layoffs, mental imbalance such as depression, etc., and the issue of "black companies," who force employees into indecent work practices, is also recognized as a social problem. Many young people, however, do not know what is illegal or unreasonable, and how to respond if they are placed in such a situation, because they have entered labor market with insufficient knowledge to deal with these situations.

It would be difficult to say that university education has undertaken to provide training for "resistance." As Igami (2010) states, however, there are some examples appearing where universities have begun to implement labor education as part of their career education programs.

III. Conclusions

This paper introduced the situation surrounding university career support. A brief summary of the main discussion points is as below.

As increasing proportion of students choose to continue their education to university, the mere fact of being a graduate no longer provides a significant advantage within the

[7] The committee who met to consider this issue was made up mainly of university researchers, with Yuki Honda playing a central leading role as director.

youth labor market. In addition, with job search becoming more individualized, complex, starting earlier and taking longer to complete, universities are increasingly required to provide career support. This was initially considered to be supporting students through job search, but more recently demands have been increasing for curricular and extra-curricular educational activities to provide integrated career support for students. As part of this, the contents of curriculum have also been called into question, with the relevance of current university education to work being particularly under scrutiny. It could be said that universities are being called to answer the question of what exactly their significance is for young people in the first place.

While it is still unclear just how Japanese employment practices and human resources development will change in the future, it is not at all simple for universities and their staff to provide the answers to these questions. The problems of current job search and recruitment screening are currently shared broadly between universities, students and corporations, however, and it may be that this is increasing momentum for universities and corporations to work together in considering the role of universities, and recruitment methods.

References

Center for Research on University Management and Policy, Graduate School of Education, University of Tokyo. 2007. *Kokosei no shinro tsuiseki chosa, dai-ichi-ji hokokusho* [Survey following the career path of high school students: First report]. Compiled and issued by CRUMP, Graduate School of Education, University of Tokyo in September 2007. http://ump.p.u-tokyo.ac.jp/crump/resource/crumphsts.pdf (accessed November 30, 2010).

———. 2008. *Zenkoku daigakusei chosha, dai-ichi-ji hokokusho* [Nationwide survey of university students: First report]. Compiled and issued by CRUMP, Graduate School of Education, University of Tokyo in May 2008. http://ump.p.u-tokyo.ac.jp/crump/resource/ccs%20report1.pdf (accessed November 30, 2010).

Central Education Council. 2008. Gakushi katei kyoiku no kochiku ni mukete (toshin) [Toward the creation of bachelor education (report)]. Compiled and issued by Central Education Council, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology on December 24, 2008. http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/shingi/chukyo/chukyo0/toushin/1217067.htm (accessed November 30, 2010).

Honda, Yuki. 2009. *Kyoiku no shokugyoteki igi* [The vocational relevance of education]. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo.

Igami, Ko. 2010. Non erito daigakusei ni tsutaerubeki koto [What do we have to tell to non-elite university students?]. *The Japanese Journal of Labour Studies* 52, no. 9:27-38.

Ishiwatari, Reiji, and Hitoshi Osawa. 2008. *Shukatsu no bakayaro* [Stupid job search]. Tokyo: Kobunsha.

Japan Student Services Organization. 2006. Daigakuto ni okeru gakusei seikatu shien no jittai chosa [Survey on the state of student lifestyle support by universities]. Compiled and issued by Japan Student Services Organization on June 30, 2006. http://www.g-shiendb.jasso.go.jp/gsdb/main/tmp/contents/ab00141.html (accessed November 30, 2010).

Kariya, Takehiko, and Yuki Honda, eds. 2010. *Daisotsu shushoku no shakaigaku* [The sociology of graduate employment]. Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press.

Science Council of Japan. 2010. Kaito: Daigaku kyoiku no bunyabetsu shitsuhosho no arikata ni tsuite [Reply: Study of quality assurance by sector of university education]. Compiled and issued by the exploratory committee of Science Council of Japan on July 22, 2010. http://www.scj.go.jp/ja/info/kohyo/pdf/kohyo-21-k100-1.pdf (accessed November 30, 2010).

Toyoda, Yoshihiro. 2007. "*Rikunabi*" no tojo ga shinsotsu shijo ni motarashita hikari to kage [Light and shade brought to the new graduate market by the arrival of *Rikunavi* or recruitment information websites]. *The Japanese Journal of Labour Studies* 49, no. 4:62-64.

Uenishi, Mitsuko. 2007. Daigaku ni okeru kyaria shien: Sono doko [Trends in university career support]. In *Daigaku no kyaria shien* [University career support], ed. Mitsuko Uenishi, ch. 1. Tokyo: Keiei Shoin.

Working as an Independent Contractor in Japan and the U.S.: Is It a Good Option for Married Women with Young Children?*

Yanfei Zhou

The Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training

This research focuses on married women with children, and asks whether independent contract work, which is known as offering freedom and flexibility, is really an attractive option for such women, through a comparison of data from Japan and the U.S. The analysis results show that in both Japan and the U.S., women are more likely to be employed in independent contract work if they have children under the age of six, and that the greater the number of children they have the more likely they are to be employed as independent contractors. This indicates that it is an employment format that offers future opportunities when considered from the perspective of work-life balance. On the other hand, regular employees earn 1.5 times (in the U.S.) to 2.3 times (in Japan) the income of independent contractors, and the benefits and working conditions for independent contractors are poor. Furthermore, the probability of independent contractors falling into a situation where they are working for low pay or long hours is higher than regular employees by 17.1% points and 16.2% points, respectively, in the U.S., and by 47.1% points and 30.0% points, respectively, in Japan. This research established that independent contractors in Japan are particularly at risk of falling into "bad jobs" when compared to those in regular employment. This difference in benefits, etc., when compared with regular employees, can be partially accounted for by individual differences in educational attainment, social experience, residential area, etc., as well as individual preferences, but there is a significant proportion that remains unexplained by these factors.

I. Introduction

"Independent contract work" is a type of employment that has recently been gaining significant attention in Japan. The term describes a self-employed person who enters into an outsourcing contract with a company, enabling them to work at their own discretion. An independent contract represents what has conventionally been known not as "employment," but rather, as a type of "self-employment." However, the traditional occupations in which self-employed people may have worked in the past—individually run stores and restaurants—have been decreasing, and are being replaced by industries such as publishing, advertising, and computer-related professions, which conventionally had far larger proportions of regular employees.

* This paper was originally authored by Zhou in 2010, but has been partially added to and edited. Helpful comments were received from Yutaka Asao, Toshiyuki Kugotani, Atsushi Sato, Kazuya Ogura, and James Raymo, as well as participants in the JILPT Workshops. This note is to thank these people. This paper is presented under the responsibility of the author, and does not represent the views of the Institute to which the author is affiliated.

In Japan, people working based on independent contracts still represent a small proportion of the overall workforce, but this proportion is growing year by year. Research by Yamada (2007) is an example of research that has collected macro-level data on independent contract employment. Yamada used the National Census to calculate the number of "unemployed self-employed people" in industries considered to have a large proportion of independent contractors. This figure totaled 1.141 million people (1.8% of the total workforce) in 2005, which was an 80% increase over the 2000 figure of 633,000 people.

In the U.S., on the other hand, independent contract work is significantly more common than in Japan, and has become a more typical form of non-standard employment than working via an agency or as a contracted employee. According to a Supplemental Survey done as part of the Current Population Survey (CPS) by the U.S. Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), as of February 2005 there were an estimated 10.34 million independent contractors in the U.S., representing a total of 7.4% of all workers (while, incidentally, employees hired through staffing agencies comprised no more than 0.9%). This indicates that out of all those employed in outsourcing,[1] approximately 70% are working under independent contracts. Furthermore, independent contracts cover around 60% of all self-employed people, making them a bigger presence than the conventional self-employment trades such as individual store owners (BLS 2005).

While the prevalence of independent contract work differs, the reasons behind people choosing to work as independent contractors are similar in both Japan and the U.S.: freedom and flexibility. As the name suggests, independent contracts allow individuals to undertake a contract that allows them to work in a location of their choosing during hours that can be set at their own discretion, as well as allowing them to specify their own work methods. This is attractive to many. The U.S. CPS Supplemental Survey, for example, includes a question category asking "What was your reason for selecting your current job?" to which 27.9% of independent contractors responded "[Because it allowed me to have] job freedom." Combined with the two additional responses "Because I prefer to work without being formally employed" (33.4%) and "For personal or family reasons" (9.9%), more than 70% of independent contractors in the U.S. indicated freedom or flexibility in their jobs as their reason for selecting this format. In Japan, a Survey of Attitudes towards Work Styles implemented in 2004 by the Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training (JILPT) asked similar questions, which, while it did not produce such high figures as in the U.S., demonstrated that nearly 30% of independent contractors gave "job freedom" as their reason for choosing this work style.

The image of an independent contractor that is naturally conjured up from these statistics is someone who requires freedom and flexibility in their work style. People with family members who require nursing care, for example, or those with disabilities, as well as

[1] "Outsourcing" is the term used to describe independent contracts, temporary employment, the work of employees hired through staffing agencies and contract employees. According to DiNitale (2001), these styles of work are referred to as "alternative work arrangements."

women raising children, need to ensure a work-life balance (WLB), and presumably prefer a more flexible style of working. In Japan, these categories of people have conventionally found it difficult to become employed, or have had to work for very low wages, and have been the subject of policy support aimed at people at a disadvantage in employment. In the future, however, as work based on independent contracts becomes a more normalized job format, such people will find they have greater opportunities of employment, and as a result, they may find they have the ability to escape being the focus of policy support. Therefore, promoting policies that encourage the greater application of independent contract work could kill two birds with one stone, having the effect of solving the shortages within the labor force, while at the same time releasing people from their employment disadvantage.

There is an urgent need to verify whether or not desirable and positive employment opportunities are being provided for independent contractors. Given the premise that if all other conditions are equal, independent contracts are being selected by people with a high degree of need for a WLB, then such people (those with a high degree of need for WLB) will be seen in the data to represent a higher proportion of independent contractors than average workers (the "employment ratio hypothesis"). Furthermore, it should be possible to observe that the benefits and working conditions of contracted employment are no worse than conventional employment formats, and that such contracted workers are not working in "bad jobs" (the "non-bad job hypothesis"). "Benefits" and "working conditions" as used here indicate both income and health insurance and other benefits, but job satisfaction and whether or not a worker works long hours are also considered to be indirect indicators.

This research focuses on married women with children, a group that is considered as having a particularly high level of need for WLB, and implements analysis to establish whether the two theories above are supported by statistics. The issues being considered through this analysis include whether or not independent contract employment is actually allowing women in this category to genuinely achieve WLB or not, and whether it appears to offer future opportunities. The objective of the analysis is to establish whether women select independent contract work purely out of a sense of choice, or whether in fact they are unavoidably trading WLB for poor benefits and conditions.

Few surveys have been done either in Japan or the U.S. on independent contractors, but in the course of this research the author was able to make use of indicators from two comparable representative surveys, in the form of the CPS February Supplemental Survey (U.S. Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics) and the Integrated Survey into Japanese Working Practices (JILPT). The former is a large-scale national survey of the state of workers in non-typical employment formats (including independent contractors) and fixed-term employment, while the latter was also a national-level survey of the state of workers in a range of employment formats, including independent contractors. Furthermore, since both surveys were implemented in 2005, they facilitate a comparison of Japan and the U.S. at a similar point in time.

This research has three particular features compared to existing research. The first is that it includes an aspect of comparison between Japan and the U.S. Through comparing the structures of independent contract work for married women with children in two different economic environments, the unique features of independent contract work in the two countries, as well as the future potential and issues for independent contract work in Japan, can be identified. The second is that it brings together frameworks for comparative research between Japan and the U.S. (in terms of scope and implementation methods, etc.). Previous research in Japan and the U.S. has often produced differing results, but it has been impossible to tell whether this was due to the difference in the scopes of their research or their verification methods, or just due to the difference between Japan and the U.S. Unifying the research framework is thought to allow the differentiation of these issues. The third unique feature is that this research focuses on married women who are currently raising children, a particularly significant group in terms of social policy from the viewpoint of addressing declining birth rates and promoting gender equality.

II. Previous Research

As indicated by Yamada (2007), independent contracts are considered an attractive form of work for people wanting to balance their work and aspects of their home lives, such as raising children. Since independent contracts involve commissions from companies to undertake specific tasks, they should give workers a high level of discretion to select when, where, and how the job is done. Further examination is needed, however, to see if this is actually the case.

In fact, other than Zhou (2006), almost no verification has been carried out on the "employment ratio hypothesis," focusing on independent contract work, either in Japan or in the U.S. Zhou (2006) implemented an empirical analysis on Japanese independent contract work, which demonstrated that the attributes of being female, having children, and being married were not, in fact, raising the proportion of those selecting independent contract work.

At the same time, in the U.S., significant quantities of verification analysis have been carried out regarding the relationship between women's WLB and broadly-defined self-employment, although this is not restricted to independent contract work, and a number of results suggest consistency with the "employment ratio hypothesis." According, for example, to the analysis of Edwards and Field-Hendrey (2002), a higher proportion of women with small children work at home than other women. Furthermore, among women who choose to work at home, a particularly high proportion of women who are the mothers of small children choose self-employment. Furthermore, Wellington (2006) used panel data from the 1970s to the 1990s in the U.S. to analyze employment selection behavior by white, married women between the ages of 22 and 40, and found that women with younger (pre-school) children and women with greater numbers of children were far more likely to be self-employed. This trend was even more pronounced among women with better academic backgrounds. Notably, as indicated by Carnoy (2000), even though self-employment was broadly considered as a good option for women raising children, allowing them to maintain a WLB, it was not considered a realistic option by many women, particularly those with poorer academic backgrounds or those with fewer skills.

On the other hand, previous research in both Japan and the U.S. has largely produced negative results regarding the "non-bad job hypothesis," which states that independent contract work does not necessarily offer poorer benefits and working conditions. Zhou (2006), for example, states that the average annual income of an independent contractor in Japan is around 1.5 million yen lower than that of a regular employee, and that insurance and other benefits remain at low levels. Kalleberg, Raskin, and Hudson (1999) implemented a verification analysis that showed the scores of benefits and working conditions for female independent contractors in the U.S. were 43% lower than those of regular female employees.

Previous research in both Japan and the U.S., however, has been diverse in terms of its scope, analysis period, estimation models, estimation methods, etc., and it has been difficult to identify the factors leading to conclusions that either support or do not support the theories. This research, therefore, reconsiders the employment ratio hypothesis and the non-bad job hypothesis, in the light of a unified research scope (married, working women aged between 18 and 45) and analysis period (2005), and using the same estimation model and methods.

III. Data and Research Model

1. Data

Two data sources are used in this research. The first is Japanese, in the form of JILPT's Integrated Survey into Japanese Working Practices, which was implemented between August and September 2005. The second is the individual survey data on the February Supplemental Surveys of the "Current Population Survey, Contingent and Alternative Employment Arrangements" collected by the U.S. Labor Department's BLS in February 2001 and 2005.

The Integrated Survey into Japanese Working Practices was a mail survey of 3,000 regular employees, 3,500 non-regular employees, and 3,000 people who run their own businesses or who work for a family business, all of whom were selected in an indiscriminate way from among survey volunteers contacted through Intage Inc. Of the people surveyed, valid responses were received from 1,576 people running their own businesses or working for a family business (52.5% valid response rate). In this research, an "independent contractor" is defined as someone who fulfills all three of the following conditions: he/she "works without an employer" (this excludes company directors, people working for a family business, or self-employed business owners who are in the position of hiring others), "does not take instruction from anyone regarding the way in which he/she works," and "is able to decide by him/herself when to start work and how long to work for." The survey results contained 613 subjects who met all three of these conditions, of whom 187 subjects were married working women between the ages of 18 and 45.

At the same time, the CPS February Supplemental Survey is an additional CPS survey implemented alongside one of the largest-scale monthly surveys in the U.S., which has a history that spans more than 50 years. The CPS February Supplemental Survey is implemented with the aim of understanding how many people are working in non-typical employment or fixed-term employment, as well as their job status, and it has been carried out five times to date (in 1995, 1997, 1999, 2001 and 2005). In this research, the author uses survey data from the two most recent separate surveys. Two years' worth of data gave a total of 127,581 subjects, of which 17,714 were married working women between the ages of 18 and 45. Of these subjects, 71.0% were regular employees, 21.6% were working in part-time jobs, and 2.6% (461 people) were independent contractors. For the purpose of this research, the definition[2] of "independent contractors" is people who meet the following three criteria in the CPS February Supplemental Survey: they are "workers treated as individual consultants or freelancers," "not employed by a third party," and "not employers."

Of these subjects, while the U.S. CPS survey is in the form of panel data, since there were extremely few subjects who matched the criteria, in this research, the survey is used not as panel data but as cross-sectional data. Cross-sectional estimations, however, require the presumption that variables such as preferences regarding marriage, the expected number of children, etc., have no relationship to employment preferences. In fact, decisions regarding when to get married and how many children are wanted are highly likely to be made at the same time as considering whether or not to have a job, or what form of work is to be selected, and as a result, this presumption is problematic. If a good instrumental variable were available, this problem of endogeneity could be sufficiently solved through methodology, but finding an appropriate instrumental variable is not necessarily a simple matter. In order to solve this problem of endogeneity with cross-sectional estimations, therefore, in this research, we restricted the scope of estimations to married, working women aged between 18 and 45. By doing this, the author was able to remove variables with a strong possibility of endogeneity (whether or not a subject was married, and whether or not they were working) from the estimation models. At the same time, restricting the scope to working women removes work/non-work behavior from the scope of analysis, allowing a simple model for analysis, which focuses solely on selection of work format.

2. Theories and Verification Models

Much of the previous research looks at the decision to select a particular work format within the framework of "maximizing utility" (Willington 2006). In other words, if the anticipated income from independent contract work is higher than the anticipated income

[2] The CPS February Supplemental Survey identifies independent contractors as "workers treated as independent consultants or freelancers," since it does not collect information relating to "work style" or "starting time or time spent at work."

from other work formats, the “utility” gained by independent contract work is maximized, making the selection of independent contract work a natural one for rational individuals. However, when using the framework of maximizing utility in research that focuses on married women with children, who are the very subjects of this research, it is necessary to consider the impact that the presence of children has on the selection of a work format.

Say, for example, that a woman with children has decided to work H_w hours per day, and to spend the rest of her available time in childrearing. Since independent contract work (or self-employed work) allows her to select her workplace and working time with comparative freedom, it is possible for her to spend a proportion of the time she is working, defined as αH_w $(0 \leqq \alpha \leqq 1)$, in childrearing activities. Employees, however, are unable to do any childrearing activities, in principle, during the time in which they are working. Regardless of the employment format, women incur childcare costs during the time that they are not able to look after their own children, which we will cost at C yen per hour. If independent contract work is paid at rate W_{ic}, and employees’ rates of pay are defined at W_e, the following relational expression is created:

(Net) anticipated income for an independent contractor: $I_{ic} = W_{ic} \times H_w - C \times (1-\alpha) H_w$ (1)

(Net) anticipated income for an employee: $I_e = W_e \times H_w - C \times H_w$ (2)

Difference in (net) anticipated incomes: $I_{ic} - I_e = H_w \times (W_{ic} - W_e) + \alpha \times H_w \times C$ (3)

The decision for a married woman with children as to whether or not she should become an independent contractor will depend on the difference in anticipated (net) incomes (formula [3]) above). The higher the cost of childcare (C) and the higher the proportion of work time that can be combined with childrearing activities (α), the higher the likelihood of selecting work as an independent contractor. For this reason, the increasing cost of childcare, the increasing proportion of working mothers with very young children, for whom childcare costs are higher, and the increasing number of independent contractor jobs that can be combined with childrearing (for example, jobs involving work on computers or via fax, which can be done from home), may be sociological reasons for the increase in independent contracting work.

Furthermore, in addition to C and α, unearned income such as income from a woman’s husband, and individual preferences, also impact the selection of work format. For example, the higher a household’s unearned income, the easier it is to provide startup costs (such as the purchase of a computer or initial startup capital, etc.), which results in increasing the proportion of independent contractors. In other words, as shown in formula (4) below, the probability of becoming an independent contractor is influenced by C, α, unearned income and individual preference.

Pr (work format = independent contractor)
= f (C, α, unearned income e.g. husband’s income, individual preferences) (4)

Let us consider the probability of a woman choosing to become an independent contractor if given five possible choices of work format (1= regular employment, 2= part-time work, 3= contractual work or work found through a staffing agency, etc., 4= conventional self-employment, 5= independent contracting). If the IIA hypothesis[3] (Independence of irrelevant alternatives), which assumes the independence of each possible choice, is proven, then it will be possible to use a multinomial logit model to estimate the probability of selecting independent contract work. Using one work format (in this case, 1= regular employment) as a benchmark, the probability of an individual i with attribute X_i selecting option j (in this case, $j=5$) can be expressed using the following logistic distribution:

$$P(y_i = j \mid X_i) = \frac{\exp(X_i \beta_j)}{1 + \sum_{j=2}^{5} \exp(X_i \beta_j)} \qquad \text{j=2,3,4,5} \qquad (5)$$

With $$X_i \beta_j = \beta_j^0 + x_i^1 \beta_j^1 + x_i^2 \beta_j^2 + x_i^3 \beta_j^3$$

x_i^1 : Variable expressing the cost of childcare (the number of pre-school aged children and whether the woman has children who are minors).
x_i^2 : Household income (excluding income of the subject)
x_i^3 : proxies for α (type of job, industry),
Proxies for individual preferences (academic background, race, age, area of residence)

When using a multinomial logit model, the signs of explanatory variable's parameter and the explanatory variable's marginal effect will not necessarily be the same (Norton, 2009). To be able to judge whether the explanatory variable x_i^k increases the possibility of selecting independent contract work, the marginal effect value must be calculated, instead of judging merely by the sign of parameter.

IV. Verification Results

1. Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 shows a summary of the work status of married women between the ages of 18 and 45, by the age of their children. The percentage of women who work, and their work format, can be seen from Table 1 to be closely related to the number of children a woman

[3] With the objective of verifying the validity of this IIA hypothesis, calculations were carried out on two models – one with options "3= contractual work or work found through a staffing agency, etc." and "4= conventional self-employment" dropped, and one with all five options available – and the Hausman Test was used to verify whether the estimated coefficients for the two models were statistically different or not. As a result, the IIA hypothesis was accepted, for both the Japanese and American data sets.

Table 1. Ages of Children and Work Status of Married Women Aged 18-45

	Overall (Married women aged 18-45)			Youngest child aged 3 or under			Youngest child aged 3-6		
	U.S. 01	U.S. 05	Japan 05	U.S. 01	U.S. 05	Japan 05	U.S. 01	U.S. 05	Japan 05
Percentage in work	68.1	66.9	61.7	52.7	52.7	33.1	61.9	62.1	49.6
Breakdown of those in work									
Regular employees	71.4	70.6	28.2	62.1	62.7	57.5	64.8	64.0	22.9
Part-time employees	21.4	21.8	46.1	29.4	28.5	23.4	27.4	27.5	50.8
Contractual/dispatcher worker or temporary employees	2.1	2.3	11.8	1.9	2.5	8.5	2.2	2.2	9.8
Self-employed (other than independent contractors)	2.6	2.7	12.0	3.0	2.8	8.5	2.9	3.4	14.8
Independent contractors	**2.5**	**2.7**	**1.8**	**3.7**	**3.5**	**2.1**	**2.7**	**2.9**	**1.6**
Sample size	12,755	13,753	807	2,980	3,308	148	1,906	2,157	127
Of whom in work	8,601	9,113	490	1,553	1,738	47	1,166	1,321	61

Sources: Compiled by the author using U.S. Data from BLS CPS February Supplemental Survey (2001, 2005), and Japanese data from a separate JILPT survey (Survey into the Work Styles of Japanese People 2005). The Survey into the Work Styles of Japanese People 2005 was implemented in regard to 8,000 Japanese men and women aged between 20 and 65 throughout Japan, selected from the Basic Resident Register, via home visits, and is considered highly representative. The survey resulted in 4,939 valid subjects, with a 61.7% response rate.

has, and the age of her youngest child. In sum, (1) the proportion of women who are employed when they have a very young child, particularly when their youngest child is below the age of three, is very low in both Japan and the U.S., and (2) a high proportion of working women in the U.S. whose youngest child is under three years old are independent contractors; both of these facts are consistent with the employment ratio hypothesis mentioned above.

Next, we see that looking at the attributes of the analysis subjects by work format also gives a result consistent with the employment ratio hypothesis. Table 2 shows that between 40% and 60% of independent contractors have children under the age of 6 (compared to between 30% and just under 50% of regular employees), and that independent contractors are raising, on average, 1.6 minor children (compared with 1.3 to 1.4 among regular employees). Hence, all indicators show that independent contractors belong to a group for which childcare costs are relatively high.

On the other hand, taking a look at the benefits and working conditions of independent contractors, by average annual income[4], in comparison with an average annual income among U.S.-based independent contractors of 2.333 million yen (calculated at one US dollar = 100 yen), the average annual income of Japanese independent contractors is only 1.599 million yen (Table 2). While the average annual income of independent contractors in the U.S. is slightly higher than in Japan, the positioning of independent contractors' annual salaries somewhere in between those of regular employees and part-time employees is similar in both countries. Of course, it would be premature to automatically judge from this difference in average annual income that independent contractors' working conditions equate to them being in a "bad job." Concluding whether or not a job is a "bad job" depends on being able to control for other conditions such as educational attainment, social experience, profession, area of residence, etc., and comparing independent contracting with conditions available in other work formats. Detailed verification in regard to this is given in Section 3 below.

2. Verification of the Employment Ratio Hypothesis

Table 3 shows the results of cross-sectional estimations using a multinomial logit model. In order to make the table a printable size, only coefficient parameters for independent contracting (choice 5) are reported. The benchmark used is regular employment.

Both the dummy of youngest child under six and the number of children under 18, which are the two variables that indicate childcare costs—the issue most requiring attention—are shown definitively to be factors impacting the proportion of women working as independent contractors. Comparisons of women whose youngest child is under six, for example, with those who are not in that situation, shows that the proportion of such women

[4] "Annual income" here is defined on a tax-inclusive basis. The income of self-employed or independent contractors is not the total income of their business, but rather their individual income once costs have been deducted.

Table 2. Attributes of Married Working Women Aged 18-45, Viewed by Work Format (2005)

	U.S. 2005					Japan 2005				
	Regular employees	Part-time employees	Contractual/ dispatcher workers etc.	Self-employed persons (other than independent contractors)	Independent contractors	Regular employees	Part-time employees	Contractual/ dispatcher workers etc.	Self-employed persons (other than independent contractors)	Independent contractors
Age	35.7	35.5	35.2	36.9	36.9	36.4	36.7	36.6	36.4	37.3
Graduated junior high school (%)	6.1	5.9	7.9	4.9	4.9	1.9	2.9	0.5	3.2	3.7
Graduated senior high school (%)	27.3	28.6	19.4	25.0	21.3	35.4	49.3	41.1	32.3	28.9
Graduated junior college or vocational school (%)	29.6	32.6	31.3	31.6	35.7	36.9	36.6	32.5	38.3	34.8
Graduated university (or graduate program) (%)	37.1	32.9	41.4	38.5	38.1	25.8	11.1	25.9	26.2	32.6
Annual personal income (in 10,000 yen units)	351.5	166.8	230.3	227.6	233.3	372.1	89.6	163.1	158.5	159.9
Household income (in 10,000 yen units)	726.1	671.7	678.5	706.3	718.4	965.2	494.0	586.6	697.2	760.2
Youngest child under 6 (%)	30.8	44.4	34.4	38.1	40.6	48.1	71.5	59.4	78.0	63.1
Number of children under 18	1.3	1.8	1.6	1.7	1.6	1.4	1.8	1.4	1.9	1.6
Sample size (max.)	6,889	2,260	227	244	244	260	655	197	313	187

Sources: Results of U.S. Data from BLS CPS Supplemental Survey (February 2005), and Japanese data from JILPT Integrated Survey into Japanese Working Practices (August 2005).

Note: When calculating annual income, one U.S. dollar is taken as equal to 100 yen.

Table 3. Determinants of Working as an Independent Contractor (Cross-Sectional Estimations)

Benchmark = regular employment	U.S. 2001 Marginal effect (S.D.)	U.S. 2005 Marginal effect (S.D.)	U.S. 2001-2005 Marginal effect (S.D.)	Japan 2005 Marginal effect (S.D.)
Youngest child under 6	0.025 ***	0.021 **	0.022 ***	0.002 ***
	(0.009)	(0.008)	(0.006)	(0.018)
Number of children under 18	0.002 *	0.009 ***	0.006 ***	0.005 *
	(0.002)	(0.003)	(0.002)	(0.005)
Age	0.002 *	0.003 ***	0.002 ***	0.001 ***
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Senior high school graduate	-0.020	-0.015	-0.019 *	-0.044 **
	(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.029)
Junior college/Vocational college graduate	-0.012	0.004	-0.004	-0.034 **
	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.003)	(0.025)
University (graduate school) graduate	0.002	-0.014	-0.007	-0.017 ***
	(0.008)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.022)
Log (Household annual income) (excluding annual personal income)	0.004 **	0.005 **	0.004 ***	0.065 ***
	(0.004)	(0.002)	(0.003)	(0.034)
Racial dummy		Yes		No
Regional dummy		City population size		Regional block
Log likelihood	-2952.6		-6376.8	-4711.5
Sample size	2,637		5,501	3,808

Notes: 1. All of these results were estimated using multinomial logit models.
2. Estimated results for "part-time workers," "employees hired through staffing agencies and contracted employees, etc." and "self-employed persons (other than independent contractors)" have been omitted from this table.
3. The marginal effect has been calculated for each subject, and the average treatment effect and standard deviation (SD) reported.
4. *, **, and *** indicate that the estimated coefficients are not zero, at a confidence level of 10%, 5%, and 1% respectively.

who work as independent contractors is 2.1-2.5% points higher among married women in the U.S. Furthermore, with every additional child under the age of 18, the probability of a woman working as an independent contractor rises between 0.2-0.9% points. Similar trends can be seen among married women in Japan. The cross-sectional estimation results for both Japan and the U.S., therefore, can be said to be consistent with the theoretical model proposed in 3.2 above; the ratio of independent contractors to workers in other employment formats is higher among women with preschool children and among women with greater numbers of children under 18.

The marginal effect of childcare costs in Japan is slightly smaller than in the U.S. For example, in Japan, a mother with a child under the age of six is only 0.2% points more likely to be employed as an independent contractor, and the effect is 1/10 of that seen in the U.S. The background to this difference is thought to be in the difference between childcare center systems and childcare costs in Japan and the U.S. In Japan, a significant amount of public money is invested in licensed childcare facilities, and the cost of childcare is reduced to less than 1/4 of its actual value (Zhou, Oishi, and Ueda 2003). On the other hand, childcare facilities in the U.S. have almost no public funding, and therefore the cost is significantly higher. Since the market price of childcare that women with young (particularly pre-school) children in the U.S. are faced with is so much higher than in Japan, the marginal effect of the two variables relating to the cost of raising children (youngest child under six, number of children under 18) is very likely to be larger for the U.S. than it is for Japan.

To summarize the above information, for married women with children, independent contracting is thought to offer opportunities and future prospects from the perspective of WLB. The ability to select the time and location of work means that independent contracting allows women to at least partially reduce the costs of childcare while they are at work, and also offers them the attractive option of being able to spend more time with their children. Both Japanese and American data support the idea that the higher the cost of caring for children, the higher the probability is that a woman will become an independent contractor. This is a clear result of the fact that for such women, independent contracting offers an opportunity for a job future.

The analysis above gives differing results to those in Zhou (2006), which showed that the attributes of being married and having children did not increase the possibility of becoming an independent contractor. This is thought to be as a result of using different data, a different scope of analysis, different estimation methods, and different verification models. The results contained in this paper are considered as potentially more accurate for three reasons. Firstly, while the postal survey used in this research had a valid response rate of 52.5%, the response rate in the Internet survey used by Zhou (2006) was non-measurable and therefore unclear (although the response rate calculated against the number of survey requests distributed was 5.3%). From the perspective that a high or low response rate is an important indicator of the margin of error within the sample, it could be considered that the data used in this research was more representative. Secondly, this paper limits the scope of its analysis to married, working women between the ages of 18 and 45, focusing on an age range in which it is fairly easy to extract the impact of childcare costs on work. Thirdly, this research uses an estimation model in which it is not necessary to consider variables with a strong possibility of endogeneity (whether or not a woman is married, and whether or not she is working), and as a result, is considered to have achieved more reliable results.

3. Verification of the Non-Bad Job Hypothesis

(1) Nominal Income

Next, let us look at whether married women working as independent contractors have worse benefits and working conditions than those of employed workers. In order to verify this, we must first reconfirm the conditions applicable to the independent contract work model. In the model of "maximizing utility" given above, married women with comparatively high anticipated incomes (I_{ic}-$I_e>0$), for whom the following is applicable, are likely to be working as independent contractors.

$$\alpha \times H_w \times C \;>\; H_w \times (W_e - W_{ic}) \tag{7}$$

The left hand side of formula (7) above represents the reduced cost of childcare, achieved through raising children while working as an independent contractor, and the right hand side gives the differential in income between an employed worker and an independent contractor. In other words, even if the income of an independent contractor does not equate to that of a regular employee, provided that the childcare costs saved are large enough, independent contracting is the more rational option. At the same time, however, as Table 1 shows, most married women with children in both Japan and the U.S. choose not to work as independent contractors but rather as employees. For most of the married women with multiple children, the conditions for the formula in (7) above do not apply, and it is thought that the difference in income between employed work and independent contracting is significant enough not to be offset by any saving in childcare costs.

In fact, annual incomes of regular employees in the U.S. are 1.5 times those of independent contractors, and 2.3 times in Japan. Both countries pay less to independent contractors (Table 2). 90.3% (Japan) and 69.0% (the U.S.) of independent contractors fall into a low income bracket (earning under 2.5 million yen per year), far more than the equivalent proportion of regular employees (Table 4). Furthermore, a significantly high proportion of independent contractors fall into the category of workers paid under 1,000 yen per hour (71.4% in Japan and 40.7% in the U.S.). It is therefore impossible to deny that independent contracting has some elements of a "bad job," particularly when considered from the perspective of income.

The fact that the difference between the annual incomes of Japanese regular employees and independent contractors is larger than that in the U.S. is, however, unexpected. Considering the fact that childcare costs are so much more expensive in the U.S. than in Japan, it would be natural for annual incomes to be around 1.5 times higher. According to the latest American surveys, the average annual cost of professional childcare for children under three was US$15,895, and for children between the ages of three and five was US$11,680. For children aged six and over, the cost of after-school care was US$10,720 (National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies 2009). In the U.S., the difference between the average incomes of independent contractors and regular employees is around US$12,000, a differential which can be fully covered by the saving achieved in childcare costs. On the other hand, the significant investment of public finance in accredited childcare facilities in Japan means that the average cost of childcare is 1/5 that of the U.S. Regardless of this, regular employees' income in Japan is 2.3 times higher than that of

Table 4. Comparison of the Levels to Which Different Work Formats Constitute a "Bad Job" (for Married Women Aged 18-45)

	Japan			U.S.		
	Regular employees	Part-time employees	Independent contractors	Regular employees	Part-time employees	Independent contractors
Level to which work format is a "bad job" (0-3)	0.48	0.98	1.80	0.76	1.27	1.19
Long working hours	55.0%	1.5%	20.6%	5.0%	0.0%	10.8%
Annual income under 2.5 million yen	24.7%	96.6%	90.3%	43.2%	84.9%	69.0%
Wage rate equivalent to under 1,000 yen/hour	19.2%		71.4%	29.0%	42.9%	40.7%
Benefits						
Participating in employer7's health-care insurance				82.9%	30.8%	
Participating in Employer's pension or retirement plan				66.6%	33.3%	0.7%
Job satisfaction						
Hope to continue in current employment	83.7%	51.0%		74.4%	80.0%	84.2%

Notes: 1. "Long working hours" indicates a minimum of 45 hours per month of overtime, or 205 hours of work per month (8 hours/day x 20 days + 45 hours = 205 hours). Since no variables are provided for working hours of non-regular employees (in Japan), respondents who fulfilled the conditions of "having designated working hours that are longer than other regular employees in the same workplace" and "sometimes or often working overtime" are considered to have "long working hours."

2.When calculating annual income, one US dollar is taken as equal to 100 yen.

independent contractors—a greater differential than that of the U.S.—and the difference in average annual income is significant, at 2.1 million yen. Therefore, the low incomes earned by independent contractors in Japan cannot be close to sufficiently explained within the framework of "maximizing utility."

(2) Insurance and Other Benefits and Working Hours

It is of course necessary to consider not only income, but also health insurance and other benefits when making a comparison. When considering benefits, however, it is surely the case that independent contractors are in a less advantageous position. Independent contractors are not employees, but are considered “self-employed.” Companies outsourcing their business rarely provide benefits to people in such positions. For example, more than 80% of regular employees in the U.S. are members of health insurance plans provided for employees, and just under 70% are members of employee pension and retirement plans. Compared to this, the proportion of independent contractors involved in such plans is virtually zero. According to Zhou (2006), in Japan, as well, the benefits available to independent contractors are significantly less advantageous than those given to employees. For example, only 13.2% of independent contractors receive travel expenses from the companies they work for (compared with 90.0% of regular employees and 53.2% of non-regular employees). The proportion of contractors receiving other types of benefits is similarly low (2.5% receive skills development support; 0.5% receive housing allowances from a company).

Furthermore, in the U.S., the proportion of independent contractors who work long hours (more than 205 hours/month) reached 10.8%, which is approximately double the number of regular employees (5.0%). In other words, nominal income, benefits, and working hours could all be described as strongly defending the view of independent contracting as being a “bad job” in the U.S. On the other hand, in Japan, although fewer independent contractors work long hours than regular employees (20.6% as opposed to 55.0%), there is a significant gap in income and benefits, making it difficult to state definitively that independent contracting is not a “bad job,” based on this information alone.

(3) Is Independent Contracting a “Bad Job” Even If Academic Background, Age, and Childrearing Costs Are the Same?

The comparisons of average values given above generally show that a higher proportion of married women working as independent contractors work long hours compared to regular employees (in the U.S. only), that their incomes are lower, and that their benefits are less comprehensive. But is independent contracting a “bad job” even in cases where individual attributes such as academic background, age, the number of children, etc. are controlled?

Table 5 shows an estimation using a probit model to express the three prescriptive factors for a “bad job”—“annual income under 2.5 million yen,” “working 205 or more hours per month” and “non-enrollment in corporate pension or retirement plans.” Specifically, the author controlled explanatory variables including the subject’s age, academic background, the age of the subject’s youngest child, the number of under-age children, race, union membership, area of residence, etc., to estimate the probability of independent contracting being a “bad job” in comparison with being employed as a regular employee.

Table 5 shows that in comparison with regular employees, independent contractors are between 23.8% points (Japan) and 27.2% points (the U.S.) more likely earn under 2.5

Table 5. Prescriptive Factors in "Bad Job" Aspects of Work (2005)

	Y1: Probability of annual income being under 2.5 million yen		Y2: Probability of working long hours		Y3: Probability of participating in employer's pension/retirement plan (U.S.)
	U.S. 2005	Japan 2005	U.S. 2005	Japan 2005	
	Marginal effect (S.D.)	Marginal effect (S.D.)	Marginal effect (S.D.)	Marginal effect (S.D.)	Marginal effect (S.D.)
Work format					
Part-time employee	0.395 ***	0.466 ***		-0.3725491 ***	0.309 ***
	(0.110)	(0.294)		(0.198)	(0.082)
Contractual/dispatched worker	0.241 ***	0.166 ***	-0.015	-0.208 ***	0.337 ***
	(0.089)	(0.188)	(0.006)	(0.211)	(0.106)
Self-employed (Not including independent contrators)	0.226 ***	0.279 ***	0.117 ***	-0.094 ***	0.558 ***
	(0.083)	(0.284)	(0.028)	(0.107)	(0.211)
Independent contractor	0.272 ***	0.238 ***	0.052 ***	-0.112 ***	0.557 ***
	(0.104)	(0.270)	(0.016)	(0.129)	(0.212)
Youngest child under 6	-0.041 **	-0.020	-0.021 ***	-0.019	-0.049 ***
	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.008)	(0.018)	(0.014)
Number of children under 18	0.016 **	0.035 ***	-0.002	0.010	0.009
	(0.005)	(0.017)	(0.001)	(0.008)	(0.002)
Age	-0.006 ***	-0.002	0.000	-0.003	-0.009 ***
	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.000)	(0.002)	(0.003)
Senior high school graduate	-0.132 ***	-0.034	-0.027 **	-0.104 **	-0.157 ***
	(0.045)	(0.022)	(0.01)	(0.099)	(0.051)
Junior college or vocational college graduate	-0.205 ***	-0.041	-0.02 *	-0.064	-0.222 ***
	(0.072)	(0.026)	(0.008)	(0.063)	(0.075)
University (graduate school) graduate	-0.400 ***	-0.089	0.001	-0.088 **	-0.337 ***
	(0.078)	(0.046)	(0.001)	(0.093)	(0.093)
Log Likelihood	-1862.7	-452.1	-1435.1	-381.2	-3221.7
Racial/Union membership dummy	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Regional dummy	City population size	Regional block	City population size	Regional block	City population size
Sample size	3,455	1,516	6,819	1,388	5,695

Notes: 1. All results estimated use a probit model.

2. The marginal effect has been calculated for each subject, and the average treatment effect and standard deviation (SD) reported.
3. *, **, and *** indicate that the estimated coefficients are not zero, at a confidence level of 10%, 5%, and 1% respectively.

million yen per year. Furthermore, the likelihood of American independent contractors being excluded from company pension and retirement plans is 55.7% points higher than that for regular employees. On the other hand, while the likelihood of American independent contractors working long hours is 5.2% points higher than that for regular employees, the opposite result is seen in Japan—the probability of long working hours is 11.2% lower for independent contractors than for regular employees. The results of these estimates are roughly consistent with the results of the simple comparisons carried out in Table 4. Even considering the impact of individual attributes and the cost of raising children, the likelihood is high that independent contracting is a “bad job” when compared with being a regular employee.

At this point we must remember that Table 4 and Table 5 appear to give opposite results regarding long working hours. Table 5 shows that independent contractors in Japan are less likely than regular employees to work long hours, whereas in the U.S., this is more likely to happen. On the other hand, Table 4 shows that approximately 20% of independent contractors work long hours in Japan, but that only around 10% do in the U.S., indicating that Japanese independent contractors work comparatively longer hours. In fact, this apparent difference in results is caused by the comparative benchmark of “long working hours among regular employees,” which is significantly divergent between Japan and the U.S. In Japan, 55.0% of regular employees work long hours, whereas this applies to only 5.0% of regular employees in the U.S. If, therefore, the comparison was done against absolute criteria, Japanese independent contractors would be shown as working significantly longer hours than their U.S. counterparts, but comparing them to regular Japanese employees makes it seem that they are not in fact working such long hours.

(4) Is Independent Contracting a “Bad Job” Even When Restricted to Full-Time Workers?

One thing must be noted from the results in Table 5. Despite the fact that between 47.7% (the U.S.) and 45.4% (Japan) of the independent contractors who are the subject of this research work less than 35 hours per week, all of the regular employees used in comparison are full-time employees who work 35 or more hours per week. Since there is a possibility that this comparison is not fair, next, we will consider whether independent contracting is a “bad job” when restricted to full-time employees only.

The estimation results in Table 6 are restricted to independent contractors working full-time – more than 35 hours per week—but still show that independent contracting has aspects of being a “bad job” when compared to regular employment. Specifically, independent contractors have a 17.1%-point (the U.S.) to 47.1%-point (Japan) higher probability than their regular employee counterparts of earning under 2.5 million yen per year, and are 16.2% points (the U.S.) to 30.0% points (Japan) more likely to be working long hours. While Table 5, which includes employees who work short hours, shows noticeably low estimated results for long working hours for Japanese independent contractors when compared

Table 6. Prescriptive Factors in “Bad Job” Aspects of Work (for full-time workers)

	Y1: Probability of annual income being under 2.5 million yen		Y2: Probability of working long hours	
	U.S. 2005	Japan 2005	U.S. 2005	Japan 2005
	Marginal effect (S.D.)	Marginal effect (S.D.)	Marginal effect (S.D.)	Marginal effect (S.D.)
Work format				
Contractual/dispatched worker	0.035		0.015	
	(0.009)		(0.006)	
Self-employed (Not including independent contrators)	0.162***	0.521***	0.209***	0.318***
	(0.034)	(0.245)	(0.043)	(0.099)
Independent contractor	0.171***	0.471***	0.162***	0.300***
	(0.036)	(0.282)	(0.039)	(0.095)
Log Likelihood	-1209.5	-114.0	-1399.5	-57.8
Sample size	2,139	298	6,571	305

Notes: 1. Estimation results use the same verification model as Table 5. Estimation results for explanatory variables other than work format have been omitted.

2. Since no information is available regarding the working hours of workers hired from staffing agencies or contract employees within the Japanese data, comparisons between work formats have been done only for regular employees, conventionally self-employed people, and independent contractors.

3. *, **, and *** indicate coefficient estimated values that are not zero, at a confidence level of 10%, 5%, and 1% respectively.

with regular employees, Table 6, which restricts the scope of the comparison to full-time workers, shows a higher risk of long working hours for independent contractors than for regular employees.

Furthermore, the probability of independent contractors earning low salaries and having to work long hours is higher than for regular employees by 17.1% points and 16.2% points, respectively, in the U.S., while such probability is much higher in Japan by 47.1% points and 30.0% points, respectively. It is interesting to note that the marginal effect of independent contracting is around double in Japan what it is in the U.S. In other words, the risk of independent contractors ending up in a “bad job” is extremely high in Japan compared to regular employees.

V. Conclusions

This research focuses on married women with children, and compares data from Japan and the U.S. in order to ascertain whether independent contracting, which is considered to offer freedom and flexibility, is in fact an employment format that offers future opportunities for such women.

The results of analysis showed that in both Japan and the U.S., women with children under the age of six and women with higher numbers of children are more likely to end up in working as independent contractors (as opposed to regular employees). At the same time, the average annual income of a regular employee is 1.5 times (for the U.S.) and 2.3 times (in Japan) that of an independent contractor, and benefits and working conditions for independent contractors are relatively poor. The difference in benefits between independent contractors and regular employees can be partly explained by individual differences and preferences such as academic background, social experience, area of residence, etc., but this does not fully explain the issue. In particular, in Japan, there are some clear aspects of independent contracting that make it a "bad job," with noticeable levels of risk of independent contractors ending up with low incomes and long working hours, when compared with regular employment.

At this point, the author would like to look at the outstanding issue of the reason behind the difference in benefits, which has not so far been explained. One possibility indicated by Hundley (2000), is that this is being caused by individual preference. People working in independent contracting and those who are self-employed tend to place a lower emphasis on income, and may be feeling a sense of fulfillment or enjoying their freedom. This may be a particularly clear trend in women who are currently raising children and who can count on their husbands' income. In reality, it is true in both Japan and the U.S. that independent contracting seems to lead to a high level of job satisfaction. Table 4 shows that 84.2% of American independent contractors say that they "would like to continue at their current job," compared with 74.4% of regular employees and 80.0% of part-time workers. Japanese independent contractors also express a higher level of satisfaction with their jobs than regular employees (Zhou 2006).

One other possibility is that there may be a significant number of independent contractors working for less than the minimum wage. Since independent contracting is legally considered to be self-employment (not employment), it is not subject to labor laws, and there is no protection regarding minimum wages. For this reason, when compared to employees, a manner of sample selection has occurred based on the fact that no employees receive less than minimum wage, and this may be observed as the disparity. This situation is almost certainly affected by the fact that there is little information available regarding appropriate remuneration for independent contracting, and it is extremely difficult for independent contractors to negotiate with companies regarding benefits. More than anything, the scale of the independent contractor labor market is small (in particular in Japan) compared with the employment market as a whole, meaning that companies have a monopolistic or oligopolistic advantage when negotiating regarding remuneration for contracted work. It is possible that independent contracting as a whole has poor benefits and conditions as a result of all these factors working together.

Several of these factors will not find solutions until the independent contracting market grows, as it has in the U.S. In the future, as independent contracting expands in Japan, it is anticipated that the disparity in benefits between independent contractors and regular employees will gradually narrow. Japanese policy will need, in the future, to support the development of the independent contractor market, and ensure that information is coordinated regarding appropriate remuneration for contracted work. In addition, considering the fact that in general, independent contractors are individual players and do not have the negotiating power of a group or organization, the author suggests that it may be necessary for a fair trade commission or other such organization to investigate whether companies are implementing monopolistic or oligopolistic negotiations and paying inappropriately low rates, and where necessary, to publish the names of, or issue warnings to, such companies. Disparities that occur because of individual preferences should be distinguished from disparities such as these, which must be eliminated, and therefore identifying and shining the light of investigation on such practices is extremely important.

References

Bureau of Labour Statistics. 2005. Contingent and alternative employment arrangements, February 2005. Economic News Release. http://www.bls.gov/news.release/conemp.nr0.htm (accessed December 1, 2010).

Carnoy, Martin. 2000. *Sustaining the new economy: Work, family and community in the information age*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation; Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press.

DiNitale, Marisa. 2001. Characteristics of and preference for alternative work arrangements, 1999. *Monthly Labor Review* 124, no. 3:28-49.

Edwards, Linda. N., and Elizabeth Field-Hendrey. 2002. Home based work and women's labor force decisions. *Journal of Labor Economics* 20, no. 1:170-200.

Hundley, Greg. 2000. Male/female earnings differences in self-employment: The effects marriage, children, and the household division of labor. *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* 54, no. 1:95-114.

Kalleberg, Arne L., Barbara F. Reskin, and Ken Hudson 1999. Bad jobs in America: Standard and nonstandard employment relations and job quality in the United States. Inequality Summer Institute 1999, Mimeo. http://www.hks.harvard.edu/inequality/Summer/Summer99/privatepapers/Reskin.PDF (accessed December 1, 2010).

National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies. 2009. Parents and the high price of child care: 2009 update. http://www.naccrra.org/publications/naccrra-publications/publications/665-0410_PriceReport_FINAL_051409.kv.pdf (acessed December 1, 2010).

Norton, Edward. 2009. Applied econometrics in health services research. HMP 826 class notes, University of Michigan.

Wellington, Alison J. 2006. Self-employment: The new solution for balancing family and career? *Labour Economics* 13 (3):357-86.

Yamada, Hisashi. 2007. Kojin gyomu ukeoi no jittai to shoraiteki kanosei: Nichibei hikaku no shiten kara “indipendento kontorakuta” wo chushin ni [Actual condition and perspectives of individual outside contractors in Japan: Focusing on independent contractors in comparison with the U.S. situation]. *The Japanese Journal of Labour Studies* 49, no. 9:4-16.

Zhou, Yanfei. 2006. Kojin ukeoi no rodo jittai to shokugyo sentaku no kettei yoin [The state of independent contracting and factors influencing the selection of work format]. *JCER Economic Journal*, no. 54 (March):63-89.

———. 2010. Kojin ukeoi shugyo no shoraisei: Nichibei no komochi kikon josei ni chumoku shite [The future of independent contracting: Focusing on married women with children in Japan and the U.S.], JILPT discussion paper 10-01, the Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training, Tokyo.

Zhou, Yanfei, Akiko Oishi, and Akemi Ueda. 2003. Child care system in Japan. *Journal of Population and Social Security (Population)*, supplement to vol. 1:411-425. http://www.ipss.go.jp/webj-ad/webjournal.files/population/2003_6/15.Zou.pdf (accessed December 1, 2010).

Human Resources Development at Companies in the Service Industry

Makoto Fujimoto

The Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training

In recent years, human resources development in the service industry have started to draw public attention from the perspective of improving productivity and promoting industries that may create new jobs. This report first examines the difference in the implementation of human resources development targeted at core personnel among companies in the service industry. Then, it analyzes the impact of such corporate activities as clarifying the skills required of core personnel and using professional certifications as a benchmark of the implementation of human resources development. As a result, the report concludes that companies that vigorously implement such corporate activities are more active in implementing human resources development than others.

I. Introduction

It is a long time since the beginning of the discussion about a shift to a service economy in Japan, which started as the number of workers in the service industry exceeded the number of workers in manufacturing industry. Human resources development in the manufacturing industry has often attracted public attention in relation to such issues as keeping Japanese companies' international competitiveness and passing technical and engineering skills to younger generations amid worries over the so-called "year 2007 problem," which refers to the start of mass retirement of baby boomers. However, the services industry has drawn scant interest in that respect. Still, in recent years—especially since the recession was triggered by the global financial crisis in the latter half of 2008—promoting personnel training in the nursing care sector, which is part of the service industry, has started to attract public interest gradually, as a manpower shortage in that sector has emerged as a major issue amid efforts to create new jobs to mitigate the impact of the economic crisis. Moreover, there is also a move to create an environment conducive to the promotion of training and retention of high-quality personnel, regarded as the key to improving the Japanese service industry's productivity, which is said to be low by international standards.[1]

From the perspective of economic activity and employment, as well—not to mention in light of the recent trend mentioned above—the method used to implement human resources development in the service industry, whose weight in the Japanese economy has grown, will likely have a significant impact on the entire economy and the majority of workers. Based on the results of a recent survey, this report looks into how human resources development are implemented in the Japanese service industry, as well as looking into

[1] Examples include activities by Service Productivity & Innovation for Growth, a group established in May 2007 following a debate conducted by a study group on the improvement of the service industry's productivity under the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry.

companies' initiatives that may promote human resources development.

II. Data

This report analyzes the results of the *Survey on Human Resources Development at Small and Medium-Size Companies in the Service Industry*[2] (the "Service Industry Survey," below), which was conducted in January through March 2009 by the Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training (JILPT). This survey covered companies in the service industry in the Kanto region, a region in eastern Japan that includes Tokyo, which employ five workers or more. A total of 897 companies gave valid responses, bringing the effective response ratio to 25.8%.[3]

However, while the service industry comprises a number of business sectors, the range of sectors covered by this survey was narrowed down through the following process, in order to ensure efficient research and keep the effective response ratio at an adequate level. First, several business sectors as defined by the 2002 revised version of the Japan Standard Industrial Classification (which is a government-authorized classification) were selected, including "medical, health care, and social welfare"; "education and learning support"; and "services"; as well as "Information services," "Internet-based services" and "video picture, sound information, character information production and distribution," both of which are subcategories of "information and communications." The scope of the survey was further narrowed down, as the survey selected, from among subdivisions of these sectors, those that employ a relatively large number of workers according to the Establishment and Enterprise Census, conducted in 2006 by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, and those in which the number of workers showed a relatively high level of growth compared with the same survey conducted in 2001. Moreover, care was taken to ensure that business sectors that show distinct trends concerning skills development and career formation are covered by the survey, by taking account of the conditions of employee education and training and the job separation rate for permanent employees engaging in service jobs, as assessed through the Monthly Labour Survey by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, the *Management Innovation in the Service Industry and Employee Wellbeing* by JILPT (1997) and the *Survey on Employment Conditions in Service* by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (2003). Through the above process, eight business sectors were selected as the subjects of the survey: (i) building services, (ii) cram school management, (iii) hair dressing, (iv) information services, (v) funeral services, (vi) car

---

[2] For the details of the survey results, refer to the relevant survey report compiled by JILPT (2010).

[3] In the survey, survey officials visited 3,482 companies headquartered in the prefectural capitals in the Kanto region (Tokyo, Yokohama, Chiba, Saitama, Mito, Maebashi, and Utsunomiya) to ask for cooperation with the survey and later revisited them to collect their replies.

Table 1. "Principal Job Roles" by Business Sector

Cram school management	Teachers (88.0)
Building services	General cleaning (63.9), Facility management (24.3)
Car mechanics	Car mechanics (76.5)
Information services	System engineers (42.7), Salesmen/Consultants (14.0), Programmers (11.9)
Funeral services	Ceremony staff (94.6)
Civil engineering & construction	Construction design (28.0), Civil engineering design (19.0), Land survey (14.9)
Hair dressing	Hair dressers (95.7)
Social welfare for the elderly	Nursing care staff including helpers and care managers (97.1)

Note: The figures in parentheses represent the percentage of companies in the business sector that cited the relevant principal job role.

mechanics, (vii) social welfare for the elderly and (viii) civil engineering and construction.[4]

III. Human Resources Development for Core Personnel: Differences among Business Sectors

In the Service Industry Survey, "the job which plays the central role in the provision of service as a part of the company's business and in which the most workers engage" is defined as the "principal job role," and people engaging in this type of job are regarded as "core personnel." Table 1 shows the principal job roles for the business sectors covered by this survey as identified on the basis of replies given by the subject companies. For social welfare for the elderly, cram school management, funeral services, and car mechanics, there is only one principal job role, while there are two or more principal job roles for information services and for civil engineering and construction.

How do individual companies implement human resources development for employees engaging in the principal job role? First, we will look at activities implemented internally by the companies. Asked whether they are conducting activities related to human resources development in the workplace (Table 2), a relatively large number of companies in the hair dressing sector replied in the affirmative with regard to all of the activities cited in the questionnaire, compared with companies in other sectors. Particularly, the percentage of companies implementing training and skills development according to a plan and under a designated leader was far higher in the hair dressing sector than elsewhere. Social welfare

4 For the details on the selection of business sectors to be covered by the survey, refer to Fujimoto (2010).

Table 2. Workplace Training Activities for Employees Engaging in Principal Job Roles (%)

	All respondents	Hair dressing	Social welfare for the elderly	Funeral services	Building services	Civil engineering & construction	Information services	Car mechanics	Cram school management
n	897	70	104	56	144	168	143	162	50
Implementing training and skills development according to a plan under a designated leader	48.3	81.4	57.7	46.4	48.6	40.5	43.4	40.1	50.0
Using work process manuals for training and skills development	37.5	62.9	58.7	44.6	45.1	27.4	20.3	31.5	30.0
Taking care to ensure a transition from easy to difficult work	69.9	81.4	73.1	71.4	70.1	72.0	68.5	66.0	54.0
Requiring employees to experience related jobs on a rotation basis	43.5	52.9	51.0	44.6	43.8	50.6	35.7	39.5	24.0
Holding employee seminars and meetings for presenting proposals	41.0	67.1	62.5	35.7	29.2	41.1	43.4	25.3	44.0
Total number of companies conducting activities	240.1	345.7	302.9	242.9	236.8	231.5	211.2	202.5	202.0

Note: The above figures represent the combined percentages of companies that are actively implementing the activities and those implementing them somewhat actively.

for the elderly came in second after hair dressing in terms of the combined percentage of companies conducting the various activities related to human resources development. Particularly, it nearly matches the hair dressing sector in terms of the percentage of companies holding employee seminars and meetings for presenting proposals. Meanwhile, the activities related to human resources development are sluggish in the car mechanics, cram school, and information services sectors. In the information services sector, the percentage of companies using work process manuals for training and skills development was particularly low, while in the cram school sector, the ratio of companies that require employees to experience related jobs on a rotation basis was conspicuously low.

Next, we will look at the implementation of off-the-job training (Off-JT) for employees engaging in the principal job role (Table 3). The percentage of companies not implementing off-JT was low in the social welfare for the elderly and hair dressing sectors, which means that sectors that are active in off-JT are the same as those that are active in implementing on-the-job training (OJT). In contrast, the percentage of companies not implementing off-JT was particularly high, at nearly 40%, in the funeral services sector. The percentage was also relatively high in the information services, civil engineering and construction, and cram school sectors. Given that workplace training activities in the funeral services sector are not sluggish, this sector apparently depends entirely on OJT for employee education and training. In business sectors that make active use of Off-JT, such as social welfare for the elderly and hair dressing, the objectives of the training frequently cited by the respondents were: helping to acquire expert knowledge and skills necessary for doing the job smoothly; helping to acquire new techniques, skills and knowledge; helping to develop a basic attitude toward work; and helping to acquire systematic knowledge and skills that are difficult to acquire through OJT.

How fully are companies committed to supporting education and training that employees engaging in the principal job role undertake voluntarily as a part of their self-development efforts (Figure 1)? In terms of the combined ratio of companies providing support and those considering doing so, social welfare for the elderly was ranked at the top, followed by the information services and civil engineering and construction sectors in that order. What is noteworthy is that this ratio is high in the information services sector, in which OJT and Off-JT activities are apparently sluggish. We may presume that in the information services sector, there is a strong awareness that employees should undertake education and training on their own initiative. Meanwhile, in the funeral services sector, in which the ratio of companies implementing Off-JT was low, the ratio of companies that provided support for employees' self-development efforts and those considering doing so was also not very high.

When we examine the implementation of education and training through various means, we recognize that business sectors may be classified into five broad groups: (i) a group represented by the social welfare for the elderly sector, which makes active use of all means, (ii) a group represented by the hair dressing sector, which makes active use of

Table 3. Implementation and Objectives of Off-JT Targeted at Employees Engaging in Principal Job Roles (%)

	All respondents	Social welfare for the elderly	Hair dressing	Car mechanics	Building services	Civil engineering & construction	Cram school management	Information services	Funeral services
n	897	104	70	162	144	168	50	143	56
Helping to develop a basic attitude to work	30.4	45.2	40.0	29.6	31.3	23.2	32.0	26.6	21.4
Helping to acquire systematic knowledge and skills that are difficult to acquire through OJT	24.3	47.1	27.1	17.3	22.2	19.0	12.0	32.9	8.9
Helping to acquire expert knowledge and skills necessary for doing a job smoothly	38.1	58.7	44.3	37.7	38.9	35.7	20.0	34.3	25.0
Helping to acquire knowledge and learn theories that underlie the work method acquired through OJT	16.4	34.6	22.9	15.4	16.0	11.3	16.0	11.9	5.4
Helping to acquire knowledge and skills related to the operation of new equipment	12.5	15.4	21.4	21.0	9.7	9.5	4.0	9.1	3.6
Helping to acquire new techniques, skills and knowledge	33.9	46.2	42.9	40.7	23.6	37.5	24.0	29.4	16.1
Helping to systematically acquire knowledge and skills necessary at each stage of the career	12.0	21.2	25.7	9.3	9.0	6.5	12.0	13.3	7.1
Helping to obtain certifications related to work	15.2	23.1	14.3	16.0	20.1	19.0	6.0	4.9	8.9
Other	0.9	0.0	1.4	1.2	1.4	0.6	2.0	0.0	1.8
No reply	14.7	10.6	12.9	17.9	12.5	13.1	28.0	11.9	21.4
Not implementing Off-JT targeted at employees engaging in the main job	23.0	9.6	15.7	21.0	23.6	25.6	26.0	29.4	33.9

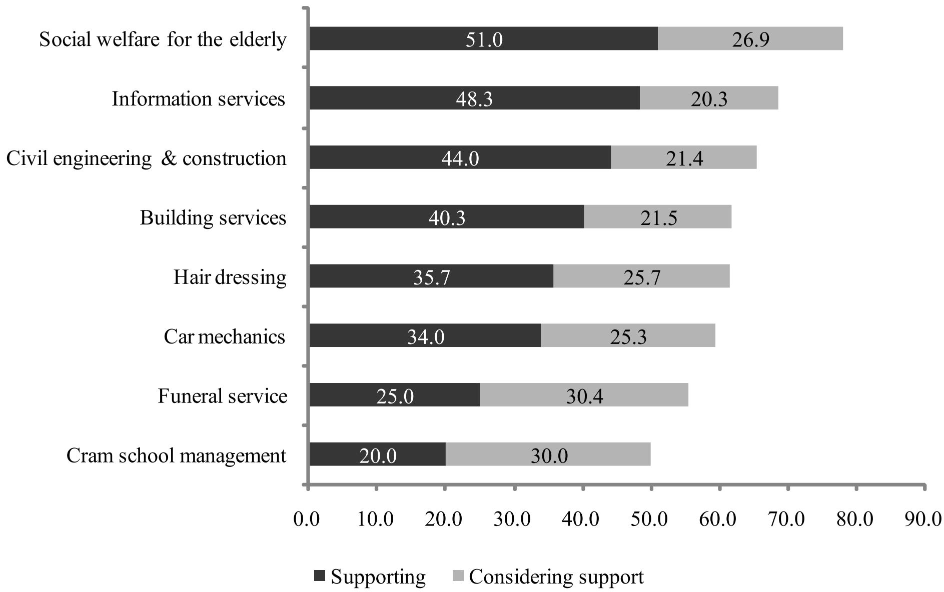


Figure 1. Provision of Support for Self-Development Efforts by Employees Engaging in Principal Job Roles (unit: %)

in-house activities, such as OJT and Off-JT, (iii) a group represented by the funeral services sector, which apparently depends entirely on OJT, (iv) a group represented by the information services and civil engineering and construction sectors, which depends heavily on self-development efforts, and (v) a group represented by the cram school sector, which does not make active use of any means.

When asked to cite problems that impede human resources development for employees engaging in the principal job role (Table 4), more than 20% of the companies surveyed replied that they did not recognize any particular problems in the funeral services, cram school, and car mechanics sectors, while that ratio was just around 10% in the social welfare for the elderly and information services sectors. What was notable about the social welfare for the elderly sector is that the ratio of companies that replied that employees quit their jobs soon after acquiring adequate skills was double or triple the ratio in other business sectors. This problem was also cited frequently in the hair dressing sector. This suggests that companies in these two sectors face difficulty retaining employees despite their active implementation of education and training. On the other hand, in the information services sector, in which the ratio of companies that did not recognize any particular problem was low as in the case of the social welfare for the elderly sector, many companies cited problems that are apparently caused by an excessive dependence on self-development efforts, such as that employees are too busy to undertake education and training and that it is quite costly to use external education and training institutions.

Table 4. Problems Impeding Human Resources Development for Employees Engaging in the Principal Job Roles (%)

	All respondents	Funeral services	Cram school management	Car mechanics	Hair dressing	Civil engineering & construction	Building services	Information services	Social welfare for the elderly
n	897	56	50	162	70	168	144	143	104
No particular problem	16.2	23.2	22.0	21.6	15.7	15.5	15.3	11.9	9.6
Difficult to clarify the required skills	12.6	10.7	14.0	8.0	10.0	11.3	15.3	17.5	13.5
Difficult to communicate the required skills to employees	8.0	7.1	8.0	9.9	15.7	4.8	8.3	7.0	6.7
Lack of employee motivation	18.5	14.3	6.0	28.4	25.7	14.3	21.5	13.3	16.3
Little time for employees to receive training	49.1	28.6	42.0	35.2	21.4	59.5	52.8	58.7	68.3
Employees quit jobs soon after acquiring adequate skills	17.9	16.1	16.0	11.1	37.1	12.5	18.8	11.2	34.6
Not aware of what training institutions are located where	3.1	0.0	6.0	3.7	7.1	3.6	3.5	2.1	0.0
Lack of training institutions providing adequate training programs	7.6	8.9	18.0	4.3	4.3	11.9	5.6	7.0	5.8
Costing much to use external training institutions	25.0	14.3	24.0	14.8	25.7	26.2	27.1	37.1	25.0
Not aware of how to apply for national subsidies for training/ application procedures are complex	6.7	3.6	16.0	6.8	7.1	3.6	6.3	9.1	5.8
Other	1.9	8.9	0.0	1.2	5.7	0.6	0.7	2.8	0.0
No reply	6.4	7.1	6.0	10.5	11.4	5.4	4.2	4.9	2.9

IV. Clarification of Required Skills and Training

1. Clarification of Required Skills

The circumstances companies are faced with are changing considerably, as exemplified by the intensifying competition, changing industrial structures, and the ongoing IT revolution, as well as the rebuilding of business strategies and restructuring of internal control systems pursued by companies to cope with these changes. In a situation such as this, quickly developing and retaining personnel capable of adapting themselves to new business strategies and internal control systems is essential to achieving corporate growth. Most likely, the key to quickly developing and retaining such personnel will be clarifying as much as possible the skills required of personnel who will be the wellspring of corporate competitiveness and implementing education and training suited to the development of such skills.[5] This section will look at how companies in the service industry are implementing activities related to the clarification of the required skills and how such activities affect the implementation and results of employee education and training.

In response to a question asking companies about how advanced they were in clarifying the skills required of employees engaging in the principal job roles that were mentioned in the previous section, 72.0% said they were either well advanced or somewhat advanced in doing so. As indicated by this result, companies are fairly confident about their efforts to clarify the required skills. Clarification is well advanced particularly in the hair dressing, cram school, funeral service, and civil engineering and construction sectors (Table 5).

Broadly speaking, there are two ways whereby companies inform their employees of the required skills: one is informing all employees of the required skills in general and the other is informing individual employees of the specific skills required of them. In the former, which is used to publicize the skills required by the company from the long-term perspective, using oral means of top-down communication, such as communication at a meeting or in a small group (56.5%) and at routine morning assemblies (32.4%), are more popular than using written means of communication, such as specifying the skills in the job description statement (8.8%), disclosing them as part of the personnel management and salary systems (12.5%) and communicating them via in-house LAN (8.2%) and via circulars and other documents (9.1%). Employees receive individualized information mainly to clarify the skills required at the moment through communication during routine work (65.4%) and through OJT (28.8%).

The mix of means of communication used to inform employees of the required skills vary from business sector to business sector. In the social welfare for the elderly sector, a greater variety of means of communication is used than in other sectors. Communication at

5 For the importance of clarification of various management-related resources, including human resources, and skills related to the implementation of management activities, refer to Endo (2005), Koyama (2009), Matsui, Ishitani, Sakuma, and Kojima (2009) and Nagao (2009).

Table 5. The Degree of Clarification of the Skills Required of Employees Engaging in the Principal Job Roles (%)

	n	Well advanced in clarifying	Somewhat advanced in clarifying	Neither advanced nor lagging in clarifying	Lagging somewhat in clarifying	Lagging in clarifying	No reply
All respondents	897	28.1	43.9	13.6	10.5	2.1	1.8
Cram school management	50	40.0	32.0	12.0	14.0	2.0	0.0
Building services	144	20.8	45.1	15.3	14.6	4.2	0.0
Car mechanics	162	22.8	48.1	16.0	10.5	1.2	1.2
Information services	143	23.1	44.8	18.2	10.5	1.4	2.1
Funeral services	56	37.5	35.7	12.5	7.1	5.4	1.8
Civil engineering & construction	168	31.0	44.0	10.7	11.3	0.6	2.4
Hair dressing	70	50.0	38.6	4.3	4.3	0.0	2.9
Social welfare for the elderly	104	23.1	48.1	13.5	7.7	3.8	3.8

a meeting or in a small group is the most popular means in the hair dressing sector and routine morning assemblies are frequently used in the car mechanics sector. In the information services sector, in-house LAN, OJT, job description statements, and disclosure as part of the personnel management and salary systems are favored. Use of circulars and other documents, disclosure as part of the personnel management and salary systems, and informal communication are popular in the cram school sector, while communication during routine work is favored in the civil engineering and construction sectors (Table 6).

What kinds of companies are well advanced in clarifying the required skills? Presumably, there are two reasons why a company clarifies these. One is that informing employees of the required skills while accurately identifying the skills they have acquired is essential to implementing education and training effectively and efficiently. The other reason is that it is important to form the optimal career for each employee by appropriately matching the employer and the employee, or the job and the worker.

Having set independent and dependent variables based on the above thesis, we will identify the characteristics of companies that are well advanced in clarifying the required

Table 6. Means of Informing Employees Engaging in the Principal Job Roles of the Required Skills (%)

	All respondents	Cram school management	Building services	Car mechanics	Information services	Funeral services	Civil engineering & construction	Hair dressing	Social welfare for the elderly
n	897	50	144	162	143	56	168	70	104
At a meeting or in a small group	56.5	60.0	53.5	43.2	58.7	53.6	53.6	64.3	77.9
At routine morning meetings	32.4	18.0	25.0	54.3	11.2	41.1	22.0	51.4	44.2
Via internal LAN	8.2	12.0	5.6	1.2	18.9	7.1	7.1	5.7	10.6
Via circulars and other documents	9.1	14.0	9.0	5.6	5.6	5.4	6.5	7.1	25.0
During routine work	65.4	64.0	67.4	65.4	62.2	66.1	69.6	58.6	65.4
Through OJT	28.8	36.0	30.6	9.3	39.2	25.0	24.4	20.0	53.8
Job description statement	8.8	6.0	7.6	3.1	11.9	3.6	6.0	10.0	23.1
Disclosure as part of personnel mamagement and salary systems	12.5	24.0	4.9	2.5	25.9	5.4	8.3	20.0	20.2
Informal communication	15.1	22.0	14.6	9.9	16.1	16.1	13.1	12.9	23.1
Other	3.1	2.0	5.6	1.9	3.5	3.6	4.2	0.0	1.9
Not taking any particular step to communicate	3.9	10.0	4.9	1.9	5.6	1.8	3.0	4.3	2.9
No reply	1.0	0.0	0.0	1.2	0.0	1.8	1.2	4.3	1.0

skills by using the ordinal logistic regression analysis model. The dependent variables used in this model are represented as points awarded according to the replies given by the respondent companies in response to questions regarding the clarification of the required skills. Meanwhile, independent variables were set on the basis of the replies to two questions. One of the questions, related to activities to inform employees of the required skills, asked the companies whether they have a mechanism to assess employee performance and reflect it in the their treatment of employees, while the other, related to activities to identify the skills acquired by employees, asked the companies what types of information they collect and sort regarding individual employees. Independent variables related to the formation of optimal careers for the companies' employees were also set on the basis of the replies to two questions. One of them asked the companies whether they require employees engaging in the principal job roles to have formal job qualifications (meaning qualifications that workers who engage in specified jobs must obtain), and the other asked them how useful employees engaging in the principal job roles would be if employed by other companies of a similar size in the same business sector.

In addition to the above independent and dependent variables, we set control variables that represent business sectors, the size of the workforces of companies deemed to be influencing the clarification of the required skills and employer companies' self-assessments of the quality of regular employees compared with those at other companies of a similar size in the same sector.[6]

Table 7 shows the results of our analysis. The results indicate, first, that companies that assess the performance of their employees and reflect this assessment in their treatment are more advanced in clarifying the required skills than others and, second, that companies that have identified the business departments and roles in which the employees have experience, their training records, and their status of self-development efforts, are more advanced in the clarification. Third, companies that require employees engaging in the principal job roles to have formal job qualifications are more advanced – by a statistically significant margin—than other companies in clarifying the required skills. Fourth, companies whose employees with skills that would be sufficiently useful to other companies of a similar size in the same business sector are more advanced in the clarification.

Even if other factors are controlled, it is obvious from the above results that companies which inform their employees of the required skills, try to identify the skills acquired by their employees, and seek to form the optimal career for employees by appropriately matching them with jobs, are well advanced in clarifying the required skills.

6 Self-assessment was adopted as a control variable because companies that give high marks to the quality of their own regular employees are considered to be well advanced in skills development, indicating that the intensity of skills development activities and the degree of clarification of the required skills are correlated with each other.

Table 7. Which Sectors' Companies Are Well Advanced in Clarifying the Required Skills? (ordinal logistic regression analysis model, N=795)

	Co-efficient	Standard error
Industry		
(Civil engineering & construction used as a reference group)		
Cram school management	0.172	0.333
Building services	-0.446	0.236 +
Car mechanics	-0.364	0.224
Information services	-0.380	0.245
Funeral services	0.021	0.330
Hair dressing	0.812	0.309 **
Social welfare for the elderly	-0.345	0.253
Number of employees	0.000	0.000
Quality of regular employees	0.261	0.086 **
Collecting and sorting information concerning individual employees		
Records of experience before joining the company	0.108	0.169
Business departments experienced in the past	0.401	0.151 **
Records of training	0.377	0.186 *
Status of self-development efforts	0.487	0.212 *
Certification	-0.189	0.173
Presence of requirement for formal job qualifications	0.423	0.159 **
Usefulness of employees with adequate skills	0.356	0.094 **
Assessment of employee performance and its reflection in employee treatment	0.885	0.163 **
-2LL	2076.129	
Second power of χ	149.468**	
NagelkerkeR^2	0.185	

**p<.01, *p<.05, +p<.10.

Notes: 1. The dependent variable is how advanced the companies are in clarifying the skills required for employees engaging in the principal job role, with five points awarded to companies well advanced in the clarification, four points to companies somewhat advanced, three points to companies neither advanced nor lagging in the clarification, two points to companies somewhat lagging and one point to companies lagging.

2. The figure representing the "number of employees" is directly used as a variable for each of the respondent companies.

3. The "quality of regular employees" represents a company's assessment of its own employees compared with the quality of those at other companies of a similar size in the same business sector. Five points were awarded to companies that recognized the quality of employees as superior, four points to those that recognized it as somewhat superior, three points to those that recognized it as ordinary, two points to those that recognized it as somewhat inferior and one point to those that recognized it as inferior.

4. "How useful employees with sufficient skills would be to other companies" represents the company's assessment of such usefulness for employees engaging in the company's principal job role. Five points were awarded to companies that recognized their employees as useful, four points to those that recognized them as somewhat useful, three points to those that recognized them neither as useful or useless, two points to those that recognized them as rather useless and one point to those that recognized them as completely useless.

5. All variables other than those indicated in above 1 to 4 are dummy variables, with "1" assigned to companies that fit the description of the variables and "0" to those that did not.

2. Degree of Clarification and Human Resources Development

Corporate education and training is an investment made in human resources in order to secure employee skills for the immediate moment or for the future. Generally speaking, this investment has three stages: the input stage, which relates to the amount of resources to be deployed, the processing stage, which relates to how the deployed resources are used in order to achieve a goal, and the output stage, in which the results are assessed. This applies to education and training, as well.[7] This report will examine whether the degree of clarification of the required skills affects the three stages of education and training.

Input, which is generated by the resources deployed for investment, is indicated by four benchmarks related to human, physical, and financial resources and information. The benchmark related to human resources indicates the status of the organization responsible for education and training. Specifically, it may indicate the presence or absence of a department or staff dedicated to education and training. The benchmark related to physical resources indicates the status of educational materials, equipment, and facilities used for education and training. For example, it may indicate the presence or absence of seminar houses, training centers, and training materials and equipment. The benchmark related to financial resources indicates the amount of expenses for education and training, and the benchmark related to information indicates, for example, the status of the planning of education and training programs and the collection of information concerning training materials. How much a company should deploy the above four resources is closely related to its basic strategy for education and training and its basic policy to be implemented based this strategy.

First, we will look at the correlation between a company's policy on education and training and how advanced it is in clarifying the required skills (Table 8). This table shows that many of the companies that are well advanced in clarifying the required skills have implemented skills development programs while considering what kind of personnel will become necessary for business activities in which they may be engaging several years later. On the other hand, in most cases, companies that lag behind in clarifying the required skills have not set any particular policies for human resources development, or, although they have set such policies, they implement skills development programs for the purpose of having individual employees acquire the skills necessary for performing their current jobs. This suggests that stragglers in the clarification are focusing on developing skills necessary for the immediate moment and have little spare capacity for developing skills that may be required in the future.

As for the correlation between the clarification of the required skills and input related to education and training, the ratios of companies that have personnel responsible for

[7] For the details of the approach of regarding education and training as investment activities comprised of three stages, and the elements of each stage which we will mention later, refer to Fujinami (2003).

Table 8. Clarification of the Required Skills and Input Related to Education and Training (%)

	All respondents	Well advanced in clarification	Somewhat advanced in clarification	Neither advanced nor lagging	Somewhat lagging in clarification
n	897	252	394	122	113
Policies for training and skills development					
Implementing skills development while considering what personnel will be necessary for future business activities	11.6	21.0	11.2	3.3	2.7
Implementing skills development so as to enhance existing personnel's skills	38.1	41.7	39.8	41.0	23.0
Implementing skills development to help individual employees acquire skills necessary for performing their current jobs	25.0	25.4	24.6	23.0	28.3
Set no particular policy for training and skills development	19.7	8.7	19.0	27.9	39.8
No reply	5.6	3.2	5.3	4.9	6.2
Status of input related to education and training					
Securing budget funds each year	12.7	17.1	11.4	9.8	10.6
Appointed personnel responsible for planning	12.4	17.5	11.9	10.7	5.3
Having training materials and equipment in place	7.4	11.1	6.3	4.9	5.3
Collecting information concerning training materials and programs	26.1	31.7	27.7	21.3	14.2

planning off-JT programs, those that have training materials, equipment and facilities for off-JT in place, and those that collect information concerning training materials and programs are high among companies that are active in clarifying the required skills. There is a tendency that the more a company has clarified the required skills, the more resources it deploys to develop human and physical capital and collect information. Moreover, the ratio of companies that allocate budget funds to the deployment of resources for skills development each year is high among companies that are active in clarifying the required skills. From this, we may presume that the clarification of the required skills promotes financial investment as well as the deployment of human and physical capital and the collection of information.

Table 9. Clarification of Required Skills and OJT-Related Activities (%)

	All respondents	Well advanced in clarification	Somewhat advanced in clarification	Neither advanced nor lagging	Somewhat lagging in clarification
n	897	252	394	122	113
OJT-related activities					
Implementing training and skills development according to a plan under a designated leader	48.3	67.9	49.0	33.6	21.2
Using work process manuals for training and skills development	37.5	54.0	37.1	24.6	18.6
Taking care to ensure a transition from easy to difficult work	69.9	74.1	72.1	63.1	67.3
Requiring employees to experience related jobs on a rotation basis	43.5	48.0	46.4	31.2	38.9
Holding employee seminars and meetings for presenting proposals	41.0	57.6	39.6	25.5	27.4

Note: The above percentages represent the combined percentages of companies implementing the activities vigorously and those implementing them somewhat vigorously.

Next, we will look at the correlation between the degree of clarification of the required skills and the process of education and training. The process of education and training is comprised of six elements: (i) Who: Who implements education and training? (Who are the trainers and teachers?); (ii) When: When are education and training implemented? (What are the hours of the day and the duration of education and training?); (iii) Where: Which institutions implement education and training?; (iv) For Whom: Who is educated and trained? (Who are the trainees?) ; (v) What: What kind of education and training is implemented? Specifically what are the priorities of education and training? (What are the contents of education and training programs?); (vi) How: How are education and training implemented? (What is the method of education and training?). This report focuses on the correlation between the method of education and training—OJT in particular—and the clarification of the required skills.

As is indicated in Table 9, companies well advanced in clarifying the required skills are also active in implementing OJT programs, particularly those that take a significant amount of time and money, such as programs implemented according to a plan under a designated leader, programs using work process manuals, and employee seminars and meetings for presenting proposals.

While it would be possible to examine the results of education and training implemented by companies from various viewpoints, this section will focus on the correlation

Table 10. Clarification of the Required Skills and Benefits of Education and Training (%)

	All respondents	Well advanced in clarification	Somewhat advanced in clarification	Neither advanced nor lagging	Somewhat lagging in clarification	Lagging in clarification
n	897	252	394	122	94	19
Improvement in workplace productivity	53.1	63.1	54.6	45.9	41.5	15.8
Increased ease of hiring activities	15.7	22.0	14.3	13.9	9.5	0.0
Rise in employee retention rate	31.2	40.4	32.2	18.9	24.5	10.5
Improvement in employee motivation	51.1	60.4	54.1	36.9	41.5	21.1
Improvement in workplace human relationships	29.2	38.9	27.9	23.7	21.3	5.3
Improvement in customer satisfaction	53.2	63.1	52.8	46.7	46.8	21.1

Note: The above figures represent the combined percentages of companies that recognized significant benefits and those that recognized some benefits.

between the degree of clarification of the required skills and how companies assess the benefits of education and training in terms of (i) improvement in workplace productivity, (ii) increased ease of hiring activities, (iii) a rise in the employee retention rate, (iv) improvement in employee motivation, (v) improvement in workplace human relationships, and (vi) improvement in customer satisfaction.

Table 10 shows that companies well advanced in clarifying the required skills recognized significant benefits of education and training in terms of improvement in customer satisfaction, in workplace productivity, in employee motivation, and in workplace human relationships. In light of these survey results together with the results of the analysis of the input and process stages of education and training, we may presume that the more companies are advanced in clarifying the required skills, the more active they are in making an investment in the input and process stages and the greater benefits they reap from education and training.

V. Professional Certification and Human Resources Development

In the service industry, there are numerous professional certifications that may be obtained by individual employees. Professional certification is useful for companies in that it helps to select personnel out of the labor market in a rational and efficient manner and in that it promotes training of employees when employees are encouraged to obtain certification (Agata 2010). How are companies in the service industry making use of professional

Table 11. Use of Certifications as a Benchmark and the Number of Education and Training Initiatives Implemented

	Number of initiatives actively implemented in the workplace	Number of Off-JT and self-development support initiatives implemented
Is a formal job qualification required?		
Required	2.63	1.49
Not required	2.22	1.25
Are employees ordered to obtain some manner of certification as a part of their job duties?		
Yes	2.78	2.25
No	2.35	1.24
Are employees encouraged to obtain some manner of certification before attaining a certain position?		
Yes	2.90	2.01
No	2.29	1.21
Are employees encouraged to obtain some manner of certification for self-development?		
Yes	2.70	1.86
No	2.30	1.18

certification in implementing human resources development?

This report will first look at how companies are treating professional certification in terms of whether they require employees engaging in the principal job roles to have formal job qualifications and whether they use any certification as a benchmark for skills development and career formation. Regarding whether the companies use any certification as a benchmark for skills development and career formation, the survey asked three more detailed questions: (i) whether the companies order employees to obtain any certification as a part of their job duties, (ii) whether the companies encourage employees to obtain any certification before attaining a certain position and (iii) whether the companies encourage employees to obtain any certification as a self-development effort. Many of the certifications frequently cited in response to the questions (i) to (iii) were common to all or two of the three, indicating that the same certification is used as a benchmark in different ways at different companies.

Do the differences in the requirement for formal job qualifications and the presence or absence of any certification being used as a benchmark for skills development and career formation affect the implementation of education and training? To find the answer, we looked at how active companies using certifications as a benchmark are in implementing routine education and training in the workplace, in implementing off-JT, and in supporting self-development efforts (Table 11). On average, companies that require formal job qualifications implement more education and training initiatives than those do not require it, while companies that order employees to obtain certification as a part of their job duties and those that encourage employees to obtain some manner of certification before attaining a certain position implement more education and training initiatives than companies that do not. These differences are statistically significant. As for off-JT and support for self-development efforts, companies that require employees engaging in the principal job roles to have formal job qualifications and those that use certification as a benchmark for skills development and career formation implement more education and training initiatives on average than companies that do not. These results indicate that requiring employees engaging in the principal job roles to have formal job qualifications and using some manner of certification as a benchmark for skills development and career formation may lead to active implementation of education and training.

Is there any correlation between actively implementing education and training and requiring employees engaging in the principal job roles to have formal job qualifications or using some manner of certification as a benchmark for skills development and career formation even if such factors as business sector, company size, and business performance are controlled or if the difference in the degree of willingness to hire regular employees, which could considerably affect the implementation of education and training, is controlled? Table 12 indicates the results of a multiple regression analysis using the intensity of routine education and training activities in the workplace as a dependent variable, and Table 13 shows the results of a multiple regression analysis using the strength of support for Off-JT and self-development efforts as a dependent variable. These analyses revealed that the dependent variables have a statistically significant positive correlation with requiring employees engaging in the principal job roles to have formal job qualifications and using some manner of certification as a benchmark for skills development and career formation. It can be said that requiring employees engaging in the principal job roles to have formal job qualifications or using some manner of certification as a benchmark for skills development and career formation promote corporate education and training.

Table 12. Correlation between the Intensity of Training and Skills Development (multiple regression analysis)

	β	t-ratio
Formal job qualification is required	0.120	2.639**
Employees are ordered to obtain some manner of certification as a part of their jobs		
Employees are encouraged to obtain some manner of certification before attaining a certain position		
Employees are encouraged to obtain some manner of certification for self-development		
Industry (Reference group: Cram school management)		
Building services	0.097	1.470
Car mechanics	0.004	0.050
Information services	0.034	0.493
Funeral services	0.092	1.755+
Civil engineering & construction	0.085	1.106
Hair dressing	0.224	3.820***
Social welfare for the elderly	0.193	3.096**
Number of employees (Reference group: five to nine employees)		
10-29	-0.009	-0.187
30-49	0.025	0.584
50-99	0.070	1.529
100 and more	0.024	0.458
More than half of the workers engaging in the principal job roles are non-regular employees	0.009	0.204
Sales trend in the past three years	0.080	2.121*
Willingness to hire regular employees	0.114	2.803**
Constant		3.778***
R^2	0.136	
Adjusted R^2	0.117	
N	682	

***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05 +p<.10.

Notes: 1. Companies that employ four workers or fewer were excluded from the analysis.

2. In each of the models, the dependent variable is the intensity of human resources development activities in the workplace (the number of training and skills development initiatives actively implemented in the workplace).

3. In "willingness to hire regular employees," two points were awarded to companies that invited applications for the position of regular employee from both new graduates and mid-career workers, one point to companies that invited applications for the position of regular employee from either new graduates or mid-career workers, and no points were awarded to companies that did not invite applications for the position of regular employee from either new graduates or mid-career workers.

Activities in the Workplace and the Use of Certifications as a Benchmark

β	t-ratio	β	t-ratio	β	t-ratio
0.090	2.455*				
		0.122	3.271**		
				0.067	1.753+
0.107	1.621	0.104	1.584	0.109	1.648
0.055	0.746	0.053	0.723	0.061	0.826
0.037	0.528	0.029	0.421	0.022	0.308
0.093	1.781+	0.089	1.706+	0.089	1.701+
0.127	1.695+	0.102	1.351	0.113	1.490
0.276	5.049***	0.280	5.141***	0.279	5.086***
0.228	3.729***	0.208	3.396**	0.210	3.382**
-0.018	-0.370	-0.017	-0.356	-0.018	-0.367
0.011	0.248	0.017	0.390	0.017	0.396
0.061	1.328	0.066	1.450	0.066	1.438
0.018	0.345	0.006	0.121	0.018	0.350
0.002	0.037	-0.001	-0.017	0.003	0.079
0.080	2.105*	0.081	2.143*	0.071	1.845+
0.109	2.674**	0.101	2.487*	0.108	2.642**
	3.931***		4.002***		4.045***
0.135		0.141		0.131	
0.115		0.122		0.112	
682		682		682	

4. In “sales trend in the past three years,” five points were awarded to companies that recorded a sales increase, four points to companies that recorded a slight increase, three points to companies whose sales remained unchanged, two points to companies that recorded a slight decline and one point to companies that recorded a decline.
5. All variables other than those indicated in above 3 and 4 are dummy variables, with “1” assigned to companies that fit the description of the variables and “0” to those that did not.

Table 13. Correlation between the Strength of Support for Off-JT and (multiple regression analysis)

	β	t-ratio
Formal job qualification is required	0.161	3.628***
Employees are ordered to obtain some manner of certification as a part of their jobs		
Employees are encouraged to obtain some manner of certification before attaining a certain position		
Employees are encouraged to obtain some manner of certification for self-development		
Industry (Reference group: Cram school management)		
Building services	0.111	1.734+
Car mechanics	0.131	1.746+
Information services	0.226	3.345**
Funeral services	0.028	0.560
Civil engineering & construction	0.165	2.205*
Hair dressing	0.096	1.689+
Social welfare for the elderly	0.171	2.825**
Number of employees (Reference group: five to nine employees)		
10-29	0.021	0.452
30-49	0.104	2.469*
50-99	0.211	4.752***
100 and more	0.289	5.685***
More than half of the workers engaging in the principal job roles are non-regular employees	0.006	0.149
Sales trend in the past three years	0.060	1.633
Willingness to hire regular employees	0.097	2.457**
Constant		-0.388
R^2	0.186	
Adjusted R^2	0.168	
N	682	

***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05 +p<.10.

Note: The subjects of the analysis and the treatment of variables are the same as in Table 12.

Self-Development Efforts and the Use of Certifications as a Benchmark

β	t-ratio	β	t-ratio	β	t-ratio
0.247	7.125***				
		0.194	5.406***		
				0.180	4.905***
0.110	1.771+	0.117	1.854+	0.116	1.832+
0.180	2.599*	0.193	2.732**	0.197	2.787**
0.237	3.601***	0.219	3.275**	0.196	2.909**
0.029	0.580	0.023	0.465	0.018	0.364
0.214	3.014**	0.179	2.472*	0.176	2.416*
0.161	3.124**	0.171	3.271**	0.168	3.202**
0.217	3.760***	0.185	3.149**	0.169	2.836**
0.003	0.058	0.009	0.202	0.003	0.068
0.075	1.827+	0.093	2.226*	0.093	2.222*
0.187	4.294***	0.205	4.669**	0.201	4.542***
0.273	5.500***	0.261	5.166**	0.274	5.416***
0.000	0.012	-0.006	-0.154	0.005	0.126
0.062	1.727+	0.062	1.696+	0.037	1.003
0.088	2.302*	0.077	1.982*	0.086	2.189*
	-0.292		-0.115		0.064
0.229		0.205		0.199	
0.212		0.187		0.181	
682		682		682	

VI. Conclusion

Above, we examined the status of human resources development in the service industry and companies' initiatives that could affect human resources development based on the results of the analysis of a survey. Our analysis made it clear that the means of training and skills development targeted at core personnel differ from business sector to business sector in the service industry. It is also evident that companies that are well advanced in clarifying the skills required of core personnel are also actively involved in the input and process stages of education and training and that such active involvement may make education and training more effective in various ways. The analyses also revealed that companies that require employees engaging in the principal job roles to have formal job qualifications or that use some manner of certification as a benchmark for skills development and career formation are more active in implementing education and training than those that do not. Moreover, companies that require employees engaging in the principal job roles to have formal job qualifications tend to be more advanced in clarifying the skills required of core personnel than those that do not.

In light of the results of our analyses, what should be done in order to promote human resources development in the service industry? First, it will be necessary for industry organizations that well understand the status of corporate management and manpower to lead activities to develop and popularize qualifications that suit the circumstances and to implement measures to support those activities, given that the presence of various certifications other than formal job qualifications that are regarded by companies as essential to career formation and improvement in job performance may lead to active implementation of a variety of skills development initiatives by them.

When small and medium-size companies in the service industry implement education and training activities in an effective and efficient manner, the clarification of the required skills plays a significant role, and use of professional certifications as a benchmark makes no small contributions to the clarification. In light of this, the establishment of standards that may be used across the boundaries of companies for assessing effective professional skills will be important from the viewpoint of promoting human resources development at companies.

References

Agata, Kenji. 2010. Shokugyo shikaku no koyo wo do toraeruka [How should we recognize the utility of professional certification in Japan?]. The Japanese Journal of Labour Studies 52, no. 1:20-27.

Endo, Isao. 2005. *Mieruka* [Clarification]. Tokyo: Toyo Keizai Shinposha.

Fujimoto, Makoto. 2010. "Chusho sabisugyo ni okeru jinzai ikusei, noryoku kaihatsu" ni kansuru anketo chosa no gaiyo [Key points of the survey on human resources development at small and medium-size companies in the service industry]. In *Chusho sabisugyo ni okeru jinzai ikusei, noryoku kaihatsu: Kigyo, jugyoin anketo chosa* [Human resources development at small and medium-size companies in the service industry: A survey on companies and employees]. JILPT Research Series no. 74, the Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training, Tokyo.

Fujinami, Miho. 2003. Henka suru jinzai ikusei seisaku [Changing policy for human resources development]. In *Ko to soshiki no seika shugi* [Performance-based assessment of individuals and organizations], ed. Koichiro Imano. Tokyo: Chuo Keizaisha.

The Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training, ed. 2010. *Chusho sabisugyo ni okeru jinzai ikusei, noryoku kaihatsu: Kigyo, jugyoin anketo chosa* [Human resources development at small and medium-size companies in the service industry: A survey on companies and employees]. JILPT Research Series no. 74, the Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training, Tokyo.

The Japan Institute of Labour, ed. 1997. *Sabisugyo no keiei kakushin to jugyoin fukushi* [Management innovation in the service industry and employee wellbeing]. JIL Research Report no. 92, The Japan Institute of Labour, Tokyo.

Koyama, Noboru. 2009. *Keieino mieruka* [Clarification of management]. Tokyo: Chukei Shuppan.

Matsui, Junichi, Shingo Ishitani, Yoko Sakuma, and Mika Kojima. 2009. *Shigoto no mieruka 99 no shikake* [99 ideas for the clarification of jobs]. Tokyo: Nippon Noritsu Kyokai Manejimento Senta.

Nagao, Kazuhiro. 2009. *Shigoto no mieruka* [Clarification of jobs]. Tokyo: Chukei Shuppan.

Statistics and Information Department, Minister's Secretariat, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, ed. 2003. *Sabisugyo shugyo jittai chosha* (Survey on Employment Conditions in Service). http://www.mhlw.go.jp/toukei/itiran/roudou/koyou/sangyo/02/index.html (accessed December 10, 2010).

JILPT Research Activities

International Workshop

The Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training (JILPT), the Chinese Academy of Labour and Social Security (CALSS), and the Korea Labor Institute (KLI) held a research forum on the theme "Temporary Agency Workers: Current Situation and Policy Tasks" on October 28 in Seoul, Korea. The three labor institutes hold a forum once every year with a common theme and present their research results with the aim of promoting mutual understanding among the three countries and raising the standards of research. The research papers presented at the forum are shown below. The papers (in full text) are available on the JILPT website (http://www.jil.go.jp/english/index.html).

JILPT

Koji Takahashi, Temporary Agency Workers in Japan: Current Situation and Related Issues

Masato Gunji, The Careers and Work Styles of Temporary Agerncy Workers in Japan, as Examined through the "Survey on Temporary Agency Workers' Careers and Work Styles"

KLI

Kim Seungteak, Temporary Agency Workers in Korea: Current Situation and Policy Issues

CALSS

Li Tian Guo, Temporary Agency Workers in China and Relevant Regulations

Deng Ting, The Current Situation of Temporary Agency Workers in China, in Light of Concerns over Temporary Agency Workers at IBIDEN

Research Reports

The findings of research activities undertaken by JILPT are compiled into Research Reports (in Japanese). Below is a list of the reports published from May to August of 2010. The complete Japanese text of these reports can be accessed from the JILPT website. We are currently working on uploading abstracts of reports in English onto the JILPT website as well.

Research Reports

No.126 An Interview Survey on Fixed-Term Contracts for Workers and Employment Management: Companies' Current Application of Fixed-Term Employment Contracts and Related Policy Issues (September 2010)

No.125 Career Education During the School Years and Young Peoples' Professional Lives (November 2010)

Discussion Papers

DPS-10-06 A Study into Points of Controversy in Recent Discussions on Career Guidance and the State of Adult Career Guidance (Hideo Shimomura, November 2010)

Research Series

No.81 A Survey on Support for High School and University Graduates without Jobs (November 2010)

No.77 A Survey on the Minimum Wage (September 2010)

No.76 A Survey on the Employment of Out-of-Prefecture Workers, Their Utilization, and Core Personnel in SMEs: Toward Facilitating the Retention of Core Personnel (September 2010)

Research Material Series

No.79 Irregular Forms of Employment in the West and Related Issues: A Look at Germany, France, England, and the United States (November 2010)

No.78 A Theoretical and Empirical Research Study into the Structure of Unemployment (September 2010)

No.77 A Research Study on the Employment System and Human Resource Strategies (November 2010)

No.76 Dispute Settlement by Autonomous Unions, from the Example of Three Sexual Harassment Disputes (September 2010)

No.75 An Economic Analysis of Wage Disparity between Men and Women (September 2010)

No.74 The 10th Japan-Korea Workshop Report—The Status of Individual Labor Disputes and Related Issues: A Comparison between Japan and South Korea (September 2010)

Japan Labor Review Order Form

The Japan Labor Review is published four times a year and is free of charge.
To receive the Japan Labor Review on a regular basis, please fill out this form and fax to the Editorial Office at : +81-3-3594-1113.
(You can also register via our website: http://www.jil.go.jp/english/JLR.htm)

NAME: Mr. / Ms. ______________________________

TITLE: ______________________________

ORGANIZATION: ______________________________

ADDRESS: ______________________________

____

______________ ZIPCODE: __________ COUNTRY: __________

TEL: ______________ FAX: ______________

EMAIL: ______________________________

Soliciting Your Opinions

To improve the contents of the Review and provide you with the most useful information, please take the time to answer the questions below.

What did you think of the contents?
(Please check the most appropriate box.)

☐ Very useful ☐ Useful ☐ Fair ☐ Not very useful ☐ Not useful at all

(If you have additional comments, please use the space below.)

What issues do you want the Review to write about?

❖ If you wish to unsubscribe the Japan Labor Review, please send an e-mail to jlr@jil.go.jp placing the word “remove” in the subject line.