

Abstracts

Future of the System of Regulations on Working Hours for White-Collar Workers in Japan

Yoichi Shimada (Waseda University)

Recently, we proceeded to discuss whether to exempt the normal regulations concerning working hours from white-collar workers in Japan with the development of performance-based wage systems for white-collar workers. It is true that the legal systems of regulations on working hours which the Labour Standard Law provides don't have a compatibility with the working styles and the wage system for white-collar workers, because employers are required to pay an overtime premium when they order their employees overtime. But there is a considerable danger that unlimited long working hours threatens the life of white-collar workers, when the exemptions from the normal regulations are carried into effect without taking account of the working styles of white-collar workers. The aim of this study is to examine the situation of regulations on working hours for white-collar workers and to show how to create their appropriate system.

Changing Human Resource Management and "Discretionary Work System"

Atsushi Sato (The Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training)

More and more companies in Japan intend to introduce so-called "performance oriented human resource management system", while some of employee's working hours are increasing. Main purpose of this paper is to clarify the performance oriented system of major firms, focusing on three typical white-collar functions such as software system development, sales promotion, and planning section at headquarter that "discretionary work system" are applied. At the same time, we analyze how managers and workers set their goal, and how managers evaluate them under the discretionary working hour system. The main results are: (1) It is difficult to check distinctively job volume and working hour of each worker applied to that system. (2) This is suggested that a certain check system is required to control overwork. (3) Manager's role is very important for workers to decide the leaving time from workplace at their discretion.

The Promotion Structure of White-Collars for Large Banks in Japan: An Empirical Analysis of Long-Term Promotion Competition Using "Career Tree" Method

Katsuhito Uehara (Hitotsubashi University)

The aim of this paper is to clarify the promotion structure for employees of large banks in Japan. Based on the personnel data published in the bankers' directory, three "career trees" were drawn to analyze the employees of an industrial bank and those of two city banks. The results by the analysis showed that there were two different tendencies; the former have been promoted almost simultaneously for over 20 years since joining, while the latter have shown great disparities in promotion speed (10 years or over) at the time of promotion to the initial managerial position, provided that those outstripped in promotion have been given opportunities to catch up and rise in rank.

The Labour-Management Negotiation about the Selection of Workers in Shifts: A Case of an Electronics Manufacturer in Japan

Kenji Iwata (Setsunan University)

This paper tries to show the labour-management negotiation in a Japanese electronics manufacturer in terms of the selection of workers in a shifts, and factors in changing its rules. A rule that only candidates for shifts could work in shifts were revised in the 1990s. The union agreed to revise how to select workers, because it had aimed for secure employment within the company. One of the main factors for the revision were that it had become difficult to continue to secure employment in the manufacturer.