

Abstracts

Non-Standard Work in the U. S.

Yoshiko Takayama (J-Eurus IR Co., Ltd.)

This study examines the present status of non-standard workers in U. S., and compares non-standard workers and standard workers in U. S. and Japan, using data from the Survey on Contingent and Alternative Work Arrangement supplements to the Current Population Survey of the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, obtained since 1995. Although there has been considerable interest in Japan in non-standard workers in the U. S., the real situation has not hitherto been well understood.

The present paper looks at the actual status of non-standard workers in the U. S., using original data from the survey of the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. In my study, workers in the U. S. were classified into eight categories — independent contractors, on-call workers, temporary help agency workers, contract company workers, direct-hire temporary workers, self-employed workers, part-time workers, and full-time workers in long-term employment. They were compared in various ways such as working modes, wages, educational levels, and occupations.

While there are many analyses by American experts based on the Survey on Contingent and Alternative Work Arrangements, many of them used data from 1995 and 1997. The present study is based on the latest information including wage data obtained by the 1999 survey. It identifies real wages, educational levels and occupational structures of non-standard workers in the U. S. Furthermore, it compares the number of workers by work arrangements in the U. S. and Japan.

Contrary to the common view, it was found that the proportion of full-time regular workers to the total employed is actually larger in U. S. than in Japan.

The "Seniority" in Promotion and Wage Systems of the Japanese Firm: An Empirical Analysis on Personnel Data

Ma Jun (Toyama University)

The present study first analyzes seniority in the promotion and wage increase systems of Japanese companies according to the two factors of age and length of service, and then according to the additional factor of the length of time an employee stays at the same rank in a personnel system, in order to survey blue-collar employees belonging to same-year-entrance cohorts and same-age cohorts at major manufacturing companies. How these three factors function in the promotion and wage increase system of companies was examined. It was demonstrated that the length of service positively affected promotion, while age only affected wage increase. There is competition among employees regarding the speed and level of promotion. If they are able to ascend from the lower ranks early, later promotion to the higher ranks will also be fast, leading to a significantly higher wage level.

The following can be suggested by the results above. Japanese companies provide incentives to motivate employees in acquiring a wide range of integrative skills by relating the length of service to the promotion system. Also the age of employees is included as a factor in the wage increase system to encourage them to continue to learn integrative skills and also provide incentives for lower achievers, without discrimination, in the competition for work promotion. However, in order to encourage employees to acquire extensive integrative skill and organizational skills, evaluation of what has been learnt within the company, rather than the length of service and age, is a decisive factor in an incentive system.

The Effects of Age-Grouped Mismatch on the Shift of UV Curves and Unemployment

Masaru Sasaki (Kansai University)

This paper estimates the decomposition of the outward shift of the aggregate UV curve into the outward shifts of the age-grouped UV curves due to structural changes within each age group and increased mismatches across age groups, using the age-level panel data from Japan. It also estimates the extent to how mismatches across age groups affect unemployment over the period. As one would not expect, it is found that age-grouped mismatches decrease in the late 90s, which leads to the inward shift of the aggregate UV curve. However, its effect is so small and dominated by the effect of the outward shifts of age-grouped UV curves. Therefore, the aggregate UV curve has shifted outward in the 90s despite decreases in mismatches across age groups.

Job-Rotation System of Japanese Civil Servants: A Case Study of Prefecture A

Hodaka Maeura (Tokyo University)

Problems in job-rotation systems of Japanese local governments are often pointed out. The reason of the problems generally talked about is that clerical staff (jimushokuin) are transferred regularly but so soon from one division to another that they cannot accumulate knowledge and experience. The aim of this paper is to clarify the features and such problems, via an analysis of the systems using panel data about 175 civil servants employed by prefectural government A in 1961. Specifically, the frequency, pattern, job-relevance, and range of each transfer were surveyed and analyzed. The findings indicate that clerical staff are transferred from one division to another regularly, but most of their transfers have job relevance. Therefore, it is concluded that the job-rotation system of Japanese local governments is efficient to a degree and that clerical staff do not thereby become generalists; however, it would be required to review the frequency to avoid possible productivity decrease.

A Case Study: What's the Rule of Work-Organization and Implication of Introducing MBO in Local Government?

Yoko Irie (Aichi University)

Discussions about performance management reform have recently been popular in public personnel administration. However, one feature of the work organization of local government has been interpreted as 'obeya-shugi', which refers to people working together, in a large, open-plan area, in cooperation with others. These approaches are contradictory with regard to work organization and goals. In order to make discussions about reform more constructive in the future, it will be necessary to observe the actual state of management in workplaces and reexamine accepted but paradoxical theories.

In this case, these matters were clear: each employee is operating to some extent autonomously. There is no interference in their work even if the employee is little interested in the content of the business and the progress of other members. This does not match the accepted theory regarding work management.

This paper demonstrates that a flexible introduction is necessary in order to introduce of Management by Objectives (MBO) in local government. After bridging the gap relating to the goal, the specification of an organization goal and an individual goal, and the mechanism which creates the motivation of the business, the introduction of MBO becomes meaningful.