

## Abstracts

### The Extent of Employee Representation and Participation and Its Determinants: Econometric Evidence from Japan

**Takao Kato** (Colgate University)

This paper fills an important gap in the literature on the effects of participatory employment practices. Prior studies on the effects of participatory employment practices often assume that once introduced, participatory employment practices change little in their nature and scope over time. Using unique micro data that provide detailed information on various attributes of representative participation mechanisms used by Japanese firms (such as joint labour-management committees and shopfloor committees) as well as the age of such practices, we provide the first direct and systematic evidence that such practices expand significantly in their scope and nature as they age.

### The Process of Changing Working Conditions and Involvement by Labour Representatives

**Shinya Oouchi** (Kobe University)

Currently there is no particular legal regulation which prescribes how labour representatives should be involved in the process of changing working conditions. There remain various matters that are debatable (particularly in cases where working conditions are changed through the modification of work rules), such as how majority representatives should be involved, and how specific involvement on the part of majority labour representatives affects the “reasonableness” test of modified work rules. While focusing on how a balance of interests is achieved between majority and minority of the employees at the workplace, this paper discusses the ideal processes of changing working conditions and stresses the importance of democratic legitimization in formulating working conditions as well as explanation procedures for the opposing minority. Adopting this viewpoint, it can be expected that “reasonableness” of modified work rules should be based mainly on examination of the relevant procedures and that the criteria for “reasonableness” should have more definite clarity.

### Unionization of Part-time Workers and Systems that Reflect Their Opinions: Homogeneous or Heterogeneous Strategy for Union Member Treatment

**OH, Hak-Soo** (The Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training)

Owing to a diversification of the modes of employment, the number of part-timers in Japan has been increasing. In the latter half of the 1990s, RENGO promoted a campaign to expand the organization of workers in order to control the continuous decline in the number of union members. As a result, an increasing number of part-timers have been organized, mainly by UI ZENSEN and the Japan Federation of Service and Distributive Workers Unions. The present paper reports on the results of a survey which targeted six enterprise unions that have promoted the organization of part-time workers. The survey revealed similar situations among the surveyed companies: 1) inclusion of part-timers as core workers as well as in the regular workforce, 2) the number of regular employees who are union members declined to below a majority, and 3) the presence of unionization efforts to maintain the unions. There are two types of strategies related to the unionization of part-timers: a homogeneous strategy where rights and duties are prescribed the same way as for regular-employee union members, and a heterogeneous strategy where part-timer union members are treated differently. In the case of the former, there is a system in place for part-timer union members which allows their opinions to be directly reflected, while in the latter case the system is such that their opinions are only reflected indirectly. Also, it was revealed that companies which adopt a

homogeneous strategy have better business performance and that the unionization of part-time workers via a homogeneous strategy is beneficial to employers, the union members themselves as well as the labour union. By the organization of part-time workers, the union members has made up of a majority of the number of employees. And the labour unions continuously play an important role as the representative of the employees.

Toward a Comparative Perspective on Corporate Governance and Labour Management

**Gregory Jackson** (Research Institute of Economy, Trade and Industry)

While stakeholder models of corporate governance support long-term employment, recent reforms have promoted shareholder-oriented corporate governance worldwide. Will reform cause employment to converge on a market system? This paper presents a comparison of the linkages between corporate governance and employment patterns in 22 countries using the QCA method (Qualitative Comparative Analysis). Case studies of Germany and Japan also show that firms must now cope with capital market pressures, but do so by creative adaptation of their existing national employment institutions. International differences are thus growing smaller, but convergence will not occur in the foreseeable future.

Taking Childcare Leave and Duration of Leave Period

**Mayumi Nishimoto** (Hannan University)

The Childcare Leave Law was implemented in Japan on April 1, 1992. This paper reports on a study which examined the decision-making of working women pertaining to childcare leave. The study estimated a problem model in order to consider the aspect that the decision to take childcare leave is different from the decision regarding duration of leave. The findings revealed that working women tend to take childcare leave and return to work earlier when they live with their parents, and if they live in an area where there is a lack of adequate childcare nurseries, and if there is a childcare nursery operated at one's company.

Panel Analysis of Women's Decision to Work: Re-examination of the Effects of the Husband's Income

**Mamiko Takeuchi** (Osaka University)

The theory proposed by Douglas & Arisawa shows a negative correlation between the income level of one's husband and the likelihood that the wife will be employed. From this, two conclusions can be drawn: 1) high earning ability of the husband reduces the wife's incentive to work, and 2) wives who enjoy leisure/luxury tend to choose husbands with relatively high incomes. This study focused attention on the latter case in particular, and it was assumed that a woman's work preferences were included among the "individual effects," and a panel analysis was subsequently conducted. Evaluation of the results showed that the decision made by wives to work was not significantly affected by their husband's "three-year income" or their "current one-year income." Furthermore, the "work preferences" of single women were included among the "individual effects," and such effects were then evaluated and measured. Analysis revealed that the preference to work demonstrated by single women correlated to their future husbands' income level and affected their determination to work after marriage. These findings show that the theory proposed by Douglas & Arisawa can be partially explained by the heterogeneity of a woman's preference for a spouse in the so-called "marriage market."