

Abstracts

Professional Skills Development and the Types of Knowledge: A Comparative Study of Certified Public Accountants in an Audit Firm and Quants in a Bank

Shigeru Yamamoto (Hiroshima Shudo University)

How are skills, especially high skills that are required of professionals, developed in organizations after entering workplaces? This paper examines what mode of skills development is suitable depending on the type of knowledge to be learned, in terms of the efficiency and effectiveness of learning. The mode of skills development is characterized by whether the flow of knowledge to be learned is vertical or horizontal relative to organizational hierarchy. With this background, a comparative study of certified public accountants in an audit firm and quants in a bank on the basis of in-depth interviews is conducted. As a result, the following hypotheses are supported: skills development characterized by vertical knowledge flow is suitable where the type of knowledge to be learned is low degree of codification and slow pace of obsolescence, skills development characterized by horizontal knowledge flow is suitable where the type of knowledge to be learned is high degree of codification and high pace of obsolescence. In addition, that the following social arrangements and devices, which substitute for organizational hierarchy in the former skills development, play an important role in the latter is also indicated: infrastructure such as the internet, by which users transmit and gain access to knowledge to be learned.

Wages and Employment Stability of Brazilian Workers in Japan: Analysis Using Portuguese Job Advertisement Data

Yuki Hashimoto (University of Tokyo)

This paper examines Brazilian workers' wages and employment across time and areas in Japan, by compiling a database from job advertisements in Portuguese. The results of regression analysis between their employment or wage trends and economic indicators confirm that the number of job offers and the level of wage offers for Brazilians are sensitive to Japanese business cycles, and are more adjustable than those for Japanese workers. This instability may arise both from Brazilian workers' labor supply behavior, namely a high turnover rate and an incentive to maximize take-home pay, and from firms' labor demand behavior, through which they consider Brazilians as an adjustable workforce for seasonal and economic fluctuations and use them as temporary workers.

Polarization of the Japanese Labor Market: Adoption of ICT and Changes in Tasks Required

Toshie Ikenaga (Hitotsubashi University)

This paper discusses polarization of the Japanese labor market in terms of tasks required and the impact of ICT. Based on the theoretical framework of Autor, Levy and Murnane (2003), it is found that the number of workers involved in knowledge-intensive as well as labor-intensive non-routine manual tasks has grown since the 1980s in Japan, while the number of workers doing routine tasks has decreased. This is attributable to changes in workers' education and job selection along with the shift in industrial structure and skills demanded within industry. It is implied that ICT complements people performing non-routine analytic tasks, while it substitutes for workers performing routine tasks.

The Impact of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) on Work Places:
Is Telework Making Ground?

Yuka Sakamoto (Tokyo University of Science)

This paper examines both theoretically and experimentally how the diffusion of ICT has brought about alternative work arrangements, especially telework. Logistic regression analysis for predicting telework using a nationwide survey shows that there is a higher probability for employees who use/used ICT to work at home than those with no ICT experience. The results also suggest that the spread of telework has the potential to impact not only on continuous employment for female workers but also on greater irregular employment. Ongoing research with random sampling data is required to ascertain the trends after 2002.