

Abstracts

Economic Analyses of Internal Labor Market: New Perspectives

Hodaka Morita (University of New South Wales)

Recent advances in economic analyses of internal labor markets have generated useful knowledge on a variety of issues inside organizations such as firm-sponsored training, work incentives, promotion, wage determination and delegation of decision-making rights. However, most theoretical analyses of internal labor markets do not incorporate firms' strategic behavior. And, most theoretical analyses of firms' strategic behavior still leave the firm as a black box without considering issues inside organizations. In this paper, I synthesize my previous research (Morita 2001, 2005, 2012; DeVaro and Morita, 2012) that attempts to explore the link between internal labor markets and firms' strategic behavior, and point out future directions of this research agenda. Morita (2001, 2005) analyzed the link between firms' strategic interactions concerning continuous process improvement and firm-specificity of human capital investment, and its ramifications on labor turnover, on-the-job training, delegation of decision-making rights, and provision of multiple skills. Morita (2012) explored a model of firm dynamics that incorporates workers, their accumulation of firm-specific human capital, and showed that the importance of firms' managerial capability systematically influences firm dynamics and employment practices. DeVaro and Morita (2012) presented a theoretical and empirical analysis of internal promotion versus external recruitment, using a job-assignment model involving competing firms with heterogeneous productivities and two-level job hierarchies with one managerial position.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior in Contemporary Workplaces in Japan

Ken'ichiro Tanaka (Nihon University)

Academic articles published on the topic of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) are steadily increasing. Recent research trends in OCB were reviewed and concepts similar to OCB were classified. Then, the influence of OCB on the workplace was examined and it is concluded that OCB has a positive effect on employees and organizations. Contextual performance, service-oriented behaviors and innovation-promotive behaviors are concepts similar to OCB. Previous studies on OCB have indicated that the positive influences of OCB have extended not only to the behavior of each employee, but also to the overall performance of the organization. Recent conditions in Japanese workplaces were also reviewed. It was concluded that OCB in Japan has been negatively influenced by performance based pay systems, which have been adopted by many Japanese corporations after the 1990's. In performance based pay systems, OCB has not been undertaken gradually because many employees tend to focus on their own performance evaluations. Finally, possible HRM strategies for the future that would facilitate OCB in organizations in Japan are discussed and "security of justice" in the workplace and heightening employees' empowerment are presented as key management measures.

The Impact of the Long-term Use of the Short Working Hour System on Careers

Mitsuyo Matsubara (Toray Corporate Business Research)

This thesis examines the impact of the long-term use of the short working hour system on the careers of the system users from the perspectives of the content and characteristics of jobs they are assigned to. The investigation I conducted through interviews shows that the jobs they are engaged in are more likely than those for full-time workers to lack requirements for "promptness" and the "willingness to take on challenges" due to significant limitations stemming from shorter working hours. In addition, the system user cannot go on business trips which is when capability exertion is cultivated and when aptitude as a leader is checked. Furthermore, their jobs are less exposed to changes in degrees of difficulty. This indicates not only that the system users lose opportunities of competence building but also that in the mid- to longer term, companies hiring them lose their potential core human resources, thereby leading to a possible dilution of the labor market within the organization. Based on that assumption, this thesis puts forward as

solutions the need for management to deliver the jobs not only to full-time workers but also to short-time workers from a viewpoint of developing human resource and building various career paths, and the need for management and the system users to reach a consensus about career development.

Workplace Harassment, Mental Health, and the Law

Ikuko Mizushima (Osaka University)

Many workers spend a great amount of their time at work interacting with their bosses and co-workers, so relationships at work are very important. Relationships at work, however, sometimes become unfavorable and lead to stress. Relationship problems at work and the stress arising from them are probably experienced by some people. Problems from unfavorable work relationships occasionally ensue from harassment. Severe cases of harassment and human conflicts that continue for a prolonged period can lead to impairment in the mental health of workers. Upon the recognition that mental disorders arising at the workplace could be considered as occupational injury, in December 2011, new criteria were established to serve as a basis for determining whether work-related mental disorders could be classified as occupational injury or not, and notable progress has been made in the harassment cases. If workers suffer mental disorders due to harassment at work, they can also claim damages against the injuring party. Thus, once harassment is proven to be true and a relationship to the mental disorder is established, damages for pain and suffering are paid. It remains to be seen, however, whether compensation for medical costs, damages due to absence from work, and lost earnings would be awarded, and to what extent.

Designing the Workplace for Knowledge Creation : Innovating “Ba” in the Era of the Networked Workplace

Noboru Konno (Tama University), **Ying Hua** (Cornell University)

The typical and traditional working space is forced to change in today's global business environment. A new management model is required and its “workplace” is expected to be an innovation space. The focus point is human relations and connections. Innovation is the process of sharing the tacit knowledge of society or clients, discovering new values and applying them into products and services. However, conventional offices are not designed in such a manner. The ICT or network technology is the key element; however, knowledge creation does not happen in a vacuum. Sharing context physically and emotionally is necessary. Depending on the quality of empathy, knowledge creation can be active or not, and this will influence how we design the workplace. “Ba” is a dynamic context shared by knowledge workers, clients and related persons. The workplace thus should be designed as “ba” or a platform including physical office spaces, network space and individual and collective relationships. “Ba” also creates “boundary objects”. Boundary objects are symbols, objects and spaces existing between different communities and systems. They form a nexus between communities and even create some new connections. In this article, concrete examples and trials in the actual workplace such as “future centers” and project oriented workplaces are introduced.

Telework and Changing Workplaces

Akio Sato (Ryukoku University)

There has been much expectation for teleworking, which has many potential uses as “a flexible labor form without the restriction of time and place”. However, the relationships between the three labor forms of teleworking (telecommuting, mobile-working, and at-home working) and workplaces are changing rapidly in late years. The main inducement for firms to adopt telecommuting was the attainment of work-life balance. But, after the Tohoku Earthquake, it has been replaced with the BCP (Business Continuity Plan) and saving electricity. It has been assumed that mobile-workers work outside their offices, but in many cases, they work in their own homes after working hours to cope with their increased workload because the mobile-work has led to abolition of offices and clerical workers who dealt with the paperwork. The at-home workers who take on specialist

jobs were paid a relatively good reward in the past. But the fees for at-home work mediated through agents based on a bid system have been declining drastically. Recent teleworking is apparently becoming a way to achieve higher labor efficiency by allowing labor space to encroach on personal space. Further detailed studies are urgently needed to capture such changes in teleworking.

Employment Law Problems on Performing Work Outside of Ordinary Workplace

Hirokuni Ikezoe (The Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training)

This article examines employment law problems concerning working outside of ordinary workplaces and working at home, especially focusing on working time regulations (calculation of working hours) and workers' accident compensation. The scheme, the number of hours worked shall be deemed to be the prescribed working hours, stipulated in article 38-2 of the Labor Standards Act (LSA) can be applied to both work styles. But both work styles make an employer's supervision and control for employees very thin, so in reality, problems like working long hours and illness/sickness of employees arises. Therefore, the author insists that the standards for the limits on the extension of working hours beyond the LSA principle (8 hours a day/40 hours a week) should be newly introduced into article 38-2 of the LSA scheme; also, the scheme of securing an employee's health by the employer should be newly introduced into article 38-2 of the LSA. While the employer has a duty to control and record the number of hours worked by employees, this duty should be detached from the application of the calculation of working hours, article 38-2 of the LSA. The employer's duty to control and record the number of hours worked by employees should be used in a limited scope by preventing working long hours, securing employee's health, and overtime pay for hours worked beyond the LSA's working time principle.