

Abstracts

Gender Gap in the Japanese Labour Market : Selection into Employment and Relative Wages of Women

Yukiko Asai (The University of Tokyo)

The gender gap in wages for fulltime workers has been slowly converging over the last 30 years in Japan. At the same time, the female workforce composition has changed dramatically. The college advancement rate among females has increased from 12% in 1980 to 45% in 2012, and they are more likely to work fulltime and work longer than before; the proportion of college graduates among the fulltime workforce increased from 4% to 20%. Since the female fulltime participation rate is only about 30% and has not increased significantly over these 30 years, the increased labor market attachment of high earning potential women might have contributed to the convergence of the gender wage gap. Less than 10% of females are in managerial position in Japan and women are less likely to be promoted than their male colleagues. Therefore the increase in return to management/professional skills in Japanese market in recent years might explain the slow convergence of the gender gap.

Determinants of Gender Inequality in the Proportion of Managers

Kazuo Yamaguchi (The University of Chicago)

This article analyzes gender inequality in the proportion of managers among white-collar regular workers in Japan, using data from the 2009 survey on work-life balance conducted by the Research Institute of Economy, Trade, and Industry. The article first shows that “women having a shorter duration of employment than men,” a common response given in employer surveys for “reasons for having few or no female managers,” is not a valid reason. The proportion of managers among female college graduates is far less than among male high school graduates even with equal duration of employment. A decomposition analysis shows that the gender difference in the proportion of middle managers and above attributable to gender difference in human capital is only 21%. Hence, the real problem lies in the managerial practices of Japanese firms that give more weight to gender than human capital in determining managerial potential. The article also shows that longer work hours are required from women than from men in order to achieve managerial positions. The proportion of managers increases for men and decreases for women depending on the age of the employee’s last born child, suggestive of reinforcement of traditional gender roles by employers. Japanese firms with centers dedicated for the promotion of work-life balance among employees have less gender inequality, however, indicating that change is possible.

An Analysis of Workplace Factors in Women’s Ambition for Promotion

Emiko Takeishi (Hosei University)

The importance of programs that promote active participation by women has been increasing in Japan, and the said programs are aiming for a higher percentage of women in leadership positions. In order to increase the number of women at the management level, it is absolutely crucial that women take a positive view of a management career and work toward attaining it. Previous studies have shown a gender difference in ambition for promotion. If women’s ambition for promotion remains low, there can be no increase in management roles for women. Given an awareness of the issues—that women’s ambition for promotion is stipulated by corporate system enforcement, workplace conditions, and their workplace environment—this paper examines what kind of workplace factors are linked to women’s ambition for promotion and how they differ from those for men. These workplace factors were divided into two distinct types in the analysis: one, a company’s corporate-level programs to support the success of women in the workplace; and two, workplace conditions formed through employee awareness with regard to such corporate programs and their supervisors’ management. Analysis indicated that corporate-level programs for equal employment opportunities and work/life balance have a limited effect on improving

women's ambition for promotion, whereas the conditions at a woman's workplace were shown to be of great importance. Specifically, raising employee awareness through equal employment opportunity programs and work/life balance programs was an important factor in increasing women's ambition for promotion, as was the supervisors' management style. This latter differs according to the subordinate's gender. However, as programs to support the success of women in the workplace influence supervisor career development policies, it is essential that corporations take steps to shape attitudes of these supervisors in order to develop women's careers.

Job Segregation and Career Gap by Gender in Bank Clerks

Tomoko Komagawa (Hokkaido University)

Job segregation by gender is the most serious factor of the career gap in Japanese companies. This paper examines the job segregation by gender from the historical development seen in bank clerks. Educational background and gender divide jobs and career development. Male college graduates perform both lending and taking charge of customers in the company, and can move up to become branch managers. Male high school graduates take deposits and perform exchanges, and have no experience in lending which is the most important job in a bank. Women are sub-clerks and have little chance for personnel relocation. Male high school graduates are restricted in their promotion, and women remain sub-clerks even if they work till retirement age. It is important that the management of women personnel transfers women from sub-clerks to bank tellers or loan and investment trusts for individual customers, and it gives them ability and self-confidence for their work. Women have tried to break through the glass ceiling. But "utilizing female workforce" also makes yet again "women's job" and new career gaps between men and women.

Legal Framework for Gender Equality – Looking into the Development of Such Legal Theories in EU Law

Yoko Kuroiwa

What kind of a legal framework would be expected in order that laws could serve as an effective countermeasure against the gender discrimination lingering on in today's society? This essay finds its clue from the development of EU anti-gender discrimination laws. EU law has adhered strictly to "prohibiting different treatment between the sexes." On the other hand, it was recognized that just treating both sexes equally was not enough for eliminating gender discrimination. Accordingly, steps were taken in two directions to eliminate such insufficiency. First, legal theories to prohibit more various forms of categories of behaviour by reason of sex discrimination were formed, represented by two theories on prohibiting indirect gender discrimination and direct gender discrimination on pregnancy or delivery. Second, the steps toward not only post-relief through passive prohibition of discrimination and individual complaints, but also a more proactive and institutional correction of gender discrimination and promotion of gender equality were taken. However, as for the latter direction, the pros and cons were debated in terms of reverse discrimination. In this essay, I review the concept of gender discrimination and gender equality and propose a more effective legal framework and improved measures for correction of gender discrimination.

Female Labor Participation and Sexual Division of Labor: A Consideration on the Persistent Male-Breadwinner Model

Junya Tsutsui (Ritsumeikan University)

Since the 1980s in Japan, the female labor participation rate has increased while the couple's distribution of domestic labor has not shown a noticeable change. This paper, addressing to this apparent puzzle, argues that the Japanese society has basically continued to hold the sexual division of labor. The recent increase in women's labor participation can be explained by structural changes such as a shift to a service economy, the tendency to marry later, and population ageing, but institutional interventions such as maternity leave have not had an impact to change inflexible

work conditions that prevent women to engage in full-time employment. Analysis of internationally comparable micro data suggests that working styles in Japan are the most inflexible among advanced countries. Turning to the domestic deterrent factor, analysis of housework in Japanese married couples shows that the decrease in housework frequency accompanied by women's extra labor time is not matched by the increase in men's domestic chore frequency, which suggests that couples are facing a tradeoff between the wife's labor and domestic welfare. Analysis of comparable data also shows that in dual earner couples, the Japanese husband's contribution to housework is much less than that of other western economies. In order to weaken the gendered division of labor, we both have to address the inflexible working customs and unequal division of domestic labor.

Gender Gaps of Achievement and Aspirations in Mathematics

Natsumi Isa (Osaka University), Ayumu Chinen (Osaka University)

In Contemporary Japan, there is a gender gap of 10% in the university entrance rate. In addition, very few women choose science-related fields at university. Are these gender gaps due to the low achievement and aspiration of women in mathematics and science? The aim of this paper is to examine the widening process of gender gaps of achievement and aspiration in mathematics, by using data from a survey of elementary and junior high school students. The results are as follows. Firstly, at the stage of the third grade in elementary school, there is almost no gender gap in achievement and aspiration in mathematics, though girls who are interested in mathematics are already fewer than boys. Secondly, in junior high school, the achievement and aspiration of women toward mathematics are lower than men. Thirdly, in junior high school, factors determining the aspiration of women toward mathematics are the social stratification factor and the meritocratic-oriented factor. In other words, these two factors are the reasons of the widening gender gap. These findings implicate that the choosing of science courses by women is strongly determined by factors involving non-academic achievement.

How are Gender Differences in Preference and Behavior Caused? An Explanation of Gender Segregation of Occupation from the Perspective of Social Psychology

Kiriko Sakata (Hiroshima University)

This study examines the factors that have long maintained occupational gender segregation from the perspective of social psychology. Firstly, I review the findings of gender differences in various psychological traits and behavioral styles. Three traits that showed moderate gender differences were consistent in situations; risk taking, sensation seeking, and communion. While men consistently showed higher risk taking and sensation seeking, women consistently showed a higher communion. However, it is difficult to explain occupational gender segregation only from the perspective of gender differences in these psychological traits. Therefore, I focus on gender stereotypes as a cognitive framework deriving from a gender structure in the society and observe those effects on people's experience and behavior at work. The latest research shows that women found male-dominant fields (e.g., science or mathematics) unattractive because they perceived those fields might hinder achievement of their communal goals thus diminished their belongingness (not perceived skills). These findings suggested that gender stereotyping of occupations influenced people's choice of occupation; a woman would not choose male-dominant occupations even if she had high self-efficacy and competency relevant to those occupations. Finally, conditions that may encourage people to challenge the opposite sex-typed occupations are discussed.

[訂正]

2014年6月号の「論文 Today」の文中の記述に誤りがありました。下記のとおり訂正いたします。

(誤) 性的嗜好

(正) 性的指向