

Abstracts

The Characteristics of “Tokyo” as a Labor Market

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Although Japan faces a phase of population decline, the population of Tokyo is still increasing. To analyze and discuss employment policy regarding such an overconcentration of population in Tokyo, it is important to understand how the labor market in Tokyo differs from those in other regions. This paper aims to give an overview of the characteristics of Tokyo as a labor market, using a number of government statistics on the labor market. This paper defines “the special wards (23 wards)” as the scope of “Tokyo” because it focuses on the local overconcentration of population. We then discuss the characteristics of this area by comparing it with other cities. According to the results, first, labor demand in the central part of Tokyo is stronger than in other cities, generating a large labor shortage. On the other hand, job-finding rates in central Tokyo are lower than those in other cities, suggesting that the degree of mismatch is also significant. Next, while labor demand in central Tokyo partly follows a common tendency of large cities, it is relatively specialized in knowledge-intensive industries and occupations, absorbing employment of highly educated workers. Finally, Tokyo not only exhibits much higher wages and incomes than other cities, but also longer working and commuting hours. Such a tendency is more significant for females. The above results suggest that, to understand the issues of the overconcentration of population in Tokyo, we should pay attention to the non-monetary attractiveness of city, including types of tasks and work styles, as well as monetary attractiveness.

Living Space of Single Women in Tokyo

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With the globalization of the economy and the shift to a service economy, employment opportunities in the service industry are accumulating in metropolitan regions and are becoming a destination for highly educated women. It can be said that women’s higher educational background and social advancement are driving the further decline of non-metropolitan regions, where there are fewer job opportunities in the service industry. Due to the declining birth rate and an aging population, the family structure in Japan has changed drastically. With the aging of the population, the number of single-person households of the elderly and the effects of late marriage and non-marriage are increasing. In metropolitan regions, the impact of the increasing number of single households on the society cannot be ignored. This paper aims to analyze the migration trend to the Tokyo metropolitan region by gender, and to clarify the formation of gender space in the metropolitan region by focusing on the most serious housing issues among women’s living issues.

Regarding the total number of prefectural migrants between the age of 20 and 24, in Tokyo the in-migration numbers has reached 60,000, and by gender, it is clear that female migration to Tokyo outnumbers male migration trends among most prefectural migrants. In Tokyo, male in-migration numbered 27,376 males, while female in-migration numbered 32,560 females”. That is because Tokyo is an attractive place for young women. However, women migrating to Tokyo face serious housing problems. Some unmarried women bought small size condominiums recently, not because of the increase in economic conditions, but because they want to raise their living standards and reduce housing costs. In Japan, there are no remarkable policies, like housing policies, to help unmarried youth improve their living conditions, and unmarried or single residents are “blank areas of public support”.

Why Do Firms Concentrate in Tokyo? An Economic Geography Perspective

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The causes of firms concentrating in the Tokyo region can be broadly divided into two factors. The first factor is the existence of agglomeration economies. While the benefits of agglomeration are based on three sources—that is, sharing, matching, and learning—learning is especially important in the age of the knowledge economy. Geographical proximity facilitates the learning of sticky knowledge through face-to-face contact. In addition, knowledge spillover is thought to be constrained by geographical distance. On the other hand, if the degree of agglomeration increases, agglomeration diseconomies, such as congestion and rising land prices, can occur. It is important to note that current policy discussions tend to downplay agglomeration diseconomies, although they emphasize that urban density increases productivity. The second factor is the city's attributes. The overconcentration in Tokyo is considered to be partially due to the decline in the economic status of the Osaka region. The difference between Tokyo and Osaka is partly explained by which industries they specialize in. Since path dependence greatly affects which industry a city specializes in, it is necessary to consider not only the size and density of cities but also the historical path and geographical context when we consider regional policies.

Regional Disparities in the Tokyo Metropolitan Area: Industry, Occupation, Awareness

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The purpose of this study is to understand population trends in the Tokyo metropolitan area (Tokyo, Kanagawa, Chiba, and Saitama prefectures), and delineate the economic and social disparities within the area. The relationship between industrial and occupational structure and income is clarified for each municipality in the Tokyo metropolitan area. Based on statistical data from 2005 and 2015 (the national census, municipal taxation status, and the National Survey on Social Stratification and Social Mobility), various disparity indicators are mapped and changes are analyzed over time. An examination of the relationship between industry and occupational structure and regional income reveals that population is concentrated and wealth accumulates in areas where the financial, information and telecommunications, and professional services industries are active. Regarding awareness of disparities, the responses of residents of urban and suburban areas are compared. There is a gap between urban and suburban areas in the Tokyo metropolitan area, as in Japan as a whole, and the gap is widening. The importance of setting a scale appropriate for the purpose was confirmed in examining regional disparities.

Local Labor Markets and Life Courses for Non-urban High School and University Graduates: Based on the Case of Self-employed Women in Rural Areas

Makoto Ishii (Oita University)

This article focuses on the life course, which is a perspective that captures choices such as school, occupation, marriage, and so on, as well as geographical movement with housing movement. We also approach the labor and living problems of youth in rural areas. In the case of youth employment in Japan, the trends in the new graduate market are likely to be focused on, but this is only a matter of labor supply and demand at one point in time. Nevertheless, the supply-demand mismatch at that time greatly affects an individual's life. Those who come from rural areas are particularly vulnerable to geographical and economic disadvantages. In this regard, this paper points out the following. First, the life course of young people has a disparity structure between urban and rural areas depending on the educational and gender background. Second, policies to reduce disparities between rural and urban areas have been not been sufficiently developed. Third, as a result, it is difficult to obtain an occupation for making a living, especially in local labor markets. Fourth, "regional revitalization" policies and measures in Japan have the potential to increase regional disparities. To overcome these problems, this paper focused on the establishment of work in rural areas. In particular, we discuss the conditions of establishment for disadvantaged women and the conditions for establishing work. In conclusion, rather than the point of view of having young people

remain in rural areas, it is important to build the foundations of the employment sector and public sector so that young people can take on the challenge of self-employment. Human networks may support their paths from these sectors. We suggest that guidance for new graduates in high school or university should recognize a point of view of establishing work in rural areas through the employment sector and public sector.

The Possibility of “Work Beyond Employment” in Regional Cities: A Case Study of Start-uppers in Saiki City, Oita Prefecture

Takashi Nakazawa (Meiji University)

Debunking the overrated anticipation of Keynesian demand-side labor market policies, this paper aims to contemplate the possibility of “work beyond employment” in regional cities. The author recognizes that the time has passed when states had ample measures to control demand to realize the status of perfect employment. At the same time, there is a reality that a substantial number of people live on “work beyond employment” in non-metropolitan areas, and that they contribute to their communities not only with their businesses, which are usually small and not for profit-maximizing, but also various activities other than business. With these things in mind, this paper intends to spotlight the positive side of “work beyond employment” and describes the life histories of start-uppers and resources that sustain their work by field work in Saiki City, Oita Prefecture. Many start-uppers (or their spouses) were born and raised in Saiki, and left for higher education or to find better jobs. Facing a turning point in their life course, they came back to Saiki and were then converted to “work beyond employment.” Those who have a parent or spouse running their own business have an advantage to become a start-upper. Jobs in the public sector offer a period to review and consider the next step in the life course, although most of them are temporary in status. Some start-uppers voluntarily organize community events, which are beneficial to building personal networks. These networks nurture collaborative businesses and serve as psychological support by which they confirm the existence of like-minded peers.