

## Abstracts

### The Transition in Lifelong Learning Policies Leading to “Re-learning”

**Kumiko Iwasaki** (The Open University of Japan)

This paper overviews the transition in lifelong learning policies leading to “re-learning,” including in-company education under economic nationalism, learning on their own for employability after the collapse of economic nationalism, and provision of an individual learning environment by the government under the global economy. First, under post-war economic nationalism, the state and large corporations perceived that the most efficient ways to achieve economic growth and profit were full employment through education, social welfare, and job transfer. Learning opportunities for professionals were based on lifetime employment and in-house education also fulfilling their self-development needs. Second, the collapse of economic nationalism after the first oil crisis, in 1973, saw a paradigm shift from bureaucratic organization to flexible organization, with large-scale reorganization for downsizing. Professionals had to develop key skills on their own. Third, social mobilization and technology advanced rapidly with the onset of the global economy. The skills required in global society have changed, and the need for vocational training and retraining has led to an increase in employment measures. In-company education has been replaced by the institutionalization of “re-learning,” and vocational training and retraining using women and the elderly in the workforce has become a national human resource policy.

### Recurrent Education for Working Adults: The Reality and Challenges of Online Education

**Chiharu Kogo** (Waseda University)

As we enter the age of the 100-year lifespan with multiple stages, the need for recurrent education for working adults is becoming greater and greater. However, despite the incentive of increasing annual income, the number of working college students and graduate students has not grown. One of the reasons for this is the perception that the university as a receptacle is “expensive, busy, and not right for me.” An examination of the current status of correspondence universities, the Open University of Japan, online universities, MOOCs, and BP programs clearly shows that they do not respond to the needs of working adults for recurrent education. There is no doubt that we must move forward with the introduction of online education as a disruptive innovation for working adults to relearn. There is a need for both teachers and learners to have a mindset that reframes online education as a unique and effective means of teaching, rather than a mere substitute for face-to-face instruction. It is unclear whether distance learning, which has always been treated as marginal, will join the mainstream of education. However, the new online education services that companies are taking up, including universities, will absorb the need for lifelong education. It will lead to a 100-year lifespan where the essential point will not be which university you graduated from, but what you practically learned, and the knowledge, skills, and attitudes you acquired as a result.

### Significance and Issues of Recurrent Education as a Policy: Toward a Design of Institutional Arrangements Based on the Right to Receive Education Anew

**Hidekazu Sasaki** (Utsunomiya University)

Recurrent education is based on the concept that organizational and systematic educational opportunities should be decentralized and allocated to different times of life. Historically, the Japanese policy of recurrent education has been insufficiently implemented and has failed to obtain results—primarily because understanding and implementing recurrent education is fundamentally complicated. This paper takes cues from a multifaceted clarification of these characteristics with the aim of broadening our vision of the institutional design and legislative preparations that promote recurrent education. First, it is necessary for the agents and stakeholders involved to collaboratively help individuals cyclically alternate their educational terms with labor periods, though there has been difficulty in implementing such collaboration. Cooperation

between universities and industries has continued to be complex, and active linkage between educational and labor administrations has remained unsuccessful. Second, the incomplete arrangement of the concepts of education has led to adverse implications for recurrent education. By scrutinizing the relationships between education and learning and distinguishing between being educated and receiving education, a disengagement from the fixed instructive idea that children are educated by adults must occur. Rather, the new educational idea that adults, including business workers, voluntarily decide whether to receive an education should be accepted. Third, “relearning” must be considered a constructive concept that is composed of four layers: relearning, relearning activities, receiving education anew, and being taught afresh. The reason underlying this notion is the necessity of preparing a systematic policy of recurrent education.

#### The Vocational Training System in the Course of Occupational Careers in France

**Toshiharu Suzuki** (Waseda University)

The French system for vocational training during an occupational career has undergone major changes in recent years. Currently, the system includes CPF (vocational training personal account), which grants the right to vocational training in the form of money depending on the length of service, and PTP (vocational transition plan), which is for relatively long-term training. Both schemes provide leaves to trainees and financial protection if they are trained during working hours. In France, there is a strong belief that the vocational training system benefits not only workers, but ultimately employers as well, so workers and employers operate it in cooperation beyond the boundaries of companies. As a result, the vocational training system is established under the grand design that it must be for the benefit of industry as a whole. This concept has led to the provision of a full-fledged system. However, with recent technological innovations, while the required skills and knowledge are changing rapidly, the structure of vocational training is also changing. Unlike the previous system, the amount accumulated under CPF will not be lost after a certain period of time or changing jobs. On the other hand, PTP can only be used for training that enables trainees to change jobs. The vocational training system has changed to one that encourages appropriate job changes.

#### The Economic Impact of Recurrent Education

**Mariko Tanaka** (Musashino University)

Recurrent education has been gaining attention as an economic engine that promotes workers’ employment and income, increases the accumulation of human capital, and promotes economic growth. It is important, then, to analyze the extent to which recurrent education affects workers’ productivity and economic growth. This paper studies the economic impact of recurrent education with reference to cases from abroad and previous studies. It focuses on the relationship between workers’ formal educational attainment and the contents of recurrent education. There are two primary needs for recurrent education: Attainment of advanced knowledge or skills, and its relation to workers’ basic knowledge or current skills. The results show that generally, recurrent education has a positive impact on workers’ employment and income, the accumulation of human capital, and economic growth. This impact is presented with the complementary case where recurrent education is more effective for workers with higher formal educational attainment. Conversely, where recurrent education is less effective, its impact varies depending on the level of formal educational attainment. For the latter, foreign programs have promoted adult education for workers with primary or secondary-level formal educational attainment. In Japan, average educational levels are higher compared to other countries and workers have higher levels of formal educational attainment. Recurrent education, therefore, contributes to promoting workers’ employment and income, human capital accumulation, and economic growth.

#### Problems of Adult Learning in Japan in a Transforming World

**Yuki Honda** (The University of Tokyo)

The drastic transformation of the world following the COVID-19 pandemic has made the problems of Japanese society more evident. Adult learning might become more

important in order to cope with these problems, while it intrinsically accompanies negative dimensions such as pressure, inequality, and imbalance. Empirical examination of adult education in Japan reveals its insufficiency compared to other advanced countries and its disparities and obstacles within society. Necessary measures include reforms of primary and secondary schools as initial education and universities and graduate schools as continuing education, as well as changing workplaces towards horizontal diversification and job-based employment, together with a re-definition of adult education as a social tool for the formation of a society that approves and respects individuals as they are.