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All personal names are given in
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This issue of *Social Science Japan* focuses on youth and education in contemporary Japan. The circumstances surrounding Japanese youth have changed drastically over the last several decades. A changing employment structure along with various demographic shifts has had a significant influence on the life of Japanese youth.

In 2007, Shaken launched a longitudinal study called the Japanese Life Course Panel Survey (JLPS) in order to investigate how Japanese youth are doing at school, at home, and in the labor market, and how their behaviors are changing within and in relation to the current environment. JLPS consists of three surveys: the youth survey, the middle-aged survey and the high school graduate survey. Technically speaking, the high school graduate survey started in 2004 and was separate from the youth and middle-aged surveys, but it is now part of the JLPS and called the JLPS-H (High school graduates). JLPS research is being handled by a mix of both senior and junior researchers who are doing their best to grasp from these surveys the current state of Japanese youth.

Four researchers contribute challenging articles to this issue. First, Ishida Hiroshi, co-director of the JLPS, gives us an overview of the JLPS and the results from his analysis of the relationship between family background and educational attainment. The author examines the effects on access to higher education of eight social factors, which are parental education, father's class, living standard, home ownership, number of books at home, possession of private bathroom, home atmosphere, and parental marital condition.

In the second article, Fukahori Satoko analyzes the job aspirations of Japanese youth using the high school graduate survey. Comparisons are made with the National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS) in the US, and she discovers that Japanese youth place much less importance on job success than American youth. She also adds a gender perspective into her analysis to carry out an active discussion on conservative gender roles that have continued to persist in Japan.

College tuition continues to increase while the economy turns down. It is known that income disparity is now widening in Japan. What is happening with opportunity in higher education? Nakazawa Wataru approaches the problem of disparity in educational opportunity, and examines whether Japanese scholarship loan programs reduce inequality in access to college.

Lastly, Oshima Masao scrutinizes how university career placement divisions help university students search for jobs. Although the structure of the labor market has been changing, the first job after graduation is still an important factor in influencing one's status of later life employment in Japan. The author focuses on three aspects of effect of career placement: timing of employment after graduation, type of employment and company size.

JLPS is an ongoing research project, and the data set will be released in the Social Science Japan Data Archive in the near future. I hope these four articles will prove stimulating for future research on changing Japanese life styles.

For more detailed information on the JLPS, please see (in Japanese only):
<http://ssjda.iss.u-tokyo.ac.jp/panel/>

Contents

Youth and Education

Ishida Hiroshi *Japanese Life course Panel Survey and Educational Attainment of Youth*p.3

Fukahori Satoko *The Job Aspirations of Japanese Youths—
Gender Bias and Higher Education Impact*.....p.7

Nakazawa Wataru *Does the Japanese Scholarship Loan Programs Reduce Inequality of
Opportunities for Access to Universities?*.....p.11

Oshima Masao *University Student Job Hunting and University Career Placement Divisions*p.15

ISS Research Report

Harada Sumitaka.....p.19

Hotta Satokop.23

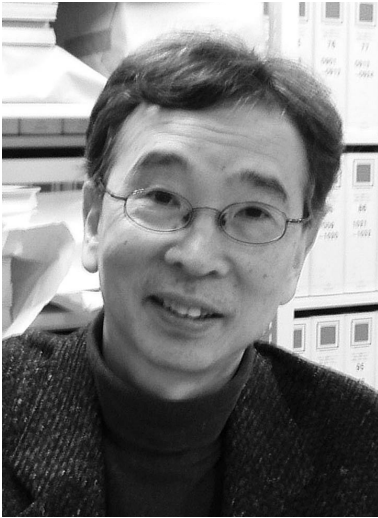
Murakami Akanep.27

Questions and Answers with Visiting Professors

Janet Hunterp.31

Japanese Life Course Panel Survey and Educational Attainment of Youth

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The demographic and socio-economic environment surrounding Japanese youth has taken a distinct turn in the past two decades. Japanese society, once characterized by stability, growth and cooperation, is now known to suffer from lack of a smooth school-to-work transition (Honda 2005; Brinton 2008), loss of job security and anxiety over future employment (Genda 2005), and deprivation of hope (Yamada 2004). The falling birth rate, which is associated with a delay in marriage and family formation (Shirahase 2005), is considered to be a major threat to the intergenerational balance within society. Given these drastic societal transformations, it is important to ask how the Japanese youth are responding to these changes. In order to examine the current state and the changes in behavior and attitude among the youth in Japan, the Institute of Social Sciences, University of Tokyo, is in the midst of conducting a longitudinal panel survey called the Japanese Life Course Panel Survey (JLPS).

Japanese Life Course Panel Survey

JLPS consists of three surveys: the youth survey, the middle-aged survey and the high school graduate survey. The youth survey sampled respondents from the population of men and women aged 20 to 34 residing in Japan, and the middle-aged survey from men and women aged 35 to 40 residing in Japan, using the electoral registry and resident registry. The first wave of JLPS was conducted from January to April 2007. The respondents were sent questionnaires by regular mail, and the staff from a survey company visited the respondents and collected the questionnaires. For the youth survey, 3,367 responses were obtained (response rate: 34.5%), and 1,433 responses (response rate: 40.4%) for the middle-aged survey. Because the respondents were told that the survey was panel and required multiple years of commitment, the response rate was slightly lower than the rates of usual cross-sectional surveys.

From January to March 2008, respondents were contacted again for a followed-up survey. Questionnaires were sent by mail and picked up by the staff of a survey company. There were 2,719 responses (response rate: 80%) for the youth survey and 1,246 responses (response rate: 87%) for the middle-aged survey. These figures are subject to change since the cleaning of the data set is still in progress. The analyses reported in this issue by Ishida, Nakazawa, and Oshima employ the youth and middle-aged surveys.

The high school graduate survey was first conducted from January to March 2004. The respondents were high school seniors in 101 high schools in four prefectures in Japan. Four prefectures were selected on the basis of college attendance rate and the proportion of graduates who neither advance to further education nor engage in employment. Schools were selected randomly from a list of all high schools (excluding night schools) in each prefecture. The questionnaires were sent to schools, and the total of 7,563 responses (response rate: 69.1%) was obtained.

The first follow-up was conducted in October 2004. The questionnaires were sent by mail to 2,036 respondents who agreed to take part in the follow-up survey. There were 500 responses (response rate: 24.6%). In addition, 485 parents responded to parental questionnaires. Additional follow-up surveys were conducted in October 2005, 2006, and 2008. The analysis reported by Fukahori in this issue uses the high school graduate survey.

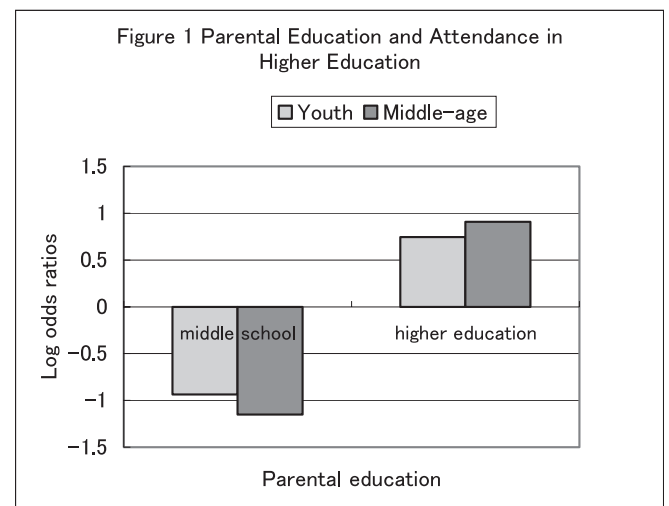
Educational Attainment and Social Background

This section reports the results of examining the relationship between social background characteristics and educational attainment. JLPS includes a number of questions about the social background of the respondent. By taking into account a variety of background characteristics, it is possible to determine what kind of background factors influence access to higher education. Furthermore, by comparing the results from the youth survey and the middle-aged survey, we will be able to verify whether the effects of background characteristics are increasing among recent cohort members.

We examine the effects of eight social background characteristics on access to higher education. The outcome is whether the respondent attended institutions of higher education (including both junior college and university). The eight factorsⁱ are: (1) parental education (middle school, high school, higher education)ⁱⁱ, (2) father's class (upper white-collar class, lower white-collar class, petty bourgeoisie, farm class, skilled manual class, non-skilled manual class), (3) living standard (above average, average, below average), (4) home ownership, (5) number of books at home (less than 10, 10 – 50, 51 – 100, more than 100), (6) lack of private bathroomⁱⁱⁱ, (7) warm home environment (self-reported response), and (8) parental divorce. We run logistic regression, predicting the attendance of higher education by eight background factors. Figures represent the independent

effects of these factors after controlling for other background characteristics^{iv}.

Figure 1 presents the effect of parental education on access to higher education. The base category of parental education is "high school completion," so the effect (log odds ratio) of higher education indicates that respondents with a parent with higher education are 2 to 2.5 times ($e^{0.745}=2.1$ for the youth and $e^{0.908}=2.5$ for the middle-aged) more likely to attend institutions of higher education than those with a parent of high school education. When the parents had only middle school education, the respondents are 2.5 to 3 times less likely to attend college and university than those whose parents had high school education. These differences by parental education are substantial and statistically significant.



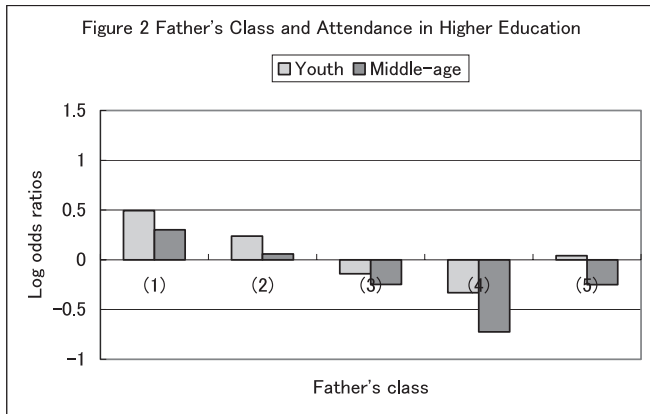
The effects of the father's class on educational attainment are more modest, as shown in Figure 2. Compared with the respondents whose fathers engaged in non-skilled manual work (base category), those whose fathers engaged in upper white-collar work are more likely and those whose fathers were farmers are less likely to attend college and university. The effects of class origin are attenuated because these are the effects still remaining after controlling for education, economic and cultural resources of the family.

ⁱ Social background factors are the characteristics of the home or parents when the respondent was about age 15, except for parental education, which is determined by the last school attended by parents.

ⁱⁱ The highest educational level of the father or the mother is taken as the level of parental education.

ⁱⁱⁱ Because of the prevalence of public bath facilities, poor families did not use to have private bathroom. This item is used as an indicator of poverty.

^{iv} In addition to other background characteristics, we control for the sex of the respondent and the cohort (youth or middle-aged).



Note: (1) upper white-collar class, (2) lower white-collar class (3) petty bourgeoisie, (4) farm, (5) skilled manual class

Figure 3 shows the effect of economic resource on educational advancement. When the respondents reported that their living standards at age 15 were more than the average at the time, they are more likely to attend institutions of higher education among the youth sample. Among the middle-aged sample, the respondents who reported their living standards to be below average are less likely to attend institutions of higher education than those who reported their living standards to be average.

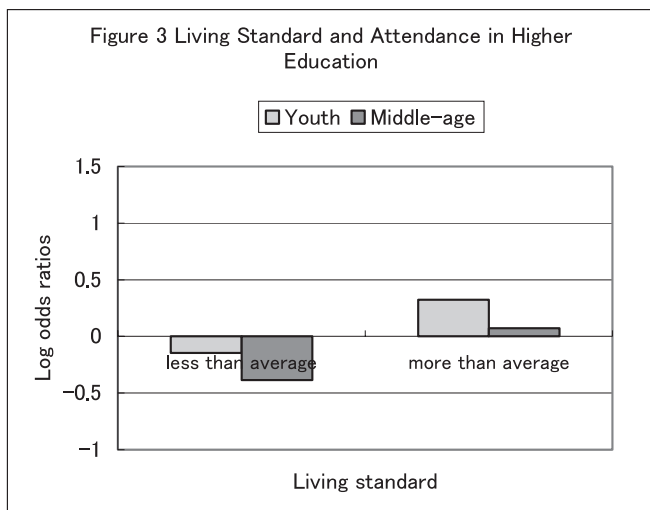


Figure 4 presents the effect of cultural resources at home on educational attainment. It is clear that the more books at home when the respondents were growing up, the higher the rate of advancement to higher education. The effects are substantial because the respondents with more than 100 books at home are 2.5 to 3 times more likely to attend college and university than the respondents who had almost no books at home.

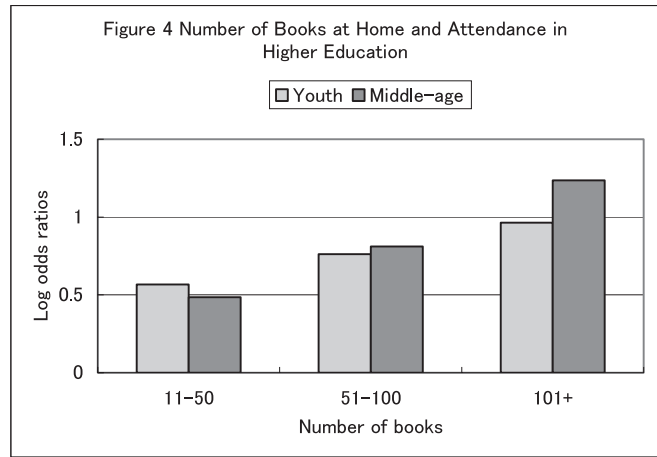
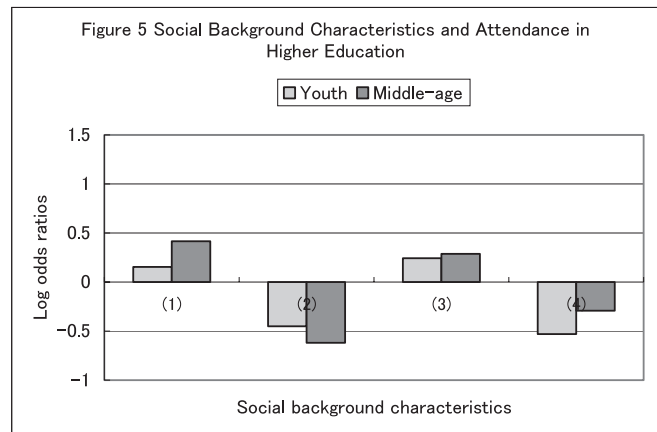


Figure 5 shows the effects of other social background characteristics on college attendance. Home ownership and warm atmosphere at home are advantageous to educational advancement of the children, while the lack of bathroom at home, which is the indicator of poverty, and the experience of parental divorce appear to have a negative consequence on children's education.



Note: (1) home ownership, (2) lack of bathroom (3) warm home environment, (4) parental divorce

Concluding Remarks

Advancement to higher education is affected by a variety of characteristics of home environment. In particular, cultural resources of the home represented by parental education and the number of books at home appear to exert profound influence on children's educational achievement. Opportunities of education do not seem to be equal among children from different social backgrounds. Family environment has significant consequence for access to higher education.

Finally, with regard to the difference between the

youth and the middle-aged surveys, although there are small differences in the effects of father's class and living standard, the overall picture has not changed between the two cohorts^v. In other word, there does not seem to be any obvious tendency for the effects of social background to increase among recent cohort members. The results do not provide support for the claim about the increased inequality in recent Japan. Instead, the results point to the persistence of inequality in educational opportunities in contemporary Japan.

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^v The statistical tests examining the difference in coefficients, for example, between the effect of living standard of the youth sample and that of the middle-aged sample are not significant.

The Job Aspirations of Japanese Youths — Gender Bias and Higher Education Impact

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The School-to-Work Transition in Transition

The uniqueness of institutional linkages between Japanese schools and workplaces has been well documented by Rosenbaum and Kariya (1989). In sharp contrast to the free market oriented United States, where educational institutions have had little impact on their students' work-entry processes, Japanese high schools have played an active role in selecting high achievers to fill in job offers distributed to schools by employers according to the quality of work conducted by previously hired graduates. Characterized by this semi-formal school-employer contract system, the Japanese society has been largely successful, until recently, in maintaining relatively low levels of work-entry problems; i.e., youth unemployment, delayed work-entry and job turnover.

The decade-long economic recession, which struck Japan in the mid-1990's, however, brought about structural changes in the labor market. While traditional Japanese employment practices, such as lifelong employment, seniority-based promotion

systems, and the exclusive hiring of new graduates, still apply to the core segment of the labor force, it is no longer the norm. In addition to cutting back on recruitment, many firms have opted to outsource operations, or replace full-time tenured positions with part-time untenured positions, resulting in a striking increase of youths with no or unstable employment (Kosugi, 2005). The unemployment rate of youths aged 15 – 24 increased from 5.5% in 1994 to 10.2% in 2003 (total population: 3.0% → 5.4%), nearing that of the United States (youths: 12.5% → 12.4%; total: 6.2% → 6.1%) and other advanced countries (OECD, 2007).

Among the most disadvantaged are the less educated, specifically high school dropouts, graduates with no vocational training and graduates with no postsecondary education. This is due partly to the increased corporate effort to hire the most capable, in order to sustain productivity with a smaller workforce, and to cut back on training costs. It is also due partly to the global shift in demand for more college educated workers, to meet the needs of a knowledge-based economy. Within this context, high schools are becoming increasingly less effective in easing their students' transitions from school-to-work. Alternatively, individual youths are being held increasingly more accountable for their abilities and drive to make a successful entry into the labor force.

The Research Questions and Data

While it is important to carefully examine what opportunities for work-entry are actually available to youths, this paper focuses on job aspirations, or the importance youths place on job success. Although job aspiration is in itself partly determined by the availability of opportunities, it is also a prerequisite for taking advantage of available opportunities. Given the recent emphasis on individual effort, it would be of interest to explore i) how strongly contemporary Japanese youths value job success, ii) how different levels of job aspiration lead to different career paths, iii)

what impact transitions into different career paths have on job aspirations, and iv) why certain groups of students alter their job aspirations.

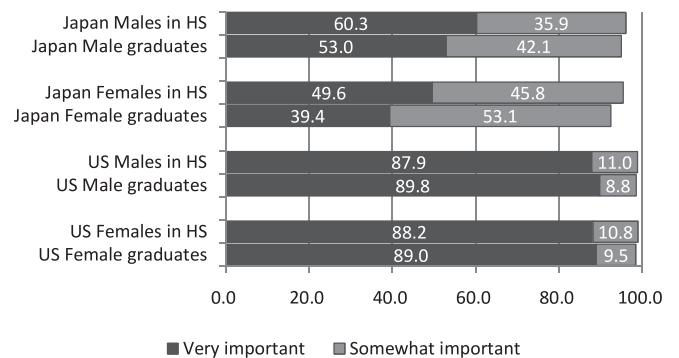
These questions are explored through the analysis of the Japanese Life Course Panel Survey: High School Graduates Survey (JLPS-H) data, collected annually since 2004 (with the exception of 2007), by the Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo. In order to determine, in relative terms, how strong or weak the job aspirations of Japanese youths are, comparisons will be made with the National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS), a national-scale panel study conducted between 1988 and 2000 by the US National Center for Educational Statistics. Several items in the JLPS-H were constructed with direct reference to the NELS in order to allow for cross-national comparisons. NELS was chosen as the counterpart to JLPS-H because the cohorts share two important background characteristics. Both graduated at a time of serious economic recession (tight job market) and higher education expansion (accessible colleges). By comparing the two cohorts, their similarities and differences, controlling for labor and educational trends, can be highlighted.

Responses to the multi-part question, “How important is the following to you in your life?—i) Being successful in my line of work (job success) and ii) finding the right person to marry and having a happy family life (marriage),” will be compared at two points in time, just before and two (US) to three (Japan) years after high school graduation. Information on postsecondary destinations is derived from the youths’ occupational/ educational status two years after graduation. The striking multiplicity of statuses found among American youths was simplified according to a scheme (see footnote), to match that of Japanese youths¹.

Low Job Aspirations among Japanese Youths

Compared to their American counterparts, how strongly do Japanese youths value job success? Figure 1 clearly indicates that Japanese youth, both males and females, and both before and after graduation place less importance on job success. While almost 90 percent of American youths consistently reveal job success to be “very important,” only around half of the Japanese youths do so, with females showing weaker tendencies, and the overall tendency declining over time². This result is not at odds with recent public commentary regarding the lack of work orientation among Japanese youths, which has led to the introduction of “career education” at the primary and secondary education levels.

Figure 1. Job aspirations of youths: Japan and the US (%)



Job Aspirations and Career Paths

Do youths with different levels of job aspiration choose different career paths? In the United States, high school students who value job success are significantly more likely to attend four-year higher education institutions (HEI) (very important: 42.2%, somewhat important: 35.2%, not important: 28.6%; $p < .001$). The opposite is the case in Japan, with those who perceive job success

¹ One of the striking differences between the cohorts was the relative complexity of postsecondary destinations among US graduates. While the JLPS-H item treats postsecondary destinations as mutually exclusive choices, NELS allows for respondents to choose multiple statuses, which add up to 141.4% of the sample, with a quarter of higher education institution (HEI) students working full-time or part-time. In order to achieve comparability, the US data was recorded according to the following scheme: full time worker, if working 35 hours per week or more, regardless of HEI attendance; part-time worker, if working less than 35 hours and not attending HEIs; four-year HEI student, if attending four-year HEIs and not working 35 hours per week or more (including two-year and non-degree granting HEI attendants); two year HEI student, if attending two-year HEIs and not working 35 hours per week or more (including non-degree granting HEI attendants); and non-degree granting HEI student, if attending non-degree granting HEIs and not working 35 hours per week or more.

² It is important to take into account cultural differences in how the cohorts respond to items. While Japanese youths tend to respond rather conservatively, compared to American youths, they were considerably more likely to express as “very important,” the item “Helping other people in my community (Japan: 68.5%, US: 33.3%),” and equally likely to do so for the items “Having strong friendships (Japan: 85.0%, US: 79.7%),” “Having leisure time to enjoy my own interests (Japan: 78.4%, US: 64.2%),” and “Finding the right person to marry and having a happy family life (Japan: 66.4%, US: 79.6%).” The panel weight F4F2PNWT was used here, in order to derive results representative of the cohort population.

“not important” more likely to enroll in four-year institutions (very important: 50.9%, somewhat important: 49.4%, not important: 57.1%; NS). This is an unexpected result given the significance academic credentials have traditionally had in the labor market, generating the assumption that the more occupationally ambitious pursue more education. Whether the result reflects the decline of credentialism, or the lack of work orientation particularly among those most strongly integrated into the school system, and hence most sharply segregated from the labor market within the Japanese context, needs to be further examined.

What impact does transition into different career paths have on job aspiration? Table 1 indicates the shift in the level of job aspiration for the same respondent, before and after graduation, by destination and gender (results shown for Japan only). The numbers shown in the diagonal cells indicate the percentages of youths whose responses did not change over time. Those in the upper right cells indicate the percentages of youths who came to value job success more, while those in the lower left cells indicate changes in the opposite direction. The results reveal that among full-time workers, and females of all destinations, relatively more respondents came to value job success less over time.

The decline among females is particularly alarming, considering their initial low status. For example, among females with full time employment, 39.3% indicated job success to be “very important” before graduation. Three years later, only 17.9% provided the same response, with 17.9% shifting to “somewhat important (total 71.4%),” and 3.6% shifting to “not important (total 7.1%).” In sharp contrast, the responses of American youths, regardless of destination and gender, are incredibly stable, with approximately 80% of youths of all groups consistently responding “very important.”

Why Japanese Females Devalue Job Success

Why do Japanese female high school students value job success less, and why do they further weaken their job aspirations as they move on to postsecondary destinations? In an earlier JLPS-H study, Genji (2005) demonstrated that Japanese

Table 1. The job-aspiration shift of Japanese youths by destination and gender

Before graduation		Three years after			Total
		not	somewhat	very	
Male full-time work	not	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	somewhat	0.0	22.2	11.1	33.3
	very	5.6	22.2	38.9	66.7
N=18	total	5.6	44.4	50.0	100.0
Male non-degree HEI	not	0.0	5.3	10.5	15.8
	somewhat	0.0	10.5	5.3	15.8
	very	0.0	15.8	52.6	68.4
N=19	total	0.0	31.6	68.4	100.0
Male 4yr HEI	not	1.8	4.5	0.9	7.3
	somewhat	3.6	15.5	16.4	35.5
	very	0.9	25.5	30.9	57.3
N=110	total	6.4	45.5	48.2	100.0
Female full-time work	not	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	somewhat	3.6	53.6	3.6	60.7
	very	3.6	17.9	17.9	39.3
N=28	total	7.1	71.4	21.4	100.0
Female part-time work	not	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	somewhat	15.4	30.8	0.0	46.2
	very	7.7	15.4	30.8	53.8
N=13	total	23.1	46.2	30.8	100.0
Female non-degree HEI	not	3.2	0.0	1.6	4.8
	somewhat	1.6	30.2	11.1	42.9
	very	3.2	19.0	30.2	52.4
N=63	total	7.9	49.2	42.9	100.0
Female 2yr HEI	not	2.1	4.3	0.0	6.4
	somewhat	4.3	23.4	17.0	44.7
	very	4.3	31.9	12.8	48.9
N=47	total	10.6	59.6	29.8	100.0
Female 4yr HEI	not	0.9	0.0	0.9	1.8
	somewhat	4.5	28.8	17.1	50.5
	very	0.0	26.1	21.6	47.7
N=111	total	5.4	55.0	39.6	100.0

*Male part-time (n=4) and 2yr HEI (n=2) not shown due to few cases.

female high school students who do not conform to traditional gender roles (the “male=breadwinner & female=caregiver” model) are more likely to aspire to higher education, and continuous employment. Here, we focus on the relative importance placed on job success and marriage, and how it changes, as the female high school student transitions into her postsecondary destination. According to Siaroff (1994), Japan is a “late female mobilization welfare state,” in which society provides little incentive for women to work, in terms of working conditions and family welfare policies. Even though traditional gender roles are no longer widely supported, structural factors such as the scarcity of opportunities for female status attainment, and policies that benefit single income families have discouraged females from remaining in the labor force. Hence, it can be hypothesized that Japanese females come to prioritize marriage over job success, as they encounter structural barriers to work-life balance in their postsecondary destinations.

In order to test this hypothesis, females are catego-

rized into four types, according to the importance they place on job success and marriage (very important vs. somewhat/not important). How the same respondent shifts from one type to another will be examined, with particular attention paid to the shift from “job success and marriage” or “job success only” to “marriage only,” and vice versa. Table 2 demonstrates the job-marriage types of Japanese females before and after graduation, by destination. The results reveal that the hypothesis is supported for all destinations. For example, among females who work full-time, the proportion valuing “job success and marriage” and “job success” before graduation were 25.0% and 14.3%. Three years later, the proportions providing the same responses drop to 10.7% and 7.1% respectively, with 14.3% (10.7%+3.6%) shifting to “marriage only” (total 39.3%→60.7%).

Noteworthy, however, is the existence of females with higher education, who change in the opposite direction. The proportions of females who shifted from “marriage only” to “job success and marriage” or “job success only” were 11.1% (9.5%+1.6%) for non-degree granting institution attendants, 12.8% for two-year institution attendants, and 10.8% for four-year institution attendants, as opposed to 0.0% for full-time and part-time workers. This result implies the existence of

Table 2. The job-marriage type shift of Japanese females by destination

Before graduation		Three years after graduation				total
		Job & marriage	Job only	Marriage only	Neither	
Full-time work	Job&marriage	10.7	0.0	10.7	3.6	25.0
	Job only	0.0	7.1	3.6	3.6	14.3
	Marriage only	0.0	0.0	39.3	0.0	39.3
	Neither	3.6	0.0	7.1	10.7	21.4
(n=28) Total		14.3	7.1	60.7	17.9	100.0
Part-time work	Job&marriage	7.7	7.7	15.4	0.0	30.8
	Job only	15.4	0.0	0.0	7.7	23.1
	Marriage only	0.0	0.0	30.8	0.0	30.8
	Neither	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.4	15.4
(n=13) Total		23.1	7.7	46.2	23.1	100.0
Non-degree HEI	Job&marriage	17.5	1.6	12.7	4.8	36.5
	Job only	6.3	4.8	4.8	0.0	15.9
	Marriage only	9.5	1.6	15.9	4.8	31.7
	Neither	0.0	1.6	3.2	11.1	15.9
(n=63) Total		33.3	9.5	36.5	20.6	100.0
2yr HEI	Job&marriage	10.6	0.0	25.5	4.3	40.4
	Job only	0.0	2.1	6.4	0.0	8.5
	Marriage only	12.8	0.0	19.1	8.5	40.4
	Neither	4.3	0.0	2.1	4.3	10.6
(n=47) Total		27.7	2.1	53.2	17.0	100.0
4yr HEI	Job&marriage	11.7	0.9	16.2	3.6	32.4
	Job only	4.5	4.5	1.8	4.5	15.3
	Marriage only	10.8	0.0	17.1	1.8	29.7
	Neither	4.5	2.7	7.2	8.1	22.5
(n=111) Total		31.5	8.1	42.3	18.0	100.0

a higher education impact, which encourages females to pursue careers. Whether this is through broadening access to jobs with better working conditions, disseminating knowledge regarding the socio-historical conditions that have shaped women’s lives, or other reasons, is an important area of further study.

Conclusion

This paper illustrates the weakness of job aspirations among Japanese youths, as compared to their American counterparts. More disturbing is the fact that Japanese youths, particularly those who have entered the labor force and females, tend to further weaken their job aspirations, as they move on to postsecondary destinations. While the reasons are largely unclear, this study provides some important implications, which prove to be promising areas of further study. First, it highlights the separation of education and labor among Japanese youths, which is in sharp contrast to the multiplicity of postsecondary destinations among American youths, and which may partly explain their psychological distance from labor. Second, it provides partial evidence that supports Siaroff’s claims regarding the structural impediments that discourage women from participating in the labor force. Third, it also provides insight into the higher education impact that encourages females to pursue careers.

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Does the Japanese Scholarship Loan Programs Reduce Inequality of Opportunities for Access to Universities?

Nakazawa Wataru



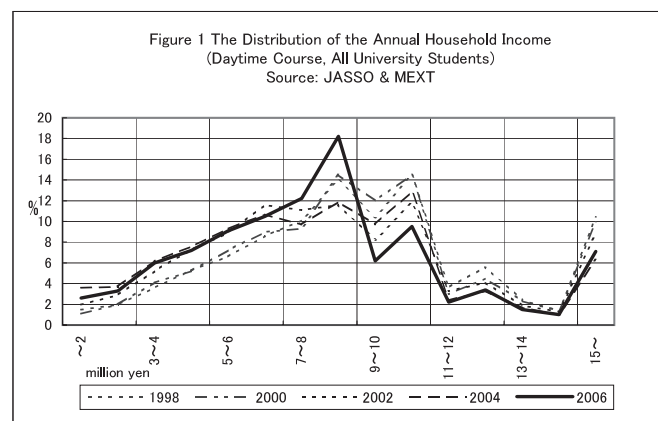
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The aim of this article is to evaluate the contribution of Japanese loan scholarship programs toward the reduction of inequalities in students' access to universities. In recent years, the Japanese mass media have started to focus on the issue of expanding income differentials—a topic that has caught the attention of much of the Japanese public as well. According to Ishida (2007), although the proportion of the population that advances to university has increased since the 1990s, the effects of social background on progression to university have increased. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) and the Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO), as of 2004, conducted a large survey—administered every two years—that focuses on the actual living conditions of students affiliated with institutions of higher education. In 2006, the average tuition fee for daytime courses at public four-year universities was approximately ¥660,000, and that of their counterpart, that is private universities, was about ¥1,320,000. Furthermore, if a student starts living away from home, the total annual cost of living would exceed ¥1,000,000. Compared to

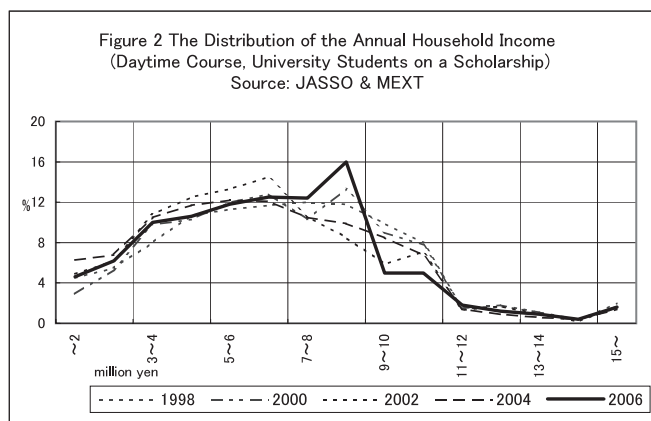
data from 1998, the tuition fees of national universities have increased by ¥60,000 – ¥100,000, and that of the private universities have increased by ¥90,000. However, the cost of living has decreased by over ¥100,000.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of the annual household income of university students who are enrolled in daytime courses. Although the mode of the household income group had once been within the ¥10,000,000 – ¥11,000,000 stratum, in 2006, it shifted into the ¥8,000,000 – ¥9,000,000 stratum. Generally, there was a decrease in the proportion of high-income groups with annual incomes exceeding ¥10,000,000. Further, since the rate of advancement to university has gradually increased since the 1990s, we may attribute the decrease of the average household income to popularization of progression to university by the general population. This implies that the people who would not have progressed to university before the 1980s, owing to income related factors, would have tended to choose advancement to university due to the expansion in the number of universities and the mitigation of entrance examination competition. However, this also implies that the pressure to gain admission into university may become universal, and may become a serious problem for people who cannot afford to pay expensive tuition fees.



According to a survey conducted by JASSO in 2004, 86,000 students used the scholarship pro-

gram offered by JASSO, which was reorganized by the Japan Scholarship Foundation in 2004; 27,000 students used other scholarship programs. In 1999, the former figure was 59,000, while the latter figure was 24,000. With regard to university students, over four-fifth students on a scholarship used the program offered by JASSO. Note that most of the scholarship programs in Japan, including that of JASSO, are based on student loans. Compared to other OECD countries, there are few, if any, real “scholarships” or direct grants offered to households in Japan to be found. Nevertheless, about 40% of university students use scholarship programs including those such as JASSO loan-based scholarship. Although there are grade and household income requirements, which play a decisive role in qualifying for JASSO’s scholarship loan program, it is not difficult to meet the criteria. Figure 2 shows the distribution of the annual household income of university students who use program and are enrolled in daytime courses. Certainly, the mode seems to shift to the left when compared to Figure 1. However, Figure 2 shows over 10% of households have annual incomes that exceed ¥9,000,000, which implies that relatively wealthy households are using the program. Since the JASSO program only provides student loans, the pressure of repayment in the future may prevent many students, who cannot afford to pay tuition fees, from using this program.



Owing to difficulties in finding and obtaining micro-data on household income, the use of scholarships and student loan programs, and the cost of education, studies that focus on the relationship between economic inequality and educational opportunity and scholarship programs are inactive. I therefore investigated the effects of eco-

nomical inequality on the use of any type of scholarship program by analyzing the Japanese Life Course Panel Survey (JLPS) conducted by the Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo. JLPS Wave 2 survey questionnaire, conducted in 2008, included detailed information on the respondents’ educational histories. I prepared a new dummy variable indicating whether the respondents used any type of scholarship program including JASSO’s education loan program when they were university students.

Our main interest lies in the fact that the scholarship program contributed to the progression to university for people who could not afford to pay tuition fees. It is easy to estimate the effects on the use of scholarship programs among the university attendees. Some socioeconomic backgrounds and grades will have significant effects on the use of scholarship programs. However, we have to remember that scholarship programs were only accessible to university attendees. Since the estimation among the university attendees excluded people who did not attend university education due to the lack of solvency for tuition fees, the estimation may be contaminated. In other words, there might be an unobservable correlation between the choice of using scholarship programs and of advancement to universities. Therefore, in this study, a bivariate probit model is estimated and compared with the coefficients of a single probit model. The dependent variable of the bivariate probit model is that whether or not the respondents progressed to university education (selection equation) and whether or not they used the scholarship programs (outcome equation). If ρ , which refers to the correlation of these probit equations’ error terms, is negative, the people who used the scholarship programs must have the opposite tendency of the people who were more likely to progress to universities, after controlling for measured characteristics. In other words, the university attendees were not a subsample of the high school attendees. University attendees were more likely to have high socioeconomic backgrounds than non-university attendees (Dubin and Rivers 1989/90).

In this analysis, I used gender, parents’ education, fathers’ occupation, property owned when the respondents were 15 years old, and the grades

obtained when they were seniors in high school, as independent variables. Gender is a dummy variable that is indicative of males. Parents' education is classified into three groups: compulsory education, post-secondary education (reference category) and higher education. Fathers' occupation is divided into service class (professionals and managerial workers), clerical workers (reference category), sales workers, manual workers and farmers. The Wave 1 questionnaire contains twenty questions that focus on whether or not the respondents' families owned any objects that could be considered property (i.e., precious items, real estates, etc.) when the respondents were 15 years old. I counted the number of the items possessed as a score with weights, which was based on the possession ratio of each item among all the respondents. A higher score reflects the ownership of more objects, such as precious items. I used this score as a proxy for household economic conditions that prevailed dur-

ing respondents' childhood years, because we could not obtain accurate household income data for those years. This thus became the property variable. Finally, grades are divided into five categories, and a larger score implies high achievement compared to other classmates. According to the Stata manual, for the model to be well identified, the selection equation should have at least one variable that is not in the outcome equation when we estimate the bivariate probit models. Therefore, I included the high school course dummy variable, which is indicative of non-academic courses in the selection equation.

The result of my analysis is shown in Table 1. The left column shows the single probit coefficients, which determined whether the respondents in a sample of university attendees used any scholarship programs. The column on the bottom right shows the coefficients of the selection equation,

Table 1 Probit Estimates of Receiving Scholarships and Advancement to Universities

	Outcome Equation (Scholarship)			
	Independent Probit		Bivariate Probit	
	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.
Male	-.134	.088	-.027	.129
Property	-.095	.037 *	-.084	.038 *
Grade	.116	.037 **	.134	.039 **
Father: Compulsory Education	.003	.158	-.025	.158
Father: Higher Education	.020	.107	.074	.115
Mother: Compulsory Education	.156	.164	.088	.174
Mother: Higher Education	.030	.110	.071	.114
Father: Service Class	-.005	.126	.005	.125
Father: Sales Workers	.264	.140 +	.229	.142
Father: Manual Workers	.344	.126 **	.301	.132 *
Father: Farmers	.622	.274 *	.544	.282 +
Constant	-1.026	.204 ***	-1.362	.348 ***
			Selection (University)	
			Coef.	S.E.
Male			.748	.056 ***
Property			.064	.024 **
Grade			.192	.025 ***
Father: Compulsory Education			-.086	.087
Father: Higher Education			.370	.070 ***
Mother: Compulsory Education			-.426	.089 ***
Mother: Higher Education			.415	.077 ***
Father: Service Class			.129	.087
Father: Sales Workers			-.195	.090 *
Father: Manual Workers			-.215	.079 **
Father: Farmers			-.457	.156 **
High School Vocational Track			-1.130	.080 ***
Constant			-1.172	.128 ***
ρ			.249	.229
Uncensored Observations	1153		1153	
Censored Observations			1559	
-2 Log Likelihood	1143.086		4293.050	

+<.10 *<.05 **<.01 ***<.001

which determined whether the respondents in the entire sample progressed to university. And the column on the top right shows the coefficients of the outcome equation, which determined whether those among university attendees used any scholarship programs. When we compare both the coefficients of the outcome equation, we can see that the results seem similar, except that grades increase the predicting power for advancement to university, while property and fathers' occupation decreases it in the bivariate probit estimation. The result of the selection equation shows that socioeconomic variables still have a strong predicting power for expecting advancement to universities, and it is coherent with preceding research. Among the university attendees, people whose fathers engaged in manual work or agricultural work tended to use the scholarship programs as compared to the people whose fathers engaged in clerical work. However, ρ , which implies the correlation of error terms between the outcome and selection equations, was not statistically significant. The result demonstrates that the decision to progress to university and the decision to use any kind of scholarship program are independent of each other.

In sum, the results reveal that we were unable to prove that Japanese scholarship programs have contributed to providing more opportunities for attending university to people who could not attend without these scholarships. Obviously, respondents belonging to the manual and farming class were more likely to be provided with benefits from scholarship programs when compared to those from the non-manual class. However, since these two decisions were unrelated, it is doubtful that the Japanese scholarship programs encouraged people who could not afford to attend university without these programs to progress to universities. Ito and Suzuki (2002) demonstrated that the scholarships from the Japan Scholarship Foundation were not used effectively, which implies the scholarship loans were not used for studies or books, but for food, telephone bills, and overseas travel. They concluded that since the standards of scholarship programs were unclear, scholarships were not used effectively. As I mentioned above, most Japanese scholarship programs imply education loans, and the proportion of private payment for higher education is very high. We should notice

that while there are many people who do not use scholarship programs in spite of a low-income household, there are many people who use the scholarship programs in spite of a high-income household. It is possible that people fear the heavy repayment of these loans in their futures after graduation. When the scholarship loan is small, the effects may also be small. On the other hand, when the scholarship loan is large, people do not want to use this program due to the future repayment factor. Although scholarship programs based solely on grades, regardless of household economic conditions, may exist, they seem to be a rarity in Japan. If high educational credentials are important in Japanese society, the benefit of university education is more likely to be provided to people with the financial standing and ability to pay expensive tuition fees. In other words, the recent expansion of university education does not improve the inequality prevalent in students' access to universities, and the economic differentials may become clearer through this higher education system. Considering the low public expenditure for higher education, it is necessary for the government to undertake certain measures to resolve these problems.

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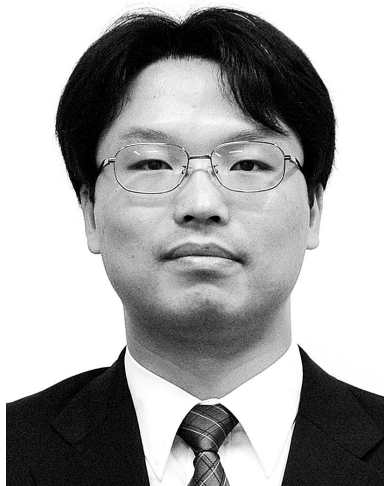
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University Student Job Hunting and University Career Placement Divisions

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1. Introduction

In this paper I used JLPS (Japanese Life Course Panel Survey) data to explore university support for student job hunting and its effect, focusing mainly on mediation by Career Placement Divisions.

Questions in Wave 2 of the JLPS concentrated on education. The scope of the survey was broad, including questions on experiences during high school, school life at the most recently attended school, major courses in post-secondary education, job hunting and the like. By grouping these questions with Wave 2 questions on first jobs, I was able to conduct a detailed study of the transition from the university to the workplace. Utiliz-

ing the qualities of these data, I examined mediation by university Career Placement Divisions, a topic that has not garnered much attention before now.

2. The Job-Hunting Process for Japanese University Students

First, let me briefly explain the current processes by which Japanese university students search for jobs and mention two features of these processes.

The first feature is that there are several types of job-hunting processes. Figure 1 represents the kinds of job-hunting processes employed as responsesⁱ to the question: "What led you to come to know about and apply for your first job?" Over a quarter of students surveyed chose the response "Internet or material request postcard," indicating a job-hunting processⁱⁱ in which students apply directly to companies via the Internet or with postcards. The main feature of this process and with the process that garnered the second largest number of responses, "job advertisement or magazine," is that these processes are undertaken in a comparatively free market. On the other hand, those processes that are mediated by the schools, i.e., responses entitled "Guidance Office or Career Placement Division" and "faculty member" only account for 10 – 15% of responses as do job hunting processes implemented via one's personal networks, namely responses such as "family or relative" or "friend or acquaintance."

The second feature is that the types of job-hunting processes that are most frequently employed differ according to College, which in this study refers to field of study. Figure 2 summarizes by College the most frequent response, "Internet or material request postcard," along with two other

ⁱ Subjects for the analysis in this paper were selected from among those JLPS (young and middle-age) respondents that graduated from university and that did not advance to graduate school or another school after graduation.

ⁱⁱ Until the mid 1990s, the mailing of postcards to request materials concerning employment selection was the beginning of the job hunting process, but with the spread of the Internet, students have come to apply online.

Figure 1: University Student Employment Processes (Multiple Responses)

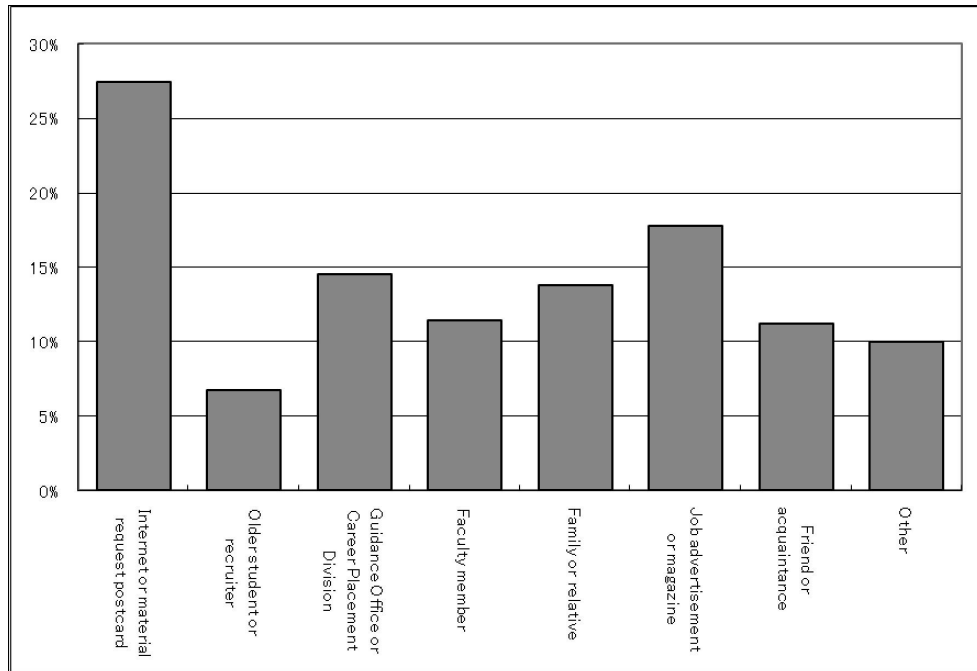
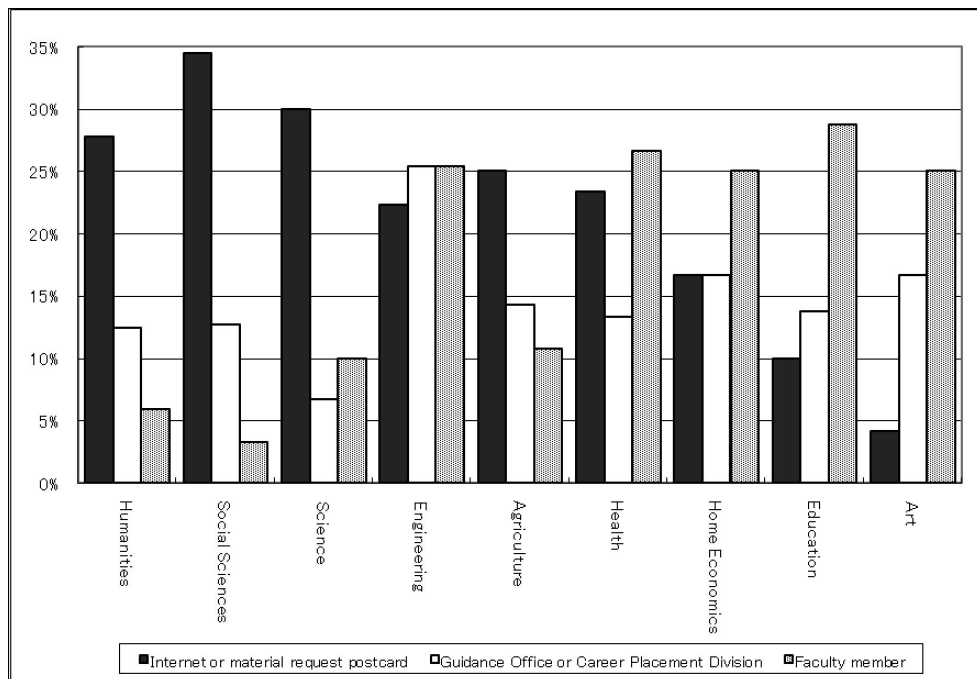


Figure 2: Employment Processes by College (Multiple Responses)



responses, “Guidance Office or Career Placement Division” and “faculty member,” which represent processes mediated by the schools. “Internet or material request postcard” is employed comparatively often for all Colleges but slightly less so for home economics, education and art. While the “faculty member” process is used by many students (approximately 25%) for the fields of engineering, health, home economics, education and art, user rates remain below 10% for the humani-

ties, social sciences, science and agriculture. The “Guidance Office or Career Placement Division” option is also low in the field of science despite its consistent use in practically all Colleges. Looking at this data, there are two student job-hunting routes in which universities are involved: one through Career Placement Divisions and one through faculty members; however, it is clear that faculty members are not too involved in the humanities, social sciences and science fields, lim-

iting job hunting to exclusive mediation by Career Placement Divisions. For students in these three Colleges, the role of mediation by Career Placement Divisions can be considered large. In this paper, I shall therefore examine the role of mediation by Career Placement Divisions focusing only on the humanities and social sciences, in other words, those areas of these three Colleges that can be referred to as the arts and sciences.

3. Differences in Job-Hunting Timing and Processes

The difference between the "Internet or material request postcard" and "Guidance Office or Career Placement Division" job-hunting processes in the humanities and social sciences is a difference in the timing of job-hunting activities. The former process can be called first-round job hunting. In recent years, students submit Internet applications between January and March of their junior year, followed by a multiple-interview screening, and concluding two to three months later with an unofficial job offer. The latter process, on the other hand, is conducted after first-round job hunting, and is one of several second-round job-hunting processes.

Figure 3 illustrates the kind of differences that appear between early-stage job offers secured in first-round job hunting and late-stage job offers

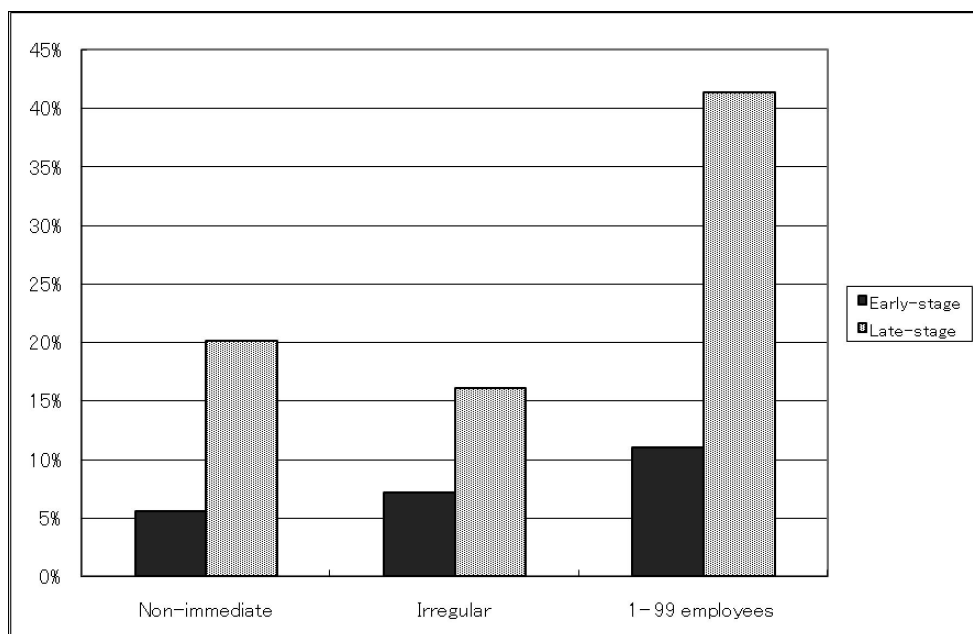
secured in second-round job hunting. Upon closer examination, one can find that late-stage job offers, when compared to early-stage job offers, are granted for jobs that do not commence immediately after graduation, that tend more towards irregular employment and that are for small-scale companies.

In short, Career Placement Division mediation can be thought of as a process that is undertaken by students who were unable to seize favorable first-round opportunities as the possibility that they may end up in jobs with poor terms and conditions grows higher.

4. The Effect of Career Placement Division Mediation on Job-Hunting Results

So, what kind of effects does Career Placement Division mediation have on job-hunting results? Let us examine the following three job-hunting results: immediate or non-immediate employment after graduation, type of employment, and company size. Here I divide paths to career entry into three categories: early-stage (first-round) job offers, Career Placement Division-mediated late-stage employment, and non-Career Placement Division-mediated late-stage employment. I examined the effects of the latter two categories on employment results when using early-stage job offers as the standard category. Analyzing the

Figure 3: Differences in Early-Stage and Late-Stage Employment Results (for Humanities and Social Sciences only)



data with binomial logistic regression, I observed the effects with gender, generation and university rank as controls.ⁱⁱⁱ

The results of the analysis are shown in Table 1. For all employment results, no significant results were achieved for Career Placement Division-mediated late-stage employment. This means that no difference in employment results can be discerned between Career Placement Division-mediated late-stage employment and early-stage job offers. On the other hand, significant results were achieved for all non-Career Placement Division-mediated late-stage employment results. That is to say, the data shows that compared to early-stage job offers, non-Career Placement Division-mediated late-stage employment is non-immediate (i.e., students are not gainfully employed within one month after graduation), job types are

irregular, and companies have 99 or fewer employees.

When comparing early-stage and late-stage employment, as in Figure 3, late-stage employment is non-immediate, there is higher possibility of irregular work, and companies tend to be smaller in size, i.e., the terms and conditions of these jobs are not very good; however, what this analysis shows is that even in the later stages, students can avoid jobs with poor terms and conditions by seeking employment via Career Placement Divisions. If it is assumed that students employed in later stages are those that failed to secure employment in the earlier stages, then perhaps this suggests that Career Placement Division mediation serves as a safety net for those students.

Table 1: Effect of University Career Placement Division Mediation (for Humanities and Social Sciences only)

	Non-immediate		Irregular		Company Size (99-)	
	B	Exp (B)	B	Exp (B)	B	Exp (B)
Gender	.039	1.040	-.252	0.777	-.254	0.776
Birth year: 1972 - 1977	1.064	2.898	1.103	3.012	.901	2.462
Birth year: 1978 or later	1.162	3.197	1.593	4.920	1.032	2.807
Private Universities: non-competitive	-.130	0.878	-.508	0.602	.564	1.758
Late-Stage / Career Placement Division-mediated	-1.185	0.306	.123	1.131	.353	1.424
Late-Stage / Non-Career Placement Division-mediated	1.856	6.397	1.302	3.675	2.023	7.560
Constant	-3.779	0.023	-3.393	0.034	-3.010	0.049
-2 log-likelihood	365.732		307.058		403.429	
Cox & Snell R2	0.105		0.067		0.181	
Number of Cases	492		432		390	

** Significant at 1% * Significant at 5%

ⁱⁱⁱ Variables are as follows. Gender: Male = 1, Female = 0; Generation: Birth years 1966-1971 set as standard dummy variable; Rank: Private universities with standard scores of 50 or lower in a university information magazine (*Gakken's Daigaku Juken Annai 2009 Nendo Yo*) = 1, All others = 0.

My Research at ISS: A Comparative Study of Urban, Rural and Family Law

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I retired from the Institute of Social Science (ISS) at the end of March 2008 (I am currently a Professor of Civil Law at the Chuo University Law School). I specialize in the civil law, sociology of law and French law, and have conducted versatile research on (a) urban planning and land law, (b) agricultural policy and rural law, (c) family law and policy, and (d) real estate law. My research is especially characterized by the following features: 1. comparisons between Japanese and French law and society; 2. special importance placed on empirical analysis based on a historical background; and 3. a comprehensive interdisciplinary approach. I should also note that most of my achievements were attained through collaboration with my colleagues at the institute and in conjunction with other joint research projects conducted at ISS.

On March 18, 2008, I presented the customary final report on my research at ISS at the staff seminar under the same title as the subtitle of this essay along with a list of my achievementsⁱ. The following is a portion of what I covered at that seminar.

Roots of My Research

I was appointed to ISS as an Associate Professor in 1982, but the roots of my research date back to my time as an ISS research associate from the end of 1968 until the end of 1976. This period of time was especially significant for me. First, it coincided with the student riots at the University of Tokyo in 1968-69. I passed the bar examination while I was still an undergraduate student with the intention to become a lawyer; however, I chose to become a researcher, specifically, a research associate at ISS. This decision was not unrelated to the social atmosphere at that time. My decision to join ISS, to me, shows that I was attracted to the research on the sociology of law being conducted by the faculty at ISS at that time, and that I was aware that it was important for a researcher to possess a clear and certain distance from authority as well as a critical perspective. The breadth and specialty of my research mentioned above were guided, in large part, by these circumstances.

Second, I had an opportunity to conduct research in France for two and a half years from the summer in 1973 as an exchange student funded by the French government (*boursier du gouvernement français*). Thanks to this opportunity, I could secure a basis for my comparative research on Japanese and French law and society. The research I conducted on the history of land law while I was in

ⁱ The list of my research achievements can be found in the *Annual Report of the Institute of Social Science*, Volume 45.

France, which resulted in a publication (*Kindai tochi chintaishakuhou no kenkyu—Furansu nouchi chintaishakuhou no kouzou to shiteki tenkai* (A Study on *Modern Contemporary Land Leasing Law—Structure of French Agricultural Land Leasing Law and Its Historical Development*), University of Tokyo Press, 1980), not only brought me joy, hardship, and closer to an understanding of historical research methods, but also presented the future prospect a career in research.

While I leave the objective assessment of this book to othersⁱⁱ, I think that my basic theoretical approach to the relationship between land ownership (rights) and use (rights), which ties into my current studies on urban, land and agricultural land law, was established upon this research. Furthermore, my study abroad experience as a truly “*pauvre* (poor)” student provided me with an invaluable opportunity to view French society from the bottom up.

Development of My Research

Since around 1980, I have developed my research in close correlation with the institute and other joint research projects at ISS. The major projects that I have been involved in are the followings.

I joined a team of French researchers working on a project titled, “Survey of German and French Farm Inheritance” (1978 – 1980), an overseas academic survey conducted with a grant-in-aid subsidy. Through this research project, I came to understand family relationships and behavior in rural French society and the real functions of civil law and laws for agricultural land and agriculture there. This made me aware, once again, of the differences of the situations in France and in Japan and convinced me that there were many extreme-

ly interestingly topics within comparative research in the fields of family law and inheritance law that needed to be explored. The knowledge and information gained in this research played an important role in the development of my comparative research on Japanese and French agricultural land legislation, which I pursued consistently and became a fundamental component in my individual research.

I was also responsible for the research on France in a special joint research project entitled “Comparative Research on Divorce: Japan and Western Countries” launched in 1983.

I was assigned to the analysis of postwar Japanese housing legislation in a institute-wide research project entitled “Contemporary Welfare States” (1982), which led me to conduct a comparative study with French housing legislation.

In a special joint research project entitled “Welfare States in Transition” (1985)—a continuation of the above institute-wide research project—I wrote “The Family Model in the Theory of Japanese-style Welfare Society”.

In the successive institute-wide research project entitled “Contemporary Japanese Society” (1986), I authored “Ageing Society and the Family—in Relation to the Transformation of the Family and the Orientation of Social Security Policy”ⁱⁱⁱ. The viewpoint, “Social Security, Social Welfare, Family and Family Policy,” I presented in both of these articles focusing on the positions and roles of women was an original and novel approach at that time, and imbued a certain influence on the developments of later research in relation to this topic. These research projects were also an important starting point for my comparative study on

ⁱⁱ Professor Seigo Hirowatari reviewed this book in *Minpo gakusetu hyakunenshi* (*The One Hundred Year History of the Civil Law Theories*) (Masanobu Kato et al., eds., Yuhikaku Publishing Co. Ltd., 1999). He comments at the beginning, “This book presented a historical and sociological empirical analysis of the development of modern French agricultural land leasing legislation which led to the Napoleonic Code, and on the basis of this analysis, provided a new perspective to the land leasing and modern land property theory, which had been one of the most important issues in civil law studies in Japan in the postwar era,” and concludes, “The author successfully objectified “the modern,” which had often been discussed as a universal model in Japanese postwar legal academia, as a unique, historic existence.” This book won the Japan Academic Society of Agricultural Law Award in 1988.

ⁱⁱⁱ These achievements were published in *Tenkanki no fukusi kokka 2* (*The Welfare State in Transition 2*, University of Tokyo Institute of Social Science, ed., University of Tokyo Press, 1988) and in *Gendai nihon shakai 6* (*Contemporary Japanese Society 6*, University of Tokyo Institute of Social Science, ed., University of Tokyo Press, 1992). They were also published in English, with additional analysis on the issues in the early 1990s, as Sumitaka Harada, “The Ageing Society, the Family, and Social Policy,” Junji Banno, ed., *The Political Economy of Japanese Society, Vol.2, Internationalization and Domestic Issues*, Oxford University Press, March 1998.

Japanese and French patrimonial law of the family (*droit patrimonial de la famille*) with consideration of the issues of falling birthrates, ageing and nursing care for elders.

In the field of urban and land law, I consistently participated in a research project called "Comparative and Joint Research on Contemporary Land Laws," which had been promoted mainly by ISS researchers since the late 1970s. I began my research focusing on the analysis of the French legislation on land acquisition for public purposes, but later I expanded my research area to the whole structure of contemporary urban land laws, including city planning laws. In this field, I first focused on the French legal system because it was far more developed than the Japanese system. In my research on the French legal system, a new recognition of the great importance for establishing an integrated (both practical and theoretical) understanding of the entire structure of the contemporary land law for town and country was gradually developed. Later I conducted research on Japanese laws with this recognition in mind. It was the driving force behind our research project called "Contemporary Urban Laws in Advanced Capitalist Nations."

The determining factors in the promotion of this urban planning law research were the urban redevelopment boom and the real estate bubble in the late 1980s in Japan, as well as the accelerated development of the policies and related laws which inflated these phenomena. Because I felt an urgent need to present a critical view of the situation, I formed an interdisciplinary research group called the "Urban Law Research Group" with researchers from other disciplines who had the same concerns in 1986. We made a significant and continuous effort to address the urban land law issues and published our research results on a regular basis. On the basis of our comprehensive, comparative and empirical research on the systems of several nations, we presented a new analytical perspective on the structures and functions the legal system should have to control urban space. Another feature of this project was our persistent effort to analyze and criticize the ongoing

issues involving Japanese policies and laws. Our main publications are *Contemporary Urban Planning Law: Germany, France, England and the United States* (1993) and *Urban Planning Law in Japan I* (2001) and *II* (2001)^{iv}. My theoretical hypothesis on comparative urban planning law research presented in the introduction of the former work had a significant impact on the development of urban law theory in Japan.

In the field of agricultural policy and rural law, mentioned above as item (b), I published several works on the legislation of agriculture and agricultural land in Japan, France, and EU/EC on a regular basis, from not only a theoretical, but also a practical perspective, as one of a small number of experts in this field. I also actively participated in the discussion on actual policies and system reforms.

In the field of real estate law, mentioned in (d) above, I conducted research on positive laws in Japan and France from a broad perspective. I feel I could make a certain theoretical contribution to the explanation of the legal relationship between ownership and use rights to land and real estate.

An Overview

My research has been so wide-ranging that it may seem too diversified. In fact, when someone asks me "What did you research at ISS?" I find it difficult to explain in a few words. This difficulty is intensified by the fact that I have not integrated my research achievements into a monographic work yet. However, I believe my research has its own consistency and an integrated perspective.

First, many of my research subjects were ongoing contemporary issues related to national policies, and as a researcher, I have always tried to assess them from a critical perspective. While this stance as a researcher caused diversification of my research, my intent to address actual problems was undeterred.

Second, I generally approached each subject from a comparative (in light of history), empirical,

^{iv} These books were published by the University of Tokyo Press. The former book, *Contemporary Urban Planning Law* won the Japan Association for Real Estate Sciences Award in 1994.

comprehensive and interdisciplinary research perspective. The underlying framework of my research was always “society and law” in which I tried to understand laws in relation to society.

Third, society and law may appear to be existence independently in three separate areas—law in urban society, law in rural society, and law in family—in France and Japan, but they are the most important segments of a society, which are closely interrelated and are what constitutes soci-

ety as a whole. In fact, cities, villages and families are the most fundamental elements that constitute a historic society and historical individuality, while the essence of each society reveals itself most evidently in these areas. Through my “Comparative Study of Urban, Rural and Family Law,” I was trying to understand such individuality and the essence of Japanese society. I will develop this theme when I have an opportunity to integrate my research achievements sometime in the future.

Skill Development and Employment Management

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In recent years, the population of non-regular workers has been on the rise; and the jobs assigned to them are becoming increasingly sophisticated. This has led to a growing need for companies to devise means, namely human resource management systems and employment management schemes, to retain and encourage non-regular workers, as well as regular workers, to be motivated about their work and about developing their job performance skills. Moreover, employee retention rates and job performance skills have been proven to greatly influence the productivity and profitability of an organization. Adopting employment management to promote personnel retention and skill development would therefore work to boost company performance.

My research mainly explores employment management to promote personnel retention and skill development. In this article, I would like to introduce my field of study by describing an overview of the doctoral dissertation, titled *Skill Development and Employment Management: Evidence from Micro-Level Data*, submitted to the Osaka School of International Public Policy, Osaka University, in 2008. This dissertation comprises two parts: the first part discusses young workers, and the second discusses home-visit care workers. Both of these workforce subpopulations, consisting increasingly of non-regular workers, suffer high turnover rates and difficulty in skill development.

Skill and career development and employment management of young workers

The increase in the employment of non-regular workers by companies has led to an increase in the rate of those who work as non-regular workers on their first job after leaving school. Working as a non-regular worker on the first job has been generally suggested to limit training opportunities and to have a negative effect on mid-to-long term career development. On the other hand, many of those who start work as regular workers after leaving school quit their jobs after less than three years. With the diminishing workforce, improving retention rates and productivity of new employees, and especially the younger of these employees, is a crucial issue for companies aiming to effectively utilize their human resources. The first part of the dissertation, "Skill and career development and employment management of young workers," therefore examines measures companies may apply to develop and utilize the work skills of young employees, focusing mainly on work experience and the workplace at the time of employment and the first three years of the first job.

One factor that may cause a worker to leave his or her job is the disappointment encountered when the job is found to fail to meet certain expectations. Realistic Job Preview, or RJP, has been gaining much attention as a possible countermeasure to this problem. In RJP, the applicant is given access to information, both good and bad, on what the job and workplace are actually like. This would thereby provide the so-called “vaccination,” “self-selection/matching,” “coping,” and “personal commitment” effects to promote retention; of which the “vaccination effect” is especially known to serve as a cornerstone for job survival. The mechanism and effectiveness of RJP is widely acknowledged in the United States. RJP has been adopted in Japan as well in recent years, mainly for young workers, in the form of temp-to-perm, internships leading to employment, trial employment, and the Japanese-version dual employment/training system. Further research which examines this type of “on-the-job matching” (matching applicants with companies through actual job experience) as a method of RJP, and its effects on retention, is yet to be conducted (Chapter 1). Furthermore, the population of those who become unemployed after giving up on finding work at the point of leaving school, and thus most likely have very little substantial access to company job offers, is growing as well. Measures that take into account this population, and the diversity of the individuals it comprises, also need to be considered (Supplement).

What meaning do work experiences during the first three years of the first job have on the later career of the worker, and which of these experiences are important? Experiencing a feeling that the job suits them during this period leads to sustained effects: The worker gains a higher self evaluation regarding work skills, is encouraged to stay at their job, and, consequently, their income level increases. It is therefore of great importance for effective skill development of young workers that they experience within the first three years of employment the feeling that the job suits them. This is facilitated by providing an environment that allows for individual consultation and a chance for the worker to work as hard as they can (Chapter 2).

Experiencing supervisory work during the first

three years of employment is also effective in developing the confidence of young workers (Chapter 2). With the increase in the adoption of internship systems in recent years, one way to provide such an experience would be to allow young workers to supervise interns. Analysis of internships leading to the growth of young employees has demonstrated that internships were more felt to be of benefit by both the company and the supervisor when young workers within their first three years of employment were in charge of supervising the student interns. Internships, therefore, not only act as a method of RJP, as described earlier, but can also be utilized as opportunities for the growth of young employees (Chapter 4).

The first three years of employment are important to those working as non-regular workers on their first jobs as well. Workers working as non-regular workers on the first job may also be granted a working environment that provides them skill development opportunities and growth experiences that may serve as a basis for later career development (such as the feeling that the job suits them, mentioned earlier). Designating someone the worker can consult and developing a work environment in which workers are encouraged to help each other out and collaborate have positive effects on the skill enhancement of non-regular workers (Chapter 3).

Retention, skill development, and employment management of home-visit care workers

Home-visit care workers constitute a working subpopulation where not only retention rates are low but applicants are few as well, leading to serious labor shortage and thus making skill enhancement through work experience difficult. The second part of the dissertation, “Retention, skill development, and employment management of home-visit care workers,” discusses employment management for retention and skill development of home-visit care workers. The home-visit care worker population is significant in that the increase in its number of non-regular workers has been extremely rapid, and securing and retention of personnel is a pressing issue for consistently providing quality service. Furthermore, temporary part-time workers, or so-called *tōroku-*

gata helpers, make up approximately 70% of this population. *Tōrokugata helpers* are fixed-term part-time employees but of a different nature compared to workers in other industries. Examining employment management of such workers may provide information that may prove to be useful to other industries in which demand fluctuates within short periods.

This part of the dissertation first provides an overview of the Long-Term Care Insurance System, the scale of the long-term care service market, the state of the long-term care workforce, and the working conditions of home-visit care workers (Introduction). It then analyzes the substance and characteristics of home-visit care work in view of the system provided and the actual working conditions, and thus presents a potential framework for understanding home-visit care work from the perspective of the home-visit care worker and the user (Chapter 1).

For effective and efficient skill development, it is important to start with a proper knowledge of which work skills the trainee is equipped with. For home-visit care workers, however, despite the fact that the occupation itself is based on credentials, these credentials do not necessarily guarantee job performance skills. The study thus presents the work skills required for home-visit care workers, and proposes standards for properly identifying and evaluating which skills a worker possesses, and the range and depth thereof (Chapter 2).

Previous studies have shown that employee retention and contribution are influenced not by the state of the company as a whole, but rather by the direct supervisor of the employee. This is true also in the field of home-visit care, where on-site managers, or “service delivery supervisors,” (*service teikyō sekinin-sha*) play a significant role. Based on this observation, the study explores personnel utilization approaches that lead to retention and long-term care skill enhancement of home-visit care workers, focusing on the human resource management abilities of the service delivery supervisor and the off-the-job training opportunities provided at the service provider branch. Here, the human resource management abilities of the service delivery supervisor were

shown to have a significant positive effect on both the retention and skill development of home-visit care workers (Chapter 3).

The study then focuses on service delivery supervisors, who have been shown to play a major role in creating a workplace that promotes retention and skill development of home-visit care workers; in other words, a workplace in which a home-visit worker can feel motivated. The study describes the job and responsibilities of service delivery supervisors and the required job performance skills, and discusses what kind of service management and helper management should be administered at home-visit care service provider branches (Chapters 4-6).

The assumed responsibilities of a service delivery supervisor are to ensure that services are provided consistently. This is to be achieved by properly identifying the long-term care needs of the user and drawing up home-visit care plans accordingly, and furthermore fulfilling these plans through measures such as securing, training, and supplying home-visit care personnel with the ability to do the job. In other words, the service delivery supervisor is to be in charge of managing services and home-visit care personnel. In reality, however, the responsibilities taken on by the service delivery supervisor are far more diverse and span the whole of the home-visit care provider branch operation. Long working hours do not necessarily yield sufficient personnel management, for more often than not, many of those hours are actually spent at the user’s home doing helper work (Chapter 4). This current state of time allocation and substance of the work of service delivery supervisors are deemed undesirable not only by the service delivery supervisors themselves, but by the service provider as well (Chapter 5).

With these observations, the study analyzes work assignment and service management in home-visit care provider branches where retention rates are relatively high, and proposes efficient methods of work assignment (Chapter 4) and service management that is in accordance with the actual procedures in providing home-visit care services (Chapter 5). The analysis demonstrates that retention of home-visit care workers is determined not by external factors such as the properties of the

service provider branch itself, but rather by the abilities of the service delivery supervisors. The study therefore proceeds to examine and present the factors governing the job performance skills of service delivery supervisors, and the current state of their skill development and issues thereof (Chapter 6).

The second part of the dissertation demonstrates the following to be important in the retention and skill development of home-visit care workers. (1) Each service provider branch should ensure that sufficient information is disclosed to the applicant at the time of employment. It should also consider the first year after employment an intern period during which the employee undergoes intensive skill development, and have a proper knowledge of the skills held by its employees so that training can be planned accordingly. On-site training opportunities in which the trainee can accompany his or her supervisor to the work site, and accurate instructions and explanations of service objectives, details, and procedures, should also be provided. (2) The service provider should adopt a human resource management system that promotes home-visit care worker skill development. (3) A long-term care insurance system that enables effective and sufficient employment management by the service provider should be

installed (Conclusion).

Furthermore, the following were shown to be essential for establishing an environment in which service delivery supervisors can play their part in creating a better workplace for home-visit care workers. (1) Appointing home-visit care workers or clerical personnel to assist in supervisory work and share some of the burden; (2) efficient service management, as described in Chapter 5; (3) advanced skill development, by means including outside training programs, and a job performance appraisal system, both of which would need to be furnished by the service provider; and (4) reviewing the role of the service delivery supervisor assumed in the Long-term Care Insurance System, especially in terms of the number and place of assignment and remuneration structure, to allow for more appropriate time allocation and a more appropriate length of time to be spent at the user's home.

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Homeownership and the Role of Work and the Family

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The Importance of Housing Research

Savings, stocks and bonds, homes and other assets possess significant meaning in people's lives. For example, when faced with an illness, job loss or other sudden risk, young households will respond by tapping into their savings instead of tightening the family budget or shifting to a double-income household structure (Horioka, Kohara, Murakami, 2004). While families with substantial assets can handle such situations adequately, families with few assets can be considered vulnerable to risk.

Homes provide an important foundation for daily life, and they are linked closely to employment opportunities and other life-chances; homeownership is especially reassuring later in life. Homes

are the most valuable asset for a large number of households as well. Housing research abounds in social work, public policy and economics, but is not so common in sociology; however, this does not mean that housing research is not important to sociologists. In the section below, I discuss Japan's recent, more market-driven housing policies and the impact of social status (i.e., one's position in the labor market) on home acquisition, which is likely to become stronger. In addition, research has shown that the higher a woman's socioeconomic status, the more likely she is to have a home registered in her name and to have more savings (Murakami, 2006a). Housing will be a critical element to examine when considering economic disparity in Japanese society. However, one feature of home acquisition is that it does not always correlate with high social status. In general, individuals of a high social status are more likely to own homes, but since homes can be transferred from parents to children, some individuals acquire homes without a high social status. For this reason, it is necessary to consider the effect that social status and family have on home acquisition.

Housing Policy in Postwar Japan

The housing policy in postwar Japan has been one of ownership; however, public assistance for housing is low compared to European countries. Historically, homeownership was promoted as part of corporate human resource management. Thanks to this policy and rapid economic growth, many households came to own their own homes after the war. Now, the number of homes exceeds the number of households. Having essentially solved the issue of housing quantity, Japan has pledged to shift its focus from quantity to quality with the enactment of the Basic Act for Housing in 2006. It was around this time that major

changes in housing policy began to occur. A case in point is the withdrawal of the Urban Renaissance Agency (originally the Japan Housing Corporation) from the provision of houses for sale and rent. Furthermore, the Government Housing Loan Corporation (now the Japan Housing Finance Agency) was dissolved, implying a greater role for the private sector. With partial revisions to the Order for Enforcement of the Public Housing Act and other legislation, it appears that the income ceiling for public housing applications will be lowered, while the rents of current tenants will be raised. The continuing shift toward market-led housing acquisition will likely grow stronger.

Factors Regulating to Housing Acquisition in Young and Middle-Aged Households

Within this socioeconomic context, I explored the factors that regulate first home acquisition in young and middle-aged households. In my analysis, I used data from the Japanese Panel Survey of Consumers (JPSC) conducted by the Institute for Research on Household Economics. This survey, conducted every October by drop-in method, began in 1993 by selecting women aged 24 – 34 from throughout Japan in a two-stage stratified random sampling. The respondents are only women, but information on parents, children, husbands, other household members, and even on families in separate households can be obtained. Taking advantage of the quality of the panel data, I conducted an event history analysis based on a discrete-time logit model. The merit of this method is that estimation can be made giving due consideration to censoring (i.e., samples that did not acquire a home by the end of the observation period and samples that withdrew from the survey without acquiring a home). In my analysis, I focused on the roles of social status and family, keeping in mind that Japan's policies comprise elements of a liberal regime, while families—whose roles as welfare providers are great—comprise elements of a conservative regime.

The dependent variable is whether or not the household to which a subject belongs owns the house in which the family is living at the time of the survey. Even if a subject does not own her own land or buildings, if the family with whom

she lives does, then this is considered homeownership in this survey. Homeownership is not limited to single-family homes with self-owned buildings and property. Condominiums with sectionally owned property and homes on leased land also constitute homeownership. I used the following explanatory variables: husband's age, husband's birth cohort, household savings balance and income, husband's occupation, wife's employment status, whether or not the household had children, coresidence with parents, whether or not the household had received an inheritance and/or gifts, and the size of the city of residence.

While the actual figures are omitted here (For details, refer to Murakami, 2008.), I found that (1) high household savings balances increase the probability that the household will switch to homeownership; (2) the probability of homeownership is higher if the husband is in a professional or semi-professional occupation, but the overall impact of the husband's occupation is weak; and (3) coresidence with parents and the receipt of inheritances and/or gifts increase the probability of home acquisition.

The probable reason that higher saving balances are more significant than household income is because a household must prepare a large amount of funds before acquiring a home. Looking at husbands' occupations, I found that self-employment and white-collar jobs, overall, influence households to acquire homes, while blue-collar jobs do not. However, the effect of the husband's occupation is not a significant variable. The reason that the wife's employment status was an insignificant variable was probably due to the fact that wives' jobs, in general, are supplemental compared to husbands' jobs. Coresidence with parents and the receipt of inheritances and/or gifts had a greater impact than occupation. However, care must be taken in interpreting the effect of coresidence with parents since coresidence in homes registered under a parent's name was defined as homeownership. Husband's age, birth cohort, whether or not the household had children, and the size of the city of residence proved insignificant.

In some foreign countries, the effect of occupation, in addition to the role of the family, is strong. Compared to the results of the analysis for Japan,

it has again become strikingly clear that Japan's family-centric element is incredibly powerful. This focus on the family—whose role as a welfare provider is great—also appears consistent with Esping-Andersen's welfare regime theory.

The Future of Housing Research

In the results of my analysis, the impact of occupation is weak; however, when looking at the impact of both occupation and family on home acquisition, I point out that they remain essential. Why then was the impact of occupation weak in this analysis? The reasons that can be gleaned are that the dependent variables do not limit home ownership to purchased homes and that there are constraints in the data; or perhaps the impact of occupation is not on whether or not a home has been acquired, but rather a question of "quality" (dwelling area, proximity to workplace, single-family home vs. condominium, etc.). Furthermore in another analysis, there are cases in which home acquisition can be inferred despite the fact that occupational rank and the condition of the family budget are not favorable (Murakami, 2007). For these reasons, perhaps, the impact of occupation is weak.

The results of this study may also show that the receipt of inheritances and/or gifts from family or coresidence mitigates inequalities in home acquisition that derive from the social status of husbands. However, can these results be considered desirable? The answer is no. People cannot choose the families they are born into. I believe that this is proof that openness in society has increased. Specifically, research on social stratification—in stride with modernization—has shown that the idea of ascription of people's ranks has weakened while the idea of achievement has grown stronger. Based on this presumption, the fact that the role of the family—the cause for ascription—is strong cannot be thought to be desirable for society. As I have already mentioned, Japan's housing policy is an ownership policy based on self-reliance. In addition, the impact of the family was further increased when the tax exemption ceiling for the mortgage gift program was raised under the 2003 tax reforms. This, however, does not mean that everyone can inherit sufficient assets from their families. Analy-

sis of the JPSC also shows that the more socioeconomically well-off individuals are, the greater their chances for inheritance will be (Murakami, 2006b).

However, while coresidence with parents will increase the possibility of a switch to homeownership, there are also signs that the custom of coresidence will ebb. Furthermore, since the average life spans of parents are long, children can be expected to acquire their own homes before inheriting their parents' homes, and since this means children will acquire homes on the free market, the impact of occupation going forward may grow stronger. On the other hand, it can also be pointed out that the decline in the number of children (i.e., the number of siblings) will increase the possibility of home acquisition by inheritance. This is why I feel that further research on the impact that occupation and family have on home acquisition is necessary.

The research discussed here focused on the factors that regulate home acquisition. It may also be important to conduct research on home acquisition with a focus on individuals' life-chances, lifestyles and consciousness. Since loans can be repaid earlier, if the timing of home acquisition is earlier, saving for children's education expenses and life after retirement becomes easier. The timing of home acquisition seems to impact life-chances later in life. Furthermore, there are reports of individuals that lose their homes when they lose their jobs due to economic downturns. It is necessary to promote further social science-based housing research in order to apply the results widely to real-life situations.

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Janet Hunter



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Q. How did you first come to know about *Shaken*?

I have known about the existence of *Shaken* for a very long time, as when I was a graduate student I had at least one friend who was supervised by a *Shaken* professor for his doctoral fieldwork in Japan. I also knew early on that some of my professors had academic contacts there, and that Japanese members of *Shaken* visited the UK, so I became very aware that the Institute was one of the foremost centres for social science research on Japan, as well as one of the most internationally oriented. Although there were a few outstanding individual social scientists in the UK who wrote on Japan before the 1970s, it was only after then that the numbers increased, and even now the number of scholars in the UK higher education system working on Japan in a social science context remains relatively small. The small size of our community over the years has therefore meant that there has been a common awareness among that community of the existence of *Shaken*. Links between the Institute and social scientists in the UK have been strengthened over time by visits by UK-based scholars to Tokyo, and by scholars with *Shaken* affiliations spending time at universities in the UK. So, although this is the first time that I have had a formal affiliation with *Shaken*, it has,

so to speak, always been a part of the academic context within which I have operated. I therefore feel particularly privileged to be able to spend some time here.

Q. What is the main purpose of this visit?

The main purpose of this visit is to collect data to initiate work on a new project focusing on the economic impacts of disasters. Much of the documentation that I need is difficult to get hold of even in Japan, and is certainly not available to me in the UK. While the growth of Internet resources has been of major importance to international social science research, it remains the case that a great deal of historical data is available only in printed form, and with limited availability. Spending time in Japan to collect historical data is therefore essential to my research. Of course, spending time in Japan also allows me to benefit from interaction with Japanese scholars working in related areas, and also to receive feedback on this new project at a critical stage in its development.

Q. What are your current research interests?

While economic historians writing in English have in recent years shown an increasing interest in the impact of long-term climatic change on economic activity, and have looked at the influence of factors such as rainfall shortage on food availability, and at epidemics such as the Black Death, there has been much less research devoted to the impact of sudden, one-off localised natural disasters, such as earthquakes and floods. While there is a significant amount of contemporary research and writing on disaster prevention, policy and recovery, analysis of how some of these factors have played out in the past has been relatively little studied. This is not, as true of Japan, of course, where the frequent recurrence over time of natural disasters, such as earthquakes, tsunami or typhoons, combined with the fires or flooding that might well follow them, has received considerable attention from historians. Nevertheless, systematic academic analysis of the economic

impacts of some of these disasters seems to have been undertaken less than one might think. I am aiming, during my stay, to collect data for two case studies, which will help me to understand the potential for future research in this area. The first, and the main case study, concerns the Kantō earthquake of 1923, when seismic activity combined with fire destroyed large parts of the Tokyo and Yokohama region, causing well over 100,000 deaths. The second is of the drought that hit parts of Northeast Asia in 1939. In both cases my data collection and research will focus on the operation of, and interaction between, the markets for different kinds of commodities. This means that I am looking more at the microeconomic level than at the macroeconomic effects on which most previous economic historians have focused. Apart from its inherent value as a contribution to Japanese economic history, I hope that this research project will also become part of a larger comparative project on the economic history of disasters that we have been thinking of developing within my own Department (Economic History) at the LSE.

The kind of data that I am collecting for the “disasters” project is essentially two fold. On the one hand, I have been collecting data on the prices and volumes of different commodities to see how far these changed in the wake of the disaster. The devastation not only transformed the supply and demand structures for different products—at least for a while—but changed the environment within which trading took place, so collecting statistical data is one way of trying to track these changes. I have also been seeking out qualitative reports. Contemporaries were very concerned about how market transactions might operate in the months after September 1923, and so compiled a lot of information on what was going on. The reports issued by government, and by commercial bodies, are particularly useful for understanding the actual situation and the concerns of the authorities and the commercial elite.

I have a couple of other ongoing research projects that I will continue to pursue in conjunction with the area on which I have been working in *Shaken*. One is the history of information infrastructure in pre-Pacific War Japan, focusing particularly on the development of the postal service. Very little

serious academic research has been done in this area from an economic history perspective, and I think that historians have underestimated its contribution to the economic development of Japan during the period of industrialisation. The other is research on the gendering of work and technology. I have worked for many years on the development of the labour market in Japan’s prewar textile industry, and I am now trying to write a paper that brings together some of the issues raised in this research with consideration of other sectors of female employment. Specifically, I will be looking at the extent to which technology transfer was accompanied by a transfer of the gendered nature of work. In other words, when a new organisational or engineering technology was introduced into Japan from outside, to what extent did the gendering of work in Japan reflect that existing in the country or countries from which the technology was introduced? This study brings together my existing expertise in textile development and communications development in Japan, but in a global context. It is clear that these two sectors, which tended to employ workers from rather different backgrounds, offer some distinct contrasts, but also manifest some similarities in terms of historical analyses of gender.

Q. What do you like about *Shaken*?

It goes without saying that *Shaken* is an extremely welcoming place that looks after its visitors very well! I would like to express my thanks both to the academic staff of *Shaken*, and to the administrative staff who have all helped to make my visit a wonderful experience. The welcome that *Shaken* is able to offer, however, is, of course, in part associated with its strongly international orientation. I have been enormously impressed with the quality of the discussions that I have heard at seminars, the willingness of *Shaken* colleagues to participate in discussion in both English and Japanese, and the range of expertise that the Institute embraces. I find the interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary nature of *Shaken* particularly supportive. Both in the West and in Japan most economic history is studied within the context of either history or economics departments. It is unusual to find a stand-alone economic history department of the kind that I am part of at LSE. That inevitably means that approaches to economic history at most uni-

Questions and Answers with Visiting Professor

versities are primarily driven by economics methodologies, or by more conventional historical approaches. And yet economic history is a truly interdisciplinary subject, as the ways in which economies have grown and developed in the past can only be understood if we consider them in their political, social and cultural context. The study of economic history should be able to draw on a range of research methodologies and analytical approaches across the social sciences. In that respect, one of the strengths of *Shaken* for

me, and, I am sure, for many other visiting social scientists, is its bringing together of scholars from a range of social science disciplines, and providing a forum in which disciplines can talk to each other. For my own research, suggestions and comments from sociologists, political scientists and anthropologists, for example, can be just as valuable as those coming from economists and historians, and I am truly grateful to *Shaken* for providing this kind of stimulating and supportive environment.

ISS Contemporary Japan Group at the Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo

The ISS Contemporary Japan Group serves as a forum for researchers on Japan to receive critical feedback on their work. Researchers visiting Tokyo are invited to contact Professor Ishida Hiroshi (ishida@iss.u-tokyo.ac.jp) for more information if they would like to make a presentation. Meetings are open to everyone.



Korea Foundation Assistant Professor of Sociology, Department of Sociology, University of Pennsylvania

Hyunjoon Park

A Closer Look at Academic Achievement of Japanese Students in PISA 2000-06
October 2, 2008

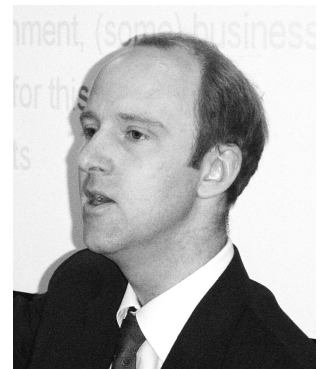
Abstract:

There is a growing concern for achievement 'crisis' among Japanese students, along with the report of the recent international comparison of student achievement, PISA (Program for International Student Assessment). Although Japanese 15-year-old student recorded a comparably high average reading score in PISA 2000, they showed the largest decline in PISA 2003 among all participant countries. In PISA 2006, Japanese students maintained the score as poor as that in PISA 2003. Meanwhile, students in Korea, Japan's neighboring country, showed even an increase in their average score from the already high score in PISA 2000, resulting in the top performing country. The sudden drop in the average scores among Japanese students, especially after the implementation of educational reform in 2002, has intensified criticisms on the reform measures toward reducing academic pressure, often described as academic achievement 'crisis' debate. However, recent public interests in and discussions about the results from PISA data, which exclusively focus on national average scores, are very limited in understanding the complicated nature of student achievement. In this presentation, I provide a closer look at Japanese students' performance in PISA 2000-06 by focusing on the /distribution/ of student achievement. The presentation highlights the growing inequality of student achievement in Japan.

Associate Professor, Department of Political Science/ Balsillie School of International Affairs, Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada

Derek Hall

"Food with a Visible Face": Food Traceability in Japan and Private Governance of the Food System
December 3, 2008



Abstract:

A seemingly endless series of food crises and scandals over the last 10 years has shaken the confidence of Japanese consumers in the safety and security of their food. "Traceability" has emerged as a key element of state and corporate efforts to restore confidence in Japan's food system. Traceability systems aim to keep track of the movements of food through the stages of production, processing, and distribution, and to provide information about what goes on at these stages to actors at other locations in the food chain. Efforts to introduce traceability systems in Japan can to some degree be understood as part of a broader move towards the private governance of food. However, a number of elements of the way traceability is being introduced in Japan stand out in the context of this literature.

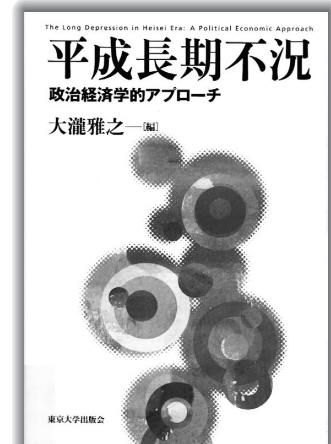
In this talk, I identify and seek to explain some of the key characteristics of Japanese food traceability, in part through a comparison with traceability initiatives in the EU. I also explore the extent to which traceability is (or is not) being pursued in Japan's food imports - a critical question in a country where more than 60% of the food consumed originates overseas, and where imported food is viewed by consumers with particular anxiety.

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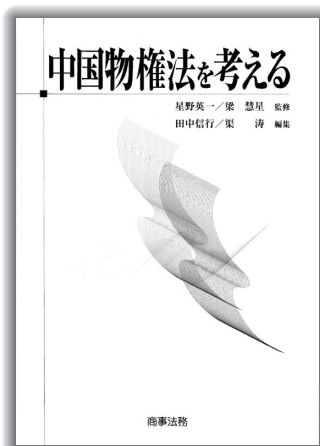


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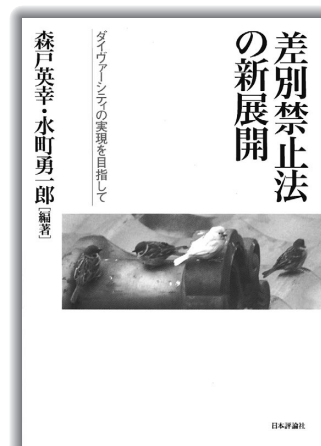


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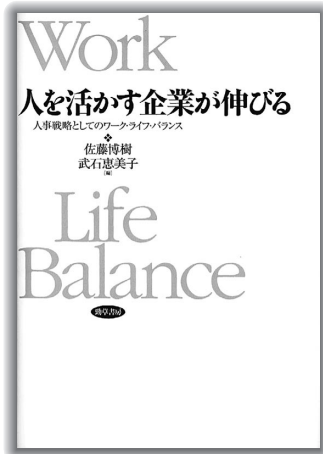
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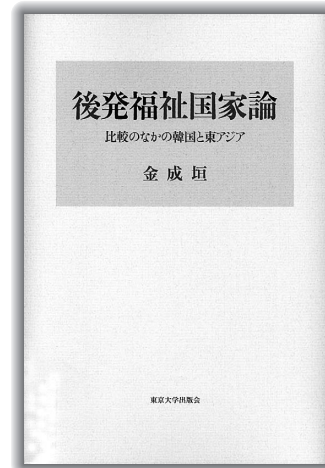
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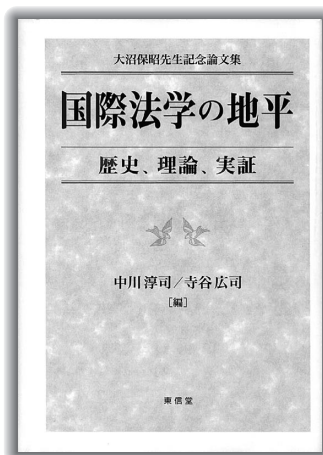
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