

The MHLW's Policy of "Diverse Regular Employees" and Its Impact on Female Employment

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Abstrak

This paper examines the implications and issues for female employment under the rationale of "diverse regular employees," whereby restrictions are placed on an employee's work type, place of work, etc. In Japan, the introduction of a course-based employment management system has been advocated by employers' associations since around the 1980s. Particularly in larger companies, the majority of male employees have been hired on the "managerial career track," with no restriction on working hours, work type and place of work, and the majority of females on the "clerical career track," with restrictions on work type and place of work, on the assumption of short-term employment. The conventional course-based employment management system and "diverse regular employees" resemble each other, in that they both create categories of employment management in which there are restrictions on the work type and place of work, etc. But if we consider the ideal employment management system, there is a difference as to whether the respective employment is "short-term" or "medium- to long-term." Depending on how systems are designed with a view to forming medium- to long-term careers, the policy of "diverse regular employees" could in fact both reinforce and eliminate Japan's gender pay gap and gender imbalance in types of employment, which are on the large side among industrialized nations