

Abstract

Essays on Human Resources

(人的資源についての研究)

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This dissertation consists of three economic papers associated with human resources and the overview.

In Chapter 1, we review how the government or the members of society have intervened in human resources, e.g. specially, education, childbirth, and health, and suggest that the level and involvement vary by country and age group. Not all the aforementioned interventions were anchored on economics. Some were justified by ethics, religion, or eugenics. We explore the economic implications of these interventions in this chapter. First, we investigate whether employers have incentives to invest in human resources for the employees. We suggest that employers have incentives because the improvement of employees' health can profit not only the employees but also the employers through improvement of labor productivity. However, we should not leave the promotion of human capital to the "invisible hand." Companies can pass on work loss due to poor working conditions to the other economic players by firing the sickly employees. Medical insurance not only reduces the individual pecuniary risk for sickness but also induces a moral hazard and adverse selection. Therefore, the market failure caused by the externality and asymmetry of information in the production of human resources depresses the level of the investment of human resources less than the optimal level. The intervention of the public sector is justified by the market failure.

The aim of this dissertation is to provide empirical or theoretical evidences for policies relating to human resources, e.g. education, childbirth, and health. In this dissertation, we investigate the relationship between people's actions, subsidies by the government, and the social system from the viewpoint of investment in human resources. This dissertation, then, refreshes the discussions on (1) how the investment on health by health insurance societies affects the insured, (2) how childbirth subsidy matters for fertility, and (3) how the pension scheme influences economic growth through incentives for self-education and educating children.

Chapter 2 Analysis of the Relationship between Health Activity and Medical Expenditure

Changes in life-styles and the advance of medical technology have extended the average lifespan in Japan. At the same time, these have induced life style-related diseases and worsened the life quality. The increase of the number of life style-related diseases patients is a serious issue itself, and also causes financial problems. One of the measures to solve each problem is health activity implemented by a health insurance society. In this chapter, we investigate how this activity affects the enrollees of health insurance society. We show that this activity reduces medical care expenditure, the length of hospital stay, and times of outpatient visit. However, we calculate that increasing the cost of a health activity by ¥1 produces less than ¥0.12 in medical care expenditure. For the sake of improving of our life quality, we suggest that this activity should be implemented more efficiently.

Chapter 3 Do Childbirth Subsidies Matter for Fertility?

-Evidence from Japanese Health Insurance Data

This chapter examines empirically the effect of childbirth subsidies on the fertility rate of Japanese households. About one quarter of Japanese residents join one of the health insurance societies, and more than half of the societies provide childbirth subsidies to the childbirth of primary insured persons and their spouses. Using the panel data of health insurance societies, we estimate the effect of childbirth subsidies on the rate of

wives' fertility, controlling the society-specific, time-invariant unobserved effects. We find that (1) a subsidy of ¥100,000 (US\$870) increases the fertility of spouses by 0.017% in the low male-salary group; (2) no effect is detected in the high male-salary group; and (3) in the model that treated the additional childbirth subsidy as potentially endogenous, using an instrumental-variable strategy, a subsidy of ¥100,000 increases the fertility of spouses by 0.033% in the low male-salary group.

Chapter 4 Pay-As-You-Go Scheme and the Incentives to Self-educate or Educate Children

We investigate the relationship between the pay-as-you-go (PAYG) pension scheme and the accumulation of human capital. We introduce the incentives of self-education into an overlapping generations model. The PAYG pension scheme encourages the incentives to educate children, but it discourages the incentives for their self-education. We show that the PAYG pension scheme hampers economic growth when the incentives for self-education are considered. The argument implies that while studying the relationship between the pension scheme, education, and economic growth, we must focus on determining the decision maker with regard to education.