

Article

## Entrenchment of Labor Structures in the Employment of Japanese-Brazilian Workers

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### < Abstract >

As a result of the revision of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act (hereinafter referred to as “Immigration Control Act”) in 1990, Brazilian-Japanese workers who came to Japan for the purpose of “dekasegi”<sup>1</sup> became a new presence in the blue-collar labor market in Japan. Many are still positioned as marginal social entities (“Nikkeijin”) that differ from Japanese workers, and they are entrenched in the working class with unstable working conditions such as indirect or non-regular employment.

According to the Immigration Services Agency’s (2021) “Foreign Nationals by Status of Residence,” approximately 63% of Brazilians in Japan, including spouses of Japanese nationals, have obtained permanent resident status. While there is a high preference toward permanent residence, their employment status remains the same as when they came to Japan as “dekasegi,” leaving them in unstable working environments. Meanwhile, small-to-medium-sized manufacturers (SMMs) are experiencing a noticeable labor shortage, and directly employing Japanese-Brazilian workers as permanent employees could be a measure to alleviate the labor shortage.

Based on a questionnaire survey and interviews with Japanese-Brazilian workers and SMMs conducted in Hamamatsu City, Shizuoka Prefecture (hereinafter Hamamatsu), this paper examines why Japanese-Brazilian workers continue to be entrenched in the working class and are engaged in indirect employment such as dispatch and contract work.

### < Key words >

Small- and Medium-sized Manufacturers, Japanese-Brazilian Workers, Labor Market Hierarchy, Indirect Employment, Dispatch Company

## 1. Research background and the research problem

According to the “Employment Status of Foreign Nationals” reported to the Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare, in 2021, the number of foreign workers in Japan was approximately 1.72 million, which breaks down to about 440,000 Vietnamese people, 420,000 Chinese people, 180,000 Filipinos, and 130,000 Brazilians. Looking at this figure by status of residence, those from Vietnam, China, and the Philippines, who account for the highest number of foreign nationals residing in Japan, are primarily technical interns<sup>2</sup>. Meanwhile, about 99% of Japanese-Brazilian workers have “the right to stay based on status”<sup>3</sup> as defined in Appended Table 2 of the Immigration Control Act (Immigration Services Agency of Japan, 2021).

Japanese-Brazilian workers, many of whom are residents due to their status, have no restrictions on their employment and are able to work in all occupations, including in unskilled labor positions. This distinguishes them from other foreign workers; however, it is noteworthy that there are few such immigrants who work as highly skilled professionals. According to a survey that I conducted, about 70% of those working in Hamamatsu work in the manufacturing industry, and about 60% of the jobs are classified as peripheral labor such as simple tasks on an assembly line. In terms of the form of employment, about 60% are indirect or non-regular employees, such as dispatch or contract workers.

According to the “Labor Force Survey” by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (2021) the percentage of those employed in manufacturing among all workers in Japan is 15.1%. In addition, according to the information collected by the Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare (2021) in “Employment Status of Foreign Nationals,” 27% of all foreign workers are employed in manufacturing. Japanese-Brazilian workers comprises 40.9%, of which 54.9% work for SMMs with fewer than 100 employees. Given these facts and the aforementioned rate of Japanese-Brazilian workers in the manufacturing industry in Hamamatsu, SMMs in Hamamatsu are highly dependent on this population for its labor force.

Although government statistics do not reveal actual figures for indirect employment, according to the “Awareness Survey of Japanese and Foreign Citizens in Hamamatsu,” published by Hamamatsu (2022), approximately 57% of Japanese-Brazilians work as dispatched, contract, or non-regular employees, while 29% are employed as regular

employees. They continue to be entrenched in the unstable working class, engaged in indirect and non-regular employment.

As mentioned above, many of the other foreign workers are “technical interns” and their purpose for coming to Japan differs from that of Japanese-Brazilian workers. Many Japanese-Brazilian workers have been living in Japan for a long time, and while they tend to have a strong desire to live in Japan permanently, they also tend to seek stable employment rather than seeking higher wages and better working conditions due to experiences such as the layoff of temporary workers that occurred after the collapse of Lehman Brothers in 2008. In reality, however, their form of employment is indirect or irregular employment. Therefore, the research problem in this study is to determine why this population continues to be entrenched in this type of employment and what factors contribute to this phenomenon.

A previous study (discussed below) points out that entrenchment in indirect employment is due to the intervention of temporary staffing agencies between Japanese-Brazilian workers and SMMs, which exist as part of a strong supply–demand system, and that a need exists for the development of employment routes.

Based on surveys of Japanese-Brazilian workers in Hamamatsu and SMMs, which account for a large proportion of companies that accept them, this study examines the reasons for the continued presence of temporary employment agencies between the two groups. Additionally, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare provides various employment support measures such as the “Training Course for Promoting the Stable Employment of Foreign Residents” for long-term residents who are residents due to their status such as Japanese Brazilian workers. However, why do they not actively use these systems and instead seek routes for job seeking or changes of occupation that go through temporary staffing agencies, family, and people of the same nationality? We also examine why SMMs go through temporary staffing companies to employ Japanese-Brazilian workers from the viewpoints of both Japanese-Brazilian workers and SMMs.

## 2. Review of previous studies

Previous studies have pointed out that one of the factors preventing Japanese-Brazilian workers from breaking out of the working class of indirect or irregular employment is the intervention of temporary staffing agencies as the route for employment or change of

occupation and as the recruitment channel for SMMs. However, very few previous studies discuss why job-seeking, change of occupation, and recruitment overwhelmingly occur through such temporary staffing companies.

This study reviews previous studies from the following three perspectives.

## 2-1 Previous studies on the situation of indirect employment

Watanabe (2004) and Song (2011) categorize Japanese-Brazilian workers into four types of employment status: directly employed regular employees, non-regular employees including part-time employees, external workers employed by subcontracting companies, and dispatched workers. Of these four types, external and dispatched workers constitute the majority, and most are employed by SMMs. The two authors also argue that many of these workers are employed indirectly, with no prospect of becoming permanent employees, and are at the bottom of the precariously placed working class.

Hashimoto (2009, 2012) argues that about 70% of workers of Japanese descent are concentrated in indirect employment and that employment (job offers) and wages of Brazilian workers react more sensitively to the economy than do those of Japanese workers (i.e., employment of Brazilian workers is relatively unstable). Furthermore, Okubo (2001) states that many Japanese-Brazilian workers are engaged in unstable employment and employment conditions and that indirect employment is increasing not only at SMMs but also at large corporations.

## 2-2 Previous studies on the positioning of Japanese-Brazilian workers in the labor market

Okubo (2005) concludes that there is a gap between Japanese permanent employees and workers of Japanese descent in terms of positions and roles and that the positions and roles of Japanese-Brazilian workers required by the labor market supports the reproduction of the “multilayered lower strata structure”<sup>4</sup> that is unique to Japanese manufacturing. He also clearly argues that the position of these workers is in the working class and that their significance is that they now perform the function that had traditionally been performed by Japanese workers in the unstable working class.

Asakawa (2007) argues that the hierarchical status demanded of workers of Japanese descent is to play a role as a peripheral and marginal workforce in the reproduction of existing subordinate subcontractor structures, in an unstable employment pattern that is

already structured in terms of hierarchy and stratification. Kondo (2005) states that, even after the collapse of the bubble economy, the very structure of manufacturing employment in the labor market required cheap, flexible labor, thus positioning Japanese-Brazilian workers as a distinct entity from Japanese workers.

### 2-3 Previous studies on the effects of temporary staffing agencies on employment styles of Japanese-Brazilian workers

Inagami (1992) and Yamamoto (1994) argue that temporary staffing agencies mediate and intervene in opportunities for Japanese-Brazilian workers to find or change jobs, and that this is a factor in indirect employment in the form of temporary and contract workers. Tanno (2000) and Kajita (2002) have examined the impact of temporary staffing agencies on indirect employment and argue that this is one of the functions of employment adjustment in the growth or decline of business.

Kondo (2005) notes that Japanese-Brazilian workers represent the lower stratum of the labor market for indirect employment, that temporary staffing agencies have grown rapidly by hiring these workers, and that employment routes need to be developed.

## 3. Limitations of previous studies and research questions

### 3-1 Limitations of previous studies

Previous studies on the reality of indirect employment commonly argue that the employment patterns of Japanese-Brazilian workers are positioned within the unstable working class of indirect or non-regular employment. Research on the position of Japanese-Brazilian workers in the labor market also shows that, as a peripheral and marginal labor force, their position is different from that of Japanese workers in the hierarchical employment structure.

A previous study on the impact of temporary staffing agencies on forms of employment for Japanese-Brazilian workers noted that temporary staffing agencies intervene between Japanese-Brazilian workers and the companies that hire them, and that this is a factor that entrenches them in the working-class hierarchy of indirect employment. That study also discusses the need for a review of employment routes.

However, although previous studies presume that temporary staffing agencies are a

factor in entrenching Japanese-Brazilian workers in the working class with unstable working conditions, they do not consider why Japanese-Brazilian workers and SMMs continue to choose these staffing agencies as a route for employment and recruitment, nor do they consider policies to change this situation. Therefore, the following research questions have been established.

### 3-2 Research Questions

- RQ1 Why do SMMs continue to rely heavily on temporary staffing agencies as a recruitment route for Japanese-Brazilian workers?
- RQ2 Why are Japanese-Brazilian workers inclined to go through temporary staffing agencies, family members, and people of the same nationality when seeking jobs or changes of occupation?

## 4. The survey

Hamamatsu has an abundance of employment opportunities for Japanese-Brazilian workers, with a multilayered concentration of world-class companies in the transportation equipment and musical instrument industries as well as SMMs in the surrounding area. According to Hamamatsu City (2021), it is a city with a high concentration of Brazilians, with 9,507 Brazilians residing there, the largest of any city in Japan. In addition, because the labor market has a higher percentage of Japanese-Brazilian workers than other areas, Hamamatsu was considered to be suitable for the purpose of this study. Thus, the following surveys were administered to Japanese-Brazilian workers and SMMs <sup>5</sup>.

### 4-1 Questionnaire survey of Japanese-Brazilian workers in Hamamatsu

The respondents were randomly sampled from the following groups: visitors to Hamamatsu Foundation for International Communication and Exchange (HICE), parents and guardians of students attending a school for South American children, and students attending driving schools. A face-to-face questionnaire survey was conducted on a total of 375 Japanese-Brazilian workers. The questionnaire was written in both Japanese and Portuguese, and a Japanese-Brazilian person fluent in Portuguese assisted in conducting the survey.

The main questions are shown in Table 1, based on the determination that it may be

possible to identify the factors behind the entrenchment of the working class by setting the main questions to ask about the type of industry, the type of occupation, the form of employment, and the route of seeking a job or change of occupation.

(Survey period: November 2, 2017, to February 9, 2018; Research assistant: Alberto Sill Takada)

Table 1: Main questions in the questionnaire

Question	Questions
Q1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What kind of company is your employer? Please select one of the following. (1) Manufacturing (2) Catering and service (3) Construction (4) Wholesale and retail (5) Other ( )</li> </ul>
Q2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What kind of job do you do at work? Please select one of the following. (1) Assembly line (2) Shop assistants/customer-facing service (3) Skilled labour (4) Professional job (5) Other ( )</li> </ul>
Q3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Which of the following is your form of employment? Please select one of the following. (1) Indirect and non-regular (dispatch, contract, part-time, etc.) (2) Permanent, full-time employee (3) Self-employed (4) Working for a family-owned business (5) Others ( )</li> </ul>
Q4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you have answered (1) (dispatch, contract, part-time, etc.) in Q3, please answer the following.</li> </ul>
Q4-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Who introduced you to join the company you are currently working for? Please select one of the following. (1) Temporary staffing companies (2) Families and co-nationals (3) Hello Work, etc. (4) Job-seekers' magazines, etc. (5) Others ( )</li> </ul>
Q4-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What was the reason you wanted (1)-(5) in Q4-1 to introduce you to a job? Please select one of the following. (1) Recommended by family members/co-nationals (2) Recruited by the temporary staffing company. (3) Because it was easy to get a job (4) Conditions including pay were good (5) Other ( )</li> </ul>
Q5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you have answered (2) (permanent, full-time employee) in Q3.</li> </ul>
Q5-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Who introduced you to join the company you are currently working for? Please select one of the following. (1) Temporary staffing companies (2) Families and co-nationals (3) Hello Work, etc. (4) Job-seekers' magazines, etc. (5) Other ( )</li> </ul>
Q5-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What was the reason you wanted (1)-(5) in Q5-1 to introduce you to the position? (1) Recommended by family members/co-nationals (2) Recruited by the temporary staffing company. (3) Because it was easy to get a job (4) Conditions including pay were good (5) Other ( )</li> </ul>

Source: Prepared by the author

#### 4-2 Results of the questionnaire survey of Japanese-Brazilian workers

Table 2 shows the results of the responses to the questions regarding the type of industry, type of occupation, and form of employment

Table 2: Type of industry, type of occupation, form of employment of Japanese-Brazilian workers

Q1	Industry				
	Manufacturing	Catering and service	Construction	Wholesale and retail	Other
277 people					
(number of people)	195	31	14	12	25
(Proportion)	70.4%	11.2%	5.1%	4.3%	9.0%
Q2	Job type				
	Assembly line	Shop assistants/customer-facing service	Skilled labor	Professional jobs	Other
277 people					
(number of people)	168	33	28	9	39
(Proportion)	60.6%	11.9%	10.1%	3.2%	14.2%
Q3	Form of employment				
	Indirect and non-regular employment	Permanent full-time employees	Self-employed	Working for a family-owned business	Other
277 people					
(number of people)	173	71	12	8	13
(Proportion)	62.5%	25.6%	4.3%	2.9%	4.7%

Source: Prepared by the author based on survey results

Table 3 shows the results of the responses to the questions regarding the occupation, job search, and job change routes by form of employment

Table 3 Routes used by Japanese-Brazilian workers to seek a job or change of occupation by form of employment

Job-hunting routes and motives (form of employment: dispatch, contract, part-timers, etc.)					
Q4-1	Temporary staffing company	Family Members and Co-nationals	Hello work, etc.	Job-seekers' magazines, etc.	Other
173 people (Number of Persons)	94	35	23	8	13
(Proportion)	54.3%	20.2%	13.3%	4.6%	7.5%
Q4-2	Recommended by family members/co-nationals	Recruited by a temporary staffing company	Easy to get a job	Conditions including salary were good	Other
173 people (Number of Persons)	63	47	28	26	9
(Proportion)	36.4%	27.2%	16.2%	15.0%	5.2%
Job-hunting Routes and Motives (Form of employment: Permanent, full-time Employees)					
Q5-1	Temporary staffing company	Family Members and co-nationals	Hello Work, etc.	Job-seekers' magazines, etc.	Other
104 people (Number of Persons)	15	22	58	4	5
(Proportion)	14.4%	21.2%	55.8%	3.8%	4.8%
Q5-2	Recommended by family members/co-nationals	Recruited by a temporary staffing company	Consultation with a public institution	Conditions including salary were good	Other
104 people (Number of Persons)	8	20	57	14	5
(Proportion)	7.7%	19.2%	54.8%	13.5%	4.8%

Source: Prepared by the author based on survey results

#### 4-2-1 Analysis of results of the questionnaire survey of Japanese-Brazilian workers

The survey responses show that 277 respondents (73.9%) indicated that they were currently working. The manufacturing industry was by far the largest employer with 195 (70.1%), followed by the service industry with 20 (7.2%) and the construction industry with 14 (5.1%). The overwhelming majority of respondents, 168 people (86.2%), were engaged in simple/unskilled labor such as working on an assembly line. In terms of form of employment, out of 277 respondents, 173 (62.5%) were indirectly employed, such as dispatched and contract workers, or in irregular employment such as part-time or temporary work (Table 2).

In this situation, the survey results regarding the route used to find their current job (in their job search or for changing occupations) and their motives for choosing the route, the research problem of this study, were found to be different for those working in forms of employment such as dispatched/contract workers and part-time workers and those employed as permanent employees (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Summary of routes used to seek a job or change of occupation by form of employment

<b>Form of employment 1</b> Dispatched/subcontracting (Indirect Employment)	Job-hunting route	• Introduction by temporary staffing companies, family members, and co-nationals (approx. 75%)
	Reason for selection	• Recommended by family members and co-nationals, recruited by a temporary staffing company (about 65%)
<b>Form of employment 2</b> Full-time employees (direct employment)	Job-hunting route	• Employment through public institutions such as Hello Work (about 54%)
	Reason for selection	• Consultation with public organizations such as Hello Work (approximately 52%)

Source: Prepared by the author based on survey results

#### 4-3 Interview survey of Japanese-Brazilian workers working in Hamamatsu

Interviews were conducted to obtain information on the reasons for selecting employment routes, which could not be obtained in detail through the questionnaire survey. For the survey sample, we selected two parents/guardians of students attending a school for South American children and three students (who differed in age, gender, and length of time residing in Japan) enrolled in the driving school where the research assistant works. The

interview method was a simple qualitative research method in which more detailed questions were asked based on the answers of the respondents, and a semi-structured interview method (using both Japanese and Portuguese), which is considered to be effective when long interviews cannot be conducted. Of the survey items, we focused on findings about the routes used by Japanese-Brazilian workers to search for a job and why they chose that route, which is the research problem of this paper.

(Survey period: June 8 to June 26, 2018; Research assistants: Marcello Morishita, Alberto Sill Takada, and da Silva Morishita)

#### 4-3-1 Results of interviews with Japanese-Brazilian workers

The attributes of interviewees and findings of the main questionnaire items are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Attributes of Japanese-Brazilian workers and reasons for selecting the employment route

	• Interview date and time		• From 18:00 to 19:30 on June 8, 2018, the driving skills school			
	Location and listener (assistant)		• The author and Morishita Marcelo (assistant)			
<b>Mr. A</b>	Age	Lengths of stay in Japan in years	Communication in Japanese	Industry	Form of employment	Residence Visa
<b>Male</b>	34	16	There is no problem.	Automobile assembly	Full-time employees	Permanent Resident
	Job-hunting route		• Employment through Hello Work			
	Reasons for selecting the route		• I wanted employment as a permanent employee. • The Japan International Exchange Association recommended to consult with Hello Work.			
	• Interview date and time		• 14:00-15:00, June 11, 2018			
	Location and listener (assistant)		• The author and Morishita Marcelo (assistant)			
<b>Mr. B</b>	Age	Lengths of stay in Japan in years	Communication in Japanese	Industry	Form of employment	Residence Visa
<b>Male</b>	43	18	Difficulty in conversation	Automobile assembly	Temporary staff	Long-term Resident
	Job-hunting route		• Temporary staffing company			
	Reasons for selecting the route		• A co-national working at the same temporary staffing company recommended. • Because they made the decision on the spot.			
	• Interview date and time		• From 14:00 to 15:30 on June 18, 2018, the driving skills school			
	Location and listener (assistant)		• Author and Da Silva Morishita (assistant)			
<b>Mr. C</b>	Age	Lengths of stay in Japan in years	Communication in Japanese	Industry	Form of employment	Residence Visa
<b>Female</b>	48	23	Fluent	Real instrument manufac	Part-time employees	Permanent Resident
	Job-hunting route		• Temporary staffing company			
	Reasons for selecting the route		• Because family members work at the same temporary staffing company • Because I was given the job immediately.			
	• Interview date and time		• From 10:00 to 11:30 on June 21, 2018, the driving skills school			
	Location and listener (assistant)		• Author and Da Silva Morishita (assistant)			
<b>Mr. D</b>	Age	Lengths of stay in Japan in years	Communication in Japanese	Industry	Form of employment	Residence Visa
<b>Female</b>	22	15	No problem	Motorcycle parts	Dispatch	Long-term Resident
	Job-hunting route		• Hello Work			
	Reasons for selecting the route		• Because a Japanese friend recommended Hello work • I consulted the Hamamatsu International Exchange Association and introduced Hello Work.			
	• Interview date and time		• From 13:30 to 15:00 on June 26, 2018, Munde de Alegria School			
	Location and listener (assistant)		• Author and Takada Alberto Sil (assistant)			
<b>Mr. E</b>	Age	Lengths of stay in Japan in years	Communication in Japanese	Industry	Form of employment	Residence Visa
<b>Male</b>	53	22	No problem	Automotive parts	Dispatch	Long-term Resident
	Job-hunting route		• Temporary staffing company			
	Reasons for selecting the route		• Because they would make a decision on the spot. • Because the procedure for joining the company is easy			

Source: Prepared by the author based on survey results

Regarding the chosen employment route, two respondents answered Hello Work, while three answered temporary staffing agencies. The reasons given for choosing these employment routes was the ease of finding a job or changing jobs.

#### 4-3-2 Analysis of results from interviews of Japanese-Brazilian workers

In terms of forms of employment, of the Japanese-Brazilian workers interviewed,

there were three dispatched employees, one permanent employee, and one non-regular employee. In the case of dispatched workers, two used temporary staffing agencies and one used Hello Work as the route to seek a job or to change their occupation. The motives of the two dispatched employees for choosing staffing agencies were “speed of hiring decision” and “easy procedures in joining the company,” while one permanent employee and one dispatched employee stated that they “consulted with HICE” and “found a job through Hello Work.” The routes for seeking a job or change of occupation and the associated motives for selecting the routes, the research problem of this paper, differed between dispatched and permanent employees.

Although there are several institutional options for finding a job or changing occupations, since workers began to come to Japan for the purpose of “dekasegi,” temporary staffing agencies have supported them in various aspects of life in Japan in addition to employment including designated procedures through city hall, housing arrangements, and matters related to their children’s schooling. This may be one of the reasons for the tendency to seek a job or change occupations through temporary staffing agencies and family members. For Japanese-Brazilian workers, we can assume that seeking a job and changing occupations through temporary staffing agencies or family members is a secure route for them and has become the norm, even if it results in a repetitive pattern of unstable work.

However, it was found that those working in permanent positions tended to use public institutions such as Hello Work as their route to seek employment or change occupations. This matches the results obtained from the questionnaire survey of Japanese-Brazilian workers.

#### 4-4 Questionnaire survey of SMMs operating in Hamamatsu

The survey targeted companies with 300 or fewer employees, and this was further divided into those with fewer than 100 employees (“micro manufacturers”), those with fewer than 200 employees (“small manufacturers”), and those with fewer than 300 employees (“mid-sized manufacturers”). We conducted telephone interviews with 245 companies randomly selected from the members of the Hamamatsu Branch of Teikoku Databank Ltd.

The reason for creating the three categories by company size is that the labor shortage differs depending on the size of the company, and we speculated that this might affect the number of Japanese-Brazilian workers employed and the forms of employment.

(Survey period: January 26 to March 5, 2018)

#### 4-4-1 Findings from interviews with SMMs

The main questions and findings from the telephone interviews with SMMs in Hamamatsu are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Main questions and findings from interviews with SMMs

Questions	Q1			Q2		
	Do you currently employ Japanese-Brazilians?			Those who answered "Yes" in Q1 Are they mainly employed as permanent employees?		
Answer	(1) Yes	(2) No	(3) Other	(1) Yes	(2) No	(3) Other
Size						
Small (47 companies)	10	34	3	6	3	1
%	21.3	72.3	6.4	60.0	30.0	10.0
Medium (51 companies)	37	11	3	14	21	2
%	72.5	21.6	5.9	37.8	56.8	5.4
Large (46 companies)	36	6	4	14	22	0
%	76.1	13.0	8.7	38.9	61.1	0
Total	83	51	10	34	46	3
Average for all sizes(%)	57.6	35.4	6.9	41.0	55.4	3.6
Questions	Q3			Q4		
Answer	Those who answered "Yes" in Q1 Which of the following is the main recruitment route for Japanese-Brazilians?			Those who answered (1) in Q3 Which of the following is the main reason for choosing (1)?		
	(1) Temporary staffing companies/family members/co-nationals	(2) Public institutions such as Hello Work	(3) Other	(1) Because we can hire according to our needs	(2) Because of our conventional relationship from the past	(3) Other
Size						
Small (47 companies)	7	2	1	5	1	1
%	70.0	20.0	10.0	71.4	14.3	14.3
Medium (51 companies)	23	11	3	11	10	2
%	62.2	29.7	8.1	47.8	43.5	8.7
Large (46 companies)	24	10	2	13	9	2
%	66.7	27.8	5.5	54.2	37.5	8.3
Total	54	23	6	29	20	5
Average for all sizes(%)	65.1	27.7	7.2	53.7	37.0	9.3
Questions	Q5			Q6		
Answer	Those who answered (2) in Q3 Which of the following is the main reason for choosing (2)?			Those who answered "Yes" in Q1 Are you considering changing the recruitment route in the future?		
	(1) We can secure good human resources	(2) To hire as a full-time employee for a long term	(3) Other	(1) Yes	(2) No	(3) Other
Size						
Small (47 companies)	0	2	0	2	8	0
%	0.0	100.0	0.0	20.0	80.0	0.0
Medium (51 companies)	6	4	1	6	28	3
%	54.5	36.4	9.1	16.2	75.7	8.1
Large (46 companies)	5	4	1	8	26	2
%	50.0	40.0	10.0	22.2	72.2	5.6
Total	11	10	2	16	62	5
Average for all sizes(%)	47.8	43.5	8.7	19.3	74.7	6.0

Source: Prepared by the author based on survey results

#### 4-4-2 Analysis of the findings from interviews with SMMs

In the interview survey, 144 of 245 companies responded (response rate: 58.8%). Of these, 83 (56.7%) employed Japanese-Brazilian workers, of which approximately 55% were employed as dispatched and contract workers and approximately 40% as permanent employees.

Regarding the employment routes, which is the research problem of this paper, recruitment through temporary staffing agencies and people of the same nationality was

high (65.1%). As for the motive for choosing to recruit through temporary staffing agencies and people of the same nationality, about 90% or more of the respondents answered it was because they could hire according to their needs or due to an existing relationship.

These findings indicate that, although half or more of the SMMs surveyed employ Japanese-Brazilian workers, most are dispatched, contract, or non-regular workers, and that the most common recruitment channels were temporary staffing agencies, family members of Japanese-Brazilian workers, and people of the same nationality.

Based on the finding that many respondents said that they used the chosen recruitment route because it would allow them to hire according to their needs or because of their existing relationships, we can say that the indirect employment of Japanese-Brazilian workers enables SMMs to carry out workforce adjustment in times of recession, which supports employment that functions as an “adjustment valve,” as has been highlighted in the past.

It was difficult to analyze micro manufacturers due to their small recruitment numbers, but findings are roughly shared between small- and medium-sized manufacturers.

## 5. Conclusion

This paper sought to answer RQ1, “Why do SMMs continue to rely heavily on temporary staffing agencies as

a recruitment route for Japanese-Brazilian workers?” and RQ2 “Why are Japanese-Brazilian workers inclined to go through temporary staffing agencies, family members, and people of the same nationality when seeking jobs or changes of occupation?” based on surveys with Japanese-Brazilian workers and SMMs.

Questionnaire surveys and interviews revealed that many SMMs seek to hire Japanese-Brazilian workers from temporary staffing agencies because “it is easy to secure the necessary number of workers as needed” and “we have a long-standing relationship with the temporary staffing company.”

From the above, it can be inferred that the SMMs mentioned in RQ1 are heavily dependent on hiring Japanese-Brazilian workers through temporary staffing agencies is because they can use them to secure the workforce needed to meet their orders.

As for the reasons for the question raised in RQ2, which asked why Japanese-Brazilian

workers are inclined to go through temporary staffing agencies, family members, and people of the same nationality when seeking jobs or change of occupation, the questionnaire survey and interview suggest that this is due to the lack of contact with public institutions such as Hello Work. The workers search for information sources about finding a job or changing occupations among familiar sources, such as a temporary staffing agency, family/friends, and people of the same nationality, and that is their normal route for finding a job or change of occupation. This is thought to be a factor leading to the repetition of indirect employment and continuing to be entrenched in the working class of dispatched and contract work.

Based on the above, the conclusion of this study is that, to free Japanese-Brazilian workers from entrenchment in indirect employment, there is an urgent need for the development of employment routes, which has been highlighted in previous studies. As our surveys have revealed, it is also necessary for both Japanese-Brazilian workers and SMMs to change their awareness of routes to seek a job or change of occupation, as well as recruitment routes, and the government should promote the use of public institutions such as Hello Work.

## **6. Limitations and future research**

This study examined why Japanese-Brazilian workers are entrenched in the working class of “indirect employment” and cannot escape from this unstable employment environment. As discussed above, the surveys identified factors including the routes used to seek a job or change of occupation used by Japanese-Brazilian workers, the reasons for selecting them, and the reasons for SMMs to choose certain recruitment routes. Thus, the study has achieved its intended outcomes to a certain degree.

However, although the survey was conducted in a manufacturing cluster where many Japanese-Brazilian workers live, it was conducted only in Hamamatsu, and the findings are not necessarily generalizable to SMMs and Japanese-Brazilian workers in other cities. In the future, surveys other cities engage in in-depth research from the perspective of what is needed to free Japanese-Brazilian workers from “indirect employment.”

〈Notes〉

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- 1 The expression in Katakana is based on the expression “decassegui” in the Modern Portuguese Dictionary Revised Edition (2012).
- 2 Introduced in 1993, this is a system under which foreigners residing in Japan with a residence status of “technical internship” acquire skills and knowledge while receiving compensation and return to their home countries afterward to make use of the skills acquired.
- 3 Statuses of residence provided for in Appended Table II of the Immigration Control Act include a permanent resident, spouse of a Japanese national, spouse of a permanent resident, and long-term resident.
- 4 The multilayered lower strata structure refers to the hierarchy that exists for a number of subcontractors under the parent company such as first-tier subcontractors and second-tier subcontractors.
- 5 The survey was conducted from 2017 to 2018. This is new knowledge obtained from an analysis carried out from the perspective of this study.

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## 研究論文

### 日系ブラジル人労働者の雇用における労働階層の固定化に関する一考察

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#### <要旨>

1990年の「出入国管理及び難民認定法（以下、「入管法」という。）」の改正によって、「デカセギ」を目的に来日するようになった日系ブラジル人労働者は、日本におけるブルーカラーの労働市場において新たな存在となり、彼らの多くは、今日でも日本人労働者とは異なるマージナル(Marginal)な社会的存在(“Nikkeijin”)として位置付けられ、間接雇用、非正規雇用といった不安定な就労環境の労働階層に固定化され続けている。

出入国管理庁(2021)「在留資格別外国人」によれば、日本人の配偶者を含めた在日ブラジル人の約63%が永住資格を取得し、永住志向は高い一方で、彼らの雇用形態は「デカセギ」で来日した当時と変わらず、不安定な就労環境に置かれたままである。一方、中小製造業は人手不足が顕著であり、日系ブラジル人労働者を正社員として直接雇用することは、人手不足解消の方策にもなり得る。

本稿では、静岡県浜松市(以下、浜松市)において行った日系ブラジル人労働者及び中小製造業へのアンケート調査及びインタビュー調査をもとに、日系ブラジル人労働者が派遣・請負などの間接雇用といった労働階層に固定化され続けているのはなぜか、その要因について考察した。

#### <キーワード>

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