Department of Management and Information Sciences

Key words Demographic Change, Low Fertility/Aging in Japan and Asia, Development of Huma Capital, Feedback Exchange

Ph.D in Economics / Professor

Shigesaburo Kabe

Education

Shigesaburo Kabe received BA in law from Waseda University, MA in international economics from Aoyama Gakuin University, and PhD in economics from Keio University.

Professional Background

He was senior researcher at Nikkei Inc. and senior economist at the Japan Center for Economic Research (JCER). He has taught as a part-time lecturer at Atomi University and Tokai University.

Consultations, Lectures, and Collaborative Research Themes

Economic Growth & Demographic Change in High Income Countries, Low Fertility and Childcare services in Japan & Asia, Higher Education and Development of Huma Capital

e-mail address

kabe@fukui-ut.ac.jp

Main research themes and their characteristics

「Demographic Change in Japan & Asia: Current Situation, Impacts, and Countermeasures」

Japan underwent major economic and social changes during its rapid economic growth after World War II, but it has also experienced rapid changes in terms of population, with the fertility rate falling to “lowest of low” level compared to the world as a whole, while the proportion of the aged population has increased from less than 5% in 1950 to just under 30% today.

Asia is following in Japan's footsteps, with an increasing trend of low fertility and aging population. As shown in Table 1, societies such as South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and Thailand have experienced both economic development and demographic change, and have emerged as societies facing or about to face low fertility and aging populations.

Economic development and demographic change have a significant impact on each of these societies in Asia. While economic growth has been accompanied by higher education and higher employment rates, especially among women, it has taken time to develop an environment that supports compatibility of work and family life including childcare. As a result, the wrinkles of delayed environmental improvement tend to be directed toward the individual.

Japan and other Asian countries are grappling with difficult issues: how to cope with rapid demographic changes, how to create a society in which individuals can balance work and family life/childcare, and how to maintain economic growth at the same time. Whether their efforts are successful or not, they will provide lessons for the countries that will experience demographic change in the future.

Year	Period when the TFR falls below 2.1	Period when ratio of those aged 65 and over to the total population reaches 14%	Period when the labor force begins to decrease	Period when the population begins to decrease
1960–1965	Japan			
1965–1970				
1970–1975				
1975–1980	Japan, Singapore			
1980–1985	Hong Kong			
1985–1990	South Korea			
1990–1995	China ,Thailand	Japan		
1995–2000				
2000–2005	Vietnam		Japan	
2005–2010	Malaysia			
2010–2015		Hong Kong		Japan
2015–2020		South Korea	China, Hong Kong, South Korea, Thailand	
2020–2025		Singapore, Thailand	Singapore	
2025–2030	Indonesia	China		Thailand
2030–2035	India	Vietnam	Vietnam	China
2035–2040				South Korea
2040–2045		Malaysia, Indonesia		
2045–2050			Malaysia	Hong Kong, Vietnam

Table1 Timing of key events in the population structures of Asian counties

「Development of Human Capital: Macro and Micro Perspectives」

When considering a country's economic growth, it is important to increase labor productivity, and the question is how to foster and develop the skills of workers, or human capital. Figure 1 illustrates the process of developing human capital by investigating, absorbing, and digesting new technologies and innovations as a society as a whole. The development of human capital is not a linear process, but a complex and time-consuming process like a spiral staircase, in which new discoveries and learning can be expected. This process does not end with schooling at a young age, but continues even after graduation as people gain work experience. Higher education institutions play a major role in providing an environment that can offer such opportunities.

Figure 1 can also be viewed as a process of personal growth. It is necessary to have the ability to seek and utilize useful information on one's own, rather than waiting for someone else to tell one what to do. One of the skills that is attracting attention is the skill of eliciting and utilizing good quality feedback (FB) from communication partners. FB literacy can be positioned as a core competency not only for learning well at university and other institutions when young, but also in the workplace and lifelong learning after graduation.

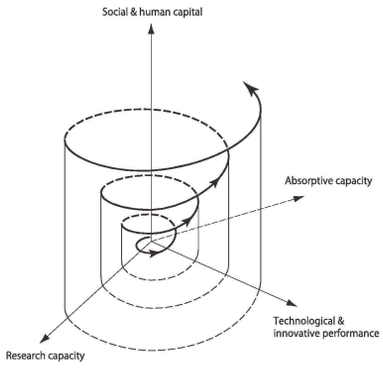

Fig.1 The development path of human capital

Major academic publications

Komine T. and S. Kabe (2023) “The Long-Term Forecast for the Demographic Transition in Japan and Asia, ”Komine T. (eds.) Examining Heisei Japan: Economy, Japan Publishing Industry Foundation for Culture, pp.337-351.

Kabe, S., R. Ushiyama, T. Kinkyo, and S. Hamori (2016) (eds.) Moving Up the Ladder: Development Challenges for Low and Middle-Income Asia, World Scientific: Singapore.

Kabe S. (2012) “Can South-South trade be a driving force for future economic growth?”, T. Kinkyo, Y. Matsubayashi, and S. Hamori (eds.) Global Linkages and Economic Rebalancing in East Asia, pp.139-158. World Scientific: Singapore.

Fukao K., T. Inui, S. Kabe, and D. Liu (2008) “An International Comparison of the TFP Levels of Japanese, Korean and Chinese Listed Firms”, Seoul Journal of Economics, Vol. 21, No.1, pp.5-33.