

German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ)

DIJ Social Science Study Group

Public Lecture



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Improving Japan's Disability Employment From Separate to Inclusive Workplaces

Reiko Nishida, PhD, The University of Tokyo

Japan's "Act on Employment Promotion of Persons with Disabilities" has been revised in 2013 and 2019. The 2013 amendment prohibited discrimination on the grounds of disability and obliged employers to provide reasonable accommodation to employees with disabilities, and was supposed to be a paradigm shift in Japan's disability employment policy, which until then had relied on the disability employment quota system. As the law originally intended to improve employment opportunities in the general labor market, the quota and related systems contributed to quantitative improvements. However, it also established the "special but separate" treatment for persons with disabilities (PWD).

In order to answer the puzzle why different or separate treatments remained in place in the employment of PWD even after the 2013 amendment, I have analyzed statistical data, administrative guidelines, and the debate preceding the recent 2019 amendment. Furthermore, I conducted interviews with the management of "Special Subsidiary Companies" about their methods to hire and maintain PWD as employees. My findings suggest that the prohibition of discrimination and the reasonable accommodation clause were both poorly interpreted in subsequent administrative guidelines. A further research objective is to reflect on a more suitable operation of the quota system and non-disability approach. In my conclusion, I would like to stress the necessity for a reform of the quota system.

Reiko Nishida, PhD, is a project researcher at the Faculty of Education, Center for Barrier Free Education, The University of Tokyo, since 2015. She was awarded the PhD degree in the discipline of Law. Her research interest includes labor law, American law and disability law. The details of her researches can be seen at <https://researchmap.jp/r-n/>.

About:

The DIJ Social Science Study Group is a forum for scholars conducting research on contemporary Japan. Meetings are held once a month and are open to speakers from all disciplines of the social sciences. The event is open to all. Registration is not necessary but appreciated, online at www.dijtokyo.org.

Venue:

German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ)
Jōchi Kioizaka Bldg. 2F, 7-1 Kioichō,
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-0094
Phone: 03-3222-5077

For directions visit dijtokyo.org/access

