

Information Flow in Distribution Theory and Consumers

Sachiko ITO

The purpose of this paper is to clarify the current state of information flow in Japan in more detail. The advent of the Internet has brought many changes to the information flow in the distribution process. Although there is some partial research, few studies provide an overview and discuss recent issues. Therefore, in this paper, we intend to examine the whole picture.

We first review the concept of information flow and trace flow changes after the advent of the Internet. We also illuminate the problems, especially those related to personal data. Then, by referring to distribution theory to analyze information and control, we show the expansion of data distribution by ICT in today's distribution process, the marketing use of these data, and sophistication of the market mechanism. In conclusion, it is shown that consumer information is expanding in the market control area, and the implications of this phenomenon are also illustrated.

Keywords : Information Flow, Consumer, ICT, Personal Data, Control

Analysis of Socio-Economic Factors Related to Prefectural Differences in Health Awareness

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Japan faces a continuous increase of social security expenses due to a rise in the aging population. Local governments are making efforts to improve life expectancy as one of the reduction measures. A statistical analysis reveals health awareness factors in prefectures from a regional countermeasure perspective to reduce social security expenses. The rates of persons uninterested in health of prefectures, as an objective variable of the analysis, were obtained as the rates of persons who answered, “Not doing anything in particular” to the question “What are the things you do for your daily health?” in the Comprehensive Survey of Living Conditions. Forty kinds of socio-economic factors in five fields such as medical care and welfare, economy and labor, education, population and households, and natural environment were used as explanatory variables. A multiple regression analysis was applied to these data to search for determining factors of the health indifferent rates. Twelve kinds of factors, reproducing the observed rates from 47 prefectures with high accuracy, were obtained. Employment in industries such as transportation and postal industry were high contributors to the observed health indifferent rates. This study indicates that employment rates in special industries, working hours, and overwork premiums suggest mean death from overwork is possible. For the Aomori prefecture, the one with the highest health indifferent rate in the nation, improvement plans were considered, and some proposals are suggested.

Keywords: Health Awareness, Prefecture Difference, Socio-economic Factors, Multiple Regression Analysis, Problem of Death from Overwork

A Study of Circulated Logistics Channel Network to Facilitate Reuse

Michiko TAKECHI

The 3Rs (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) are important for establishing a Recycling-minded Society. However, Reduce and Reuse haven't advanced as much as recycling.

New business models, car sharing systems, and applications that can easily exchange reused products online are useful for achieving a Recycling-based Society.

Car sharing and free market application may not solve environmental problems directly. However, they could solve some problems and change consumption styles.

Keywords: 3Rs, Sharing Economy, Consumption Style, Internet of Things (IoT), Circulated Logistics Channel Network

A Study of the Innovation of the Hospitality Industry in Japan: A Case of the Lodging Industry

Jun-ichiro TOKUE

In Japan, the hotel industry had grown gradually from its introduction during the Meiji Era to after World War II. Since the 1960s, the hotel industry has grown rapidly because of economic growth in Japan and the popularization of tourism. During this period, two hotel grades have been established: "City Hotels" and "Business Hotels." In the 1990s, this industry might be in a matured market.

In this century, only foreign capital hotels have been opened, because there has been little innovation in products or services by Japanese hotel enterprises.

In 2017, I presented a working paper on this subject at the Institute of Social Sciences at Toyo University. In this paper, I summarized innovations by the Japanese lodging industry.

Keywords: Hotel, Innovation, Luxury, Market, Differentiation

The Effectiveness of Matching between Start-ups and Major Enterprises in Japan

Koji NAKANO, Toru OHARA

In the open innovation phenomenon (Chesbrough, 2003), many researchers and practitioners are trying to expand the market and promote innovation from outside and inside the company. We show the kinds of requirements the matching of start-ups and major enterprises would need to expand this innovative community. From a questionnaire survey for companies participating in the Innovation Leaders' Summit, a pioneering open innovation event in Japan, we find that the actual condition of open innovation in Japan which is important for matching top leadership with venture capital.

Keywords: Open Innovation, Matching, Start-ups, Major Enterprises, Top Management

Research on Effective Use of Digital Textbooks for Students: An Empirical Research Concerning the Use of Digital Textbooks in Takeo City, Saga Prefecture

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This paper aims to verify the outcomes and challenges of using digital textbooks (teaching materials) for students in Takeo City, Saga Prefecture, from the results of questionnaire surveys carried out from September 2017 to March 2018. We administered questionnaires to students and teachers, regarding the “Empirical Research Project Concerning the Use of Digital Textbooks for Students” conducted in Takeo City. The results show that approximately 60% to 70% of students prefer digital to paper textbooks. Furthermore, we discovered that more than 60% of teachers recognize the benefits of digital textbooks. However, teachers have demands for teacher training, environment improvement issues in schools, and teaching method development. Through this analysis, we conclude that there is a need to further amend laws for full introduction of digital textbooks into schools and it is essential for both teachers and students to adapt and understand this new innovative concept of learning by using digital textbooks.

Keywords: Takeo City, Use of ICT for Education, Digital Textbook, Revision of School Education Law, Tablet PC

Constructing Midcareers Within and Outside of the Organizations

Keiko MUROMATSU

In our midcareer, we come to discover our talents, needs, and values, making us think about our career situations, possibly giving rise to a midcareer crisis. This crisis occurs during our midlife, when our feeling of physical strength and willpower could be in decline. We come to desire the life that can make use of our talents and our sense of values. Given the great span of a human life, the period of midcareer is important. It is therefore worthwhile to elucidate the characteristics of the period of midcareer in order to ponder strategies of how to spend this period well. This study investigates and analyzes the career histories of alumni who became bankers in various banks upon their graduation. The research results show that there are differences between their career formations within and outside of the organizations, the latter reflecting their career anchors. What is common to the categories is that both of them maintained the positive and growth-oriented attitude toward the rest of their careers.

Keywords: Midcareer Crisis, Mid-life Transition, Job Change, Career Anchors, Turning Point

Anti-cyberbullying Measures and Constitutional Problems in the U.S.: Trend of Laws and Precedents

Kazutoshi IMADE

Currently, “Cyberbullying” is serious problem in the United States of America. Many states have enacted “Anti-bullying Laws” which include cyberbullying, but this legislation has led to constitutional challenges.

First, this paper examines the definition and current state of cyberbullying, looks at “Megan’s Case” as the impetus for anti-bullying legislation, and explores the trend of state cyberbullying laws.

Second, this paper looks at the recent precedent of school sanctions and criminal sanctions in cyberbullying laws versus the freedom of speech protected by the First Amendment, and finally, illuminates the difficulties in solving the complex problem of Cyberbullying in the U.S.

Keywords: Cyberbullying, Tinker Test, State v. Bishop, Megan Meier

Technical Changes and the Situation of Patent Application in Two Major Districts of Producing Towels (Imabari and Senshu) since the 1960s in Japan

Chisako TSUJI

Regional industry activation is one of the most important tasks in the activation of the Japanese economy. Innovation plays a major role in activating regional industries, being an essential survival factor in the global economy, not only for large corporations, but also for medium and small corporations. To understand the relationship between regional industries and innovation from an historical perspective, this study focused on Imabari and Senshu, two major towel-producing districts, and examined the situation of patent application between 1964 and 2011 using the Institute of Intellectual Property Patent Database, based on technical changes in these two districts. The results can be summarized as follows: (1) weaving accounted for 57% of the patent applications, and dyeing with bleach accounted for 16%; these inventions acted in response to the changes in techniques and market needs; (2) the applicants were technical leaders and innovators in their districts; and (3) the number of patent applications was small in both districts. Regarding the third result, it is difficult to understand the extent of innovation based only on the number of patent applications. Therefore, other factors, such as utility models, designs, and the use of the patent system are taken into consideration.

Keywords: Local Industry, Innovation, Industrial Clusters, Imabari Towel Industry, Senshu Towel Industry, IIP Patent Database

Agenda for Temple Management and Buddhism-Related Businesses: Focusing on Monk Temp Services and Large Ossuaries

Hisato NAKAMURA

In the previous article (Nakamura, 2018), the author examined how we can revitalize Japanese temples using management strategy. Temples are now in a critical economic condition, except for prominent national and tourist temples in metropolitan areas, due to both a weakening Buddhist culture in metropolitan areas and the wave of low population density in local areas, among other causes.

This paper examines the rise of Buddhism-related business, focusing on tombstone dealers and funeral parlors that are now found in many areas. Then, the author considers the status quo of monk temp services, which have a close relationship with funeral parlors and brokers, and, furthermore, the advent of large ossuaries with burial storage systems, specifically the “locker system” and “automated transportation system.”

Besides, on the building of huge ossuaries, the author clarifies what kind of problems are occurring in the metropolitan areas. Finally, the author presents his perception of temple management and Buddhism-related business in general and suggests an optimal state of operation.

Keywords: Temple Management, Buddhism-Related Business, Funeral Parlors, Monk Temp Services, Large Ossuaries

Sacred Japanese Tourist Spots: Comparison Between Two Distinguished Shrines and their Regional Tourism Policy

Lorenz Poggendorf

Recently, Japanese tourism is on the rise. Among various reasons for the destination, cultural religious heritage plays a major role. However, is mass tourism to temples and shrines the right path to choose? Are photo shoots in front of a prayer hall, as proof that you have been there, appropriate?

To clarify the deeper meaning of shrines and their potential as tourist destinations, a qualitative case study has been conducted. As case studies, two outstanding religious sites with a long tradition of pilgrimage tourism have been selected: the Ise Grand Shrine, in Mie Prefecture, and the Nachi Kumano Taisha Shrine in Kumano, Wakayama Prefecture. By conducting and recording interviews with both the priests of these shrines, as well as tourism divisions of corresponding local authorities, the author obtained considerable insights into current affairs regarding tourism at religious spots in two Japanese rural areas.

The results show that for both shrines, the setting in a purely natural environment surrounded by forest and streams is an important religious factor. However, regarding regional tourism policies, it becomes clear that the city of Tanabe in Kumano has strategies and tools to attract tourists for sustainable spiritual tourism within the Kumano-Kodo area. Although differences in the travel behaviors of Asian and European tourists are apparent, there is a general trend toward a different style of travel, namely, to experience the uniqueness of a place and to be inwardly touched by it. More research about integrating tourism and lifestyle is needed to anticipate such social trends and make use of them for future strategies.

Keywords: Heritage Tourism, Shinto Shrines, Religious Meaning, Tourism Policy, Future Strategy

Doctors' Accountability for Medical Treatment

Kana NISHIMOTO

In the medical field, doctors have various legal and ethical obligations. For example, they are obliged to protect the life and body of a patient, to treat it with respect and confidence, and so on. Among these obligations, accountability (Aufklärungspflicht) is important and complex. In general, when treatment is performed, patients give consent to Treatment, except in unconscious or/and urgent cases. This consent, however, is effective only when the patient is given information. This is called “informed consent”. Therefore, doctors have an obligation to “provide the patient with explanation for the treatment”.

In this paper, we focus on what “providing information” necessary for effective patient consent means. We conclude that accountability is a prerequisite for patient consent and that the doctor’s discretion should only be accepted within the scope of the patient’s self-determination rights (Selbstbestimmungsrecht).

Keywords: Informed Consent, Accountability, Medical Treatment, Patient Will, Patient Consent

Considering Policy Benchmarking for the Fourth Industrial Revolution through the Lesson of Information Communication Technology (ICT) Revolution

Kazuma KOBAYASHI

This paper considers the problem of measuring the effect of Artificial intelligence (AI) and Internet of Things (IoT) in the trend of ICT policy, which is expected to be an integral factor for future economic growth. It also clarifies how major concepts, (i.e. investment and consumption,) are influenced by technological factors. Through this analysis, the economic effects of AI and IoT can be explored and measured by examining social effects of AI and IoT.

This paper examines some relationships, like the one between investment and consumption through the ARCH/GARCH model, as the research method, using the time series Gross Domestic Product (GDP) data between 1956 and 2017 as the research subject.

The implication for policy issues regarding the fourth industrial revolution shows that we need to break down the essences of AI and IoT because of diversity and flexibility. Therefore, as a result, we need empirical reviews on subjective but distinctive judgments regarding AI and IoT and to examine what the future of the technologies brings to our economy and society

Keywords: Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Artificial Intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT), Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Autoregressive Conditionally Heteroscedastic (ARCH) Model, Generalized Autoregressive Conditionally Heteroscedastic (GARCH) Model

Eliminating Subjectivity from Hate Speech Regulation: Exploring a Modified Definition of Hatred in Canada

Takayuki SUZUKI

When regulating hate speech, it is difficult to clarify what “hatred” actually is. Considering the importance of freedom of expression, there is a risk of causing a “chilling effect” and “self-censorship” of a term so vaguely defined. The Supreme Court in Canada indicated standards for reducing emotive and subjective definitions of hatred. This study focuses on how to resolve the question of subjectivity by analyzing the decisions in Taylor and Whatcott. The definition of hatred was first considered in Taylor. The majority in Whatcott argued as it follows; (i) the question courts must ask is whether a reasonable person, aware of the context and circumstances surrounding the expression, would view it as exposing the protected group to hatred, (ii) the legislative term “hatred” or “hatred or contempt” is to be interpreted as being restricted to those extreme manifestations of the emotion described by the words “detestation” and “vilification;” and (iii) the key is to determine the likely effect of the expression on its audience, keeping in mind the legislative objectives to reduce or eliminate discrimination. Analyzing the question of “subjectivity,” which hate speech regulation inevitably involves, is very useful to the ongoing debate in Japan.

Keywords: Hate Speech, Subjectivity, Modified Definition of Hatred, Taylor Decision, Whatcott Decision

Economic Effects of Supply within the Regions of Roadside Stations: Regions of Tajima, Hanshin and Kobe City in Hyogo Prefecture

Ryusaku MATSUO, Mitoshi YAMAGUCHI

In Japan, Roadside Stations are considered regional activity centers. These stations are considered integral to regional survival, especially for cities and towns experiencing depopulation; Roadside Stations have the concept of supply and demand within the regions. We have already seen economic ripple effects and the employment-inducing effects in three regions of Hyogo prefecture (Tajima, Hanshin and Kobe City) using Input-Output analysis from the Interindustry Relations Table for Regions. However, recently, we found more detailed data, which is called the Interindustry Relations Table for Cities and Towns. By analyzing these data, we found more detailed information concerning these three regions (four cities and two towns). In the cases of Asago and Yabu city, we found that the economic ripple effects from analyzing the data in the Interindustry Relations Table for Cities and Towns is bigger than the economic ripple effects using the Interindustry Relations Table for Regions, before income distribution. This means that the Roadside Stations' management specializing in agricultural products leads to larger economic effects to cities like Asago and Yabu city. This paper uncovers many other findings by analyzing and comparing ripple effect results using the Interindustry Relations Table for Regions and for Cities and Towns.

Keywords: Roadside Stations, the Interindustry Relations Table for Cities and Towns, Supply within the Region, The Economic Ripple Effects, Employment-inducing Effects