Young People in Transitional Crisis: Interview Survey for the Young Jobless and *Freeters* (interim report)

Summary

Contributing Authors:

Reiko Kosugi	Assistant Research Director, the Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training (JILPT)
Yukie Hori	Researcher, JILPT
Masaaki Nagasu	Professor, Kawasaki City College of Nursing
Michiko Miyamoto	Professor, Chiba University
Toshie Okita	Part-time Lecturer, Doshisha University

Research Participant (other than authors):

Hugh Whittaker	Professor, Doshisha University

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Objective of the Research:

This interview survey was conducted to elucidate the realities of unemployed or jobless youth and the so-called *freeters,* or job-hopping part-timers, who are in a transition crisis from school to work.

One of the key features of our study is that we paid careful and extensive attention not only to the problems surrounding labor market and schools, but also to the social relations including family backgrounds and relationships with friends. We realized the importance of highlighting these points based on the analysis of youth employment measures implemented in foreign countries as well as each country's recognition of the background behind the youth problems.

Although our research has not completed yet and this is just an interim report, we would like to present here the implications for recruitment measures targeted at young people that we have so far deduced from the analysis of the survey results.

Outline of Research Results

1. Objective and Focus

(Objective)

The Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training has been collecting and documenting information regarding the pioneering policies on youth employment measures administered in some foreign countries (United Kingdom, Sweden, Germany, and United States.) In order to formulate efficient strategies for young people in Japan, it is inevitable not only to analyze precedent measures taken in other countries but to assess the current situation surrounding Japanese youth.

Since the international comparison analysis led us to the recognition that it is important to perform a holistic examination of the school-to-work transition issue, including family and social relationships on top of the connections with labor market and schools, our individual hearings were initiated in the Fiscal Year 2003 to grasp the actual situation of young people who are in the throes of transition to workplaces.

(Research Issues and Focus)

A juvenile grows up into adulthood to become a mature member of society – it is a grave concern for both society and each individual. Entering adulthood has various aspects, including forming one's own family and becoming independent of parents' income, participating in politics, or fulfilling tax obligation. It is the most inevitable element, among others, to take up work and achieve economic independence. This process whereby one who has been going to school depending on parents' income comes to stand financially on one's own is so-called "From Initial Education to Working Life" (OECD, 2000.)

It is one of the major challenges in labor policies to help students' smooth shift to workplaces without letting them fall into the unemployment pool after graduation. Although Japan has enjoyed an international reputation as a country equipped with a smooth school-to-work transition mechanism (Ryan, 1996; OECD, 2000 etc.,) the current unemployment rate among young people has risen as high as that of other developed countries, making it an urgent task to implement youth-targeted employment measures. Under these present circumstances, the Japanese government announced "Independence and Challenge Plan for Young People" in 2003, which indicates that Japan's employment promotion policy for youth has entered into a new phase.

Many Western countries have administered a wide range of employment promotion strategies, as they experienced a rise in unemployment rate among young workers from the latter half of the 1970s to the 1980s. The Japan Institute of Labour (the current

Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training) set up a "Comparative Study Group on Youth Employment Policy" in 2002 to investigate the employment promotion policies implemented in the United Kingdom, Sweden, Germany, and the United States (Japan Institute of Labour, 2003; Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training, 2004). Through the investigation, the study group identified the following five characteristics of employment strategies taken in these countries:

1. Policy-making mechanisms at the level of local communities: Authorizing local governments to formulate measures sensitive to particular needs of the labor market as well as young residents in each community.
2. Support programs customised for each recipient of assistance: Providing personal assistant programs tailored to individual needs that were identified through interviews with staff members of support organizations including recruitment advisors.
3. Holistic assistance: Aiming at establishing an extensive system whereby all the youth problems can be flexibly dealt with, under the recognition that youth employment issues cannot be solved only by focusing on job-search assistance and that comprehensive measures should be taken to address the whole problems accompanied with juvenile-to-adult transition.
4. Pre-work support: Introducing programs to instill young people with basic disciplines and manners as well as general ideas on work.
5. Policy evaluation: Requiring further improvements in its methods and utilization of the assessed results.

The employment promotion strategies administered for youth in the above mentioned states are based on the recognition of the situations surrounding young nationals in each country. Since youth unemployment is a long-standing concern in these countries, many researches and studies focusing on unemployment issues and occupational problems of young people have been conducted.[1] Follow-up surveys have helped grasp the actual situation of school-to-work transition and problematic backgrounds of those who are at the most risk of unemployment. Empirical studies have also revealed that assistance exclusively targeted at the most disadvantaged youth in the labor market is not necessarily useful as such a limitation of subjects could bring about stigma among support recipients. The five characteristics pointed out above should be attributable to the outcomes of these researches.

[1] For instance, refer to the review of G. Jones and C. Wallace, 1996.

Japan's employment assistance measures for youth, on the other hand, have just set out on a new stage. How accurate is our recognition of the current situation surrounding Japanese young people? With respect to *freeters*, a study group that the Japan Institute of Labour set up in 1999 has performed surveys on this specific topic. Prior to the researches conducted by this study group, however, there were only a limited number of demonstrative investigations focusing on employment of young people. Though we have now recognized the youth employment issue as a grave political concern, empirical researches on this matter have just started to be carried out. We believe that the first step required to enhance the effects of measures expected to be undertaken in the future is to investigate young people who are having difficulties in transition to workplaces by classifying and patternizing them according to their backgrounds and characteristics as well as challenges they are facing.

How many young people are struggling in transition from school to work in Japan? To start with, let us consider the unemployed youth. The average unemployment rate of those aged between 15 and 24 was as high as 10.1 % (680,000) in 2003. The number of young people neither work nor go to school, which is internationally regarded as an important index to assess the degree of the problem, reached 1.37 million (9.2 % of the same age group) in the same year. This figure includes the above mentioned unemployed youth as well as 690,000 of those who do not go to school but are not counted as part of the workforce. (Note: The number falls to 960,000, if 410,000 of those engaged mainly in housework are excluded.)[2] This indicates that there are quite a few jobless young people who do not seek any job and thus are not considered as part of the labor market, as those who are not job hunting are excluded from the unemployed. Those unemployed or jobless young people are identified as the primary group who are experiencing the critical shift to workplaces and need help the most to facilitate their transition.

It has been a long-standing tradition in Japan that a majority of young people achieve entry into the labor market as full-time employees immediately after graduation, following the corporate practice to hire new graduates en bloc. Taking into this custom into consideration, young workers who take up non-regular types of work such as *arubaito* (casual work) or part-time job are also having the potential to face transitional problems. For the non-regular workers cannot enjoy the benefits and working conditions for regular employees, and it is not so easy to seek for a position of a regular employee once a new graduate starts his or her career on a non-regular basis. The number of those who

[2] The unemployment rate of other age groups: 15-19=4.4%, 20-24=13.3%. Ryan (2001) pointed out that the youth unemployment rate in Japan in 1997 was lower than that of France, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, United Kingdom, and United States. However, the present rate has reached to other countries' 1997 level.

engage in non-regular types of work has been soaring recently, reaching 1.59 million within the age group of 15 to 24 (excluding students,) which accounts for 32.5% of all the employed in the same age group ("Labour Force Survey," July-September 2003). These non-regular workers are more or less in the transition crisis, in a different sense from that of the jobless or the unemployed. Though we cited the case of those aged between 15 and 24, it would be required to include up to early 30s, as the transition period is likely to be further prolonged.

As mentioned earlier, the objective of this research is to empirically grasp the realities of youth who are experiencing difficulties in the school-to-work transition. It is essential, in particular, to investigate the situation of those who are facing the most difficult challenges in order for this study to contribute to the future policy-making on this issue.

Who will be identified as experiencing the most critical transition? Kosugi and Hori (2003) realized, through hearings from public and private employment assistance organizations, that recipients of their support are mostly young people who are "highly motivated to work." This finding suggests that existing recruitment services are effective for those who are enthusiastic about job hunting and are actively searching for a job, but that those who are not very eager to obtain a job are out of the reach of these supports. If we wish to understand the actual situation of young people's transitional problems, the primary focus should be on those who are not vigorously searching for a job.

2. Research Methods

We decided to undertake exploratory data collection for our research, as there is not much data available regarding this matter prior to our study. In line with the holistic assistance measures provided in other countries, we believed it was necessary not to limit the scope of our research in the matter of employment, but to cover the juvenile-to-adult transition as a whole and to highlight the employment issue within the entire range of transitional problems. Under this assumption, a half-structured questionnaire is used in the interviews with the subjects.

Even though an interview survey has been already performed by the Japan Institute of Labour (2000a,) we have to admit that it was not sufficient enough to examine young people who are in a serious transition crisis, as the subjects of this study were volunteers who willingly responded to the advertisement asking for participants in the survey posted on informational magazines for teenagers or recruitment publications.

We first of all tried to explore young people who would join our research project with the aid of bodies and individuals including high school teachers who give various types of assistance for youth in the throes of transition. If needed, a mediator whom the subject

trusts participated in the hearing or even conducted some parts of the interview. These mediators also provided us with the background information regarding the subject.

We have so far gathered 23 analyzable data in the metropolitan area, 21 in Kansai (Greater Osaka) area, and 7 in Tohoku (north-eastern part of the mainland Japan) area. Interviews are still going on especially in Tohoku area. This interim report is based on 51 data which have already been analyzed. The breakdown of the subjects is given in Table 1.

The interview consists of 4 dimensions under the intention to holistically comprehend the situation of the subjects to establish appropriate assistance programs. In each dimension, we asked the subjects to explain their individual situations by looking back on their past.

Table 1: Breakdown of the Subjects

Number

		Total	Male	Female
	Total	**51**	**28**	**23**
Educational Background	Junior High School Graduates	2	2	0
	High School Dropouts	4	2	2
	High School Graduates	25	11	14
	Junior College / Vocational School Dropouts	2	1	1
	Junior College / Vocational School Graduates	5	2	3
	University Dropouts	4	3	1
	University Graduates	9	7	2
Age	19 or younger	16	5	11
	20 to 22	12	7	5
	23 to 25	14	9	5
	26 or older	9	7	2
Employment Status	Jobless	17	8	9
	Arubaito / Part-time job	31	17	14
	Other	3	3	0

The first dimension focuses on the issue of employment. The interview items contained in this section include the subjects' professional history, recruitment routes, perceptions on the current workplace and their position, views on employment and vocation as well as career planning, recognitions on labor market situations, and ideas on vocational ability development.

The second dimension covers school related matters. In this section, subjects are asked to retrace what have happened to them in their school lives around since they were at the higher grades of elementary school, including the following points: schools they have attended, academic performance and degree of adaptation to each school, career and

educational planning, factors that they believe affected their educational or professional decisions, and circumstances where they obtained (or did not obtain) a job after graduating from or dropping out of the last school they attended.

Family affairs are dealt with in the third dimension, such as family makeup and its changes, separation from other family members, grant or receipt of money including living expenses, use of subjects' own income and the amount they can use at their discretion, occupational and educational backgrounds as well as the lifestyle of their parents, income for the whole household and family's standard of living, and parents' expectation for and interest in their children.

The fourth dimension is made up of inquiries about the social networks and activities, that is, young people's daily life apart from home or workplace, and relationships with their friends or other acquaintances. Major items are: circle of acquaintances including their friends and boy/girlfriend, model of life, people and the way of life they respect, activities they value, hobbies, things they really want to do, self-evaluation for their life, life planning and visions, prospects for their own family, and the range of activities.

We started this survey at the beginning of the Fiscal Year 2003 and are still continuing as of March 2004. This interim report is based on the interviews undertaken by February 2004.

3. Major Findings and Interpretations - Policy Implications -

We analyzed the interview results according to the above mentioned four dimensions.

In Chapter 1, we first sorted out what kinds of barriers exist in the process of the school-to-work transition and why young workers give up their regular employment. We also examined the observed obstacles barring the smooth transition, particularly by focusing on the dimension of employment. The subjects of our survey turned out to have diverged from certain routes at some points to become a regular employee, due to reasons such as choosing not to go to high school, dropping out of school, not engaging in job hunting upon the graduation from school, not succeeding in obtaining a job, losing jobs at an early stage, or taking up *arubaito* jobs after leaving office or school. We further asked them, in each phase of deviation from regular employment, about the factors and thoughts they had in mind and their employment status after stepping off the path toward standard employment. By reviewing their responses, the following patterns were identified: Dropouts or students who failed to successfully graduate from secondary schools lack basic disciplines required at workplaces and are not fully ready for work; high school graduates living in rural areas cannot obtain a job, even if they are well prepared to start working, because the absolute number of job openings is low; those who went onto higher education

drop out due to wrong school selection or maladaptation to school environment, or fail to join the process of new graduates' mass employment because of indecisiveness in selecting companies upon application for positions that are equally open to everyone; those who had to spend longer years than most of other students to prepare for university entrance examinations or to earn enough credits for moving on to upper grades or for graduation tend to give up catching up with the mass employment process for new graduates.

In Japan, high schools have served as primary organizations which facilitate the transition between schools and businesses. Reviewing the dimension of schools in Chapter 2, we focused on the role of high schools as comprehensive transition assistance institutions. The existing difficulties seen in the school-to-work transition evidence that schools' supportive roles are no longer effectively functioning. We found that those who had actively engaged in choosing their high schools, among other young people who are having transitional problems, showed a sincere attitude to make a decision upon leaving high schools, and tend to retain their hopes and visions for the future even in the crucial process of transition to workplaces. This tendency was also observed in cases of those who chose to go to university; they carefully selected the university to enter, eagerly searched for a job, and are still having positive visions for their future in spite of their current hardships to obtain a job. These serious attitudes seen on the occasions of making critical decisions that affect one's life are meaningful in the sense that such attitudes help prevent transition crisis from aggravating, even if they don't guarantee success in job hunting. Taking this finding into account, the role of high schools as transition assistance organizations should be once again reassessed.

On the other hand, there are quite a few students who don't take seriously their choices which affect the rest of their lives. In Chapter 3, we examined the role of high schools to assist this group of students. What we realized here was that some students negatively regard schools as "places to just be there" to kill time by hanging around with their friends, as they don't see any clear reason either to quit school or to continue going there. It seems that schools once served to socialize students are hardly functioning in that sense any more. It is required to complement the role that schools used to play with trainings or experiences given in workplaces including *arubaito* jobs or at institutions other than schools such as public vocational training centers.

We also found that those who went onto higher education and those who gave up academic career before going to university do not follow the same transitional path from school to work. The primary factor which affects the decision of going or not going to higher education is the income of parents. Family background and class is another key element to determine the perception and attitude toward profession. In Chapter 4, we

analyzed the influence of family on children. Young workers in urban areas who did not go to university often give some of their income to their parents, even if they are working as *freeters*. These parents tend not to care about what type of job their children have, as long as they can earn money. They are also quite indifferent toward their children and do not interfere whatever their children do, while their sons and daughters do not have any desire to get a particular job and are not even worried about such a situation. On the other hand, parents of those who have graduated from higher educational institutions are greatly concerned over their children's career development and have strong expectations for what education can achieve for their children. Such attitudes sometimes result in a typical pattern of giving too much pressure and frustrating their children. Other cases showed that parents who always respect their children's intention and will and do not interfere eventually give their children an illusion that they are multi-talented and expand the gap between reality and dream, causing their children's hesitation in taking up available jobs. We also learned that some students living in rural areas who failed to obtain a job have to give up the alternative to go onto higher education as well, because the stagnation of local economy cut the income of their family. These findings show us that young people are on the verge of confinement to a socially and culturally poor environment at the very time of life when they need to enhance their career and experience.

In the final Chapter 5, we argued the relation between the transition and social networks, such as relationship with friends and adults nearby or that with employment assistance organizations. Social networks provide young people with concrete supports as well as criteria to make decisions or judgments. If one leaves school and does not belong anywhere, his or her social network shrinks. This contraction of social network reduces the opportunity of social development of young people and inactivates them by making them lose self-confidence and their will to overcome the current situation, which often leads to further difficulties in their job hunting efforts. Those who gave up their academic career at an early stage showed a tendency to get a short-term job and then to search for another again after losing the previous job, repeating this cycle within a single closed social network. For this group of youth, it is necessary to present a possible standard with which they can take another alternative apart from simply leaving school.

Table 2 is a provisional attempt to categorize the types of problematic situations in school-to-work transition observed so far into five groups. We also investigated the background factors seen in each type.

Those who are classified into the last row, "Waiting for a better opportunity," are the victims of the current economic situation causing a significant fall in the labor force demand within certain communities. In our survey, we often found young people who fall

into this category in high school graduates residing in rural areas. According to the categorization which divides *freeters* into three groups (“no other choice” type, “moratorium” type, and “dream pursuing” type,) this group of young people are included in “no other choice” type. It is highly likely that they could take up work once better economic conditions return and local economies revive.

Other groups will be mostly categorized into the “moratorium” type. A key characteristic of this category is that this type of young people did not have any prospects for the future upon leaving school and postponed making a vital decision that would determine the direction of life. Since a wide range of young people consist this “moratorium” group, it is necessary to further examine the realities of this type in order to set up assistance programs for smooth transition.

Those who are classified into the group of “Pursuing pleasures of the moment” were mainly found among high school graduates living in big cities. As shown in Table 2, they negatively consider schools as just places to hang around and do not mind getting low scores as well as being frequently late or absent. Their unfavorable family backgrounds are similar to those of “socially excluded class” identified in Western societies. The young people who fall into this group might not be able to overcome the transitional problems, just as seen in other advanced countries, even if an economic recovery brings about an increased number of job openings.

Table 2: Patterns of Young People in the Difficult Process of Transition to Workplaces (provisional categorization)

Key words describing the situation	Labor Market	School	Family	Society etc.
Pursuing pleasures of the moment	Not many job openings available via high school / Working on an *arubaito* basis following an invitation from a friend or just for money / Employability lower than labor market demand	Considering schools as places just to hang around / Dropping out of high school / Frequent absence or lateness and low academic achievement / Unable to take up jobs introduced by school	Insufficient income / Parents' indifference toward children / Lacking basic disciplines such as getting up early in the morning	Close but confined relationships with local friends and hesitation in going out of hometown / Unaware of what they really want to do / Friends are all in similar situation / Working on an *arubaito* basis to make money just for hanging around
Losing ties with others	Unable to keep up with the process of mass employment for new graduates / Having difficulty in writing an attractive resume due to the lack of work experience as a regular employee / Hoping to work but having difficulty in establishing social relations	Experienced problems in establishing relation with friends or others / Unable to take up jobs introduced by school	Repeated changes in schools accompanying parent's transfers (in some cases)	Few friends from school / Having quit a job because of a certain trouble and ending up weakening ties with society (in some cases) / Generating a vicious circle of degrading interpersonal skills due to little communication with others and losing chances of employment (in some cases)
Being at a loss without knowing where to proceed	Even though having tried job hunting upon graduation from university, unable to perform active and extensive searches because of failure to choose a certain career to pursue / Unrealistically narrowing the range of job searching	Having gone onto higher education without any career vision / No relevance between the major subject and profession / Insufficient employment assistance from university	All other family members went to university / Parents' high expectation for children's academic achievement / Showing understanding of the significance of self-realization	Having actively searched for a job, not because others were doing the same / Feeling deeply guilty for parents
Losing self-confidence	Having lost job at an early stage due to incapability of handling assigned tasks / Taking up short-term *arubaito* jobs to avoid being a burden on family / Giving up employment because of age higher than other classmates (ex.: having spent 2 years to pass an entrance exam for university and 2 more years to earn enough credits)	No relevance between the major subject and profession / Having utilized recruitment supports provided by university	All other family members went to university / Parents' high expectation for children's academic achievement	Mentally and physically exhausted, hoping to take time to find the next job
Waiting for a better	Not many job openings available via		Not hoping to leave home for	Hoping to stay in hometown

opportunity	high school / Sagging local economy		a job	

In Japan, it seems that "Being at a loss without knowing where to proceed" type of young people mostly found among higher education graduates is the most serious problem among others. Until recently, the vocational abilities the industry demanded and the higher education universities provided had little relevance. At present, however, companies have a wide range of university graduate applicants who have various skills and careers. This change is making the transition of higher education graduates more difficult. It is vital to reinforce career development activities as well as to review the relationship between vocational ability and education.

"Losing ties with others" type of youth needs pre-work support to help build up social relationships. Systematic assistance would be required for this purpose.

Those who were categorized into "Losing self-confidence" type were all exhausted both mentally and physically. It is likely that they will once again regain their will to work as time passes by. Even if they first wish to get a part-time job with a short duration of work, many of them will often be remotivated to obtain a position of a full-time worker.

Based on the analysis findings above, followings are what we believe to be effective as employment promotion measures for youth:

First, it is required to establish a mechanism whereby extensive recruitment supports can be systematically given to meet various needs, such as a single-point delivery system of assistance or a support network mainly led by local governments.

It is an essential process to obtain a stable position in a workplace and to work regularly, in order for young people to grow up into adulthood and to become one of mature members of society. This process has much to do with other elements to be an adult, for example, being independent from parents' income, forming one's own family, paying tax, having social insurance, and participating in society and politics. Some of those who are facing the most difficult transition are isolated and distressed because they do not have a place to belong to, as having dropped out of school or having shut themselves out of society by staying at home all the time. This "Losing ties with others" type often needs, prior to searching for a job, to start with receiving assistance so that they can go back to school or participate in society. Collaboration with medical institutions might be required in some cases.

It will be of no use to deal with employment problems as an independent issue, as all the transitional problems are not inseparably connected from the perspective of the support recipients. For young people who do not have sufficient social knowledge or experience, utilizing plural organizations appropriately for each occasion is too difficult and complicated to understand. Either one specific organization to extensively cover all the

related issues or an assistance network of agencies to cooperatively address problems is needed for the benefit of support receivers.

This also makes it possible to provide support services for a wider range of young people. For if the recipients of the service are limited to only those who are in the most problematic situations, receiving such supports might cause the recipients to have some sort of stigma. This fear will disappear when various types of services are continuously given to various types of young people.

It is also desirable that local administrations play a key role to address problems related to labor, education, family, and society, as they are principally efficient in coordinating assistance within each local community.

Possible support services may include helping find a job, providing access to vocational training, giving guidance and counselling for career planning, sharing information on recruitment, and granting opportunities to gain work experience. It should also be effective to set up cultural or interactive programs apart from the issue of occupation and labor so that young people can expand their social networks. In regions where job openings are limited in number, programs for social participation as an alternative to employment would be meaningful, especially when they are designed to encourage initiatives of young participants.

What is needed, secondly, is to enhance school education as well as to provide complementary assistance in socialization at organizations other than schools.

Our research has revealed that failure to adapt to school life at an early stage (i.e., constant absence, deviation from requirements, or dropout) tends to continue to be a barrier for career development even later on. We also found that the role of socialization that schools used to play is hardly functioning these days, and that parents of those who gave up early to go to school are likely to have unstable jobs and to lack conditions under which their children can prepare for employment, as such parents often do not care about their children's style or content of work as long as they are making money, show indifference toward them, and never interfere with whatever they do. This "Pursuing pleasures of the moment" type of family environment is similar to that of those who are recognized in Western countries as having possibility of suffering the severest social exclusion. It is difficult but inevitable to complement the function of family and, at the same time, to reinforce the weakened role of schools.

The function of school could be enhanced though the collaboration with the industry, just as seen in the ongoing Japanese version of so-called "Dual System," by putting emphasis on vocational training. The fact that students who do not live up to what schools value are often eager to work on an *arubito* basis could be attributable to the

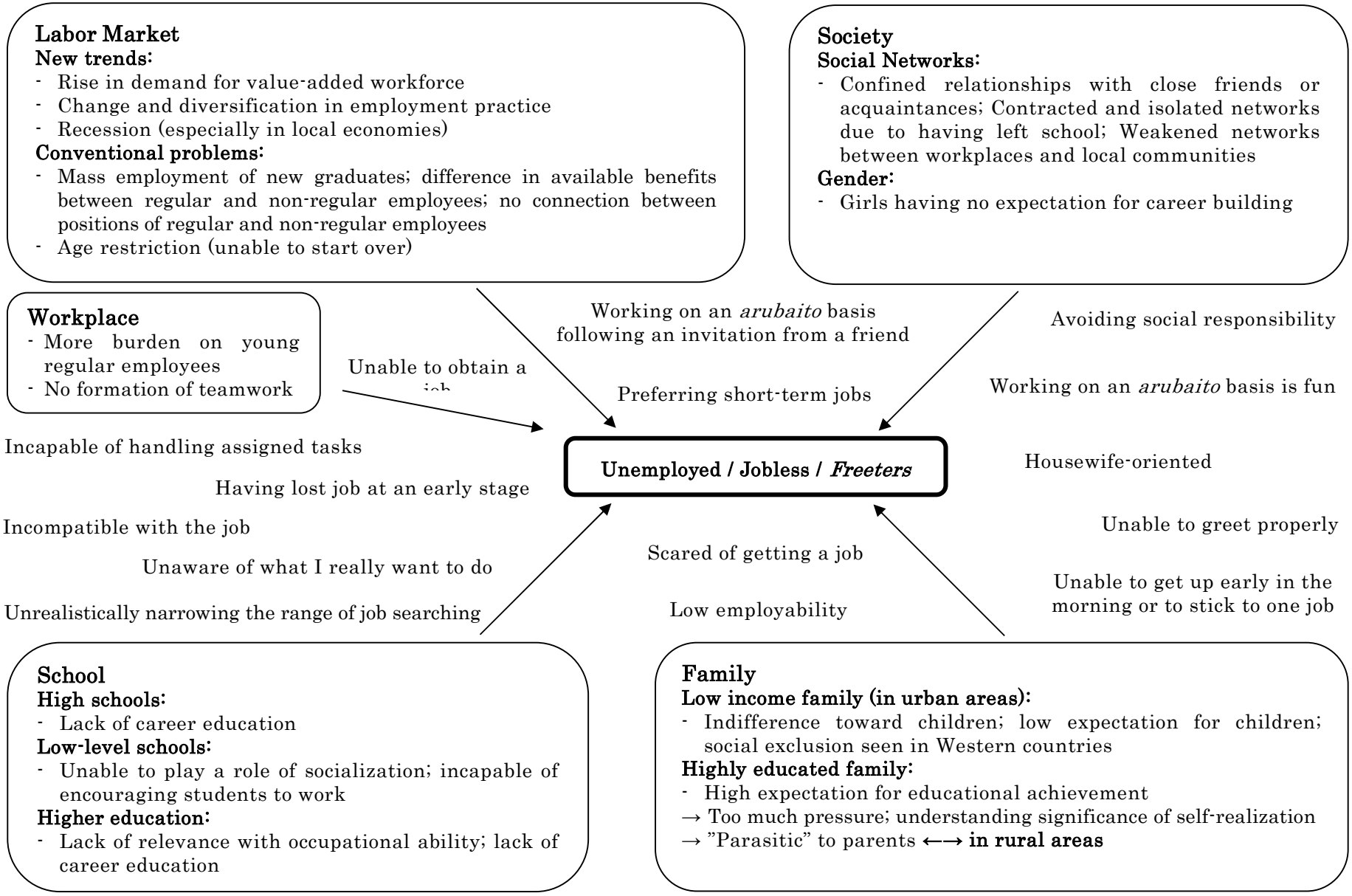
educational power that the business circles have, on top of their simple motivation to earn money. Extensive efforts are expected to incorporate such an educational power that the industry possesses into school education.

Non-school organizations can be of use in that they can prevent students from deviating from school requirements and help young people prepare for starting working, by support in their adaptation to school life and granting opportunities to expand their social networks. What these organizations need to do is to apply outreaching approaches to enhance their effectiveness.

What we suggest thirdly is to develop career education as well as vocational training in higher educational institutions. Many young people end up being jobless or working as a *freeter* because of dropout from higher education or unsuccessful job hunting. This could be attributable to higher educational institutions, as well as the insufficiency of career education given in secondary schools. To support higher education graduates who are categorized as "Being at a loss without knowing where to proceed," it is vital to reassess the relevance between the contents of higher education and professions, and to set up a supportive mechanism for career building (for example, career education including internship programs and assistance to change the current situation including transfer of major, faculty, or institution.)

This research has not completed yet, and we have to admit that there is disproportion of subjects. It is necessary to conduct more interviews and deepen the analysis, especially in rural areas. In addition, since Japan has not fully implemented employment assistance measures for young people yet, we have to follow up the future policy development to assess if the newly adopted strategies would be relevant to the actual situation of young people.

Figure 1: Structure of Youth Employment Problems



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7. Plans and visions for the future
7.1 Plans for the future
7.2 Visions for the future
7.3 Perceptions on marriage
7.4 Conclusion
8. Conclusiona
8.1 Characteristics of family and relatives of *freeters* who did not go onto higher education
8.2 Characteristics of family and relatives of *freeters* who have high academic backgrounds
8.3 Conclusion

Chapter 5: Social Networks and Transition

1. Social networks during transition
   1.1 Shrinking networks
   1.2 Confined social networks
   1.3 Expansive networks
2. Vital role of social networks as “alternatives”
3. Social networks in local communities responsible for transitional support
4. Conclusion in this chapter

Epilogue
1. Introduction
2. Examination of situations of young people experiencing difficult transition
3. Development of patterns of young people experiencing difficult transition
4. Suggestions for effective measures

Appendix: Rough backgrounds of the research subjects