

## **Research on the Current Status of Home-based Work Support for Persons with Disabilities and their Tasks**

### **(Research Reports No. 131) Summary**

#### **[Keywords]**

Home-based work, home-based employment, telework, special adjustment allowances, special rewards, organization supporting home-based work

#### **[Usage of this report]**

With the recent rapid development of IT technologies and the expansion of high-speed networks, telework has been widely recognized. However, because of incidents of personal information leakage and due to the availability of offshoring, there are a variety of tasks in operating the organization supporting home-based work for persons with disabilities. In this research, by undertaking surveys and visits, the newest status and tasks for home-based work, circumstances in the past and finally the revitalization plan for the future are summarized and then the beneficial information is provided for persons who are willing to use the organization, the supporters and the involved persons at the corporations.

April 2016

Japan Organization for Employment of the Elderly, Persons with Disabilities and Job Seekers. (JEED)

National Institute of Vocational Rehabilitation

1 Authors (in writing order)  
Shinichiro Koike (Senior Researcher, Research Group on Support for Employers, National Institute of Vocational Rehabilitation)  
Mitsuyo Tamura (Researcher, Research Group on Support for Employers, National Institute of Vocational Rehabilitation)

2 Research Period  
FY 2014 to 2015

3 Composition of the Research Report  
Summary of the research study  
Chapter 1: The definition of home-based work and function within and outside Japan  
Chapter 2: The current status and tasks for persons working at home  
Chapter 3: Undertaking the research on the organizations which offer home-based work support for persons with disabilities  
Chapter 4: Visitation research on organizations supporting home-based work  
Chapter 5: Undertaking research on the corporations concerning the possibility of job offer expansions for home-based work  
Chapter 6: Research summary  
Reference literature, Materials at the end of report

4 Background and Purpose of Research  
Since 2006, for the persons with disabilities working at home, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) has been providing the special adjustment allowances or rewards, as a part of the Levy and Grant System for Employing Persons with Disabilities, to the corporations which have been offering jobs to persons with disabilities working at home (persons with disabilities who are working at home, etc.) and through the organizations supporting home-based work (corporations which have applied and registered to the MHLW as an organization to support persons with disabilities working at home). Currently, 22 organizations acting as the organizations have been registered by the Minister of the MHLW. Even though the number of registrations has slightly increased, the transition of the number of successful grants for the special adjustment allowances or rewards has been low, which is not even half the number of registered organizations, showing that the system is currently not actively used. Therefore, the aim of this research is to understand the current condition of the home-based work, analyze the main cause of disuse of the system from the conditions reviewed and consider what kind of support plan should be undertaken in order to have the support system used more actively in the future.

5 Method

(1) Undertaking the survey on the organizations supporting home-based work  
In order to understand the actual status of the organizations supporting home-based work, a survey on the organizations was undertaken. The 49 organizations which met the following criteria were targeted, 1) providing counselling and information regarding the employment to the home employed persons with disabilities, as well as supporting them with technical support, for example, IT, and 2) offering the jobs received from corporations to the registered home employed persons with disabilities, as well as managing the quality and progress and distributing their profit to persons with disabilities working at home. (Survey period: July 29<sup>th</sup> – August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014, data collection rate: 71.4%)

(2) Undertaking survey interviews to specialists and organizations supporting home-based work

In order to understand the actual status of the home-based work of persons with disabilities, survey interviews were undertaken with experts with relevant learning and experience, as well as visitation research took place with the organizations supporting home-based work which would help to validate the circumstances by gathering various information, for example, reference literature.

(3) Undertaking the survey on corporations in the information service industry

In order to understand the usage status of the organizations supporting home-based work at corporations, a survey was undertaken with corporations. The target of this survey was 1,235 corporations within the telecommunications industry which most outsourced to home-based workers with or without disabilities (percentage of corporations outsourcing: 35.2%), excluding communications businesses and broadcasting businesses, as well as the parent corporations of special subsidiaries\* with the main business as an information

service business. The size of these corporations has more than 50 employees (corporation size with an obligation to report their employment status of persons with disabilities) where their main activity is the middle classification business (hereinafter referred as “information service”) from the “Japan Standard Industrial Classification.” (Survey period: the end of June – August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015, data collection rate: 18.4%) \*In case that an employer establishes a subsidiary company which gives special consideration for employing persons with disabilities in order to promote and stabilize their employment, and fulfills certain requirements, the workers employed at the subsidiary can be deemed to be employed by the parent company for calculating the employment rate.

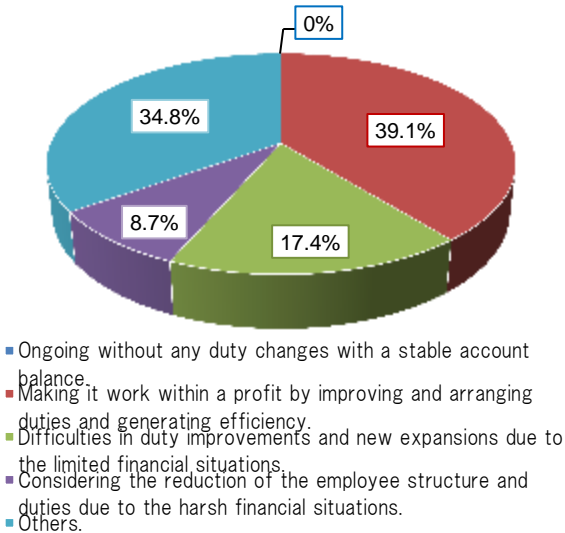
6 Research Details

(1) The current status and tasks of the IT utilized organizations supporting home-based work which were comprehended by the survey and visitation research

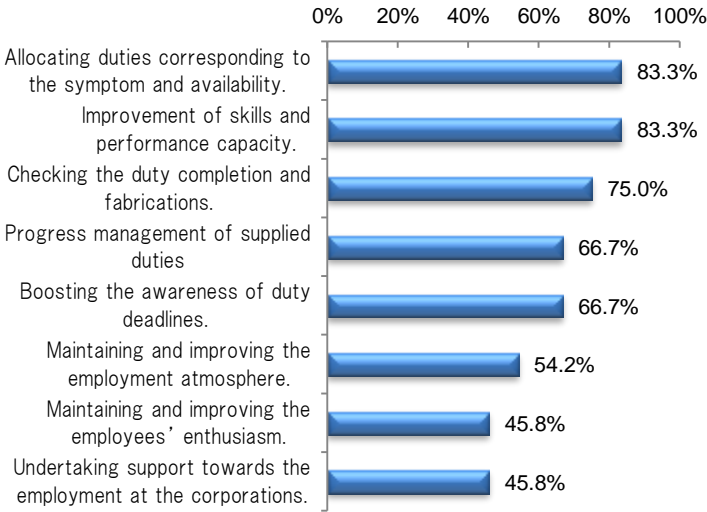
A. The operation status and tasks in order to operate for IT utilized organizations

Reviewing the operation status of the IT utilized organizations, approximately 40% of them were in the status of “making it work within a profit,” and this indicates that there was no organization which has been operating a stable business with a well-balanced profit. Concerning their operation status, it is estimated that many organizations were in difficult situations. (Picture 1)

In addition, the tasks in operating the home-based work support business were “allocating duties corresponding to the symptom and availability,” and “improvement of skills and performance capacity,” and both of them scored at 83.3% and “checking the duty completion and fabrications,” scored at 75% and “progress management of supplied duties,” scored at 66.7%. The characteristics of duty tasks which appeared to be high seemed to have a direct connection to everyday duties. (Picture 2)

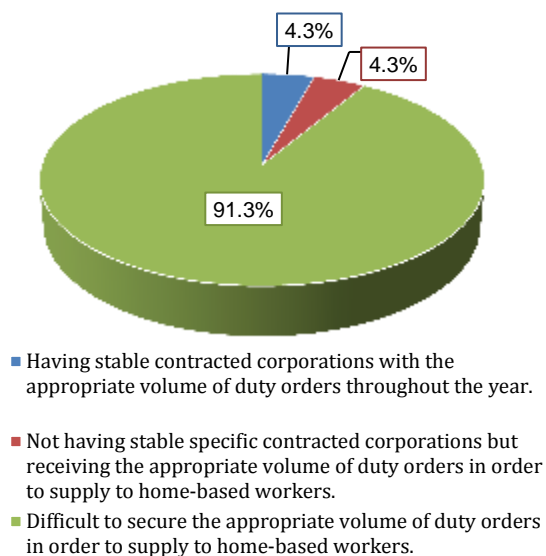


Picture 1: The operation status of the IT utilized organizations supporting home-based work

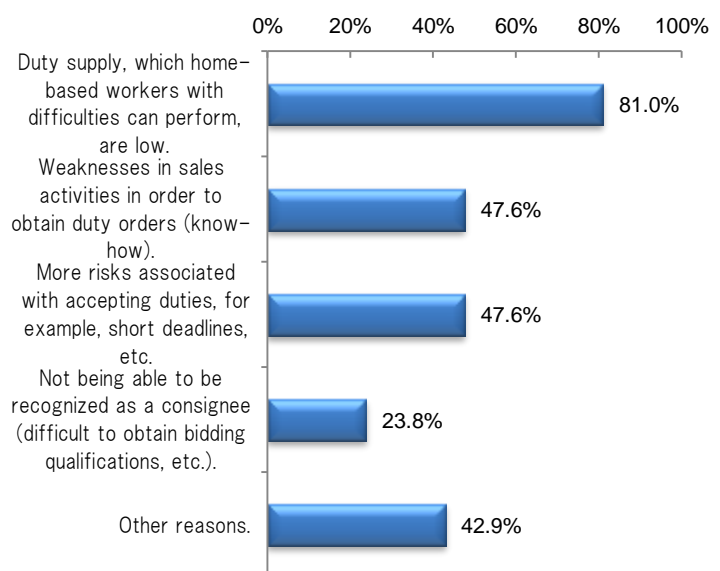


Picture 2: The operation tasks for the IT utilized organizations supporting home-based work

The status of securing the duty orders, the organizations supporting home-based work which have been able to secure the stable contracted corporations or the appropriate volume of duty orders, were 8.6% in total. The organizations which answered “difficult to secure the appropriate volume of duty orders,” was the highest at 91.3% of the total (Picture 3) and this indicates that there were many organizations which have not been able to respond to the needs of registered persons with disabilities. In addition, when the reason was asked to the organizations that answered “difficult to secure the appropriate volume of duty orders,” more organizations answered at 81% that “duty supply, which home employed persons with difficulties can perform, are low.” Comparing the duty details registered persons with disabilities can perform with the duty details of actual duty orders in the question mentioned later, it is considered that the performable duties and offer able duties do not match. Other reasons mentioned were “weakness in operation structure,” and “weakness in sales activities.” (Picture 4)



Picture 3: The status of securing duty orders

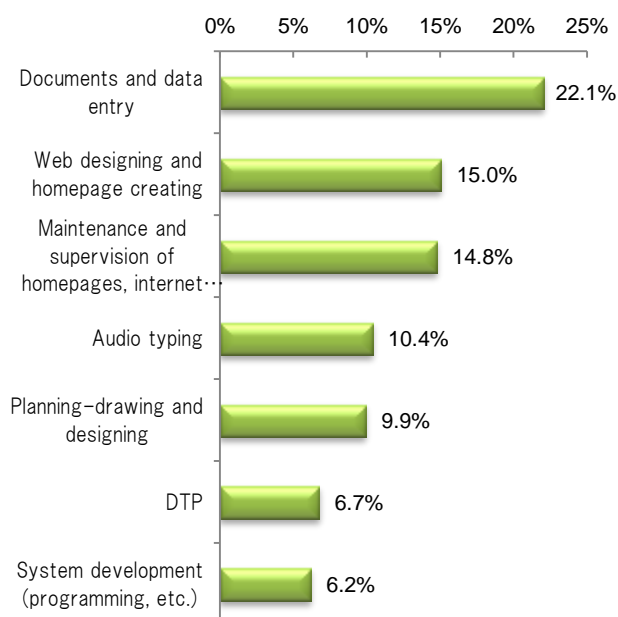


Picture 4: The reasons for not being able to secure the appropriate volume of duty orders

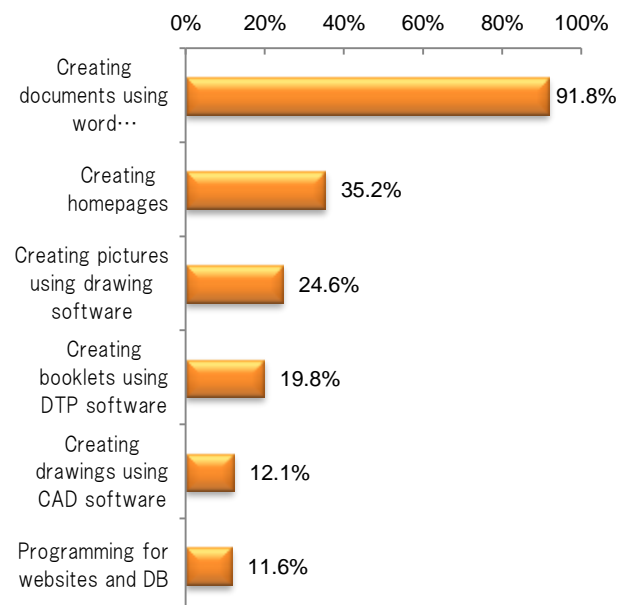
B. The relationship between the skills of registered persons with disabilities and the details of the duties organizations offer

The duties which IT utilized organizations offer to registered persons with disabilities are “documents and data entry,” (22.1%) with the highest proportion, followed by “web designing and homepage creating,” (15.0%), “maintenance and supervision of homepages, internet and websites,” (14.8%) and “audio typing,” (10.4%) indicating that the variety of duties using the IT technologies is wide. (Picture 5) From the actual status research by visiting organizations supporting home-based work, it is confirmed that there are organizations specialized in planning and drawing, as well as organizations skilled in design among “planning-drawing and designing,” (9.9%).

On the other hand, it is identified that more than 90% of registered persons with disabilities at the IT utilized organizations have learnt basic skills, for example data input, that is required for home-based work. However, it is understood that the learning rate of the use of software which is identified as a medium level or higher in general, is approximately about 1/3 of all the registered persons with disabilities, including drawing software at 24.6% and CAD software at 12.1%. (Picture 6) Comparisons with the percentage of the duty offered by organizations, it shows typical consistency with the percentage reviewed for each duty detail which registered persons with disabilities can perform. However, from the previous paragraph, “difficult to secure the appropriate volume of duty orders,” many answered as the reason, “duty supply, which home employed persons with difficulties can perform, is low,” and it is assumed that having only a limited number of duties that registered persons with difficulties can perform, might be one of the reasons for the difficult operation conditions.



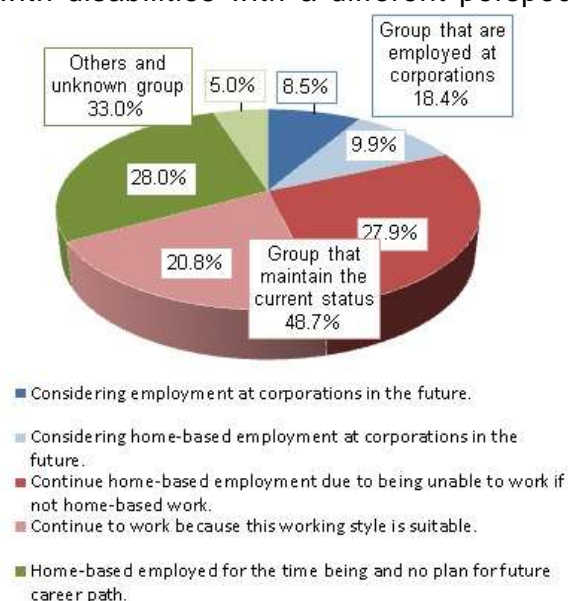
Picture 5: The percentage of duty details organizations offer



Picture 6: The percentage of each duty that registered persons with disabilities can perform

### C. The future career path for registered persons with disabilities

Regarding the future career path for registered persons with disabilities at IT utilized organizations, approximately half the number of them belonged to the group “maintaining the current status,” at 48.7%. The percentage of persons who answered “no plan for future career path,” who were currently home employed for the time being was 28.0% and it exceeds the group of persons who are aiming for employment at corporations scoring 18.4%. There were 5.0% of persons who were looking at another path, for example using specialist communal nursing care facilities in the future because of the severity of their disorders. Moreover, there were nine IT utilized organizations (45% of the total) which had no persons who were willing to be employed and this indicates that there were a variety of registered persons with disabilities with a different perspective among the organizations. (Picture 7)

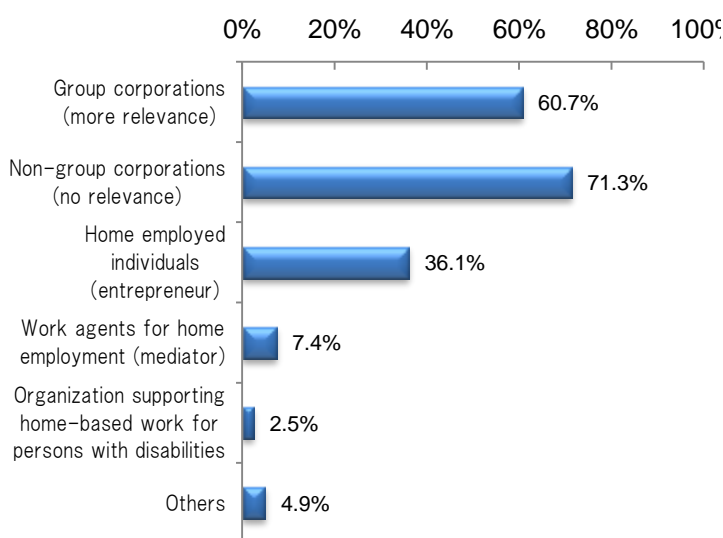


Picture 7: The future career paths that organizations supporting home-based work comprehend concerning registered persons with disabilities

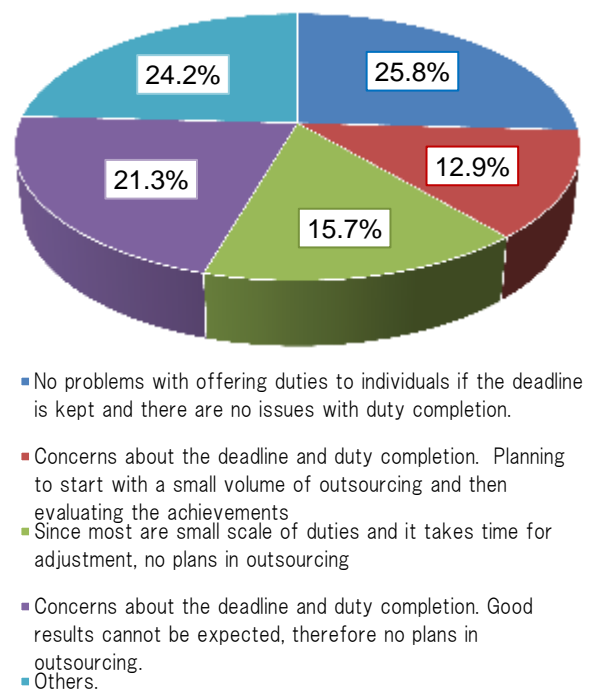
(2) The tasks within the system recognized from the survey from the corporation perspective

A. The status of job offers and aspects towards the job offers to home employed persons at corporations in the information service industry

The corporations which answered that home employed individuals (entrepreneur) were one of their targets to job offers were 36.1%, however there were only 7.4% offered to work agents for home-based work that registers, manages home employed persons as well as acting as an intermediary for outsourcing and submits their duty completion and finally there were only 2.5% offered to organizations supporting home-based work. (Picture 8) Corporations tend to choose persons that have relevance and with constant skill reliability and it is estimated that it is difficult to be the target to obtain job offers whilst having less direct relationship with work agents for home-based work and organizations supporting home-based work. In addition, regarding the thoughts about outsourcing jobs to work agents for home-based work and home employed persons (entrepreneur), 25.8% of corporations answered “no problems if the deadline is kept and there are no issues with completion of duties,” and also 12.9% of corporations answered, “planning to start with a small volume of outsourcing and then evaluating the achievements.” Since the corporations which answered that they were not planning to outsource was 37.0% in total (Picture 9), the corporations with positive aspects towards outsourcing to individuals (entrepreneur) was slightly higher. For the corporations in the information service industries, it is estimated that 1/3 of corporations had a perspective of having jobs outsourced if there were no problems with deadlines and completion of duties.



Picture 8: Job offer targets at the corporations

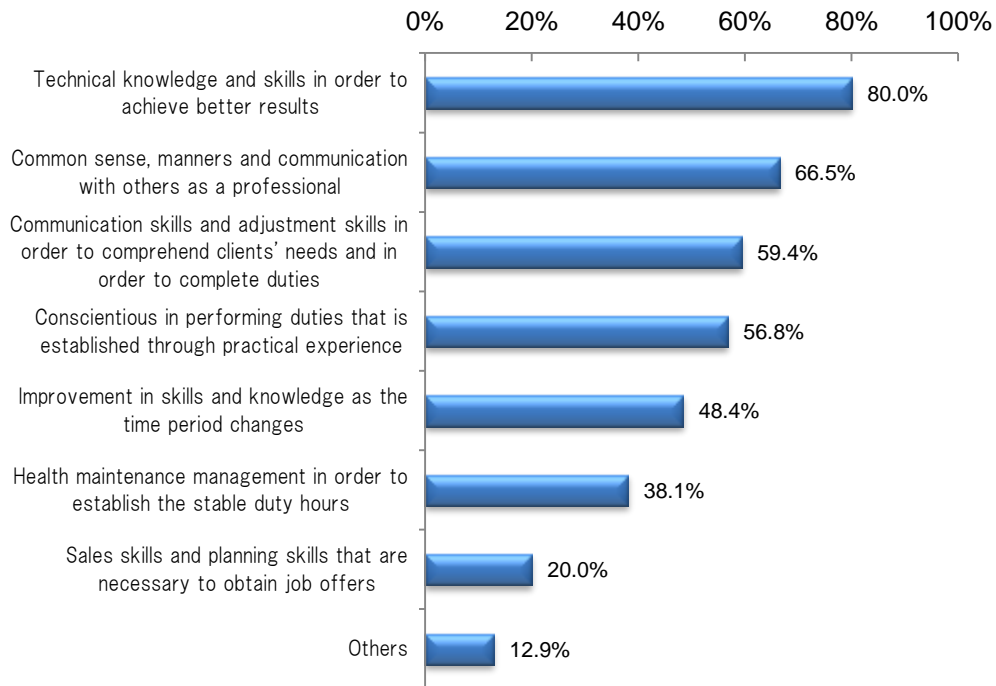


Picture 9: Aspects of corporations towards outsourcing job offers

B. The requirements of corporations in the information service industry for home employed persons

The specifics that corporations required for home employed persons, “technical knowledge and skills in order to achieve better results,” (80.0%) scored the highest followed by “common sense, manners and communication with others as a professional,” (66.5%), “communication skills and adjustment skills in order to comprehend clients’ needs and in order to complete duties,” (59.4%) and “conscientious in performing duties that is established through practical experience,” (56.8%), and more than a half of the corporations had these answers as a requirement of outsourcing duties. In the free format comments for corporations which chose “others,” out of fourteen corporations which detailed requirements, ten corporations mentioned concerns about the need for securing

information security and information management. (Picture 10)

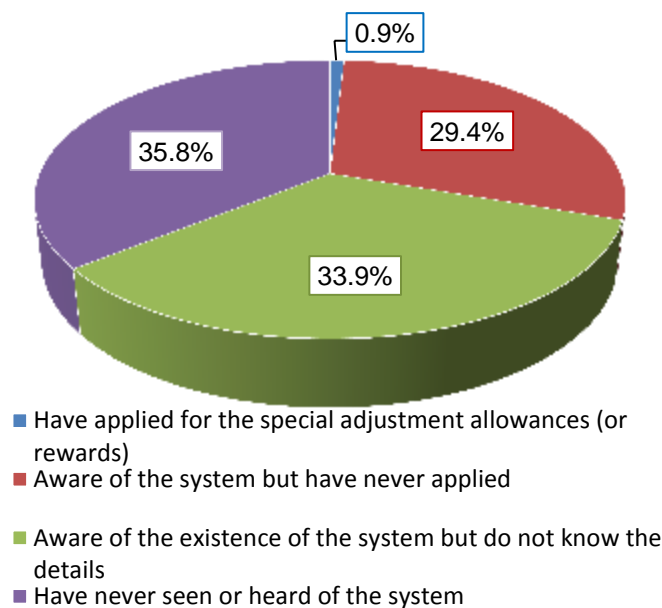


Picture 10: The specifics corporations require for home employed persons

C. The recognition levels of the support systems in corporations within the information service industry

The corporations which recognized special adjustment allowances or rewards based on the Levy and Grant System for Employing Persons with Disabilities scored 30.3% of the total, however the corporations that have actually applied for these specific payments scored only 0.9% (that is two corporations out of 218 corporations that responded to the question) (Picture 11).

Moreover, corporations that answered “do not know the details,” and “have never seen or heard,” about the system scored 69.7% in total, which covered more than 2/3 of the total and it is estimated that the recognition around the corporations about this system is not yet embedded.



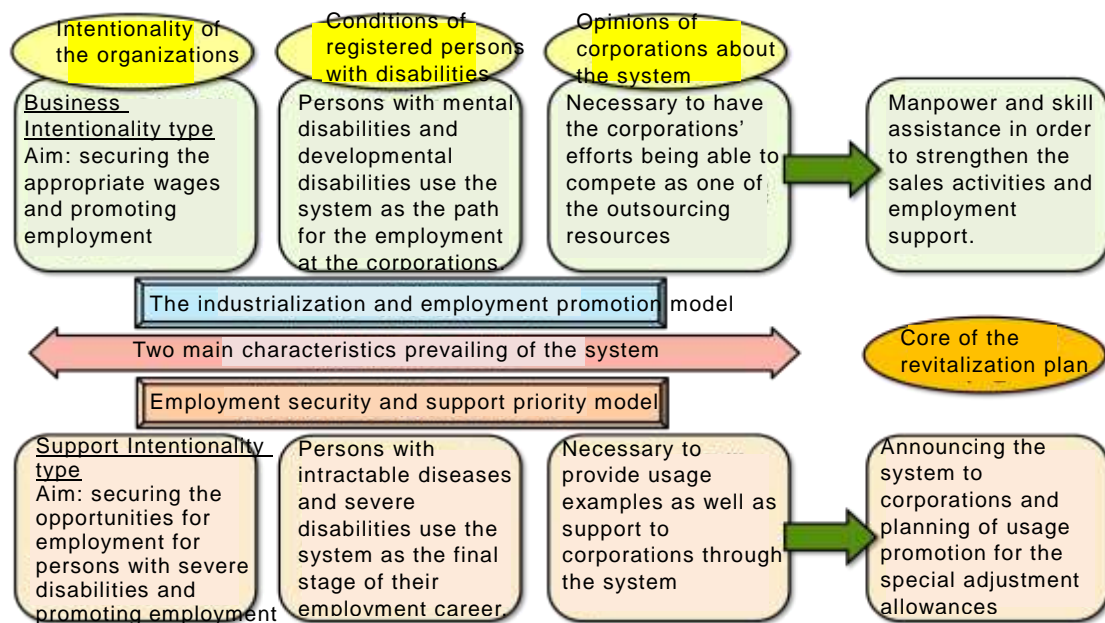
Picture 11: Recognition levels regarding the special adjustment allowances (or rewards)



(3) The support plans towards the full usage of the support systems for home-based work Recently having more simple duties outsourced overseas and the learning rate being low for the use of software which is identified as a medium level or higher in general for registered persons with disabilities, it is assumed, from the results of the surveys, that their skills and the duty details the support organizations are willing to offer do not match (more demand = more specialty skills). Having “technical knowledge and skills in order to achieve better results,” abilities corporations are looking for, it is necessary to consider comprehensively the method of effective and high degree of specialization instruction and support for skills, for example e-learning, and plan the improvement in skills for registered persons with disabilities.

In addition, from the results of the surveys on corporations, it was identified that the recognition around corporations concerning the special adjustment allowances or rewards was extremely low. It is desirable to strengthen both the publicity of the system and outsourcing sales activities, including support organizations visiting corporations for sales activities and having interactive questions and answers, in order to reduce the worries and concerns that corporations tend to have about the home-based work support system and enhance the possibility of having them use the system proactively.

Moreover, there are two main characteristics prevailing based on the two types of thought: 1) there are two types of registered persons with disabilities at support organizations, the first are persons who are using them as a path for the employment at the corporations and the second are persons who are using them as the final stage of their employment career, and 2) there are two types of corporations using this system, the first believe that support organizations should also have a competitive power, same as other outsourcing corporations, and the second believe that being part of the development plan of support organizations, the home-based work support system should be improved and enhanced to be more convenient for corporations, furthermore there are two standard models in existence relating to the home-based work support and it is considered that because the focal points such as intentionality, usage method of the system, attitude perspectives are different. (Picture 12) As the basis for expenditure of financial resources, for example, the payment of special adjustment allowances, etc., as the focus, “the format of home-based work expands the options for employment opportunities for persons with disabilities who have difficulty commuting, it is considered to be a preparation period for persons with disabilities transitioning to employment.” For the organizations supporting home-based work supplying “employment security and support priority model”, it is important to actively undertake activities close to “the industrialization and employment promotion model,” whilst strengthening the sales activities of those organizations and enhancing the improvement of the skills of home employed persons with disabilities.



Picture 12: The two typology models of organizations supporting home-based work and the two main characteristics prevailing for the usage of the system