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SOCIOECONOMIC AND SEX INEQUALITIES IN JOB SATISFACTION OF JAPANESE CIVIL SERVANTS: ROLE OF JOB STRAIN, WORK HOURS AND WORK-FAMILY CONFLICTS

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Introduction: Under slow economic growth, the maintenance of job satisfaction is important.

This study aims to evaluate

(1) whether psychosocial stress at work and work-family conflicts contribute to low job satisfaction and

(2) whether these work and family characteristics explain socioeconomic and sex inequalities in low job satisfaction.

Methods: The subjects were civil servants in local government in Japan. Questionnaire survey was conducted in 2003. Altogether 4272 subjects (response rate: 79.2%) responded. The questionnaire included questions on job satisfaction, job strain, as measured by the job-demand-control-support model, work hours, shift work, family structure, and family-work conflicts.

Results: Approximately two thirds of participants were satisfied with their job. Low job control, high job demands, low social support, long work hours and high work-family conflicts were associated with low job satisfaction. Low grade employees were likely to report low job satisfaction but the associations were significant only for men. In men, the grade differences in low job satisfaction reduced and were no longer significant after adjustment for job strain, work hours and work-family conflicts. In women, the grade differences in low job satisfaction hardly changed after adjustment for job strain, work hours and work-family conflicts. More women than men reported low job satisfaction. The sex difference reduced and was no longer significant after adjustment for job strain, work hours and work-family conflicts.

Conclusion: Job strain, long work hours, and work-family conflicts may cause low job satisfaction and contribute to socioeconomic and sex inequalities in low job satisfaction.