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## DOES AN ADVANTAGEOUS OCCUPATIONAL POSITION MAKE WOMEN HAPPIER IN CONTEMPORARY JAPAN?

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In contemporary Japanese society, occupational gender segregation persists despite increased numbers of women participating in the labour market. The gender inequality in the labour market may yield different patterns of occupational gradient in psychological health between men and women. We examined gender specific associations between occupational position and psychological health in Japan and the potential mediating effect of job-control and effort-reward imbalance in these associations. The data used for this inquiry was obtained from 7,123 men and 2,222 women, who participated in an occupational cohort study, the Japanese Study of Health, Occupation, and Psychosocial Factors Related Equity (J-HOPE), between 2011 and 2012. The prevalence of poor psychological health increased from manual/service occupations (23%) to professionals/managers (38%) among women, while it did not vary by occupational position among men. In women, the significant association between occupational position and psychological health was attenuated by effort-reward imbalance. On the other hand, in both genders, the relatively high levels of job-control in professional/managerial groups were protective against potentially higher levels of poor psychological health in these groups. Our findings suggest that Japanese women in more advantaged occupational positions are likely to be at a greater risk for poor psychological health due to higher levels of effort-reward imbalance at work. Ensuring gender equality in accessing rewards may be a critical component for promoting psychological health of women in professional and managerial positions in Japan.

### Biography

Maki Umeda has completed her PhD in 2013 at the University of Tokyo, and was a UCL Balzan Fellow from July 2014 to March 2015. She is an associate professor at St. Luke's International University School of Nursing, and has been publishing papers on social determinants of mental health. The study presented at this conference was conducted in collaboration between the University of Tokyo and University College London, contributed by Dr. Anne McMunn, Dr. Noriko Cable, and Prof. Michael Sir Marmot at University College London, and Prof. Hideki Hashimoto and Prof. Norito Kawakami at the University of Tokyo.

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