

A study on thoughts regarding work–life balance and long-term care

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Background

In Japan, the number of people who balance work and caregiving duties is increasing, making this a pressing issue for many.

Aim of the study

This qualitative study explores how the Japanese balance work and caregiving responsibilities in everyday life.

Methods

A semi-structured interview was conducted with a female participant in her 50s who worked while providing long-term care for her mother-in-law. The survey included questions on balancing work, life, and long-term care. The results were analyzed using the qualitative synthesis method (KJ method).

Results

The participant shifted from regular employment to non-regular employment, and then to self-employment for long-term care. Based on her caregiving experience, she realized that long-term caregiving had “diverse aspects.” She also balanced work and caregiving responsibilities by adopting a “flexible posture” in long-term care. She realized that, from a caregiver’s perspective, “each family has a diverse background.” The participant faced problems due to “the lack of job security associated with non-regular employment,” and because “she was not on good terms with her mother-in-law.” Self-management also became difficult for her. As a parent, “she did not want her children to encounter these issues.”

Conclusions and implications

The participant was able to balance work and long-term care by adopting a flexible attitude. However, the insecurity of non-regular employment caused problems. It is necessary to establish a system that will allow employees to balance work and caregiving duties regardless of the type of employment.