

# La percezione dello stress nel terziario: utilità e indicazioni del *Job Content Questionnaire*

M. FERRARIO, CARLA FORNARI\*, ROSSANA BORCHINI, FRANCA MERLUZZI\*\*, G. CESANA\*

Medicina del Lavoro e Preventiva – Dipartimento di Scienze Cliniche e Biologiche, Università degli studi dell'Insubria, Varese

\* Centro Studi Patologie Cronico Degenerative – Università degli Studi di Milano Bicocca

\*\* Clinica del Lavoro "L. Devoto" – Università degli Studi di Milano

## KEY WORDS

Job stress; validity; Italy; assessment of occupational exposures

## SUMMARY

**«Job stress in the service industry. Evaluation of the Italian version of the Job Content Questionnaire».** **Background:** Recent changes in work organization have greatly expanded the service industry, where stress perception appears to be the major factor of discomfort. Job stress remains a critical issue in occupational exposure assessments. **Objectives:** To assess the compliance and the consistency of the three major constructs (Psychological Job Demand (PJD); Decision Latitude (DL); and Social Support at Work (SSW)) of the Italian version of the Job Content Questionnaire (JCQ) adopted in the MOPSY and JACE studies and their gender-specific distributions in a large sample of civil servant in northern Italy. **Methods:** JCQ was administered to 2601 men and 5761 women employed in six different departments of the Municipality of Milan. Two JCQ versions – short and intermediate – which differ by the number of items that assess DL for inclusion of SSW, were used in different sub-samples. Compliance was measured in terms of participation rate and percentage of missing items. A construct-specific Cronbach alpha coefficient was used to assess internal consistency. As a measure of external consistency the correlation coefficients between the three constructs were adopted. **Results:** The participant rate was very high in the entire sample: 75.3% in men and 76.2% in women. The percentage of missing items was small and acceptable, ranging from 3.61% for DL to 6.33% for SSW. The Cronbach alpha coefficients ranged from 0.72 for PJD to 0.88 for SSW. Assumptions for external validity were satisfied in both gender groups. The percentage of perceived high job stress diminished in older men, but the age trend was inverse among women, indicating gender differences in the possibility of improving work conditions and career. Interferences with the family-related load and responsibilities may play a significant role. In both gender groups, a satisfactory SSW level reduced perceived high job stress. **Conclusions:** The adopted versions of the JCQ, originally developed in American and north European socio-cultural contexts, demonstrated satisfactory levels of compliance, and internal and external consistency. The JCQ adequately described perceived job stress in the groups of workers under study.