Report

Management of Employees in the Short Working Hour Sysyem and Their Career Development

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Abstract

The 2009 amendment to the Child Care and Family Care Leave Act mandated the introduction of a short working hour system for employees who are taking care of children, and companies, mainly large ones, have increasingly adopted this system. Consequently, an increasing number of female regular employees have been seeking continued employment during pregnancy and after childbirth under the short working hour system. The 2016 amendment included the expansion of the short working hour system to include employees who are providing care for family members and it is expected that more and more employees with care-related time constraints will continue to work. In this context, how to promote the performance of employees with such time constraints has become an urgent issue in human resource management. However, various problems have occurred in administering the short working hour system under traditional workplace management systems, which have assumed that employees work long hours. Based on the result of a questionnaire survey of female regular employees conducted by Mitsubishi UFJ Research and Consulting in 2016, this paper summarizes the situations and issues related to the allocation of tasks to employees in the short working hour system, goal setting, performance evaluation, and other administrative activities and analyzes the effect of work-style reform for all employees (including those without time constraints) on retention and the performance of employees with time constraints. Considering the analysis results, this paper examines the sort of workplace management that would promote the performance and career development of employees in the short working hour system.

Introduction

The 2009 amendment to the Child Care and Family Care Leave Act mandated that companies introduce a short working hour system for employees who are raising children.[1] As a result, a growing number of female regular employees returning to work after maternity leave have sought continued employment under the short-hour system. Though eight years have passed since the amendment, employees who utilize the short-hour system (hereinafter, "short-hour employees") still face various issues at the workplace, such as difficulties in performing to their full potential or developing a successful career, restrictions on divisional assignment or reassignment, and different treatment from different managers. One reason is that the short-hour system is not properly implemented because the necessary management methods are not consistent with traditional workplace management methods. In the traditional mindset, it is not assumed that some employees work under time constraints because of their responsibility for childrearing or family caregiving. Undesirable situations are found at many companies. Short-hour employees become dissatisfied because they are not given tasks that require responsibility or that are rewarding, or because they receive a low evaluation for the sole reason that they work short hours. Colleagues who support short-hour employees bear increased burdens. Moreover, the increase in the number of short-hour employees has exacerbated these issues.

As Japan's labor force continues to shrink, companies must improve their business performance by effectively utilizing their human resources. Therefore, it will be an urgent issue for companies to enable employees with time constraints due to childrearing or family caregiving to perform to their full potential and contribute to the organization. Within this context, this paper analyzes data from a survey of female regular employees with preschool-age children, which was conducted by Mitsubishi UFJ Research and Consulting, and considers the sort of workplace management that is ideal for the work performance and career development of short-hour employees.[2]
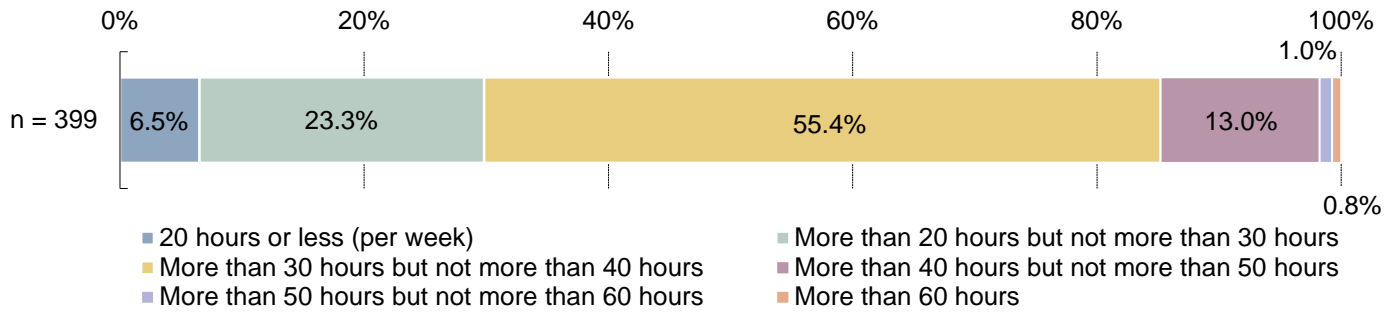
1. The Short-Hour System

Let us first consider short-hour employees' working hours and planned duration of utilizing the short-hour system. Figure 1 shows the actual working hours per week of female regular employees who currently use the short-hour system, which allows fewer working hours per day or fewer working days per week. As the figure shows, 55.4 percent of these employees work more than 30 hours but not more than 40 hours per week; 23.3 percent work more than 20 hours but not more than 30 hours per week; and 13.0 percent work more than 40 hours but not more than 50 hours per week. A large majority work 40 hours or less per week. Yet, despite the use of the short-hour system, more than 10 percent work more than 40 hours just like full-time employees.

Figure 2 shows the relationship between the use of the short-hour system and colleagues' overtime work. It seems that the greater the amount of overtime work performed by workplace colleagues, the higher the proportion of short-hour employees. Similarly, as Figure 3 shows, the greater the amount of overtime work performed by colleagues, the higher the proportion of short-hour employees who plan to utilize the system for a long period of time (i.e., until the child finishes second or third grade, or until the child finishes fourth or higher grade). It seems that some employees use the short-hour system to signal to their overtime-prone workplace that they cannot work overtime, even though they could work full-time if the workplace culture allowed them to easily

leave the office at the scheduled time. In other words, whether an employee uses the short-hour system or how long she plans to use it depends on not only her family and childcare situations, but also the overtime situation of her workplace.
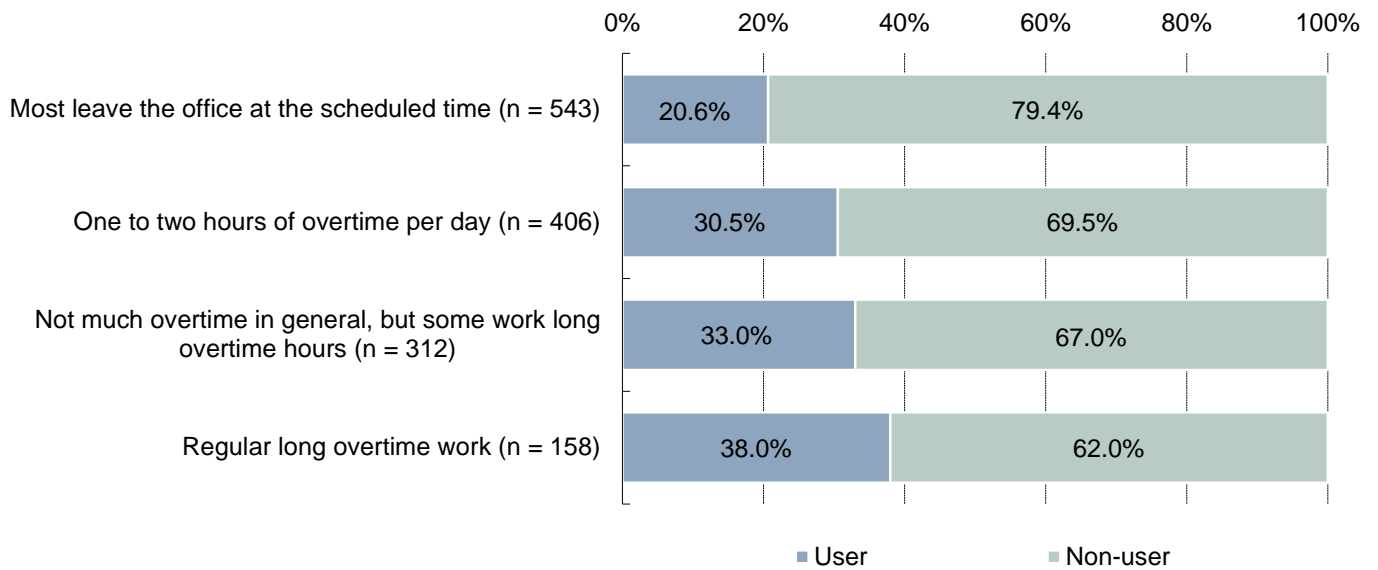
Figure 1: Actual working hours per week of short-hour employees

Note: Short-hour employees considered here are female regular employees who currently use the short-hour system, which allows fewer working hours per day or fewer working days per week.
Source: Mitsubishi UFJ Research and Consulting (2016). The Survey on Active Participation of Female Regular Employees Who Continued to Work after Childbirth. The same source is used for Figures 2 to 16 and Table 1.

Figure 2: Use of the short-hour system and different overtime situations of colleagues at the workplace

Figure 3: Planned duration of the use of the short-hour system and different overtime situations of colleagues at the workplace
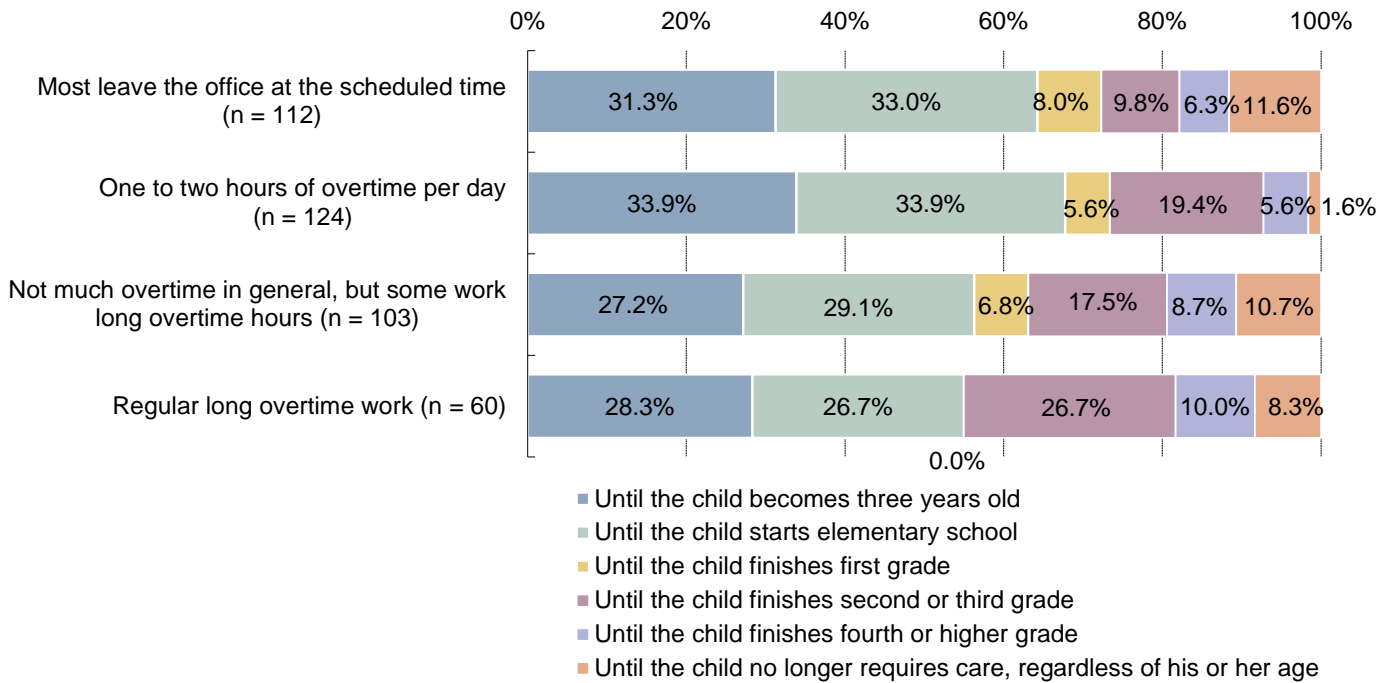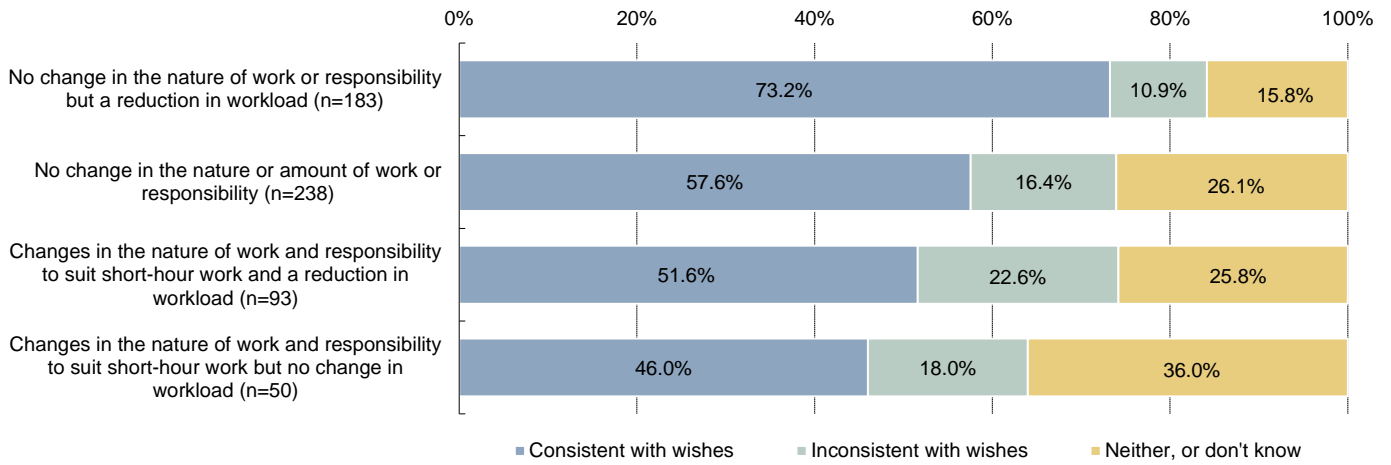

Note: Short-hour employees considered here are female regular employees who currently use the short-hour system which allows fewer working hours per day or fewer working days per week.

Figure 4 describes changes in the nature and amount of work that result from the use of the short-hour system. As the figure shows, 41.9 percent of short-hour employees report no change in the nature or amount of work or responsibility; 32.2 percent report no change in the nature of their work or responsibility but a reduction in workload; and 16.4 percent report changes in the nature of their work and responsibility to suit short-hour work and a reduction in workload.[3] Also, as Figure 5 shows, among short-hour employees with no change in the nature of their work or responsibility but a reduction in workload, more than 70 percent consider the result consistent with their wishes. However, among short-hour employees with changes in the nature of their work and responsibility, about half consider the result inconsistent with their wishes or consider it neither consistent nor inconsistent.

Figure 4: Changes in the nature and amount of work resulting from the use of the short-hour system
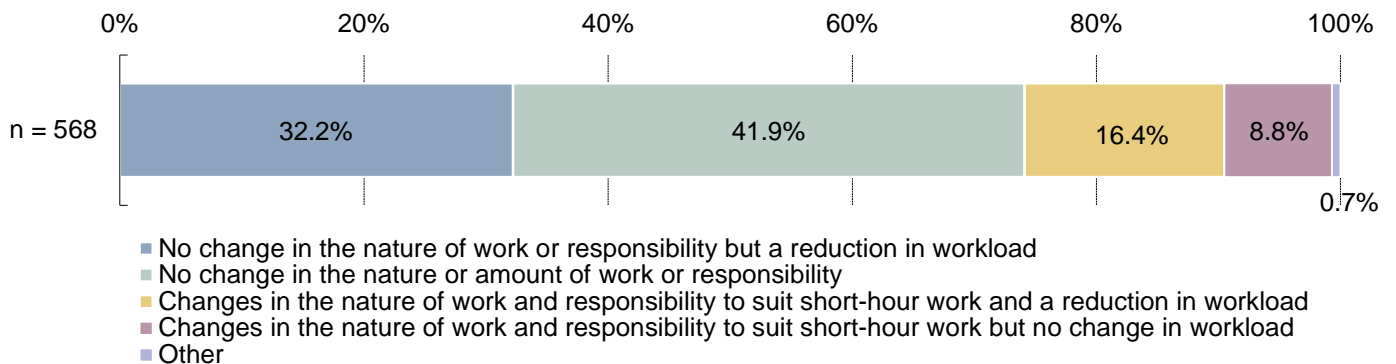
Figure 5: Changes in the nature and amount of work resulting from the use of the short-hour system and their consistency with short-hour employees' wishes

With regard to the performance evaluation of short-hour employees, the highest proportion of short-hour employees considered their evaluation to be based on work performance as it is for normal employees. However, about 30 percent considered their evaluation to be lower because of their use of the short-hour system (Figure 6). Similarly, with regard to the effect of the use of short-hour system on promotion, the highest proportion of short-hour employees consider that use of the system does not affect promotion, but nearly half of short-hour employees thought that it slows or prevents promotion (Figure 7).

Figure 6: Evaluation of the work performance of short-hour employees
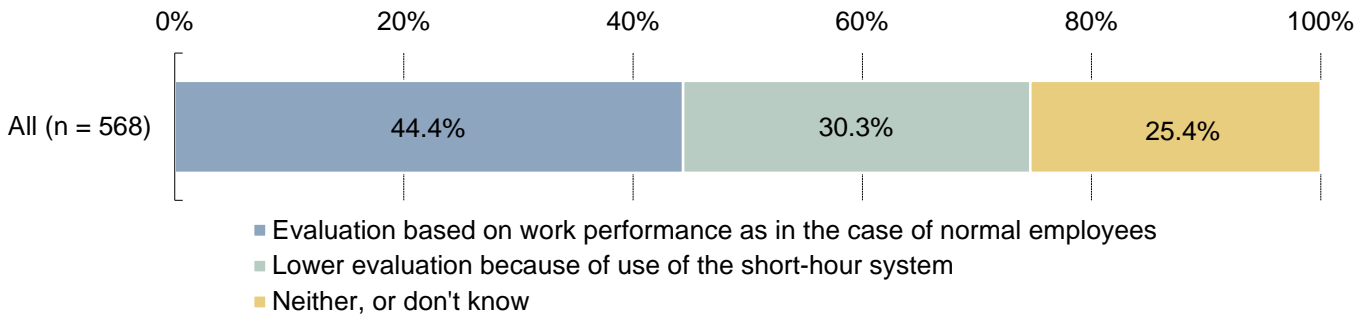
Figure 7: Effect of the use of the short-hour system on promotion

All (n = 568)	33.6%	27.3%	19.0%	1.2%	18.8%

- ■ Use of the short-hour system does not affect promotion
- ■ Use of the short-hour system slows promotion
- ■ Use of the short-hour system prevents promotion
- ■ Other
- ■ Don't know
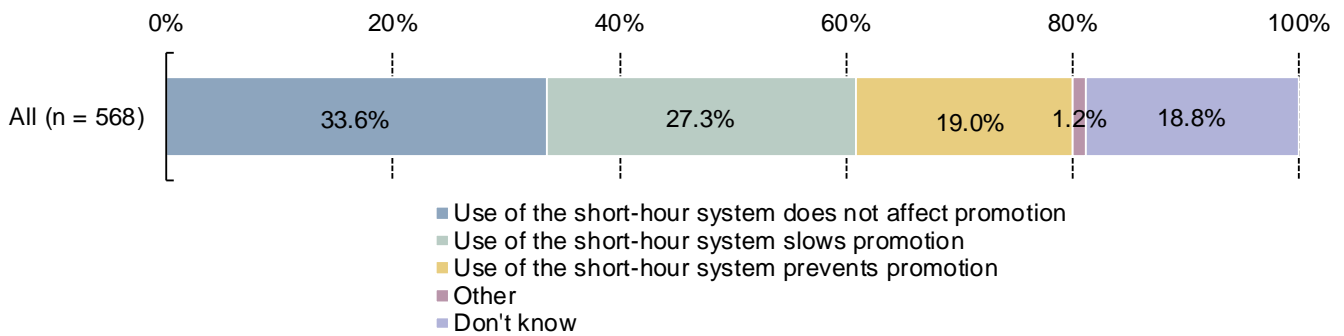
The Manual for Supporting the Implementation of the Short Working Hour System (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, 2016) puts forward a basic approach to goal setting for short-hour employees. In principle, the quantitative goals of short-hour employees should be set lower in accordance with their reduced working hours while their qualitative goals should not be changed, relative to those set for the full-time regular employees with the same occupational category and position, and the goals should be set based on the nature of their work and the short-hour employee's requests. The basic idea is that since the salary of short-hour employees is often reduced in proportion to the reduction in working hours based on the "no work, no pay" rule, the quantity of their work should also be reduced accordingly, whereas the quality of their work should be maintained as much as possible because their responsibility and expected role do not change even with the use of the short-hour system. For short-hour employees, maintaining the quality of their work while they use the short-hour system is an important factor in a smooth return to full-time work after the short-hours period. In addition, when employees are starting to use the short-hour system, managers must ensure that increased burdens on their colleagues are not excessive by examining current work processes that can be simplified or made more efficient or by making adjustments such as canceling or outsourcing low-priority tasks.

The general rules concerning the evaluation of short-hour employees are that activities performed to achieve set goals should be evaluated based on the level of achievement, and that, in principle, an employee's skills and actions should be evaluated based on the same standards used for the full-time regular employees with the equivalent occupational category and position. In the case where the colleagues of short-hour employees support their work, taking such support into consideration when evaluating their colleagues is effective in eliminating a sense of unfairness and ensuring that workplace operations run smoothly. Companies must ensure that all managers thoroughly know and act on these basic ideas and must monitor them so that the use of the short-hour system will not directly lead to low evaluations and will not become a seriously disadvantageous factor in promotion-related decisions.

As the aforementioned survey results reveal, not many companies implement the short-hour system in an ideal manner. In fact, there seem to be many cases where no special consideration is given to the nature and amount of work of short-hour employees; or changes in the nature of their work and responsibility are made to suit short-hour work, and workload is reduced. Also, as for the evaluation and promotion of short-hour employees, a fair proportion of them consider that their use of the system leads to low evaluations and hinders their promotion.

What then are short-hour employees dissatisfied with as they use the short-hour system? When the use of

short-hour system did not result in reduced workload, a large proportion of short-hour employees point to two sources of dissatisfaction: no change in the nature and amount of work despite the reduced hours; and their inability to leave the office at the time they set in advance (Table 1). Some companies do not reexamine short-hour employees' workloads even though their scheduled working hours are reduced. Such inaction increases the burden on short-hour employees and may negatively affect their balance between work and childrearing.

Table 1: Changes in the nature and amount of work resulting from the use of the short-hour system and sources of dissatisfaction of short-hour employees

	Total (n)	Sources of dissatisfaction in using the short-hour system										
		No change in the nature and amount of work despite the reduced hours	No overtime work even if it is wanted	Delayed promotion	Low evaluation for the given nature and amount of work	No conceivable path for career development	Inability to leave the office at the predetermined time	Inability to work on tasks that require responsibility or that are rewarding	Inability to use the short-hour system over a long period of time	Superiors' and colleagues' low levels of understanding	Inability to use the short-hour system multiple times	Nothing in particular
All	681	31.7	27.2	22.2	21.3	18.6	18.2	17.3	16.6	10.6	7.3	19.1
No change in the nature of work or responsibility but a reduction in workload	183	19.7	31.1	20.8	23.0	16.9	12.6	16.9	15.8	9.8	7.7	21.9
No change in the nature or amount of work or responsibility	238	48.7	30.3	21.4	21.8	14.7	23.5	10.1	17.6	10.9	8.0	18.5
Changes in the nature of work and responsibility to suit short-hour work and a reduction in workload	93	10.8	21.5	28.0	20.4	33.3	15.1	35.5	24.7	8.6	11.8	12.9
Changes in the nature of work and responsibility to suit short-hour work but no change in workload	50	38.0	24.0	20.0	20.0	30.0	20.0	26.0	18.0	16.0	2.0	16.0

Unit: %

When the nature of their work and responsibility are changed to suit short-hour work, short-hour employees tend to be dissatisfied with issues related to career development and sense of fulfillment gained from work, which include the absence of a clear path for career development; inability to work on tasks that require responsibility or that are rewarding; and delayed promotion. It appears that inconsistency between the tasks assigned in short-hour work and the responsibility and expected role previously assumed by short-hour employees results in lower work motivation or more worry about their career development.

Short-hour employees for whom the nature of their work or responsibility did not change tend to be dissatisfied with their inability to work overtime even if they sometimes want to. There are companies that do not allow short-hour employees to work overtime because of difficulties of designing and administering relevant rules. Short-hour employees tend to express their desire to sometimes work overtime to fulfill their responsibilities, especially when the nature of their work and responsibility is equivalent to that of full-time employees. As discussed above, short-hour employees' dissatisfaction is closely related to changes in the nature and amount of their work and is also attributable to a lack of proper workplace management. On the companies' side, there are managers and human resources officers who think that short-hour employees have an attitude problem, arguing that short-hour employees are not sufficiently motivated and burden their colleagues, and that short-hour employees do not seek to develop their careers. Before blaming short-hour employees, companies must reexamine and improve their implementation of the short-hour system by investigating whether work assignment and goal setting for short-hour employees are properly performed, whether there is sufficient communication between management and short-hour employees, and whether short-hour employees are disadvantaged in terms of performance evaluation and promotion.

2. Short-Hour Employees' Attitudes toward Their Careers and Changes in Their Colleagues' Work

Section 1 has analyzed how short-hour employees' work changes and how the short-hour system is implemented. This section focuses on short-hour employees' work satisfaction and career attitudes and considers the effect of changes in their colleagues' work on female employees' continued employment and desire for promotion (including those of short-hour employees).

Figure 8 shows the relationship between work satisfaction and changes in the nature and amount of work resulting from the use of the short-hour system. Among short-hour employees for whom the nature of their work or responsibility did not change, the proportion who are satisfied with their work (satisfied or somewhat satisfied, to be more specific) exceeds 70 percent. In contrast, short-hour employees tend to be less satisfied if they have changes in the nature of their work and responsibility. In particular, in the case of changes made in the nature of their work and responsibility along with reduced workload, more than 40 percent of short-hour employees are not very satisfied or not satisfied with their work.

Figure 8: Changes in the nature and amount of work resulting from the use of the short-hour system and short-hour employees' work satisfaction
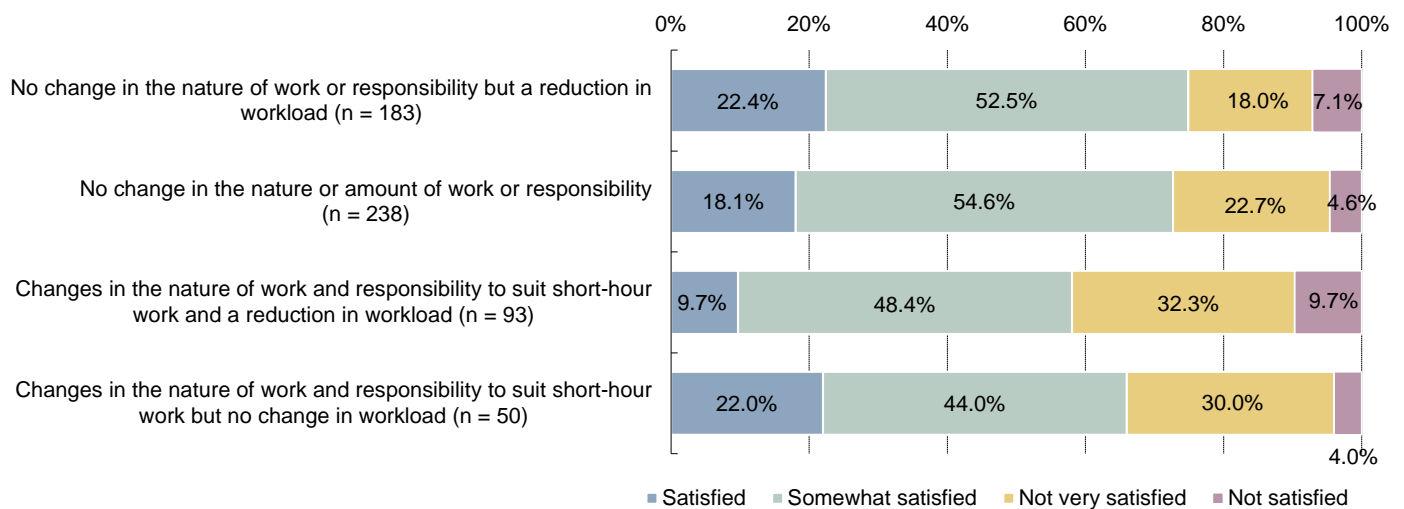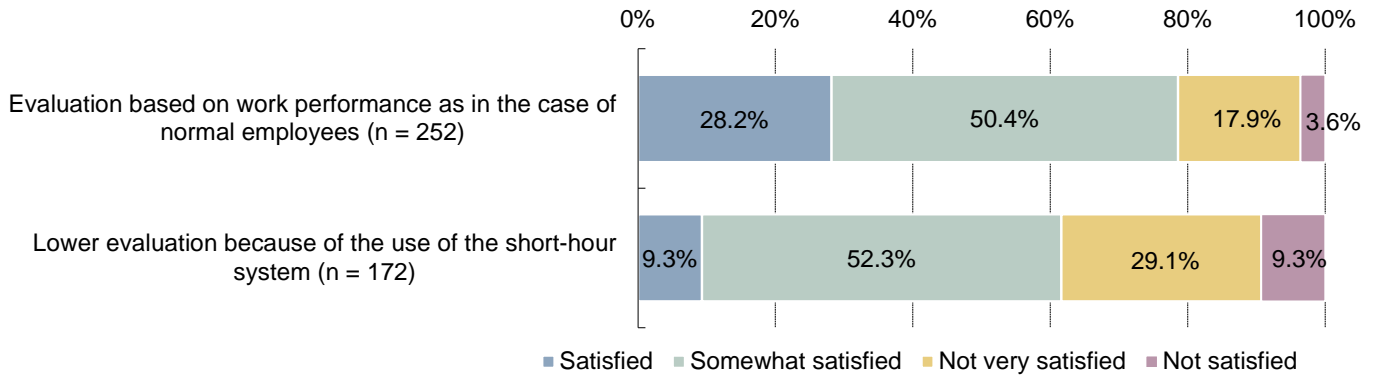

Figure 9 describes a possible connection between the performance evaluation of short-hour employees and their work satisfaction. Short-hour employees who feel that they receive lower evaluations because of their use of the short-hour system tend to be less satisfied with work than those who feel that they are evaluated based on their work performance. Figure 10 describes a possible connection between the effect of the use of the short-hour system on promotion and short-hour employees' work satisfaction. As the figure shows, short-hour employees who think that their use of the system slows or prevents promotion tend to be less satisfied with their work. As the above results imply, changes in the nature and amount of work and in perceptions about employee evaluation and promotion that result from the use of short-hour system have a significant effect on the level of short-hour employees' work satisfaction.

Figure 9: Evaluation of the work performance of short-hour employees and their work satisfaction

Figure 10: Effect of the use of the short-hour system on promotion and short-hour employees' work satisfaction
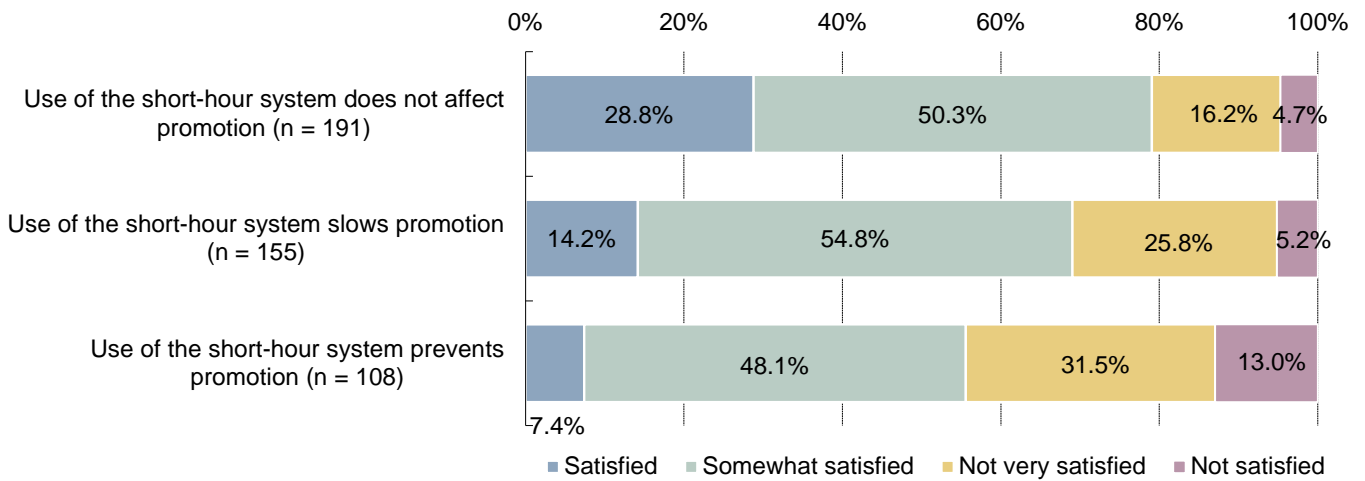
Figures 11 and 12 describe possible connections between work satisfaction and intention to continue working and between work satisfaction and desire for proportion, respectively. As the figures show, the more satisfied short-hour employees are, the more eager they are to continue working and to be promoted. By contrast, short-hour employees who are not satisfied with their work are significantly more likely to want to quit working if possible and more likely not to want to be in management positions.

Figure 11: Work satisfaction and intention to continue working

Satisfied (n=105)	70.5% / 21.9% / 4.8% / 2.9%	
Somewhat satisfied (n=294)	43.5% / 46.3% / 6.5% / 3.7%	
Not very satisfied (n=132)	22.0% / 47.0% / 21.2% / 9.8%	
Not satisfied (n=37)	13.5% / 27.0% / 35.1% / 24.3%	

- Want to work as long as possible
- Want to work for the time being
- Want to quit working if possible
- Can't say one way or another; don't know
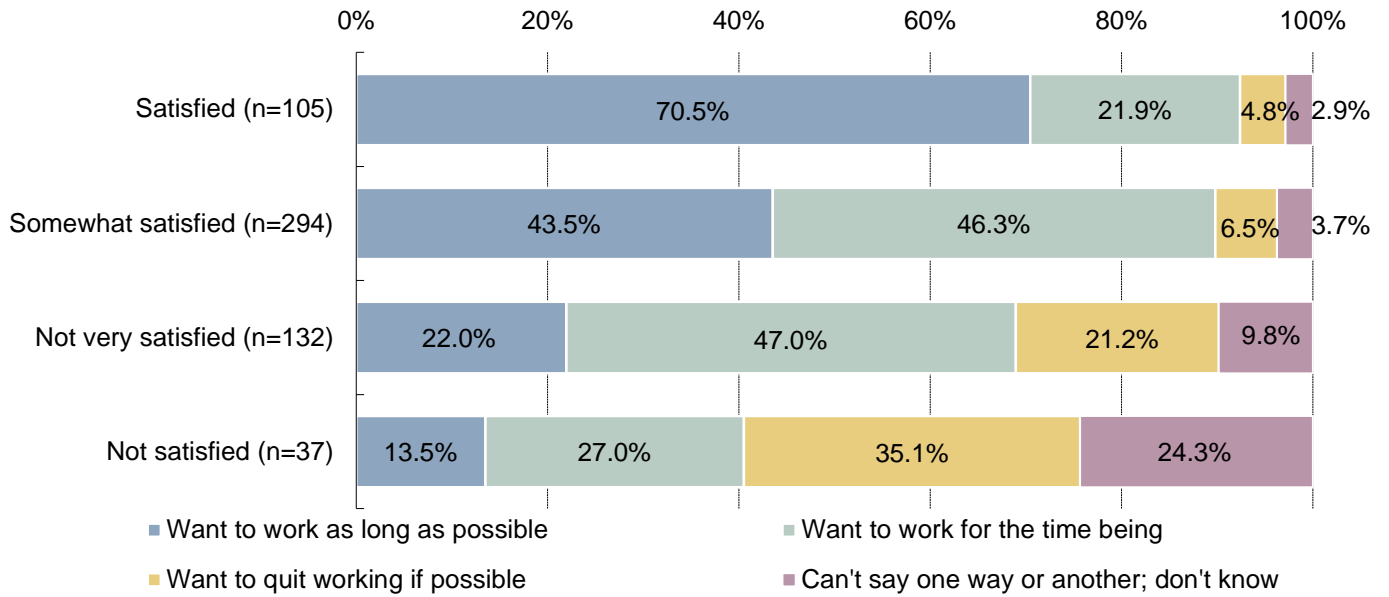
Figure 12: Work satisfaction and desire to be promoted to management positions

Satisfied (n=97)	21.6% / 16.5% / 16.5% / 36.1% / 9.3%	
Somewhat satisfied (n=281)	11.4% / 13.2% / 21.0% / 33.8% / 20.6%	
Not very satisfied (n=131)	6.9% / 10.7% / 14.5% / 45.0% / 22.9%	
Not satisfied (n=37)	5.4% / 10.8% / 8.1% / 56.8% / 18.9%	

- Want to be in a management position
- Somewhat want to be in a management position
- Do not really want to be in a management position
- Don't want to be in a management position
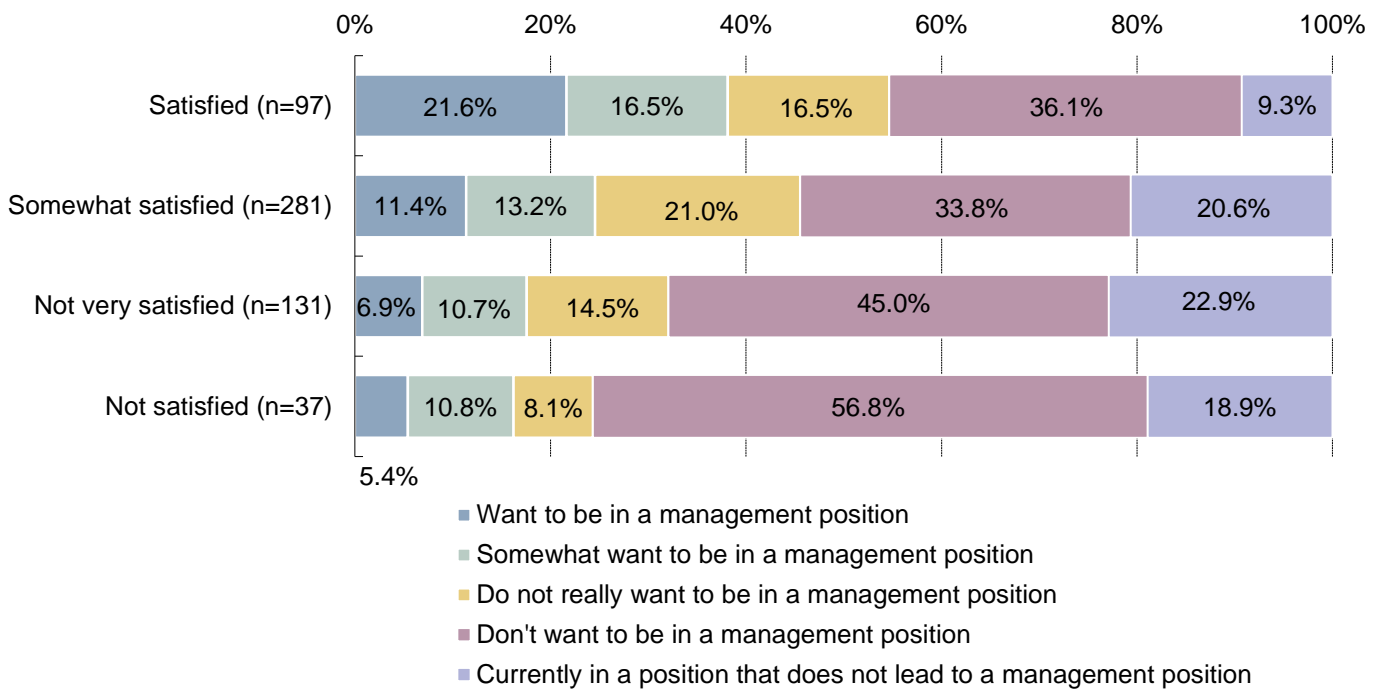- Currently in a position that does not lead to a management position

Figure 13 describes a possible connection between short-hour employees' work satisfaction and their opinion about time-constrained employees' potential for to contribute to their organization (i.e., whether they think employees with time constraints due to childrearing and family caregiving can significantly contribute to the workplace). As the figure shows, the more satisfied short-hour employees are, the more likely they are to think that it is possible to make a significant contribution.

Figure 13: Work satisfaction and time-constrained employees' potential to contribute to the organization

Category	Agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree
Satisfied (n=105)	57.1%	36.2%	6.7%	0.0%
Somewhat satisfied (n=294)	27.9%	57.5%	11.9%	2.7%
Not very satisfied (n=132)	18.9%	52.3%	23.5%	5.3%
Not satisfied (n=37)	18.9%	40.5%	18.9%	21.6%

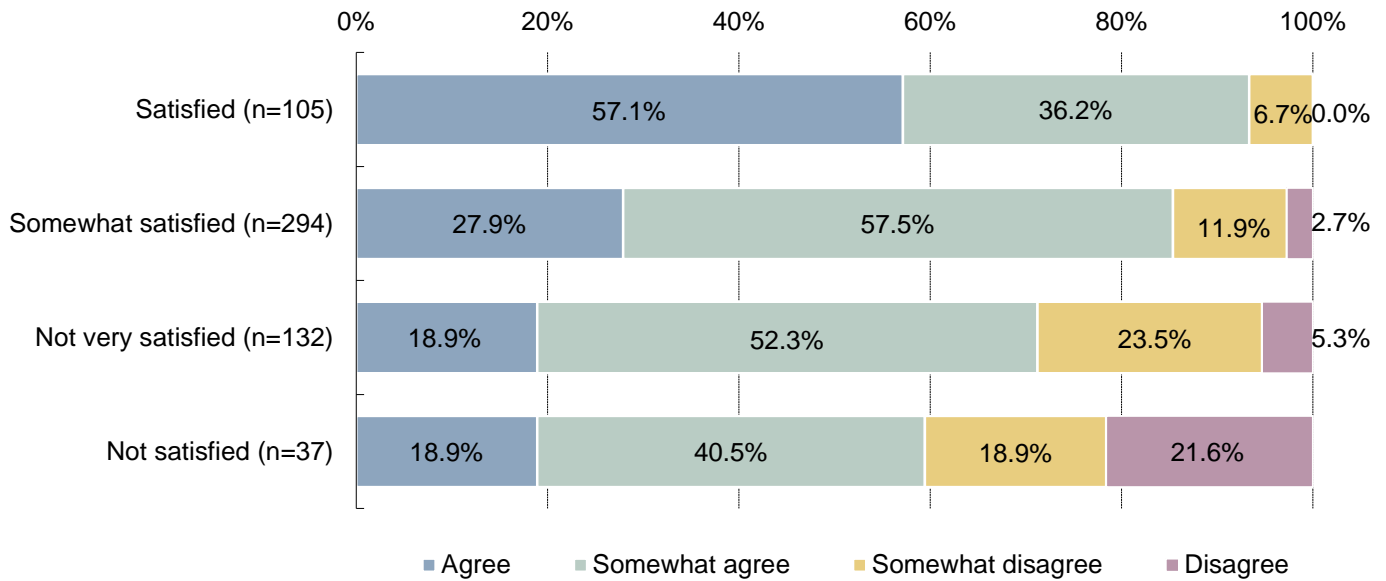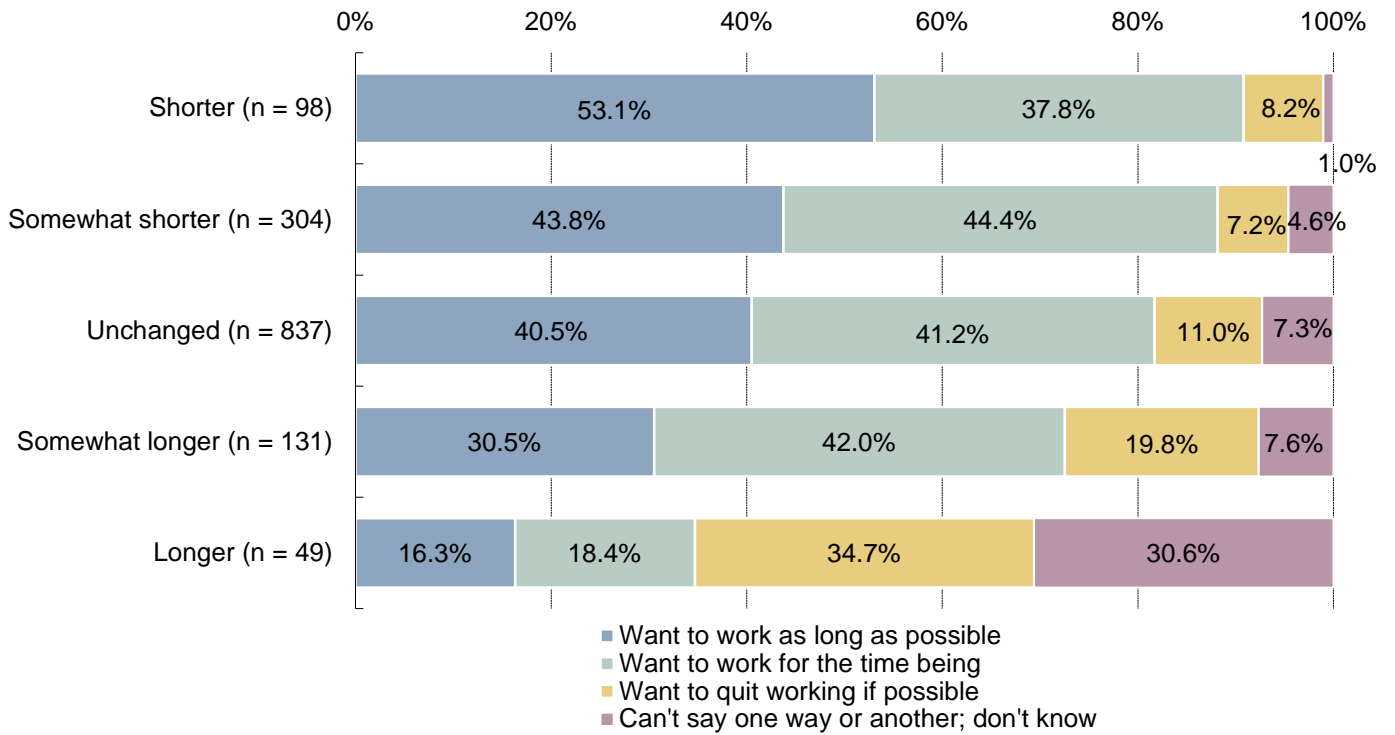■ Agree   ■ Somewhat agree   ■ Somewhat disagree   ■ Disagree

Figure 14 considers all female employees, including short-hour employees, and describes a potential connection between changes in colleagues' working hours and time-constrained employees' potential to contribute to the organization. Short-hour employees with colleagues whose working hours became shorter are more likely to think that time-constrained employees can contribute to the workplace. At workplaces where employees are assumed to work long hours, the level of responsibility and the range of tasks that time-constrained employees can take on are limited. However, at workplaces requiring less overtime work, the gap in working hours between short-hour employees and normal employees is small, which should make it relatively easy for short-hour employees to bear certain responsibilities. Also, at workplaces where necessary work and meetings occur in the evening hours when short-hour employees are not present, if employees cannot work overtime, it is difficult for them to work on tasks that require substantial responsibility. Therefore, in enabling short-hour employees to perform to their full potential, companies must reexamine how all employees, including non-time-constrained employees, perform work.

Figure 14: Changes in colleagues' working hours and time-constrained employees' potential to contribute to the organization (all female employees)
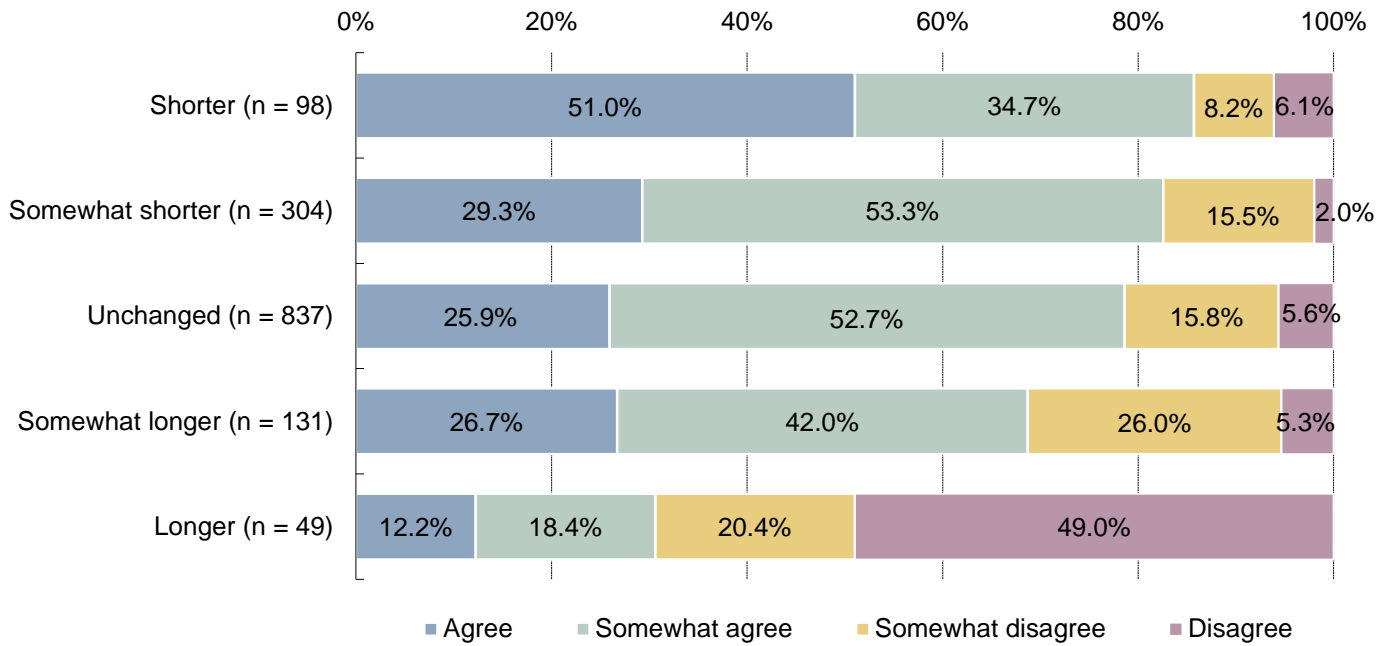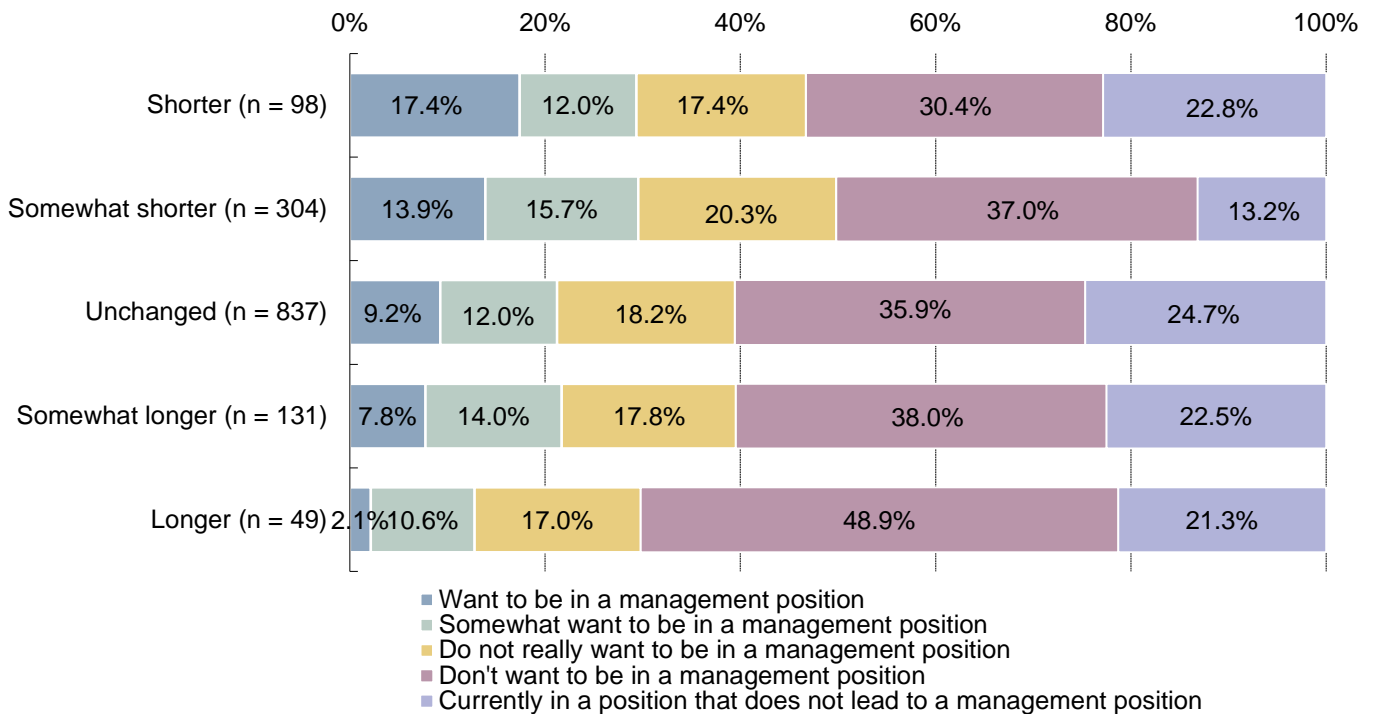

As Figures 15 and 16 show, short-hour employees with colleagues whose working hours became shorter tend to want to continue working at their current companies and desire to be promoted. Eliminating long hours and creating a workplace environment that enables employees to maintain work-family balance are important for companies as these measures not only enhance time-constrained employees' contribution to the organization, but also encourage all female employees regardless of time constraints to stay with their companies, perform to their full potential, and develop their careers.

Figure 15: Changes in colleagues' working hours and intention to continue working (all female employees)

Legend:
- Want to work as long as possible
- Want to work for the time being
- Want to quit working if possible
- Can't say one way or another; don't know

Category	Want to work as long as possible	Want to work for the time being	Want to quit working if possible	Can't say one way or another; don't know
Shorter (n = 98)	53.1%	37.8%	8.2%	1.0%
Somewhat shorter (n = 304)	43.8%	44.4%	7.2%	4.6%
Unchanged (n = 837)	40.5%	41.2%	11.0%	7.3%
Somewhat longer (n = 131)	30.5%	42.0%	19.8%	7.6%
Longer (n = 49)	16.3%	18.4%	34.7%	30.6%

Figure 16: Changes in colleagues' working hours and desire to be promoted to management positions (all female employees)

Legend:
- Want to be in a management position
- Somewhat want to be in a management position
- Do not really want to be in a management position
- Don't want to be in a management position
- Currently in a position that does not lead to a management position

Category	Want to be in a management position	Somewhat want to be in a management position	Do not really want to be in a management position	Don't want to be in a management position	Currently in a position that does not lead to a management position
Shorter (n = 98)	17.4%	12.0%	17.4%	30.4%	22.8%
Somewhat shorter (n = 304)	13.9%	15.7%	20.3%	37.0%	13.2%
Unchanged (n = 837)	9.2%	12.0%	18.2%	35.9%	24.7%
Somewhat longer (n = 131)	7.8%	14.0%	17.8%	38.0%	22.5%
Longer (n = 49)	2.1%	10.6%	17.0%	48.9%	21.3%

3. Types of Support Needed to Enable Short-Hour Employees to Perform to Their Full Potential

Based on results from a questionnaire survey, the previous sections have discussed the implementation and issues of the short-hour system, with main focus on short-hour employees' work assignment, goal setting, and performance evaluation. This section examines the role of managers who hold the key to providing the support necessary for short-hour employees to perform to their full potential.

Managers have three main responsibilities in supporting short-hour employees: communicating with them, maintaining and increasing their motivation, and giving consideration to their colleagues.

First, managers need to communicate with short-hour employees, because these childrearing employees receive different levels of family support and have different childcare situations and because managers must consider these factors when they make decisions. For example, short-hour employees may be able to handle pre-arranged overtime work depending on how childrearing responsibilities are shared with their spouse or whether they receive help from their parents or relatives. Childcare situations can vary widely: different childcare facilities have different policies in terms of the availability of early drop-off and late pick-up, service during long school vacations (e.g., summer vacation), and attendance of sick children. There are also significant regional differences with regard to childcare facilities accepting sick children. Short-hour employees may also be able to handle business trips that are scheduled in advance in some cases, while they may not be able to do so in other cases even for a same-day trip. In addition, short-hour employees' situations change according to the child's age. Despite having to consider short-hour employees' individual situations, many managers may hesitate to seek information from them because of fear of violating their privacy. Nevertheless, it is important for managers to maintain regular active communication with short-hour employees throughout the short-hours period, instead of limiting the range of work performed by them. In doing so, managers must tell short-hour employees that considerations are given to individual cases, such as what kinds of tasks they can perform and what types of support they need in performing their work. Needless to say, in considering work-related arrangements, managers need to take into account short-hour employees' intentions.

Second, with regard to maintaining and increasing short-hour employees' motivation, managers need to tell (potential) users of the short-hour system to sufficiently understand the effect of their use of the system on their careers. The law allows employees to use the short-hour system until their child becomes three years old; however, many companies, primarily large ones, allow a longer short-hour period. Being able to use the short-hour system over a long period of time helps the users maintain balance between work and childrearing, but may affect their career development in the medium to long term. If managers accurately convey the purpose of the system to (potential) short-hour employees and tell them to engage in work while keeping in mind their future return to full-time work, their motivation for work during the short-hours period will be significantly different. Also, in motivating short-hour employees, it is effective to convey management's high hopes for them through daily communication and regular meetings. According to the Survey on Female Managers: Training and Appointment conducted by Mitsubishi UFJ Research and Consulting (2015), women are more likely than men to give themselves low ratings on skills that they think are necessary to become a manager, and many women are hesitant to become managers, citing their lack of skills as a reason. The survey also reveals that women are more likely than men to cite the company's or superiors' positive evaluation of their work and superiors' persuasion or encouragement to become a manager as reasons to become willing to seek a management position. This result

implies that an effect way to motivate women is for management and superiors to recognize their work, convey high hopes for them, and actively give them encouragement. Short-hour employees are particularly prone to losing confidence in their work due to their frustration that time constraints make it impossible to work as much as they previously did, or due to a sense of indebtedness arising from the idea that they put burdens on their colleagues.

Third, an important responsibility of managers is to provide information on the short-hour system so that colleagues of short-hour employees can be more understanding and to create cooperative mechanisms at the workplace. The details of the short-hour system, as well as other measures for supporting employees who maintain balance between work and childrearing or family caregiving, are often not known to employees other than those who use them. It is therefore possible that many employees do not understand the advantages and disadvantages of these systems for their users or the operational rules of the systems. Since misunderstanding can lead to complaints about short-hour employees, managers must provide the colleagues of short-hour employees with accurate information about the short-hour system. As discussed in Section 1, managers also need to proactively reexamine the operations of the entire workplace and improve operational efficiency, regularly check whether or not excessive burdens are put on only certain employees, and potentially give consideration, in employee evaluation, to significant contributions made to supporting short-hour employees. In addition, the human resources department can support managers by providing information on their roles through management seminars for managers who supervise short-hour employees or by listening and giving advice to managers who have concerns about workplace management.

Conclusion

The Amended Child Care and Family Care Leave Act, which was implemented in January 2017, increased the number of times the short-hour system can be used and the duration of a short-hours period for employees who provide family care. As a result, it is expected that an increasing number of employees will use the system for not only childrearing, but also family caregiving. Therefore, workplace management that enables employees with time constraints for various reasons to perform to their full potential will be increasingly important.

The results of the survey considered in this paper show that there is a close relationship between short-hour employees' work satisfaction and management factors (such as work assignment, goal setting, and employee evaluation), and that assigning short-hour employees to challenging, satisfying tasks consistent with the responsibility and expected role that they previously assumed and evaluating and promoting them according to their work performance increase their motivation for work, which in turn maintains or enhances their career consciousness. The results also imply that reexamining how all employees, including non-time-constrained employees, perform work is an effective measure for making all female employees, including short-hour employees, willing to continue working or accept a promotion.

Companies must present their basic policies aimed at smooth operation of the short-hour system and provide support to managers through seminars and other means so that they can properly manage short-hour employees. At the same time, the users of the short-hour system must convey to management and superiors their wishes and requests regarding tasks assigned or the way in which they work and actively plan their career development.

There are companies that eliminate long hours and promote use of paid vacation days to improve productivity and maintain employees' health as part of work reform, which has increasingly attracted companies' attention in recent years. However, serious problems remain, including the difficulty for time-constrained employees to perform to their full potential at workplaces that regularly require overtime work. As discussed in Section 1, when colleagues regularly work overtime, time-constrained employees tend to use the short-hour system as long as possible. Also, many companies have put restrictions on short-hour employees' divisional assignment or reassignment, considering that divisions requiring long hours are not suitable for them. Negative consequences are observed at some workplaces: on the one hand, short-hour employees get stuck in the so-called "mommy track," which has little prospect of promotion, and face difficulties in developing their careers over the medium to long term; on the other hand, non-time-constrained employees bear greater burdens. The prolonged use of the short-hour system and the restricted divisional assignment or reassignment are not ideal for short-hour employees' career development. Some companies have recently started to raise awareness of both managers and short-hour employees by creating a workplace environment that encourages female employees who are raising children to return to full-time work as soon as possible and by actively assigning them to divisions where not many women have traditionally worked in order to have them expand their professional experiences. In creating a workplace where various workers can realize their full potential, it is essential for companies to reexamine their traditional workplace management, which has taken long hours and overtime work as given, and for companies to promote work reform for all employees including those without time constraints.

Endnotes

1. For businesses with more than 100 employees, the provisions of the Amended Child Care and Family Care Leave Act of 2009 were set to take effect on June 30, 2010. For businesses with 100 employees or fewer, however, the provisions were set to take effect on July 1, 2012 or later because of relevant transitional measures.

2. Mitsubishi UFJ Research and Consulting (2016). Shussanji ni shugyo keizoku shita seishain josei no katsuyaku ni kansuru chosa [Survey on Active Participation of Female Regular Employees Who Continued to Work after Childbirth]. The respondents were 1,420 female regular employees with preschool-age children, working at the same company where they worked before becoming pregnant with the youngest child.

3. Unless mentioned otherwise, short-hour employees considered in this paper's data analysis refer to female regular employees who have used the short-hour system after the birth of their youngest child (i.e., current and former short-hour employees).

References

Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (2016). *Tanjikan seishain seido donyu shien manyuaru* [Manual for Supporting the Implementation of the Short Working Hour System].

Mitsubishi UFJ Research and Consulting (2015). *Josei kanrishoku no ikusei toyo ni kansuru chosa* [Survey on Female Managers: Training and Appointment].

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Mitsubishi UFJ Research and Consulting (2010). *Tanjikan seishain seido donyu no tebiki* [Guideline for Implementing the Short Working Hour System]. (Commissioned by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare).