

Socio-economic status and dementia onset among older Japanese: A 6-year prospective cohort study from the Japan Gerontological Evaluation Study.

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Abstract

OBJECTIVES:

Lower socio-economic status (SES) may be associated with dementia later in life, but there is inconsistent evidence supporting this claim. We aim to examine the association between three SESs (education, job, and income indicators) and dementia onset in older adults.

METHODS:

Study design was a 6-year prospective cohort study. Participants included a total of 52 063 community-dwelling adults aged 65 years or older without long-term care needs from the Japan Gerontological Evaluation Study. Outcome variable was dementia onset. Explanatory variables were educational years, the longest job held, and equivalised household income. We performed Cox proportional hazard analysis by gender with multiple imputation.

RESULTS:

During the follow-up period, 10.5% of participants acquired dementia. The adjusted risks of dementia incidence of the participants with less than 6 years of education were 1.34 times (95% confidence interval [CI], 1.04-1.73) in men and 1.21 (1.00-1.45) times in women higher than those with more than 13 years of education. Females with less than 1.99 million yen (hazard ratio = 0.83, 0.72-0.96) of equivalised income were less likely to acquire dementia than those with four million yen or higher.

CONCLUSIONS:

Educational attainment had a robust impact on dementia onset compared with the other SES factors in both genders of older Japanese people. Securing an education for children could be crucial to prevent dementia later in life. The longest job held was less likely to be risks of dementia incidence, compared with the other two factors.