**Exploration of Predictors of Anxiety in Working Fathers and Mothers during Late Pregnancy in Singapore**

Linda Hui Gin Pang1, Yvaine Yee Woen Koh1, Catherine So-Kum Tang2, Luxi Chen1, Jean Wei-Jun Yeung3

1. Centre for Family and Population Research, The National University of Singapore, Singapore
2. Department of Psychology, The National University of Singapore, Singapore
3. Department of Sociology, The National University of Singapore, Singapore

fasphgl@nus.edu.sg

**Introduction:** The present study aimed to investigate the role of family communication, marital satisfaction, work-family conflict, and family-work conflict, as potential predictors of anxiety in working fathers and mothers during late pregnancy in Singapore.

**Methods:** A total of 251 working fathers and 245 working mothers at late pregnancy (*M* = 34.63, *SD* = 3.30; *M* = 34.26, *SD* = 3.41) were recruited from a regional hospital in Singapore. Family communication, marital satisfaction, work-family conflict, family-work conflict, and anxiety were measured using validated psychosocial instruments. Data were analysed using correlations and multiple regression analyses, to determine the relationship among the variables.

**Results**: Based on the cut-off score of the anxiety scale, prevalence of anxiety in working fathers and mothers during late pregnancy in Singapore was 14.2% and 9.5%, respectively. For working fathers and mothers, marital satisfaction was negatively correlated with anxiety, while work-family conflict and family-work conflict were positively correlated with anxiety. Family communication was also negatively correlated with anxiety, albeit only for working fathers. Family communication and family-work conflict predicted anxiety in working fathers. No predictors of anxiety was found for working mothers.

**Discussion:** Working fathers were more likely to experience anxiety during late pregnancy in Singapore, as compared to working mothers. Among the predictors of anxiety, negative family communication and family-work conflict were associated with higher anxiety among working fathers. There is a need for increased attention towards working fathers’ psychological health, specifically their experience of anxiety during late pregnancy. Psychoeducation, prevention, and intervention efforts tailored to address family communication patterns and family-work conflict may aid in preventing working fathers from experiencing anxiety or in reducing its impact on themselves, their family, and their work. Future research is needed to identify the predictors of anxiety in working mothers during late pregnancy in Singapore.

**Overall word count:** 294/300