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Investigation and analysis of the activities of daily living of the aged at home in western China

Objective: The objectives of the study is to investigate the current situation of the activities of daily living (ADL) of the aged at home in western China, and to analyze its influencing factors so that we can improve the quality of life and pension services of elderly people.

Methods: The elderly people who came from Qinghai province, Ningxia autonomous region, Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region, Shanxi province, Guizhou province, Guangxi province, Sichuan province, Yunnan province and Chongqing were surveyed by questionnaires. Logistic regression model was used to analyze the influencing factors of ADL.

Results: A total of 7175 aged people living in the western China were surveyed. In the study, 78.86% of the aged at home could independently live. A percentage of 12.32% of the aged were of mild dysfunction, 6.27% of the aged had mode-rate dysfunction and 2.55% of the aged suffered severe dysfunction. Multiple logistic analyses indicated that age, educational level, economic income, body mass index and disease were the factors that affected their ADL. The risk of decreased ADL in the 60-69 and 70-79 year-old groups were 0.221 (95%CI: 0.190-0.258) and 0.353 (95%CI: 0.305-0.409) times that of the elderly over the age of 80. Compared with illiterate seniors, the risks of decline in ADL of primary school, junior high school, secondary or high school, college or undergraduates, postgraduates or above were 0.299 (95%CI: 0.140-0.637), 0.312 (95%CI: 0.146-0.663), 0.238 (95%CI: 0.112-0.510), 0.226 (95%CI: 0.105-0.484), and 0.238 (95%CI: 0.110-0.514) times. The declines in the risk of ADL for elderly people with quite difficult economic conditions, slight difficulty and breaking even were 2.720 (95%CI: 2.015-3.672), 2.344 (95%CI: 1.816-3.027), and 1.542 (95%CI: 1.215-1.957) times of the economically abundant people. Compared with those with a body mass index (BMI) ≥ 28 , the risk of ADL reduction for BMI < 18.5 was 1.577 (95%CI: 1.142-2.179) times. And the ADL of the elderly with no disease was at the risk of falling 0.685 (95%CI: 0.602-0.779) times that of an elderly person with the disease.

Conclusion: The activities of daily living of age at home of western China are not high, and are affected by many factors, such as age, educational level and so on. With the increasing of the elderly, maintaining and improving the ADL are the problems and challenges that we are faced with.

Biography

Xu Xiaofeng is a graduate student at Sichuan University, China. Her major is Geriatrics Nursing and has published some articles in different journals. She has done a series of research on Geriatrics Nursing.

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