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Analysis of the Health Status of the Elderly Aged 65 and Above in Zhonghe Community of Wanzhou District, China

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Abstract

In the current stage of severe population aging, the prevalence of chronic diseases among elderly individuals in China is increasing. The physical health issues, especially for the elderly, have drawn widespread attention from various sectors of society. This article focuses on analysis of the health status of the elderly individuals aged 65 and above in the Zhonghe community of Wanzhou District. It also provides suggestions for the positive development of elderly health management, aiming to better meet the health management needs of the elderly residents in the community. The study intends to offer insights and references for the development of elderly health management in community settings in China.

Keywords: Wanzhou District, Elderly Individuals, Health Status

Introduction

With the rapid development of China's society, economy, and healthcare system, the healthcare system was gradually becoming more comprehensive. Government investments in the healthcare sector are increasing, and various medical institutions, especially community health service centers, are undergoing improvements. Meanwhile, people are paying greater attention to their own physical health and seeking more information about health. Furthermore, chronic diseases are among the leading causes affecting people's quality of life. In China, as the population continues to age, chronic diseases are on the rise, particularly among middle-aged and elderly individuals in community settings. However, current research primarily focuses on self-assessment and general aspects of physical health. Comprehensive investigations into various aspects of health among elderly individuals are lacking.

The Zhonghe Community Hospital holds a significant role as a local healthcare institution. It provides medical care, preventive services, and more to the elderly population



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in the community. Therefore, this study aims to analyze and research the health status of elderly individuals aged 65 and above in the Zhonghe community of Wanzhou District.

Objective

This study focuses on health status of the elderly individuals aged 65 and above in the Zhonghe community of Wanzhou District. Through surveys, we aim to gain in-depth insights into the basic information and health status of this age group. The primary objective is to identify the main health issues faced by the elderly population in this community and better understand their health needs and concerns. The ultimate goal was to provide a reference and basis for the development of targeted elderly health management strategies, offering guidance and recommendations for health services dedicated to the elderly population in the community.

Research Scope

This study takes the elderly aged 65 and above in the Zhonghe community of Wanzhou District as the research object. From January 2023 to May 2023, a survey on the health status of 200 elderly people in the Zhonghe community of Wanzhou District was conducted, and 200 elderly people aged 65 and above who voluntarily participated in the health examination were selected by sampling method. The questionnaire has collected the following health data: gender, ethnicity, blood pressure, education level, marital status, occupation, smoking habits, exercise frequency and other related indicators. By analyzing these indicators, we can gain insight into the health status of the region's older population.

Literature Review

1. Population Aging

Using data from three national censuses conducted between 2000 and 2020, the research revealed the latest characteristics and development trends of population aging among ethnic minorities in China. The study indicated that by the year 2020, the proportion of elderly individuals aged 60 and above among ethnic minorities reached 13.10%, showing a significant acceleration in population aging. However, compared to the Han ethnic majority, the aging process among ethnic minorities was relatively slower. The research also highlighted that the elderly population among ethnic minorities in China displayed characteristics of being older in age and predominantly female. This implies that within the elderly ethnic minority population, the proportion of older and female individuals is relatively higher. Additionally, there was a phenomenon of urban-rural inversion in population aging, meaning that the proportion of elderly individuals among ethnic minorities in urban areas was higher than in



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rural regions. (Peng, D. & Luosheng, Y., 2023)

It was pointed out that population aging has become increasingly serious across China and requires urgent solutions. Specifically, the situation of population aging in Yichun City, Heilongjiang Province, is particularly severe, ranking as the city with the most significant aging population in the province. Looking ahead to the next decade, Yichun City will face progressively severe social elderly care problems, showing a trend of "aging before becoming affluent." Additionally, as the demand for social services by the elderly increases rapidly, traditional family-based elderly care models will face considerable challenges. (Haoxia, W. & Lijia, W., 2023)

Based on data from the National Bureau of Statistics from 2011 to 2020, the study revealed the current status and characteristics of population aging in Liaoning Province. The issue of population aging has already emerged in Liaoning Province, and the growth rate of the elderly population is relatively rapid, presenting new challenges to the province's economic and social development (Yong, J., et al., 2023)

2. Elderly Health Status

Yan, G., et al. (2021) conducted a survey on the health status and physical function of elderly individuals aged 65 and above in Wuhan city and studied their associations. The survey revealed a relatively high proportion of functional disability in the urban elderly population of Wuhan. The self-reported incidence of chronic diseases significantly impacted limb movements and physical function.

Yumei, T., et al. (2020) explored the health status and health education methods among elderly individuals in Chinese communities. The study found that the most common diseases among elderly people included hypertension, osteoarthritis, hyperlipidemia, chronic bronchitis, diabetes, and coronary heart disease.

Hong, W. & Jing, H. (2020) conducted a study on the health status and influencing factors among elderly individuals in Xinyang city, providing a theoretical basis for relevant urban departments to formulate health care measures for the elderly. The investigation found that the physical health of elderly individuals in the community was relatively good; those with younger age, higher education levels, higher social status, married status, living with others, and better family support exhibited better physical health.

Methodology

This study utilized a questionnaire survey to collect data, and the research instruments included general information and the Short Form-8 (SF-8) health survey. The survey aimed to investigate the general demographic characteristics of elderly individuals in the Zhehe community, Wanzhou District. The key demographic information captured included age, gender, ethnicity, education level, and occupation.



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The physical and mental health status was assessed using the Chinese version of the SF-8 questionnaire. The SF-36 questionnaire is currently widely recognized as a commonly used tool for measuring the quality of life, and its applicability has been widely acknowledged across various populations.

The data was entered into Epidata 3.1 software and analyzed using the IBM SPSS statistical package v.20. Percentages were used to represent continuous variables, while proportions were used for categorical variables.

Results

Table 1: General information of the community-based elderly people (n=200)

Basic Information	Category	Number	Composition (%)
Ethnicity	Han	165	82.5
	Tujia	35	17.5
Gender	male	81	40.5
	female	119	59.5
Age Group	65-70	94	47
	71-80	76	38
	81-90	30	15
Education Level	literate or semi-literate	23	11.5
	primary School	76	38
	junior high school	64	32
	High School and above	37	18.5
Marital Status	Married	167	83.5
	divorced or widowed	33	16.5
Occupation	farmers or unemployed	67	32
	self-employed or workers	106	53
	civil servants	30	15
Exercise Habits	occasionally	59	29.5
	daily	95	47.5
Smoking Status	no exercise	46	23
	yes	122	61
Alcohol Consumption	no	78	39
	occasionally	96	48
	daily	32	16
	no alcohol	72	36



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As shown in Table 1, among the 200 elderly people in the comprehensive community of Wanzhou District, the Han nationality accounted for 82.5%, a total of 165 people, and the Tujia nationality accounted for 17.5%, a total of 35 people. There were 81 males, accounting for 40.5% of the population, and 119 females, accounting for 59.5% of the population. Among them, 94 people were between 65 and 70 years old, accounting for 47%, 76 people were between 71 and 80 years old, accounting for 38 people, and 30 people were between 81 and 90 years old, accounting for 15%. 23 people were illiterate, accounting for 11.5%, 76 people had a primary school education, accounting for 38%, 64 people had a junior high school education, accounting for 32%, and 37 people had a high school education or above, accounting for 18.5%. 167 people were married, accounting for 83.5%, and 33 people were divorced or widowed, accounting for 16.5%. There are 106 people engaged in self-employment or workers, accounting for 53%, 67 farmers or unemployed, accounting for 32%, and 30 civil servants, accounting for 15%. Among them, 95 people exercised regularly, accounting for 47.5%, 59 people exercised occasionally, accounting for 29.5%, and 46 people did not exercise, accounting for 23%. There were 122 people who had the habit of smoking, accounting for 61%, and 78 people who did not smoke, accounting for 39%. Occasional drinkers were the most, with a total of 96 people, accounting for 48%, 32 people who drank alcohol daily, accounting for 16%, and 72 people who did not drink alcohol, accounting for 36%.

Table 2: Abnormal metabolic conditions of the elderly in the community (n=200)

Metabolic Abnormalities	Han	Tujia	Total (n=200)
Overweight/Obesity	127 (76.9)	18 (51.4)	145 (72.5)
Dyslipidemia	114 (69.0)	27 (77.1)	141 (70.5)
Metabolic Syndrome	114 (69.0)	22 (62.8)	136 (68.0)
Abdominal Obesity	108 (65.4)	21 (60.0)	129 (64.5)
Impaired Fasting Glucose	48 (29.0)	10 (28.5)	58 (29.0)
Hypertension	23 (14.1)	4 (11.4)	27 (13.5)



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According to the results in Table 2, the prevalence rates of overweight and obesity in Han and Tujia were 76.9% and 51.4%, respectively. The dyslipidemia rate was 69% in Han nationality, 77.1% in Tujia nationality, 69% and 62.8% in metabolic syndrome, and 65.4% and 60% in abdominal obesity. The prevalence rates of impaired fasting glucose in Han and Tujia were 29% and 28.5%, respectively, and the prevalence of hypertension in Han and Tujia were 14.1% and 11.4%, respectively.

The results of this study show that the prevalence of obesity and dyslipidemia among the elderly aged 65 and over in Zhonghe community of Wanzhou District was 72.5 and 70.5%, respectively. Overall, obesity, dyslipidemia, and metabolic syndrome were the main health problems faced by the elderly population in this community. The health status of the elderly aged 65 and over in this region is not optimistic, and health management for this age group needs to be strengthened.

Conclusion and Discussion

1. Conclusion

The health survey conducted on 200 elderly individuals in the Zhonghe community revealed that the risk of overweight and obesity among this population is relatively high. According to the research results, the obesity rate among elderly individuals aged 65 and above in the Zhonghe community was 72.5%. The prevalence of impaired fasting glucose (IFG) and hypertension was 29 % and 13.5%, respectively, with hypertension prevalence being 14.1% for the Han ethnicity and 11.4 % for the Tujia ethnicity. Overall, the prevalence of obesity and abnormal blood lipids among elderly individuals aged 65 and above in the Zhonghe community is relatively high. The prevalence of IFG is moderate, and the prevalence of hypertension is relatively low.

Currently, China is facing the issue of an increasingly aging population. With improved living standards, the prevalence of chronic diseases among the elderly population in communities is also on the rise. As people age, they are more susceptible to chronic diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, and heart diseases, which significantly impact the quality of life and functionality of elderly individuals. By conducting investigations and research on chronic diseases among the elderly in communities, it is possible to gain a comprehensive understanding of the main health issues faced by this demographic. Additionally, this research can help communities take effective measures to better assist and prevent health problems among the elderly.

2. Discussion

With the rapid development of the economy and technology, people's lifestyles and dietary structures have undergone significant changes worldwide. Both in developed and



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developing countries, the number of people suffering from overweight and obesity has been increasing rapidly and showing a rising trend year by year. Survey results from various countries indicate that the obesity rate in many regions is experiencing rapid growth and has already reached a relatively high level. However, there are variations in the prevalence of obesity among different regions and ethnicities.

The research results indicate that the primary health issues among elderly individuals aged 65 and above in the Zhonghe community of Wanzhou District are obesity, abnormal blood lipids, and metabolic syndrome. To address these health problems in the future, it is essential to focus on obesity, abnormal blood lipids, and metabolic syndrome among the elderly population in the Zhonghe community. (Nan, L. & Feng, K., 2014). Strengthening public health education and providing personalized medical services will be crucial for effective interventions and policy formulation. These measures can significantly improve the overall health status and enhance the quality of life for elderly individuals in the community.

Suggestions

1. It was observed that there was a relatively high risk of overweight and obesity among the elderly population in this community. Utilizing community radio, bulletin boards, and health seminars can serve as effective means to educate the elderly about the health risks associated with overweight and obesity. Providing them with knowledge about prevention and management strategies can be instrumental. Through these efforts, a deeper understanding of these issues can be fostered, prompting greater emphasis and attention on adopting healthy lifestyles.

2. In addressing the issue of abnormal blood lipids among the elderly individuals aged 65 and above in this community, it is encouraged to promote a diet low in cholesterol and saturated fats. Elderly individuals should be encouraged to increase their consumption of foods rich in healthy fats, such as Omega-3 fatty acids, found in sources like fish, nuts, and olive oil.

3. Additionally, motivating them to engage in moderate aerobic exercises like walking, jogging, and cycling can aid in reducing blood lipid levels.

4. To address the issue of metabolic syndrome among elderly individuals in the Zhonghe community of Wanzhou District, several approaches can be implemented. Firstly, using community radio, bulletin boards, and health seminars to disseminate relevant information about metabolic syndrome can raise awareness among the elderly population and encourage them to take proactive measures to improve their lifestyle.

5. The community can establish health records for the elderly, conducting regular physical examinations. By measuring blood pressure, blood sugar, blood lipids, and other



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indicators, any metabolic abnormalities can be promptly detected. Consequently, appropriate treatment and management plans can be provided to the elderly individuals with metabolic syndrome.

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