

# Rural Chinese Elderly: Demographic Characteristics and Activities of Daily Living



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## Objectives:

- ❖ To present demographic characteristics of Chinese elderly.
- ❖ To present an overall picture of the activities of daily living (ADL) of the rural Chinese elderly in terms of eating, dressing, sleeping, bathing, and toileting.
- ❖ To test the hypothesis that the limitations faced by the elderly are associated with their demographic characteristics which are outlined using marital status, age and gender.

## Hypotheses:

- ❖ H1: ADL of the Chinese rural elderly are associated with their age
- ❖ H2: ADL of the Chinese rural elderly are associated with their marital status
- ❖ H3: ADL of the Chinese rural elderly are associated with their gender

## Methodology:

- ❖ This study is based on a nationwide survey collected by China Research Center on Elderly in December 1992. The survey was conducted among 20,083 Chinese elderly aged 60 and above including twelve Chinese provinces. This research will concentrate on the 10,194 respondents from rural areas. The sampled elderly were drawn through stratified and clustered methods. The data consists of information on demographic characteristics, economic statuses, social aspects, and psychological well-being. The unit of analysis is the individual rural Chinese elderly.
- ❖ To examine the association between the independent demographic characteristics and dependent variables of daily life activities, the appropriate methods used are Chi-square to test the significance; Cramer's V, Gamma and Tau-b to show the strength of the association. In addition, descriptive statistics and percentage distribution will be utilized to demonstrate the demographic characteristics and activities of daily living of the responded elderly.

## Results:

- ❖ The results show support to the underlying hypotheses that activities of daily living (ADL); eating, sleeping, dressing, toileting and bathing, are associated with demographic characteristics of age, gender and marital status.

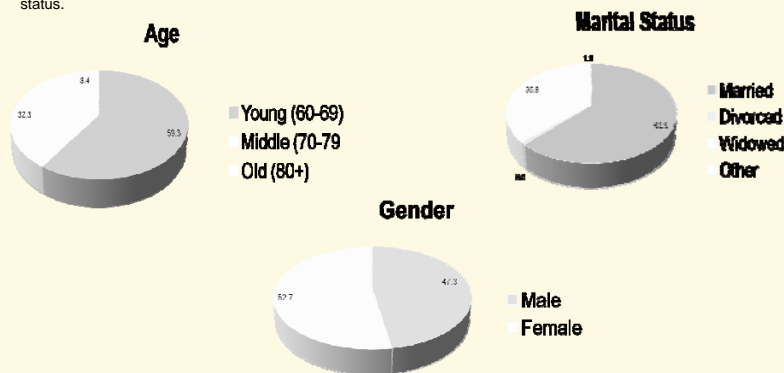
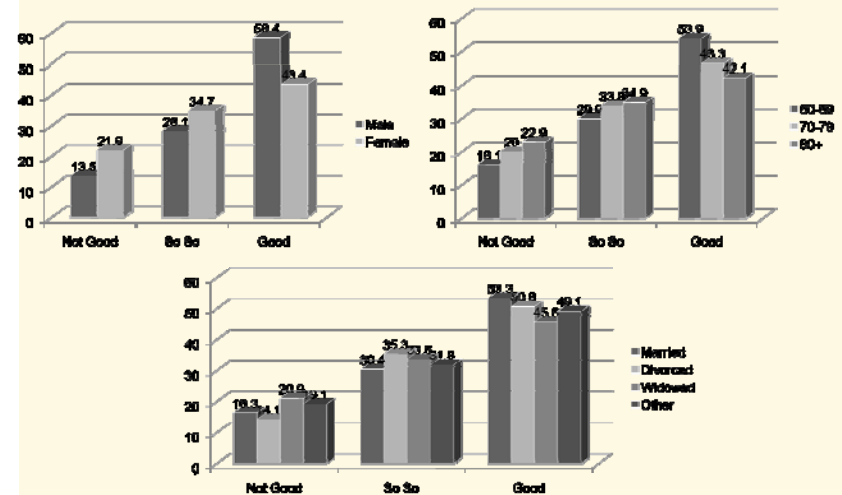


Table 1. Statistical Distribution on the Ability to Perform Activities of Daily Living

	Eat	Sleep	Dress	Toilet	Bathe
Unable	33 (0.3)	1828 (17.9)	69 (0.7)	110 (1.1)	155 (1.5)
Part	154 (1.5)	3321 (31.6)	241 (2.4)	171 (1.7)	276 (2.7)
Able	10007 (98.2)	5145 (50.5)	9884 (97.0)	9913 (97.2)	9763 (95.8)
Total	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(100.0)
N	10194	10194	10194	10194	10194

Limitations on Sleeping by Age, Gender and Marital Status\*



## Discussion & Conclusion:

- ❖ The rapid growth momentum of the elderly in China raises issues of great concern among policy makers, government and social researchers.
- ❖ Findings follow the suggestions that ADL are increasingly restricted due to effects of aging.
- ❖ Activities of daily living are correlated to one another and theories are in line with theories and findings from empirical studies.
- ❖ Increasing pressure on China, with its vast population in rural areas while facing and inadequate social welfare system.
- ❖ These findings can be concluded as follows:
  - ❖ Activities of daily living are increasingly restricted due to effects of aging. The older the elderly are the more limitations tend to be.
  - ❖ Disparities between gender and marital statuses do exist but the variations are limited. This is because the rural elderly are either in the married-couple- status (62.3%) or in the widowed status (35.8%), the two groups together adding up to 98.1%. Since these elderly live with their adult married children and are largely taken care of by their family members, thus the disparities are reduced to the minimum.
  - ❖ The activities of daily living are the very basic but also fundamental activities that the elderly must perform in order to make the survival possible, these activities should be and must be correlated to one another.
  - ❖ The results are largely in line with theories and findings from empirical studies though there is little literature in this area.
  - ❖ With the process of population aging in general and the increasing size of the Chinese rural elderly in particular, the Chinese government is facing with increasing pressure.

## Sources:

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\*Charts represent only one of the five variables in study due to limited space. The variable Sleeping represents only one of five limitations of Chinese elderly, eating, dressing, bathing and toileting are not shown.