

An Assessment of Self-Perceived Health after the Death of a Spouse among the Elderly

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Abstract : The problems of aging and number of widowed peers gradually rise in Taiwan. It is worth to concern the related issues for elderly after the death of a spouse. Hence, this study is to examine the impact of spousal death on the surviving spouse's self-perceived health and mental health for the elderly in Taiwan. A cross section data design and ordered logistic regression models are applied to investigate whether marriage is associated significantly to self-perceived health and mental health for the widowed older Taiwanese. The results indicate that widowed marriage shows significant negative effects on self-perceived health and mental health regardless of widows or widowers. Among them, widows might be more likely to show worse mental health than widowers. The belief confirms that marriage provides effective sources to promote self-perceived health and mental health, particularly for females. In addition, since the social welfare system is not perfect in Taiwan, the findings also suggest that family and social support reveal strongly association with the self-perceived health and mental health for the widows and widowers elderly.

Keywords : logistic regression models, self-perceived health, widow, widower

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