Assessment of Age-Friendliness in Rural Areas: An Investigation of Content Validity

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Abstract : Background and Purpose: The world´s population is rapidly aging, wherefore the World Health Organization (WHO) is dealing with concepts of Age-Friendly-Communities and criteria to define them. Also in Germany, we can find an aging population and a large amount of seniors is living in rural areas. Those regions are defined by unique social and environmental characteristics, which can enhance or decrease age-friendliness. To identify and work with these characteristics, we are in need of appropriate assessment instruments. To the author's best knowledge until now, no instrument could be identified as suitable and scientifically proven for the German speaking area. The aim of the study was to identify an assessment instrument to measure the age-friendliness of rural communities and its psychometric testing regarding the content validity. Methods: A literature search was carried out to identify instruments related to concepts of Age-Friendly-Communities. According to the German situation, an instrument was chosen and modified based on a Delphi-study. In this context, the content validity was investigated by calculating the Content Validity Index (CVI). Results: An instrument consisting of 86 items based on WHO indicators and the German situation in rural areas was created. 43 items (50%) had a Content Validity Index for Items (I-CVI) of 1,00, 37 items (43%) had an I-CVI of >0,78 and > 1.00, and 6 items had an I-CVI of >0,78. The value of the Content Validity Index for Scales, averaging calculation method (S-CVI/Ave) for the entire scale was 0,91. Conclusions: The results indicate a good content validity and it can be concluded that the created instrument represents the phenomenon of age-friendliness in rural areas. Nevertheless, further psychometric testing related to reliability, validity and responsiveness is recommended.

Keywords : assessment, age-friendly, rural, psychometric testing

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