Psychosocial Factors Associated With Acceptance of Old Age Home Placement: A Study of Elderly Chinese in Hong Kong

Anise Man Sze Wu
Catherine So-kum Tang
Elsie Chau-wai Yan
Chinese University of Hong Kong

This study examined psychosocial factors associated with the acceptance of long-term placement in old age homes (OAHs) among 185 elderly Chinese in Hong Kong. Participants were recruited from local community centers for elderly people and were individually interviewed on their willingness to enter OAHs, attitudes toward OAHs, perceived mental and physical health status, and beliefs about filial piety and independence. Results showed that only 20% of the participants indicated their willingness to enter OAHs in the coming 6 months. Among depicted services and facilities in OAHs, participants rated the quality of OAH staff as the most important, whereas the choice of food and mealtimes were viewed as the least important. Participants were more willing to enter OAHs if depicted services and facilities were provided at OAHs. Findings of the hierarchical regression analysis revealed that salient correlates of willingness to enter OAHs were positive attitudes toward OAHs, poor perceived physical health, male gender, and a low need for independence. Prior visits to OAHs and filial piety beliefs were unrelated to participants' acceptance of OAH care. Service and policy implications in promoting elderly people's sense of autonomy and acceptance of OAH care, reducing the cost of placement in OAHs, and ensuring the quality of services and care in OAHs are also discussed.

Keywords: acceptance; old age home placement; Hong Kong; elderly Chinese

The elderly population in Hong Kong has increased from 2.8% in 1961 to 14% in 2001 (Hong Kong Census & Statistics Department, 2001) and is predicted to grow to 24% by the year 2025 (Barlett & Phillips, 1995). Currently, there are about 1 million elderly Chinese residing in Hong Kong. One of the many challenges with this rapidly aging population is to determine directions...