

A Longitudinal Study on Intergenerational Coresidence of Older Adults:

The Impact of Its Change and Stability on Physical Health in Rural China

Objectives. Living arrangement of older adults may change or remain the same over time. Intergenerational coresidence for older adults is a common and normative experience in rural China specially. There are three major types of intergenerational coresidence among older adults including coresidence with adult children, coresidence with adult children and grandchildren, and coresidence only with grandchildren. This study investigated the impact of changing into intergenerational coresidence or remaining in the same intergenerational coresidence on physical health of older adults over 12 years.

Method. Using data (1715, 1391, 1067, 808, 605) from the baseline and follow-up surveys of Well-Being of Older Adults in Anhui Province, China, conducted in 2001, 2003, 2006, 2009 and 2012, we applied growth curve models to realize the objectives. Physical health was measured by Self-Rated Health and functional limitations.

Results. Older adults changed into coresidence with adult children suffered from a rapid decline of Activities of Daily Living (0.300*) and Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (0.633***). Those changed into coresidence with adult children and grandchildren experienced a decline of Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (0.634***) and Activities of Physical Strength, Mobility and Flexibility (0.210*). Those changed into coresidence with grandchildren only experienced improved in Self-Rated Health (0.095**). Older adults remaining in the same coresiding with adult children experienced improved in Self-Rated Health (0.046*), but suffered from a

rapidly deteriorated in Activities of Daily Living (0.189*) and Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (0.150*). Those remaining in the same coresiding with adult children and grandchildren experienced improved in Self-Rated Health (0.036*), but suffered from a rapidly deteriorated in Activities of Daily Living (0.151*) over 12 years. Those remaining in the same coresidencing with grandchildren only suffered from a rapidly deteriorated in Activities of Daily Living (0.132*) and Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (0.149*) over 12 years.

Discussion. There're differential effects of changing into or remaining the same of different outcome, and their influences depend on family needs, health and conception of older adults shaped by individual characteristics, as well as normative and social contexts in rural China. Implications of the impact of living arrangement on health are discussed.

Keywords: Older Chinese, Intergenerational coresidence, Physical health, Rural, Longitudinal study