

Determinants of aging living arrangements in Australia

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Using the 2011 Census, this paper investigates demographic patterns of living arrangements of older people in Australia in the greater capital cities compared with regional areas. Data from the 2012 Disability, Ageing and Carers Survey is also utilised to examine to what the extent living arrangements of older Australians are associated with their socio-demographic characteristics and health condition. Living arrangement may change as people get older due to issues relating to social, financial or health conditions. Around 8.1% of older Australians resided in non-private dwellings. The proportion increases as they age with considerably higher rates for women; almost 1.5 times those of men. Nearly half of older Australians were partnered or married and living in private dwellings, and about 24% were single and living alone in private dwellings. Singlehood was not only twice as likely among women than men (30% versus 16%), it varies substantially by place of residence. Singlehood was more common in regional areas except in the capital cities of Hobart and Adelaide where about one third of women were single and living alone. Noteworthy, the proportion of older people who were living with spouse or partner in private dwellings was exceptionally low in regional Northern Territory; representing 44% of women and 26% of men. Across all ages, older women were less likely than men to be partnered, and they were more likely to live alone. As expected, older people with a disability were more likely to reside in non-private dwellings than those without disability (15% versus 5%). In addition, income, labour force participation, nationality background and migration movement are used in the analysis to explain living arrangement disparities. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to broader and more focused evidence-based policies in regional areas and the greater capital cities, and at the national level.

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Introduction:

According to the last two Censuses, Australia's ageing population has grown faster than the total population. Particularly this growing is observed among the younger age group of aged people who are between 65 to 74 years, as a result of the 'baby boomer' reaching to old age. It is expected that in the next two decades, the older population aged over 75 years will reach around 3 million; almost 100 per cent growth within 20 years (Hugo 2014). The Australian population is ageing due to high fertility following World War 2, increasing life expectancy and higher longevity. Obviously, geographic distribution of an ageing population varies substantially and it is a reflection of current and past fertility and mortality patterns as well as past migration patterns. The phenomena of 'ageing in place' is different for different geographic areas, however, the changes in current fertility do not affect population ageing in the future, and it is not expected that longevity and mortality will increase much in the future to substantially change the proportion of the ageing population in the next decades. Ageing in place is influenced by many policies and environmental and geographical factors. Therefore, looking at the spatial distribution of ageing across Australia is important to decision making in relation to services and programs targeting the aged population. MacDonald (2011) argues that international migration does not affect population ageing in the future due to the fact that the tendency for migrants to be young results in an impact on national fertility rather than on the age structure.

The generation of baby boomers who have reached the age of 64, and constitute the ageing population of the next 2-3 decades, exhibit very different characteristics from their parents' generation in terms of their economic position, living arrangements and social marital status. This demographic is however diverse, and it is important to understand such differences as the geographical distribution of relocation/movement, and other health conditions which cause them to be in need of assistance and care services. Other studies have shown that 'ageing in place' is an important characteristic and older people are either culturally or socially attached to their house or local area where they have lived. Living arrangements, specifically, whether an aged person is partnered and lives with a spouse or not, affects whether a person is required to relocate in old age, as does that individual's need for care, and the availability of care services in that person's local area. Studies in different states show different patterns of movement among older ages, for example, in Adelaide (Hugo 2014) older people tend to 'downsize' their houses and relocate from outer suburbs (where access to services is difficult) to inner suburban and coastal areas. This pattern of movement is also observable in NSW and QLD (ABS 2011 Census). Most of this movement comes from regional population centres and rural areas.

In this paper, we first look at the patterns of age and sex distribution of older people based on their social, economic and demographic characteristics to explore how these patterns change over time as old people are ageing, and to what extent these changes vary between women and men in general in Australia. Second, the 2011 census data is applied to highlight geographical areas which have different patterns compared to other geographical areas which exhibit either

highest or lowest rates of specific character of older population in terms of their living arrangements patterns.

Data and Method,

The 2011 Australia Census,

The Longitudinal HILDA (The Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia) data set, release 14 including Waves 1 to 14.

Method: bivariate and multi-variate analysis

Results:

Region of residence, age, sex, education, income, home ownership and tenure, health condition and need for assistance are taken into analysis to explore their associations with living arrangements of older people in Australia. Part of preliminary results about living arrangements of older Australian is presented in this abstract. Distribution of the older population in Table 1 and Figure 2 shows that most older people live in the (private) dwellings of family members and only about 3% of the population aged 65 years and over live in non-private dwellings (which for the purposes of this paper refer to aged care facilities). This figure ranges from 2.2% among women aged 65-69 to 5.3% for women aged 75-79 and rises substantially to 21% of women aged 80 years and over. The figures for men are slightly higher for age group 65-74 (2.7-3.3%) increasing to 5% for men aged 75-79 and 13% for men aged 80 and over. From age 75, women are more likely to reside in non-private dwellings than men, whereas this is the reverse for men aged 65-74 who are more likely than women to reside in non-private dwellings.

Table 1. Distribution (%) of population by sex, age and living arrangements - Australia, 2011 Census

| Sex | Age | In Non-Private Dwellings (%) | | | | In Non-Private Dwellings (%) | Total population |
|--------|-------|------------------------------|--------------|---------------|------|------------------------------|------------------|
| | | Partnered | Living alone | Not partnered | Else | | |
| Male | 60-64 | 68.7 | 13.3 | 7.3 | 8.1 | 2.6 | 597890 |
| | 65-69 | 68.6 | 13.9 | 6.0 | 8.7 | 2.7 | 455417 |
| | 70-74 | 68.5 | 14.6 | 5.5 | 8.1 | 3.3 | 342694 |
| | 75-79 | 66.6 | 16.0 | 5.8 | 6.8 | 4.8 | 252929 |
| | 80+ | 53.3 | 21.3 | 7.1 | 5.7 | 12.5 | 327400 |
| Female | 60-64 | 62.0 | 17.1 | 11.5 | 7.6 | 1.7 | 608228 |
| | 65-69 | 58.3 | 21.1 | 10.5 | 8.0 | 2.2 | 463901 |
| | 70-74 | 52.5 | 26.3 | 11.2 | 6.9 | 3.1 | 365395 |
| | 75-79 | 42.1 | 33.4 | 13.1 | 6.0 | 5.3 | 292333 |
| | 80+ | 19.2 | 39.7 | 14.8 | 5.3 | 20.9 | 512211 |

Income and Living Arrangement

The findings suggest that having an income of about AUD600 or more per week is substantially higher for older men and women aged 65-69 years. The proportions of having such a high weekly income decreases as older people age, for instance, while 26 per cent of those aged 65-69 years and over have an income of AUD600 or more per week, this proportion falls to about 13 per cent after the age of 75, while the average income of AUD300-600 per week increases as older people age. In total, 17 per cent of older Australians have an income of AUD600 or more (41% receive AUD300-600, 23% receive AUD200-300; 8% had a weekly income of less than AUD200). The pattern for women is substantially different: men are twice as likely as women to have a weekly income of AUD600 or more, and almost two-thirds of women have an income concentrated in the range of AUD200-600.

Table 2. Distribution (%) of men by living arrangements, income and age - Australia, 2011 Census

| | | Male | | | | Female | | | | All population | | | |
|---|-------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------|
| | | \$600+ \$599 | \$300- \$299 | \$200- \$299 | <\$200 | \$600+ \$599 | \$300- \$299 | \$200- \$299 | <\$200 | \$600+ \$599 | \$300- \$299 | \$200- \$299 | <\$200 |
| Partnered, and not in NPD | 65-69 | 37.1 | 26.5 | 23.8 | 9.8 | 16.8 | 31.0 | 32.9 | 15.4 | 27.7 | 28.6 | 28.1 | 12.4 |
| | 70-74 | 22.2 | 31.9 | 33.7 | 8.7 | 11.1 | 32.7 | 39.8 | 11.7 | 17.2 | 32.3 | 36.5 | 10.1 |
| | 75-79 | 16.7 | 32.9 | 38.3 | 7.6 | 9.2 | 32.0 | 42.3 | 10.3 | 13.5 | 32.5 | 40.0 | 8.7 |
| | 80+ | 17.4 | 32.6 | 36.6 | 6.6 | 9.6 | 30.9 | 39.4 | 10.8 | 14.6 | 32.0 | 37.6 | 8.1 |
| | 65+ | 25.4 | 30.3 | 31.7 | 8.5 | 12.8 | 31.7 | 37.5 | 12.8 | 20.0 | 30.9 | 34.2 | 10.3 |
| Living alone and not in NPD | 65-69 | 30.0 | 49.6 | 9.1 | 5.3 | 23.2 | 59.3 | 9.6 | 3.6 | 25.9 | 55.5 | 9.4 | 4.3 |
| | 70-74 | 20.0 | 57.2 | 10.4 | 4.7 | 15.2 | 64.6 | 10.6 | 3.8 | 16.9 | 62.1 | 10.6 | 4.1 |
| | 75-79 | 17.1 | 58.8 | 10.4 | 4.7 | 12.8 | 65.1 | 10.7 | 3.9 | 14.1 | 63.3 | 10.6 | 4.1 |
| | 80+ | 20.6 | 55.4 | 9.2 | 4.5 | 14.5 | 61.8 | 9.3 | 4.0 | 16.1 | 60.2 | 9.3 | 4.1 |
| | 65+ | 22.5 | 54.8 | 9.7 | 4.8 | 16.0 | 62.5 | 9.9 | 3.9 | 18.0 | 60.1 | 9.8 | 4.2 |
| Not partnered, not alone and not in NPD | 65-69 | 22.5 | 34.3 | 11.7 | 6.0 | 14.5 | 44.9 | 14.0 | 8.7 | 17.9 | 40.3 | 13.0 | 7.5 |
| | 70-74 | 14.5 | 39.1 | 13.9 | 5.9 | 9.1 | 49.0 | 15.0 | 8.8 | 11.3 | 45.0 | 14.6 | 7.6 |
| | 75-79 | 11.1 | 40.0 | 14.3 | 6.2 | 7.2 | 51.6 | 14.8 | 8.8 | 8.6 | 47.5 | 14.7 | 7.9 |
| | 80+ | 11.7 | 41.3 | 12.6 | 7.0 | 8.0 | 55.4 | 13.3 | 8.1 | 9.0 | 51.4 | 13.1 | 7.8 |
| | 65+ | 16.2 | 38.0 | 12.9 | 6.2 | 9.9 | 50.4 | 14.2 | 8.5 | 12.2 | 45.8 | 13.7 | 7.7 |
| Resident of Non- Private Dwellings | 65-69 | 28.8 | 28.3 | 8.8 | 5.2 | 17.4 | 35.1 | 12.8 | 8.3 | 23.8 | 31.3 | 10.5 | 6.5 |
| | 70-74 | 17.4 | 34.0 | 11.3 | 5.1 | 10.5 | 38.1 | 13.8 | 6.2 | 14.0 | 36.0 | 12.5 | 5.6 |
| | 75-79 | 11.0 | 36.1 | 11.3 | 5.1 | 6.6 | 38.9 | 11.3 | 5.9 | 8.6 | 37.6 | 11.3 | 5.5 |
| | 80+ | 8.5 | 34.8 | 9.1 | 5.1 | 5.0 | 37.5 | 8.7 | 5.1 | 6.0 | 36.7 | 8.8 | 5.1 |
| | 65+ | 13.9 | 33.7 | 9.7 | 5.1 | 6.6 | 37.5 | 9.7 | 5.5 | 9.2 | 36.1 | 9.7 | 5.4 |