

DOCTORAL THESIS

Analysis of lifestyle behavior and health status among adults in Hong Kong

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Date of Award:
2018

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ABSTRACT

Despite having the highest life expectancy rate in the world, Hong Kong people do not necessarily lead a healthy life and may suffer from various ailments due to unhealthy lifestyle. For example, more than half of the adult population does not meet the recommended standard of physical activity set by the World Health Organization. Health status of individuals is influenced by different factors such as healthcare input, biological endowment, environment, and lifestyle. Among these factors, only the factor of lifestyle can be managed by an individual. What people can do to improve their health status is to manipulate or change their lifestyle.

The present study examines the relationship between lifestyle parameters and self-rated health status of the adult population in Hong Kong. The relationship between physical activity, eating behavior, smoking behavior, and alcohol drinking behavior of individuals on self-rated physical and mental health were analyzed. A total of 1,277 samples were collected among 18 districts in Hong Kong. Structural equation modeling and regression analysis were employed to specify the relationship between lifestyle behavior and individual self-rated health status. Two-way analysis of variance was used to examine the lifestyle behavior across gender and three categorical groups (i.e. age group, education level, marital status).

For the physical health, the relationships between eating behavior and physical health, smoking dependence and physical health, alcohol dependence and physical health were negative but statistically insignificant. For the mental health, the relationships between eating behavior and mental health, and smoking dependence and mental health were negative but statistically insignificant.

The present study is the pioneer to use latent variables of cigarette dependence and alcohol dependence as a measure of substance use in the empirical tests of Grossman model. Also, this study overcomes the limitations that using one categorical item in measuring self-rated health. The results of the present study provide information on lifestyles and health that can be used by policy-makers, the community, and other stakeholders to promote advocacy and revamp public health policies and practices. It can also provide evidence to guide the development and implementation of public health promotion campaign.

Keywords: Health, Health promotion, Lifestyle

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