

The Effects of Socio-economic Status and Health-related Factors on Healthy Lifestyle Habits among Japanese Urban Elderly

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【Background】

It is generally accepted that factors such as individual socio-economic status (SES), lifestyle habits and health-related factors affect the long-term health outcomes. However, little is known regarding the underlying mechanisms of each factor. This chronological study aims to reveal the causal relationships of healthy lifestyle habits with SES and three health-related factors (physical, mental and social health) among the urban elderly dwellers in Japan.

【Methods】

All the urban elderly dwellers aged 65 years or more in Tama city, Tokyo were surveyed using a self-administered questionnaire in September, 2001. And then, a follow-up survey was done in 2004. Finally, 8162 respondents were included as the analysis subjects. Data analysis was performed using factor analysis and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).

【Results and Discussion】

Three latent variables were extracted from 13 observed variables and defined as “Healthy lifestyle habits in 2004,” “SES in 2001” and “Three health-related factors in 2001” by factor analysis. Our model

showed healthy lifestyle habits in 2004 were not only directly affected by SES and the three health-related factors in 2001, but also indirectly by SES via the three health-related factors ($R^2=0.40$)(Fig.1).

【Conclusion】

SES as a basic determinant; enough income, high education level and healthy physical, mental and social health favored both directly and indirectly the practice of healthy or desirable lifestyle habits of the elderly late in life. It will be necessary to construct a model with higher external validity in a future study.

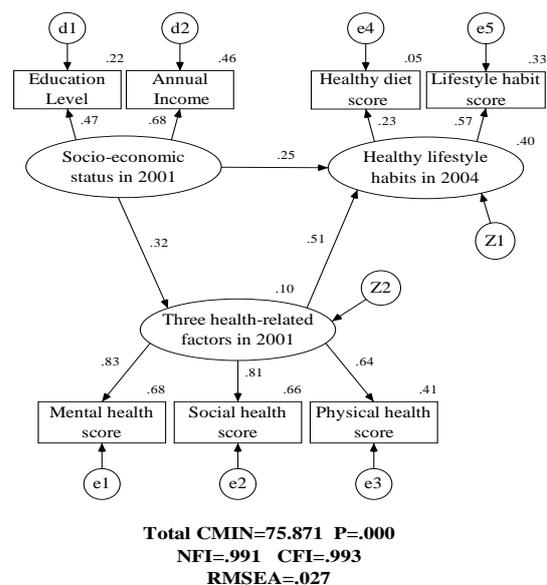


Fig.1 Structural analysis of SES, health-related factors on healthy lifestyle habits of Japanese urban elderly

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