

A Study of the Living Conditions and Welfare Needs of Indigenous Older people in Pingtung County

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Abstract

Purpose: This article aims to explore the living conditions and welfare needs of indigenous elderly people based upon the data reported in “2017 Pingtung County Older People’s Living Conditions and Welfare Needs Survey”. **Design and Methods:** The analysis relies primarily on a statistical analysis of the survey, which interviewed 200 indigenous people. In addition, the study conducted two focus groups to collect rich data from local indigenous elderly people and service providers. **Results:** In 2017, roughly 12.3% of elderly individuals were living alone, 65.4% of indigenous older people were Christians, and their children or daughters-in-law (35%) were the main care givers when they encountered difficulties in daily living. Most indigenous older people (60.2%) had insufficient income to cover their day-to-day expenditure and most of their money was spent on food (33%), medicine (26.6%) and red/white envelopes (16.5%). Indigenous older people are mostly aware of the available welfare services but do not apply for them because these services are inaccessible from where they live, and they find the

application process difficult. **Conclusion:** The analysis highlights the differences between indigenous and non-indigenous older people, most of which are related to culture perspectives, and suggests that the development of welfare services should take into account the indigenous community, its participation in those services and its cultural safety.

Keywords: Indigenous older people, Elderly living conditions, Elderly welfare needs