Reviewer’s report

Title: Analysis of the Status Quo of the Elderly’s Demands of medical and elderly care Combination in the Underdeveloped Regions of Western China and Its Influencing Factors: A Case Study of Lanzhou

Version: 0 Date: 21 Oct 2019

Reviewer: Xiaomei Pei

Reviewer's report:

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The authors need to address several methodological issues. One is the quality control method used in data collection. An explanation should be required for having specialists fill up missing items or correct errors. This does not seem to be an appropriate way to dealing with the missing information on the questionnaires. Another one is the comparison among different studies with different populations in different cities. If the data compared were collected with different instruments, we have the reason to doubt about the validity of the comparison. In addition, the authors should provide the information on the definition of the variables used in the data collection and analysis. Moreover, this research was mainly developed based on literature in China. Failure to catch up with the international studies makes some concepts very ambiguous.

The factors that affect the demand for care revealed in this study did not provide new information for the researchers in the field to understand the care needs of the aged populations in general. Available literature both in China and worldwide repeatedly revealed that level of dysfunction, number of adult children available, the availability of medical insurance, and the ability to pay for service are among the major factors to care demand. This study failed to evaluate the influence of health status, which makes it difficult for me to judge the real demand for care among the population in research. Further examination of how these factors affect the demand for care may have the potential for contribution to the existing literature.

In terms of organization of the paper, descriptions of the key concepts should appear in the introduction instead of in the later sections. Without detailed and respective descriptions about the medical care and elderly care provision systems in China, it is difficult for the readers to understand the necessity for combining the two types of services. Moreover, all the tables and figures should have clear titles for summary. Overall, the paper need further editing in language and organization.

Here are some specific problems to be addressed:
1. Line 69-71, sources of the demographic information in the introduction section should be provided with specific publishers and years.

2. In the introduction section, more social background may needed for readers to understand the specific characters of the term of "combination of medical and elderly care" used in China. In what manner did it emerge and make used? As a relative new model of care for the old Chinese, how it differentiated itself from the previous elderly care models? What is the difference between it and the existing integrated care discussed internationally?

3. The authors need to provide a description of the health status of the population under study to explain the demand for "combination of medical and elderly care". It is usually the prevalence and magnitude of dysfunction among the older people that drive the increase of demand for care, not just the large number of the older people.

4. Line 85-89, need information sources for the data cited in Figure 1.

5. A description of the existing local care organization and delivery is needed for readers to evaluate the problem for research. The authors need to explain why the existing model of care failed to satisfy the needs of the old people, and in what ways that the new model is expect to respond to demand of the old Chinese for care.

6. To evaluate the demand rates among the population, the authors need to provide information on how the concept of "demand" in the questionnaire was defined and operationalized. A description of the health status of the population being studied is necessary for the readers to understand the "demand".

7. In Table 1, percentage should be provided following each number in the column in responding to the description in the text. In addition, it is necessary for the authors to explain the differences among various medical insurance programs, especially for the international readers to comprehend the function of medical insurance as an influential factor on care demand in China.

8. On the one hand, high rates of old people are unaware of the combination of medical and elderly care. Is it because the model is too new to known to the public, or because the services included in the model are not accessible easily as it is claimed? On the other hand, high rates of the old people investigated claim to have demand for such care. It is difficult for me to understand these results. What made them feel they need the care that they had never heard of? Is it possible that these people did not really distinguish the combination of medical and elderly care from the traditional models of medical care and elderly care? Do you have any more objective ways to assess the needs of care?

9. For the section 4.2.1, I suggest the authors to provide information on the average income of the population for the year when the survey was conducted, so that readers could have a reference in judging the statistic results.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.
Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I recommend additional statistical review

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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