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## THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN HEALTH SEEKING BEHAVIOR AND SOCIAL INVOLVEMENT OF OLDER ADULTS IN TAIWAN

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This study utilized the cross-sectional design and stratified random sampling method to explore the relationship between population characteristic, social participation and utilization of health seeking behavior among older adults in Tainan, Taiwan. A structured questionnaire based on the Anderson behavior model was developed with acceptable reliability and validity. A total of 867 participated through telephone interview. Subjects' average age was  $73.1 \pm 6.83$  years old, and there were 48.3% elderly not even enhanced any social activities, while the highest participation rates was leisure activities (55.2%), and the lowest one was learning activities (11%). The western medical services were the most common utilized health seeking behavior in the case of suffering from chronic diseases (95.74%), acute illness (colds, diarrhea) (87.56%), or acute symptoms (joint or muscle sprain) (70.97%). The "living area" and "the total number of disease" in population characteristics and "political participation" in social participation were the most frequent factors predicting health seeking behavior. Subjects with higher income and participated in leisure activities, political activities, and work activities also had a higher tendency of pluralistic health seeking behavior. While almost half of the older adults have not participated in any activities, we suggested that stakeholders should design the diverse activities in considering local features by engaging the elderly. Through the development of creative, independent, or even productive social activities, we might improve the participation of the elderly, and to enhance their health and a better later life.

### Biography

Ching-Min Chen received her Doctor of Nursing Science (Health Policy and Health of the Community) from the Indiana University, USA in 1995. She joined Taipei Medical University as a lecturer shortly after returning to Taiwan, and was promoted to full professor in 2007. She served as the Director of the School of Geriatric Nursing and Care Management in 2007-2011. She then joined the Department of Nursing, National Cheng Kung University (NCKU) and was the Adjunct Professor in the Institute of Gerontology. Currently, she also serves as the Associate Vice President of the Office of International Affairs, NCKU.

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