



## Letter to the Editor

### A Need to Address Different Dimensions of Aging Challenges of Iranian Elderly for Publishing in Elderly Health Journal

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According to a report by World Health Organization (WHO) in 2018, the population of the elderly over 60 years will double from 2015 to 2050, and will increase between 12% to 22%. Also, in 2050, 80 % of the elderly will be from low and middle-income countries. Though population changes toward aging has begun from developed countries such as Japan, but in the middle of the 20th century, the elderly population of Iran has reached a notable level. WHO considered hearing loss, cataract and refractive errors, back and neck pain and osteoarthritis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, diabetes, depression and dementia as common public health problems of elderly population. It also noted environmental, social and physical conditions of individuals including homes, neighborhoods, and communities as factors of healthy aging due to their significant influence on the development and maintenance of health behaviors. Additionally, Personal characteristics such as gender, ethnicity or socioeconomic status are other factors (1). According to this report, older people are usually more dependent on the support and resources of the social services system and their families. They are more likely to be victims of abuse, negligence and violence (2).

According to a report by Ministry of Health and Medical Education of Iran concerning the health of the elderly in 2016, the seven main challenges of the elderly population were announced including double burden of diseases, increased risk of disability (visual and hearing impairment, supportive environment for the elderly), providing care for the elderly, feminization of aging, ethics and inequalities, economic problems of the elderly, and suggesting a new mode model for better life of elderly. On the other hand, the results of the report show that older women are more likely to be subjected to domestic violence and suffer from discrimination in access to education,

income, food, decent work, health services, inheritance, social security indicators and political power. Therefore, focusing on these challenges and priorities in research fields can be a foundation for inclusive planning by related policy makers (3).

In this regard, the review of all articles published by the Elderly Health journal (EHJ), which is published electronically in semiannually periods, from 2015 to 2018, shows that issues such as cognitive problems (13.8%), chronic diseases (12.3%), quality of life (12.3%), nutrition (12.3%), and self-care (9.2%) were the most frequent subjects in the journals. Also, issues such as attitude toward aging (6.4%), physical activity (6.3%), urinary incontinence (4.6%), health (4.6%), services (4.6%), and balance problems and fall risks (3.1%) have moderate frequency and issues such as sports, elderly abuse, ageism, ergonomics, sleep, social welfare, care and dependency in daily activities, each with 1.5%, had the lowest frequency in published articles.

Comparison of the issues published in this journal with the seven major challenges announced by the Ministry of Health and Medical Education of Iran indicates that although a significant proportion of the published articles are in line with the first challenge, the double burden of chronic diseases, other challenges such as disability, feminization of aging, ethics and inequalities, as well as providing a model for better life of elderly are less viewed in published articles. It can be due to the fact that these researches were less conducted in Iran or less submitted in the journal. On the other hand, studying the designs of published articles in this journal shows that cross sectional studies (52.8%) were the most frequent research design and letters to the editor, qualitative, intervention, quasi-experimental, review and Cohort studies respectively with 13.2%, 11.3%, 11.3%, 5.7%, 3.8%, 1.9% were in the next place. Therefore, it seems that

planning efforts of to call, and publish papers on other challenges for the elderly in Iran not only can increase the variety of subjects of published articles, but can lead to diversity in the approach and design of studies published by this journal.

## References

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