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An Economic Analysis of Chinese Self Health Recognition

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Abstract

This paper aims to investigate the relationship between socioeconomic status factor[a] and the self-reported health as well as the objective physical functioning in China. Moreover, we find that respondents' self-reported health and their objective health are different, which will cause an economic waste on hospital resource. Hence, we further investigate whether cognitive ability is a very important consideration factor to explain the differences between two health measures. The data used in the research is the 2008 China Health and Retirement Longitudinal Study-Pilot questionnaire (CHARLS) and the estimate method is the binary logistic regression model. As a result, we discover that some socioeconomic status factors are closely related to the self health recognition and objective physical functioning, but some have no relation with both two health measures. In addition, following the literature, we construct two cognitive ability indicators, TICS mental status and episodic memory, and find both of these two cognitive ability indicators, have the negative impacts on the differences of self-reported health and physical functioning. The result is robust to the influences of the differences between two health outcomes including education, hypertension and living alone. It suggests that people who have strong cognitive abilities will understand their own body more correctly and easily to manage their health.

Keywords: Cognitive ability; Self-reported health; Physical functioning; Socioeconomic factors; Mental status; Episodic memory;

[a] Socioeconomic factors: education, income, smoking, alcohol, area, marital status, gender