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SUCCESSFUL AGING AND THE CHINESE-AMERICAN ELDER (194 pp.)

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This study is an examination of the ways in which Chinese-American elders define successful aging. This paper is about how we age and whether visible minorities, a traditionally understudied demographic, experience aging differently than the members of the dominant culture. Chinese-Americans are one of the most rapidly growing segments of the population. The findings of this study have implications for the education of human service personnel for agencies providing services to the elderly. The methodology used in this study could be applied to other minority groups.

Previous research found that a vital issue in the lives of Chinese-Americans is acculturation and ethnic identity status. Research has described ways in which Chinese-Americans may adjust to the conflicts between Chinese and American cultures, but had not examined this conflict in the Chinese-American elder and their aging. Research found that different levels of acculturation affect other stages in the lives of Chinese-Americans.

The study showed that the acculturation level of the elder affected successful aging. The least acculturated ages differently and with difficulty. The most acculturated Chinese-American elder showed similar patterns of aging to the dominant culture but did display some unique, specifically Chinese patterns.