

ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Future of long-term-care: A Visualization and analysis of citespace-based study for the disabled elderly

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Keywords: Disabled; Elderly; Long-term-care; CiteSpace visualization; Integrated Care; social work;

ABSTRACT

Background: Aging populations worldwide are grappling with the challenge of long-term care for the disabled elderly, particularly in countries like China that are aging before they become affluent. The number of disabled elderly in China is sharply increasing, necessitating effective strategies to meet their care needs.

Objectives: This study aims to conduct a comprehensive scientometric analysis of research trends, hotspots, and future directions in the field of long-term-care for disabled elderly individuals in China using CiteSpace software.

Methods: Employing CiteSpace 6.2.R1, this study analyzed 1,914 relevant publications from 1999 to 2024 in the Web of Science and CNKI databases. Keyword analysis, clustering, and visualization were performed using CiteSpace software to identify key themes and trends.

Results: The analysis indicates an overall upward trend in publications since 1999, with a significant increase between 2013 and 2017. High-frequency keywords mainly include influencing factors, integration of clinical and nursing care, and service quality. Research hotspots include family caregiving, health status, demand factors, and mental health.

Conclusions: This study reveals the research trends, hotspots, and future directions in the field of long-term care for disabled elderly individuals in China. It shows a rapid increase in research quantity over time. High-frequency keyword analysis identified ongoing topics of interest such as influencing factors, integration of healthcare, and service quality. Keyword clustering analysis revealed that research hotspots are concentrated in areas such as family caregiving, health status, demand factors, and mental health, with each field containing rich research content.

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What do we already know about this topic?

Research on long-term care for the disabled elderly is extensive both domestically and internationally. With the increase in the number of disabled elderly, policy support for their long-term care in various countries has led to more care services, shifting caregivers from traditional family care to multiple care subjects centered around the government, society, and market. Current research mainly focuses on the characteristics of this group from perspectives of nursing, rehabilitation, medicine, sociology, psychology, service demand and types, care status, comparison of care approaches and models, care policies, and influencing factors. However, there is a lack of macro-level research and reflection on the current situation of the disabled elderly.

What is the main contribution to Evidence-Based Practice from this article?

This study uses CiteSpace visualization analysis software and bibliometric methods to organize and analyze existing literature, clarifying the research status, hotspots, and trends in the field. This information is intended to help scholars, practitioners, and policymakers better understand the progress in this area and provide a reference for future in-depth research.

What are this research's implications towards health policy?

The findings can provide policy guidance for addressing the growing long term care needs and contribute new insights to theoretical discussions on aging, care, and the integration of healthcare.

Authors' Contributions Statement:

Long Hai: Designed the research methodology, performed data analysis, and contributed to the writing of the paper; Yanghao Cui: Acquired research data, visualized experimental results, and contributed to the writing of the paper; JiaWei Zhang: Organized data, participated in analysis, and reviewed and revised the paper; All authors read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Introduction

In the context of an ageing population, long-term care for the disabled elderly is a challenge that plagues the world. According to the WHO Global Report on Ageing and Health, no country can afford the consequences of a lack of comprehensive and systematic long-term care. At present, in China, where the rich are getting old before they get rich and the social security system is not yet sound, how to deal with long-term care for the disabled elderly is an even more serious challenge. Elderly people facing the risk of age-related disability, especially those with long-term care needs due to disability, are the most vulnerable group. As the demographic structure ages, the size of China's disabled elderly population will continue to grow. It is predicted that by 2025, the number of elderly people who cannot take care of themselves will reach 6.55 million, and by 2035 and 2050, the number will increase to 8.63 million and 11.59 million respectively. It

can be seen that China's population of disabled and semi-disabled elderly is growing fast. Responding to the challenges of aging and improving long-term care for the disabled elderly has become an important social issue that needs to be solved urgently.

Domestic and foreign research in the field of long-term care for the disabled elderly has been extensive. With the increase in the number of the elderly with disabilities, the policy support for long-term care for the elderly with disabilities in various countries (Feng, 2019) has led to more and more care services for the elderly with disabilities, and the caregivers have gradually shifted from the traditional family care to the multiple care subjects centred on the government, society and the market, etc. (Chang et al. 2020). Overall, current research on long-term care for the disabled elderly mostly focuses on the characteristics of this group from the perspectives of nursing (Zeng, 2020),

rehabilitation and medicine (Arandelovic, 2018), sociology (Yu, 2019), psychology, etc. (Arandelovic, 2019), the demand and types of services (Yang, 2021), the care status (Roquebert, 2017), comparison of care approaches and models (Campbell, 2010), care policies, and influencing factors, among other areas. However, there is a lack of research and reflection on the current situation of the elderly with disabilities from a macro perspective. Therefore, this study analyses the current status and hotspots of research in the field of long-term care for the disabled elderly by searching the domestic and international literature related to long-term care for the disabled elderly, with a view to providing a reference for further research in this field.

Materials and methods

Literature Sources and Search Strategies

Web of Science (WOS) is the most trusted publisher-independent global citation database in the world, while China Knowledge Network (CNKI) is the largest and most influential database in China. To ensure representativeness and accessibility, we chose WOS as an effective source for data retrieval of English literature and CNKI as a data source for Chinese articles.

In the China Knowledge Network database, a combination of subject, title, arbitrary field, and commonly used field was used for searching, with the search terms of "disabled elderly" "elderly disability" "long-term care", "long-term care", "long-term nursing", "long-term care", "long-term care", and the search period was from 1 January 1999 to 30 June 2024, with a total of 1,026 articles retrieved. A total of 1,026 documents were retrieved. In order to improve the representativeness and credibility of the research results, each of the 1,026 pieces of literature was reviewed, and duplicates of the included literature, conference reviews, book reviews and interviews, colophons, news

reports, etc., were removed, and articles whose contents were inconsistent with the topic of this study were screened, so that 996 pieces of literature that were valid were finally identified as the samples for the analysis of the study's literature data.

The Web of Science Core Collection database was used as the source of literature data for foreign literature. In order to accurately compare the literature on the same research topics in both Chinese and English databases, this paper uses TS (Topic Search), TS=(disabled elderly in China OR elderly disability in China OR long-term care in China OR long-term nursing in China OR long-term care provision in China) to search. nursing in China OR long-term caregiving in China OR long-term care provision in China). The article type was limited to "article" and the search period was from 1 January 1999 to 30 June 2024. From the 1924 articles, 10 articles were excluded, such as duplicated papers, conference papers, experience exchanges, reviews, etc., which were not related to long-term care for the elderly with disabilities, and a total of 1914 valid articles were included. The content of the downloaded records was selected as "Full Record and Cited References", and each record in the downloaded file included the author, title, abstract, keywords and citations.

Research Methods

Scientometric analysis method is undoubtedly one of the research methods to effectively explore the research progress and frontier in a certain field. Citespace is an information visualisation software developed by applying Java language, which measures the scientific literature in a specific field through the theory of co-citation analysis and path-finding network algorithms, etc., so as to explore the path of evolution of a certain disciplinary field and the inflection point of knowledge, and to identify and display the new trends and

dynamics of scientific development (Li et al. 2015). It has been widely used in academic research at home and abroad. The software version selected for the study is CiteSpace version 6.2.R1, and the functional parameters such as time zone selection, threshold selection, pruning selection and minimum spanning tree are set to form the knowledge map, and the network structure and clustering clarity are evaluated based on the two indexes of modular value (Q-value) and average profile value (S-value), and the parameters are adjusted appropriately to carry out multiple drawings in order to achieve a more ideal mapping results. Thus, the distribution of time zones, research power and keywords in the field of long-term care for the disabled elderly are systematically analysed.

Results

Time-series analysis of literature releases

Since 1999, China has entered the stage of ageing society, and the trend of population ageing has shown a continuous and rapid

increase. Therefore, the time starting point of this paper in searching literature is 1999. In the China Knowledge Network database, the search was conducted with the subject terms of disabled elderly and long-term care respectively, which can intuitively reflect the overview of the research literature in the field of long-term care for the disabled elderly. From Figure 1, it can be seen that the academic research on "disabled elderly" began in 2006, and the number of articles published during the period of 2013-2017 increased significantly, reaching a maximum in 2021; the academic journal research on "long-term care" began as early as 1999, with the theme of "long-term care" as the main topic. Academic journal research on the theme of "long-term care" began as early as 1999, and the number of articles published during the period 2014-2019 increased significantly, reaching a maximum in 2019.

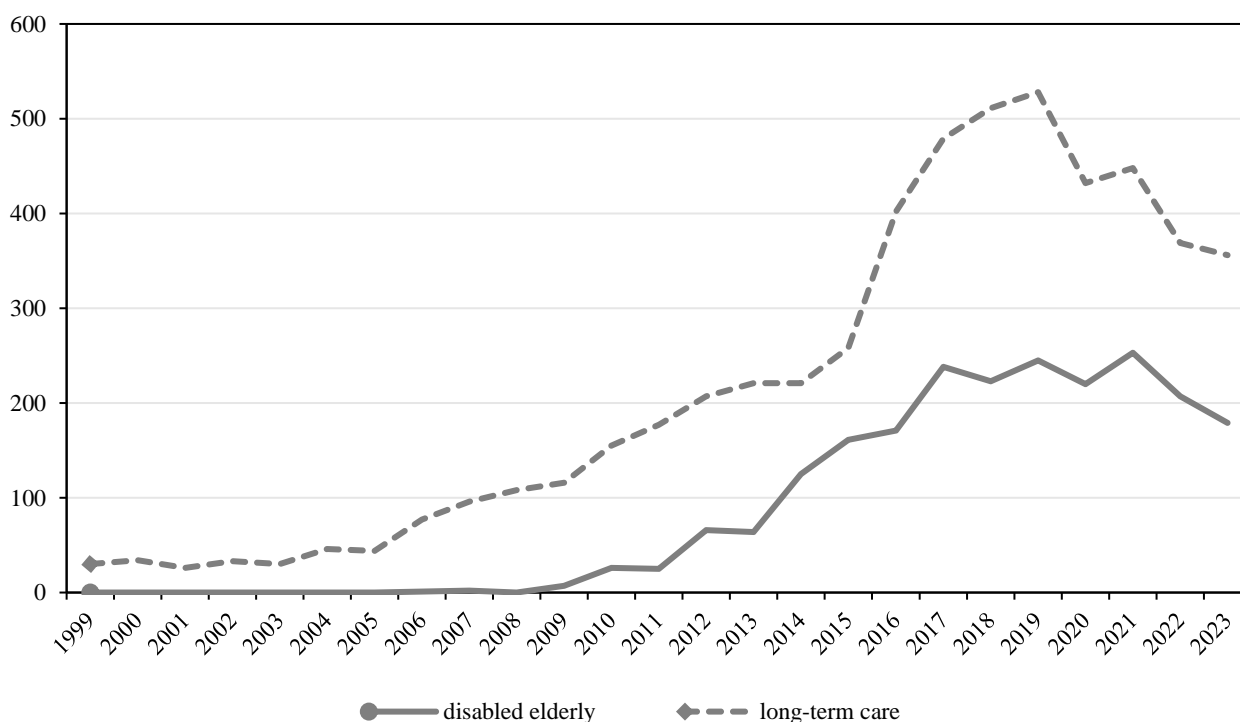


Figure 1 Number of documents in CNKI on the topic of disabled elderly, long-term care

As can be seen from Figure 2, research on "disabled elderly" in the WOS database began in 2006, and the number of articles published in the period 2018-2022 increased significantly, reaching a maximum in 2022; research in academic journals on the topic of "long-term care" began earlier than 2005, and the number

of articles published in the period 2017-2023 increased significantly, reaching a maximum in 2023. The research on "long-term care" in academic journals started earlier than 2005, and the number of articles published in the period of 2017-2023 has increased significantly, reaching the maximum in 2023.

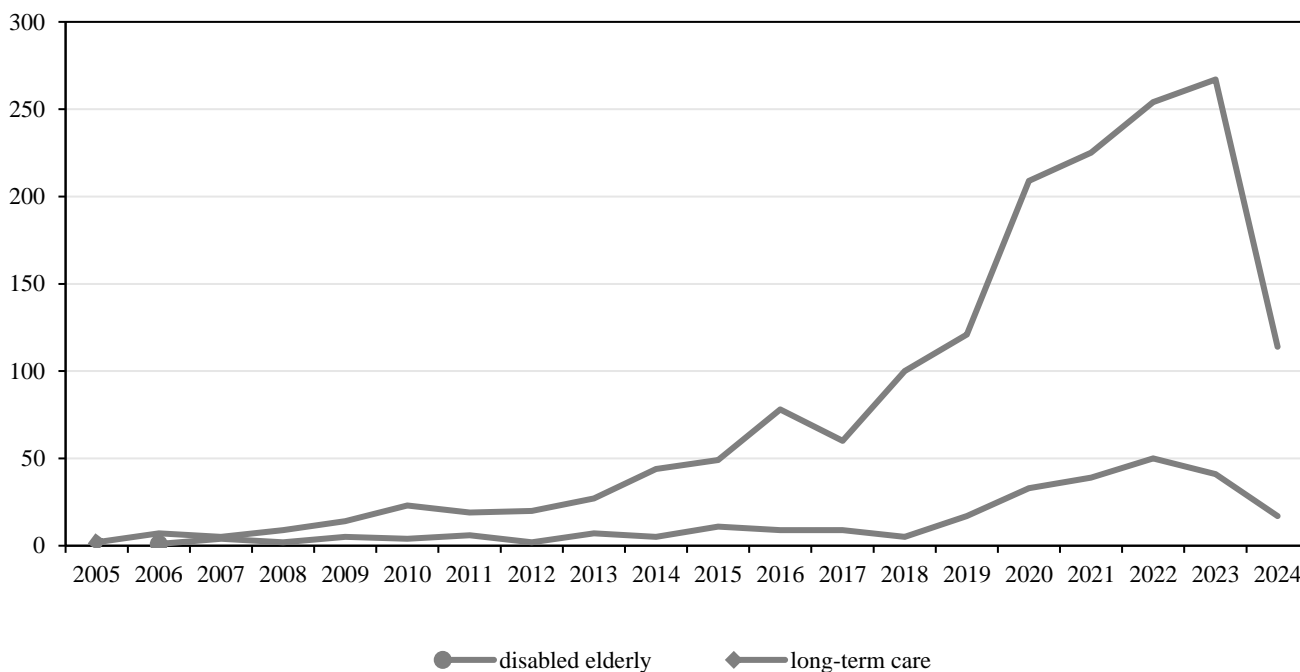


Figure 2 Amount of Literature in WOS on Disabled Elderly, Long-Term Care as a Topic

Analysis of literature authors

Disabled Elderly. Author co-occurrence analysis reveals the collaborative network between core authors and researchers who publish in the field. Based on Leps' law, the core authors of each research topic can be identified with the formula $M \approx \sqrt{N}$, where M represents the number of papers that the core authors should achieve, and N is the number of papers of the highest-producing authors in the statistical years. According to the data from China Knowledge Network in Table 1, N=12, which is calculated as $M \approx 2.60$, which is rounded to 3. Therefore,

authors who have published 3 or more papers are recognised as core authors in the field. The statistics show a total of 35 authors who have laid the academic foundation for research in the field. Table 1 shows the top ten authors in terms of the number of publications individually. It can be found that there is not much difference in terms of the overall number of articles, and Du Juan, who has the largest number of articles, has 12 articles, including 4 articles of CSSCI, the first year of the first publication is 2014, and the year of publication is concentrated in 2014.

Table 1 Top ten authors in CNKI in terms of the number of articles published on research on the elderly with disabilities

Serial number	Author of an article	Number of publications (articles)	Year of initial publication (year)
1	Juan Du	12	2019
2	Na Chen	11	2014
3	Chengguang Qian	7	2014
4	Wei Xu	7	2014
5	Xingong Liu	6	2010
6	Rong Ni	6	2010
7	Chenxi Zhu	6	2010
8	Hongjian Yu	5	2015
9	Jun Tang	5	2014
10	Junjie Wang	4	2018

According to the data of WOS in Table 2, $N=7$, it is calculated that $M \approx 1.98$, which is rounded to 2. Therefore, the authors who have published 2 or more papers are recognised as the core authors in the field, which is statistically shown to be a total of 49 authors, who have laid the academic foundation for the research in the field. Table 2 shows the top ten authors in terms of the number of publications individually it can be found (see Table 1), the largest number of publications Xu, Xiaocang is

7, the first year of 2019.

Table 2 Top ten authors in WOS in terms of number of publications in research on the elderly with disabilities

Serial number	Author of an article	Number of publications (articles)	Year of initial publication (year)
1	Xiaocang Xu	7	2019
2	Linhong Chen	6	2019
3	Ya Fang	5	2015
4	Lu Zhang	3	2020
5	Zhenhuan Hu	3	2019
6	Yang Liu	3	2015
7	Zhigeng Fang	3	2019
8	Bin He	3	2017
9	Hui-Chuan Hsu	3	2009
10	Panpan Wang	3	2023

Long-term care. In Table 3, $N=6$, which gives $M \approx 1.83$, rounded to 2, it can be seen that the number of articles issued reaches 2 and above as the core authors. Statistics show a total of 46 authors, who have laid the academic foundation for research in this field, and showing the top ten authors in terms of the number of published articles individually, it can

be found (Table 1) that there is not much difference in terms of the overall number of articles, and the number of articles published by Weidong Dai and Huiling Li is tied for the first place, with 6 articles. Of the six articles on long-term care published by Weidong Dai, four were CSSCI, with the year of first publication being 2011.

Table 3 CNKI list of authors with the most publications on long-term care

Serial number	Author of an article	Number of publications (articles)	Year of initial publication (year)
1	Weidong Dai	6	2011
2	Huiling Li	6	2018
3	Huan Liu	4	2021
4	Weiwei Zhu	4	2010
5	Yan Guo	4	2010
6	Yan Shen	3	2018
7	Yanan Dong	3	2020
8	Liang Yu	3	2014
9	Jing Lu	3	2020
10	Juan Zhang	3	2020

Source:
China

Knowledge Network Long-term Care

Measurement Visualisation Analysis Statistics.

According to the data in Table 4, $N = 19$, calculated $M \approx 3.25$, rounded to 4. Therefore, the authors who have published 4 or more papers are recognised as the core authors of

the field, and statistics show that there are a total of 43 authors, who have laid the academic foundation of the research in this field.

Showing the top ten authors in terms of the number of publications individually, it can be found (see Table 4) that Wang, Jing, who has the largest number of publications, has 19 papers, with the first publication year being 2016.

Table 4 Top 10 authors of WOS publications on long-term care research

Serial number	Author of an article	Number of publications (articles)	Year of initial publication (year)
1	Wang, Jing	19	2016
2	Liu, Jing	12	2014
3	Wu, Bei	11	2009
4	Wang, Ying	10	2018
5	Yang, Ming	10	2015
6	Fang, Ya	9	2019
7	Dong, Birong	9	2015
8	Xu, Xiaocang	8	2019
9	Wang, Jun	7	2023
10	Chen, Linhong	7	2019

Keyword analysis of research literature
 Keyword centrality. Keywords have significant physical meaning and can map the core concepts of the paper. The analysis of keywords can reveal the intellectual framework, hot topics and development dynamics of the research field. The higher the frequency of a keyword, the more attention the term receives; and the more central a keyword is, the more important it is.

As shown in Table 5, CNKI's high-frequency keywords for the research topic of the disabled elderly involve a relatively rich content, which includes the disabled elderly, long-term care, influencing factors, incapacitation, medical and nursing integration, and so on. Among them, the centrality of the disabled elderly is 1.68 (greater than 0.1), with high centrality, which is a research hotspot in the field of the disabled elderly.

Table 5 CNKI list of high-frequency keywords and their centrality regarding the elderly with disabilities

Serial number	Frequency	Centrality	Earliest Years	Keywords
1	488	1.68	2014	Disabled Elderly
2	63	0.06	2014	Long-term care
3	43	0.05	2015	Factors affecting
4	35	0.06	2015	Disability
5	34	0.04	2014	Healthcare Integration
6	29	0.05	2014	Social support
7	27	0.03	2014	Rural
8	22	0.02	2016	Home care
9	21	0.03	2014	Institutions for the Elderly
10	21	0.01	2016	Quality of life

As shown in Table 6, the related topics include HEALTH, DISABILITY, PREVALENCE and so on. Among them, the centrality of the first six high-frequency keywords, such as HEALTH, is

greater than 0.1, with high centrality, which is a research hotspot in the field of elderly with disabilities.

Table 6 List of high-frequency keywords and their centrality in WOS on disabled elderly people

Serial number	Frequency	Centrality	Earliest Years	Keywords
1	27	0.17	2007	Health
2	26	0.23	2007	Disability
3	20	0.13	2007	Prevalence
4	20	0.11	2010	Older adults
5	18	0.14	2009	People
6	16	0.13	2007	Adults
7	14	0.05	2007	Quality of life
8	13	0.05	2012	Disabled elderly
9	11	0.04	2009	Care
10	11	0.05	2007	Mortality

As shown in Table 7, the relevant topics include long-term care, disabled elderly, elderly, insurance, and aging. Among them, the

centrality of long-term care is 1.4 (greater than 0.1), which is high, and is a hot research topic in the field of long-term care.

Table 7 List of high-frequency keywords for long-term care and their centrality

Serial number	Frequency	Centrality	Earliest Years	Keywords
1	101	1.4	2017	Long-term Care
2	13	0.03	2017	Disabled Elderly
3	10	0.01	2018	Elderly
4	8	0.01	2017	Insurance
5	7	0.05	2018	Ageing
6	6	0.01	2017	Healthcare Integration
7	5	0.02	2017	Disability
8	5	0.01	2017	International Comparison
9	5	0	2018	Service Quality
10	4	0	2018	Insurance System
11	4	0.06	2019	Care Services

As shown in Table 8, the related topics include CARE, HEALTH, and IMPACT. Among them, the centrality of the high-frequency keywords of

CARE and CHINA is greater than 0.1, with high centrality, which is a research hotspot in the field of long-term care.

Table 8 List of WOS high-frequency keywords on long-term care and their centrality

Serial number	Frequency	Centrality	Earliest Years	Keywords
1	226	0.12	2006	Care
2	154	0.06	2005	Health
3	150	0.15	2005	China
4	131	0.06	2006	Impact
5	129	0.07	2011	Mortality
6	129	0.05	2010	Prevalence
7	128	0.02	2014	Older adults
8	113	0.05	2012	Quality of life
9	110	0.04	2010	Management
10	96	0.02	2009	Risk

Keyword Cluster. Keyword clustering, i.e., grouping and clustering the same or similar subject words into one piece, can reflect the subject composition of the research field (Shang et al.2022). The keywords are grouped according to the degree of similarity through keyword clustering analysis, so as to more comprehensively and accurately grasp the subject content of the field of disabled elderly and long-term care at home and abroad. Keyword Clustering of Disabled Elderly. The smaller classes are filtered out based on the size of class members as well as profile values, and the clustering labels are extracted using the LLR algorithm. The keyword clustering map

is shown in Figure 3, and the keyword clustering results of the Chinese literature are, in order, #0 Long-term care, #1 Elderly disabled, #2 Disabled, #3 Influencing factors, #4 Healthcare integration, #5 Social work, #6 Rural, and #7 Care needs. The results of the keyword clustering (Figure 4) of the foreign language literature were, in order, #0 long-term care, #1 health, status, #2 health, #3 metaanalysis, #4 adaptation, #5 apoptosis, #6 risk factors, #7 london handicap scale, #8 femoroacetabular impingement, #9 activities of daily living totalling 10 clusters.

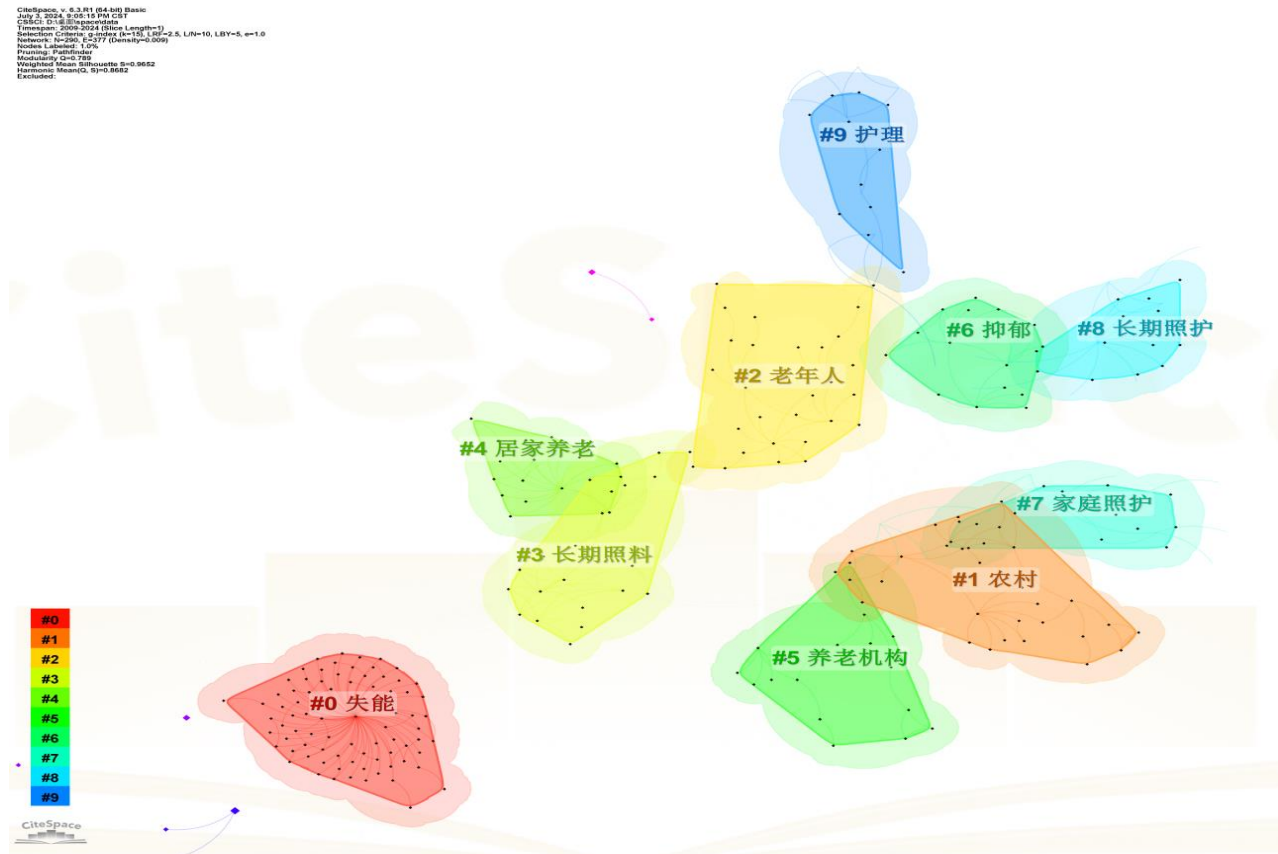


Figure 3 Number of documents in CNKI on the topic of elderly people with disabilities

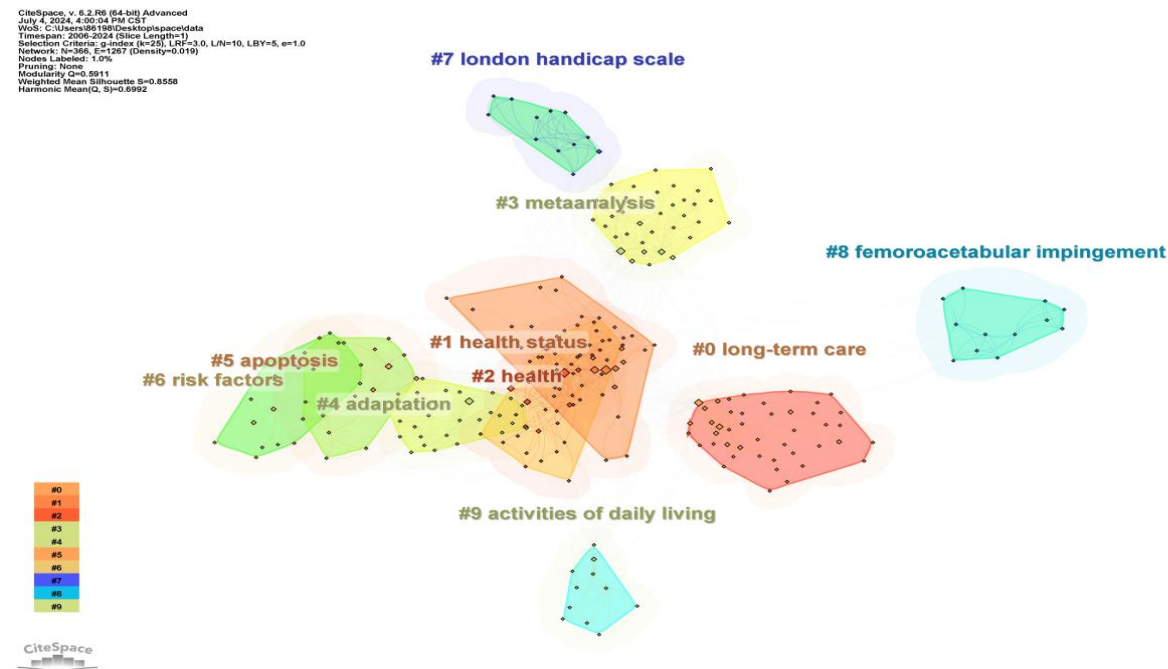


Figure 4 Amount of literature in WOS on the topic of elderly people with disabilities

Clustering of Long-Term Care Keywords. The modular Q-value for this clustering = 0.3752

(less than 0.3) and S-value = 0.7123 (greater than 0.7), indicating that the clustering was

significant and reasonably convincing. The cluster labels were numbered #0-#9 and included, in order, #0 risk factors, #1 long-term care, #2 mental health, #3 quality of life, #4

influencing factors, #5 cigarette smoking, #6 interrupted time series, #7 acute disease, #8 antibiotics, #9 preferences totalling 10 clusters.

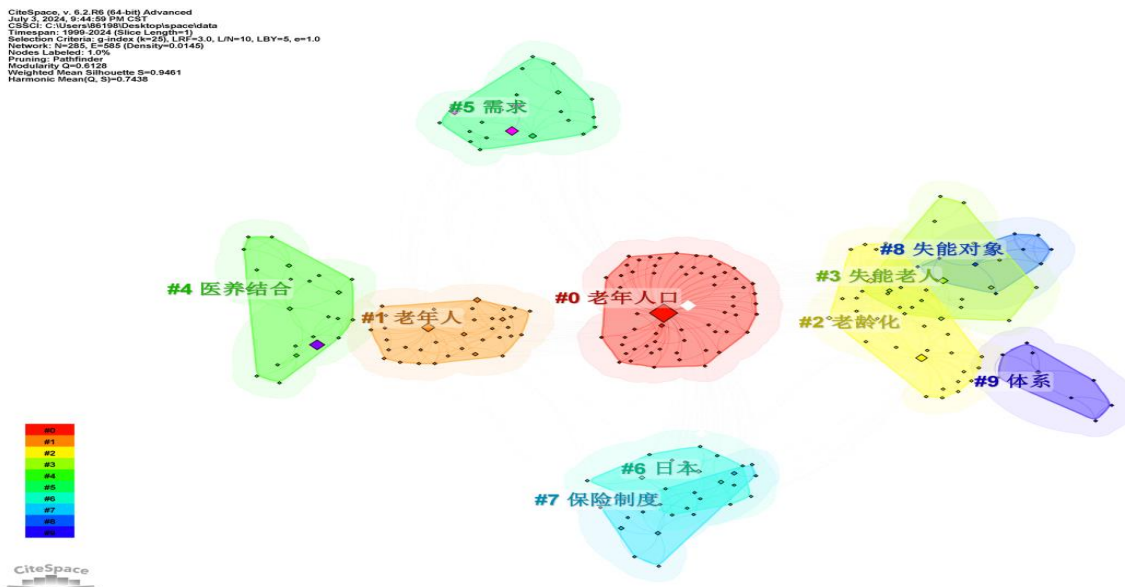


Figure 5 Long-term care keyword clustering in CNKI



Figure 6 Long-term care keyword clustering in WOS

Conclusion

First, since 1999, academics have launched a sustained research exploration of long-term care for the disabled elderly in the context of an ageing society. Many research scholars with high academic influence have been formed in this field at home and abroad. As time progresses, the number of studies in the field of long-term care for the disabled elderly is increasing rapidly.

Second, on the hotspots in the research field of long-term care for the disabled elderly. First, the disabled elderly. Through the analysis of high-frequency keywords, it is found that the keywords of influencing factors, medical care integration, and service quality have the highest frequency at home and abroad, which represents that they have been the topics that

continue to be paid attention to in this research field. Second, long-term care.

Through keyword clustering analysis, it is found that the hotspots of long-term care research for the disabled elderly at home and abroad are mainly concentrated in the fields of family care, health status, demand factors, and mental health, and there are also relatively rich research contents within each field.

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