

Self-employment tied to lower health in China

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Older Chinese people who transition from wage earners to self-employment report lower self-rated health than those remaining in waged jobs, finds a study from the Brown School at Washington

University in St. Louis.

"In general, these results show that among older workers in China, those in [self-employment](#) fared worse in health and [life satisfaction](#) than their peers in waged employment," said Cal Halvorsen, an associate professor and third author of "[a study](#) titled Self-Employment Transitions and Health Outcomes in Later Life: Evidence from China," published in the journal *Innovation in Aging*.

"This is counter to prior research in the U.S. and the United Kingdom, which found positive associations between self-employment and health," he said.

Halvorsen and his co-authors explored the health impact of employment transitions for the older working population in China according to urban or rural household registration status, region and education.

"Although the U.S. has banned mandatory retirement in most situations, it is still common in China," Halvorsen said. "As such, many folks in this study of Chinese [older workers](#) who were self-employed may have been pushed into this form of work due to a lack of other opportunities."

More information: Ting Hu et al, Self-Employment Transitions and Health Outcomes in Later Life: Evidence from China, *Innovation in Aging* (2024). [DOI: 10.1093/geroni/igae073](https://doi.org/10.1093/geroni/igae073)

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