

Investigation and study on the current situation of physical exercise of the elderly in the urban area of Guilin

Hu Zichen*, Yi Fang

College of Physical Education and Health, Guangxi Normal University, Guilin, Guangxi, China, 541000

*Corresponding author

Abstract: At present, with the improvement of people's awareness of life and health and the continuous improvement of the medical system, it is imperative to strengthen physical exercise for the elderly in the context of healthy China. This paper mainly understands the current situation of physical exercise of the elderly in the urban area of Guilin and mainly uses the questionnaire survey method and field interview method to investigate the basic personal situation, exercise situation and problems encountered in exercise of 212 elderly people in the urban area. It was concluded that older adults who participated in physical activity had good motivation and lacked professional guidance and facilities. On the above basic situation, two suggestions are put forward: cultivate professional social sports guidance talents and make full use of the resources of various sports facilities.

Keywords: Guilin City; The elderly; Physical exercise; Current situation investigation

1. Introduction

This paper uses the literature method to summarize and concisely the literature related to physical exercise in the elderly, as the theoretical support of this paper. At the same time, the field interview method, questionnaire method and other research methods were used to investigate and analyze the physical exercise status of about 200 elderly people in the main urban area of Guilin City (Qixing District and Yanshan District) and put forward corresponding suggestions for the problems found in the current situation, so as to provide a reasonable theoretical basis for the development of physical exercise for the elderly.

2. Survey results and analysis

2.1 Basic Situation of Physical Exercise of the Elderly in Guilin City

As shown in Table 1, this survey shows that 107 elderly men and 105 elderly women completed this questionnaire, with a similar proportion of men and women completing the questionnaire, making the results more scientific. Secondly, the proportion of elderly people aged 60-70 who participate in physical exercise in this survey accounts for half, and the number of people participating in physical exercise decreases with age. The number of elderly people aged 80 and above who participate in physical exercise is the lowest. At the same time, one can combine their profession with their willingness to participate in physical exercise. Through interviews with respondents, it was found that pre-retirement professionals such as military personnel, teachers, and government personnel have a higher willingness to participate in physical exercise. Due to occupational reasons, the physical health of the agricultural population is poorer compared to the other four professions, which may lead to a decrease in their willingness to participate in physical exercise in old age. Finally, through interviews, it was found that elderly people with higher levels of education and better economic conditions have a stronger subjective willingness to participate in physical exercise.

Table 1: Basic Physical Exercise Situation of Elderly People aged 60 and Over(n=212)

Factor	Number of people	Proportion%	
Gender	Male	107	50.5
	Female	105	49.5
Age	60~65	41	19.3
	66~70	66	31.3
	71~75	48	22.6
	76~80	39	18.4
	>80	18	8.4
Career	Teacher	15	7.3
	Government Agent	36	16.9
	Soldier	69	32.5
	Farming	91	42.9
	Other	1	0.4
	Education Level	Primary school and below	168
	Junior high school	30	14.2
	Specialist	12	5.8
	Bachelor's degree or above	2	1.8

2.2. Analysis of the Motivation of the Elderly to Participate in Physical Exercise in the Guilin City

As shown in Table 2, it can be seen that the main motivation for the elderly population is health motivation. The biggest motivation for the elderly to participate in sports activities is to enhance their physical fitness and improve their health level. Most elderly people provide effective preventive measures through "Enhancing physical fitness and health", "preventing diseases", "maintaining physical strength", and "enhancing physical fitness and health", thereby improving their physical and mental health levels, accounting for about half of the total. Especially, "enhancing physical fitness and health" provides more beneficial fitness activities, making it easier for them to achieve a physical and mental health rate of 47.6%. With the development of society, elderly people are paying more and more attention to health. According to statistics, more than 10% of elderly people choose "no clear reason, just want to exercise" as a part of their daily life^[1].

The second highest ranking is social motivation, as elderly people aspire to broaden their horizons through physical exercise, establish closer social relationships, and help them better integrate into society, thereby gaining a sense of belonging^[2]. In addition, the third motivation is to improve one's sports skills and physical fitness, as well as to express a sense of achievement in sports activities. Ranking fourth is the motivation for fun. With the development of society, many elderly people have entered their later years and have more leisure time. Therefore, participating in physical exercise not only satisfies their interests but also makes them feel happy. Image motivation ranks last. Elderly people use physical exercise to improve their physical fitness and physical health, which has a lower score. However, they still hope to meet their internal needs through physical exercise and achieve a better quality of life.

Table 2: Motivation of elderly people to participate in physical exercise(n=212)

Motivation	Number Of People	Proportion%
Fun Motivation	27	12.7
Health Motivation	101	47.7
Social Motivation	37	17.3
Ability Motivation	30	14.1
Image Motivation	17	8.2

2.3. Duration and Frequency of physical exercise for the Elderly in Guilin urban area

2.3.1. Analysis of the frequency of physical exercise in the elderly

As shown in Table 3, the elderly in Guilin exercise 1-2 times a week, accounting for 50.47%. The second is 3-4 times a week, with a proportion of 28.77%. The number of people who exercise more than 5 times a week is the lowest, with only 44 people, accounting for 20.75%.

Table 3: Frequency of Physical Exercise for the Elderly (n=212)

Frequency(time/week)	Number Of People	Proportion%
1-2	107	50.4
3-4	61	28.9
≥5	44	20.7

Through on-site interviews, it was found that the factors affecting the frequency of physical exercise among elderly people are: 1. physical condition 2. Weather factors 3. Family factors.

As the elderly gradually age, a decline in their physical condition is inevitable. Sometimes, they may not be able to participate in physical exercise due to physical discomfort; Sometimes elderly people also have to take care of their children due to family factors, which greatly reduces their time to participate in physical exercise, so they can only have very little time to engage in 1-2 physical exercises per week. In addition, elderly people also indicate that sometimes they are unable to participate in physical exercise due to weather factors, such as strong winds, heavy rain, and other adverse weather conditions.

2.3.2. Analysis of the Length of physical exercise of the Elderly in Guilin City

As shown in Table 4, the duration of physical exercise for the elderly in the Guilin urban area varies from 15min to 60min. Among them, 28.77% of elderly people have a physical exercise interval of 30-60 minutes, while the number of people who have a physical exercise interval of more than 60 minutes is the lowest, with 44 people, accounting for 20.75%.

Table 4: Duration of Exercise for Elderly People (n=212)

Exercise Duration	Number Of People	Proportion%
<15min	47	22.2
15~30min	60	28.3
31~60min	61	28.8
>60min	44	20.7

Through on-site interviews, it was found that the length of time elderly people participate in physical exercise is not fixed, and it depends on the weather even if affected by the environment. The second most influential factor in the duration of physical exercise for elderly people is family factors, such as whether they need to take care of their children. Additionally, some elderly people may have poor physical conditions and may need periodic treatment to affect the duration of exercise.

For some elderly people who exercise for more than 60 minutes, most of them choose to take a slow walk to a nearby park square or specialized track and field and engage in long-term jogging, jogging, and other exercise activities with friends. These elderly people have more free time and exercise more frequently compared to other elderly people; A considerable number of elderly people are accustomed to taking walks with others after meals, along communities or streets, mainly to digest food. Only when there is no need to take care of the children at home on weekends, will one set aside time to participate in other physical exercises alone^[3].

2.4. Analysis of the forms of the elderly participating in physical exercise in Guilin City

According to the latest survey results, "walking (quiet walking and walking)", "dance (square dance, social dance, folk dance, etc.)", and "martial arts (Tai Chi, etc.)" are considered the most important physical exercise programs for the elderly, with 42% of the elderly including "walking (quiet walking and walking)" in their exercise plans. Due to the relatively limited facilities and lack of special technical skills, these physical exercise programs are more suitable for the elderly. However, in contrast, the participation rate of elderly people in sports events that require high physical fitness, skills, and equipment, such as equipment, ball games, and combat, is only 21%, indicating that they prioritize their

ease of use, economic benefits, and practicality when choosing physical exercise programs.

Table 5: Selection of Physical Exercise Forms for the Elderly (n=212)

Exercise form	Number of people	Proportion%
Walk	87	42
Ball Games	14	6
Square Dance	45	21
Martial Arts	39	19
Jogging	22	10
Other	5	2

Through on-site interviews, it was found that most elderly people in urban areas choose to take a quiet walk with their families after dinner in the evening. For other sports, most elderly people believe that there are not many physical exercises suitable for them to participate in. The most suitable ones are square dance and Tai Chi. Except for a very small proportion of elderly people who participate in ball games, the remaining elderly people have little foundation in these sports when they are young. Even if they participate, they are imitating and learning, and once they haven't learned for a long time, they are easy to lose interest. The elderly mainly rely on imitation for learning, lacking professional and scientific guidance, and there are few professional personnel in the community to guide and practice. A considerable number of elderly people express their desire to master a sport but suffer from the lack of professional guidance personnel and develop a sense of withdrawal^[2].

2.5. Analysis of the Selection of Physical Training Sites for the Elderly in Guilin City

In terms of sports venues, according to the survey results, at present, there are significant differences in the choice of sports venues for the elderly. "Parks and squares", "vacant land near the residence", "unit Sports venue", and "charged stadiums" can meet their needs for sports, but the satisfaction of "unit Sports venue", "charged stadiums" and "public stadiums (stadiums)" is not high. The proportion of elderly people in both venues is over 90%. In addition, some elderly people believe that these venues need further improvement to better meet their health needs. Most elderly people's fitness activities are conducted in parks and squares^[4].

Table 6: Tendency of elderly people to participate in physical exercise venues (n=212)

Field	Number Of People	Proportion%
Community Vacant Land	55	25.9
Park Plaza	130	61.4
Exercise At Home	13	6.1
Ball Venues	14	6.6

Through survey interviews, it was found that elderly people prioritize distance and economic factors when choosing venues. If the exercise venue is too far away from the community where they live, it is not considered for elderly people to participate in physical exercise venues. Secondly, it is best to provide free exercise, as most elderly people rely on retirement pensions or family support for their financial resources after retirement. So elderly people often choose places such as parks and squares when participating in physical exercise. However, a considerable number of elderly people express their desire to participate in sports events that interest them at professional venues. However, there are few professional venues and related facilities. For example, some elderly people like to play table tennis but need to walk for half an hour to another community venue before they can have facilities for physical exercise.

In addition, the number of parks and community open spaces in the urban area of Guilin will increase sharply every evening. Many elderly people say that they often have no place to do physical exercises. They go late and even have no venues. Secondly, there is also a shortage of fitness facilities, with parks and community construction equipment in the vicinity of the city being slightly inadequate. It is common for multiple people to wait for one piece of equipment, and the facilities are sometimes used by children. However, many of the existing fitness equipment and facilities are not suitable for the elderly. To sum up, the elderly have a relatively large demand for Sports venues and facilities, both in quantity and category.

3. Conclusions and Recommendations

3.1. Conclusions

The population base of the elderly in the Guilin urban area participating in physical exercise is large. With the increase of age, the number of people participating in physical exercise decreases; Education level is generally in primary school; There are many types of industries engaged in before retirement, with agriculture and military personnel as the main subjects; Most of the income after retirement is supported by the family.

There are many motivational factors for elderly people to participate in physical exercise, mainly health motivation followed by social motivation.

The proportion of elderly people participating in physical exercise is the highest, with the number of people exercising 1-2 times a week. The number of people who exercise for 30-60 minutes each time is the highest. The factors that affect exercise frequency and duration include physical condition, family factors, and weather factors.

The elderly in Guilin City have a high demand for physical exercise, but there is a lack of professional guidance personnel and Sports venue, which has a negative impact on the elderly to participate in physical exercise.

3.2. Recommendations

3.2.1. Cultivate professional social sports guidance talents

As a special group, the elderly need professional guidance to ensure the scientificity of physical exercise. At present, most of the elderly participate in physical exercise spontaneously, lacking the guidance of professionals and coaches. Therefore, the elderly need professionals to develop scientific forms of physical exercise for the elderly, so that the elderly can carry out a scientific and reasonable physical exercise to promote their health. At present, a large number of sports talents have migrated to teaching positions or coaches after graduation, resulting in a lack of professional social sports guidance talents in China. This is one of the main factors that hinder the development of community sports at present. Therefore, the elderly lack professional sports guidance and scientific health sports knowledge when carrying out sports activities. The addition of social sports guidance talents with professional sports skills can fully leverage their professional advantages and promote the development of community sports. On this basis, the local government should strengthen the absorption of sports talents from various universities and fill the current gap in community sports. Professional guidance and popular science-related sports knowledge shall be provided when the elderly are taking physical exercise. Further, promote the better development of physical exercise for the elderly.

3.2.2. Make full use of facilities and resources in the Sports venue

The current selection of physical exercise venues for the elderly mainly focuses on parks and squares, resulting in a large number of people at a certain period. Many elderly people give up exercising because they do not have activity venues. The government needs to increase investment in social resources and develop scientific sports plans. First, we need to expand community sports facilities to meet the needs of more elderly people. In addition, Sports venues facilities should be improved to better meet the needs of the elderly. At the same time, in addition to the parks and squares, there are still some Sports venue that have not been utilized. Such as the school playground or the local sports stadium for any competition schedule. At the same period, they are all idle. The exercise time for elderly people is mainly in the evening or early morning after meals, so they can use their free time to plan free venues together with the government, schools, and communities, and make full use of idle sports facilities and resources. It can maximize the utilization of sports resources and also solve the problem of insufficient physical exercise venues for the elderly^[5].

References

- [1] Yang Yi, Liu Donglei, Cui Lili, Liu Xinru. *The Current Situation and Strategies of Sports Development for the Elderly in China*[J]. *Sports Culture Guide*, 2023(03):54-60+68.
- [2] Wang Longhong. *Developing Elderly Sports Against the Background of Healthy Aging*[J]. *Economic Research Guide*, 2022(28):38-40.

[3] Fan Dexiong. *Research on the Current Situation of Sports Participation of the Elderly from the Perspective of National Fitness*[C]. Physical Fitness Training Branch of China Sports Science Society, Abstracts of the First "the Belt and Road" International Physical Fitness Summit Forum in 2022, 2022:97-98..

[4] Gao Fang. *The current situation and influencing factors of physical exercise among elderly people in rural areas*[J]. *Journal of Gerontology*, 2022,42(13):3324-3326.

[5] Wang Hongkai. *Research on the Promotion Mechanism of Sports for Urban Elderly from the Perspective of Positive Aging*[D]. Chengdu Sport University, 2022.

[6] Li Yufan. *Research on the Status Quo and Influencing Factors of Physical Exercise Behavior of the Elderly in Chenggong District Community of Kunming City*[D]. Yunnan Normal University, 2022.