

## Exploration of Planning and Governance of Sports Services for the Elderly in Urban Communities

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**Abstract:** There are deficiencies and problems in the facilities, content, and quality of sports services for the elderly in urban communities, and corresponding measures need to be taken to improve and enhance them. This article explores the planning and governance of sports services for the elderly in urban communities. The planning principles of sports services for the elderly in urban communities are centered on ensuring that the sports needs of the elderly are met, emphasizing people-oriented, equality and justice, diversity and personalization, and sustainable growth. When implementing, attention should be paid to the physical and mental health and quality of life of the elderly, service barriers should be eliminated, a variety of sports should be provided, and long-term development plans should be formulated to ensure the stability and sustainability of services. At the same time, we should attach importance to environmental protection and explore diversified sources of funding to promote the comprehensive development of sports services for the elderly in urban communities. The results of this study can provide targeted recommendations for the government in formulating relevant policies, helping to optimize resource allocation, improve service quality.

### 1. Introduction

With the acceleration of the global population aging trend, the proportion of the elderly in the total population of society is gradually increasing. In China, this trend is particularly obvious, and the elderly population is huge and growing rapidly[1]. At the same time, as the main place for the elderly, the quality and level of sports services in urban communities directly affect the physical and mental health and quality of life of the elderly[2]. In recent years, although China has made some achievements in sports services for the elderly in urban communities, there are still many problems and deficiencies, such as imperfect service facilities, single service content and uneven service quality[3]. Therefore, how to improve the quality and level of sports services for the elderly in urban communities and meet the diversified needs of the elderly has become a key issue of current social concern.

The purpose of this study is to explore the planning and governance of sports services for the elderly in urban communities, with a view to providing reference for the development of sports services for the elderly in urban communities in China. The theoretical and practical significance of this study are as follows:

(1) Theoretical significance: Through in-depth research on the planning and governance of sports services for the elderly in urban communities, we can enrich and develop the theoretical system of sports for the elderly, community sports, public management and other related disciplines. At the same time, the planning and governance strategies proposed in this study can provide theoretical basis and reference for the formulation of relevant policies.

(2) Practical significance: This study pays attention to the practical problems of sports service for the elderly in urban communities and puts forward targeted solutions, which will help improve the quality of life of the elderly and promote their physical and mental health. In addition, this study can also provide guidance and reference for the government, community organizations, enterprises and other parties to participate in the practice of sports services for the elderly in urban

communities.

## **2. Present situation of sports service for the elderly in urban communities**

Sports services for the elderly in urban communities refer to various services provided by the government, community organizations, enterprises, and other entities to meet the needs of the elderly in sports, fitness, leisure and entertainment in urban communities[4]. This section provides a detailed description and analysis of the current situation of sports services for the elderly in urban communities from three aspects: service facilities, service content, and service quality. The details are as follows.

### **(1) Service facilities**

At present, the sports service facilities for the elderly in urban communities mainly include public places such as parks, squares, and elderly activity centers, as well as commercial sports facilities such as gyms and swimming pools. However, these facilities have shortcomings in terms of quantity, distribution, and quality. On the one hand, the number of public places is limited, which cannot meet the needs of a large number of elderly people, and some facilities in some places are outdated and severely damaged, posing safety hazards. On the other hand, commercial sports facilities are priced higher, exceeding the affordability of some elderly people.

### **(2) Service content**

The content of sports services for the elderly in urban communities mainly includes fitness guidance, sports activity organization, and popularization of sports knowledge. However, the current service content is relatively single, lacking specificity and innovation. For example, fitness guidance often only stays at simple motion demonstrations, lacking personalized guidance; Sports activities are mainly organized through traditional square dancing, Tai Chi, etc., lacking freshness and attractiveness; The form and content of popularizing sports knowledge are also relatively monotonous, lacking interest and interactivity.

### **(3) Service quality**

The quality of sports services for the elderly in urban communities varies and there are some problems. Firstly, the professional level and service awareness of service personnel need to be improved[5]. Some service personnel lack relevant professional knowledge and skills, and are unable to provide scientific and effective guidance for the elderly; Some service personnel lack service awareness and professional ethics, resulting in cold attitudes and poor service quality. Secondly, the safety and comfort of service facilities need to be improved. Some facilities have safety hazards, such as slippery floors and loose equipment; Some places have poor comfort, such as high noise and poor air quality.

The main reasons for this are as follows: Firstly, insufficient capital investment is one of the main reasons for the imperfect service facilities. The government's investment in sports services for the elderly is limited, resulting in insufficient quantity and quality of public places to meet the needs of the elderly; Meanwhile, the high operating costs of commercial sports facilities also limit their construction and development. Secondly, the lack of professional service personnel is also one of the important reasons for uneven service quality. Currently, most personnel engaged in sports services for the elderly have not received professional training and education, and lack relevant knowledge and skills; At the same time, the professional competence and moral level of some service personnel also need to be improved[6]. Finally, the lack of effective management and regulatory mechanisms is also one of the reasons for the frequent occurrence of service quality problems. At present, there is a lack of clear responsibility and effective means for the management and supervision of sports services for the elderly in urban communities, resulting in some violations and service quality issues not being dealt with and resolved in a timely manner.

## **3. Sports service planning for the elderly in urban communities**

With the trend of aging becoming more and more obvious, the demand for sports services for the elderly in urban communities is gradually prominent. In order to meet the physical and mental

health needs of the elderly and improve their quality of life, it is necessary to plan the sports services for the elderly in urban communities reasonably. The purpose of this plan is to clarify the development direction, key tasks and implementation path of sports services for the elderly in urban communities in the future, and to provide reference for the government, communities and enterprises. Specific planning principles and implementation points are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Planning principles and implementation points

Planning principle	Describe	Key points of implementation
People-oriented	To meet the sports needs of the elderly as a starting point, pay attention to their physical and mental health and quality of life.	Conduct demand surveys regularly to ensure that services meet the actual needs of the elderly.
		Provide suitable sports facilities and projects, and pay attention to the physical characteristics of the elderly.
		Strengthen health education and improve the understanding and participation of the elderly in sports services.
Equality and justice	Ensure that all elderly people can enjoy basic sports services, regardless of age, gender, economic status and other restrictions.	Eliminate the service threshold and ensure that all elderly people can participate equally.
		Provide barrier-free facilities to facilitate the participation of elderly people with mobility difficulties.
		Advocate the fair distribution of resources and avoid services tilting towards specific groups.
Diversification and individualization	Provide a variety of sports services to meet the individual needs of different elderly people.	Develop a variety of sports to meet the different interests of the elderly.
		Provide customized services to meet the special needs of different elderly people.
		Strengthen cooperation with social organizations and introduce more diversified service providers.
Sustainable growth	Ensure the long-term, stable and sustainable growth of sports services, and coordinate with the environment and society.	Make long-term development plans to ensure the stability and sustainability of services.
		Pay attention to environmental protection and ensure that the construction of sports facilities is in harmony with the environment.
		Explore diversified sources of funds, reduce dependence on government funds, and ensure sustainable growth.

Planning objectives:

The short-term goals (1-3 years) of the urban communities are to enhance sports service facilities catered to the elderly, broaden service coverage, intensify the training of service personnel in order to elevate service quality, and organize diverse sports activities aimed at encouraging the elderly's participation.

In the medium-term (4-6 years), the urban communities aim to establish a comprehensive sports service network tailored for the elderly, enabling resource sharing. They also plan to disseminate scientific fitness knowledge among the elderly to improve their health literacy, and foster sports clubs designed for the elderly's self-management and mutual assistance.

The long-term goals (7-10 years) of the urban communities strive to shape a collaborative sports service model for the elderly, involving efforts from the government, community, enterprises, and society. They aspire to establish a robust legal and policy framework for elderly sports services and cultivate a distinctive sports service brand tailored for the elderly.

When planning sports services for the elderly in urban communities, the key undertakings are as follows:

First, facility development is crucial. This involves constructing or renovating indoor and outdoor sports facilities specifically designed for the elderly, such as fitness trails, multi-purpose sports fields, and dedicated gyms. The layout of these facilities must be optimized to ensure adequate coverage in urban communities, while facility maintenance and management should be bolstered to guarantee safety and comfort for the elderly users.

Second, service team development is essential. This entails devising training and certification standards for service personnel to enhance their professionalism and service orientation. Additionally, a volunteer recruitment and management system should be established to encourage greater volunteer involvement in elderly sports services. Collaborations with relevant professional institutions are also necessary to attract professional talent and strengthen the team.

Third, organizing sports activities is vital. This involves offering a range of sports activities such as aerobics, yoga, dance, ball sports, etc., regularly hosting sports events or festivals tailored for the elderly to encourage participation. Furthermore, the elderly should be encouraged to spontaneously organize their own sports activities or clubs, fostering a sense of self-management and self-service.

Fourth, promotion and education are key. Efforts should be made to amplify the publicity and promotion of sports services for the elderly to enhance societal awareness and support. Educational programs on health knowledge and scientific fitness should be conducted to improve the health literacy of the elderly. Additionally, advocating for families and society to jointly recognize and address the sports needs of the elderly is crucial, fostering a favorable social atmosphere.

Lastly, management and evaluation are essential. A mechanism for managing and evaluating elderly sports services in urban communities should be established and refined. This includes developing service standards and quality evaluation systems to regularly assess and improve services. Encouraging social oversight and participation by establishing a system for problem feedback and resolution is also important for continuous improvement and accountability.

The implementation path and guarantee measures for the governance of sports services for the elderly in urban communities are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Implementation path and safeguard measures of sports service governance for the elderly in urban communities

Implementation path and safeguard measures	Specific content
Formulate detailed implementation plans and annual plans.	Clarify the specific requirements of each task
	Set time nodes to ensure timely implementation.
Establish a working mechanism	Government-led planning and decision-making process
	Community is responsible for the organization and implementation of specific services.
	Enterprises and social forces participate in support and service provision.
Strengthen financial security	The government increased investment to ensure the support of core funds.
	Encourage social capital to participate in the construction of sports services for the elderly and form diversified sources of funds.
Strengthen legal, regulatory and policy support	Improve relevant laws and regulations, clarify the responsibilities and obligations of all parties, and ensure the standardized development of services.
	Introduce preferential policies to lower the threshold for enterprises and social forces to participate and stimulate their enthusiasm.
Establish a regular evaluation and adjustment mechanism	According to the implementation, regularly evaluate the planning and services to ensure that the quality and effect meet the expected standards.
	According to the evaluation results, timely adjust and optimize the planning to ensure its continuous fit with the actual needs.

#### 4. Governance of sports service for the elderly in urban communities

With the continuous development of sports service for the elderly in urban communities, how to

effectively manage it and ensure its sustained and healthy development has become an important issue. The purpose of this governance is to clarify the governance structure, mode and implementation path of sports services for the elderly in urban communities, so as to achieve standardized, efficient and sustainable growth of services.

#### (1) Governance principles

Rule of law: All service activities are carried out within the legal framework and must be managed in accordance with established laws and regulations. Diversification fosters a governance structure that encourages multi-participation, including government, community, enterprises and society. Democratization guarantees the elderly's right to know, participate and supervise, thus ensuring that their voices are fully represented in governance decisions. Specialization requires the introduction of professional institutions and talents to improve the proficiency and efficiency of governance practice.

#### (2) Governance structure

Government-led: the government should play a leading role in governance, responsible for formulating policies, providing financial support and conducting supervision. Community implementation: the community is responsible for the organization and implementation of specific services, including facility management and activity organization. Enterprise and social participation: encourage enterprises and social forces to participate in governance and provide financial, technical and human support. Participation of the elderly and their families: the elderly and their families should become important participants in governance, and put forward demands, suggestions and feedback.

#### (3) Governance mode

Regulatory governance: To enhance the quality and legality of services, it is essential to improve relevant laws and regulations, clarify the responsibilities and obligations of all parties involved, and ensure the standardization and legalization of these services. Policy guidance should be introduced to encourage enterprises and social forces to actively participate in governance, promoting diversification and individualization of services offered. A contract management system must be established to clearly define the rights and obligations of both service providers and buyers, guaranteeing the quality and efficiency of services rendered. Information disclosure and transparency are paramount; thus, an information disclosure mechanism should be set up to regularly publish pertinent service information and accept social supervision. Participatory governance is vital, as it encourages the elderly and their families to engage in the governance process, listens to their opinions and suggestions, and ensures that their needs are addressed. Lastly, a robust supervision mechanism must be established to regularly evaluate and improve services, ensuring their overall quality and effectiveness.

#### (4) Implementation path and safeguard measures

① To ensure effective governance, a detailed implementation plan and an annual schedule must be formulated, outlining the specific requirements and timelines for each task. ② Organizational assurance must be strengthened by establishing a robust governance structure and operational mechanism, ensuring the active participation and collaboration of all stakeholders. ③ Financial support is crucial for the smooth execution of governance initiatives. The government should increase its investment and incentivize the involvement of social capital in these efforts. ④ To bolster governance, it is essential to fortify the commitment to talent development, which includes training and recruiting professionals who can enhance the expertise and efficiency of our governance practices. ⑤ An effective evaluation and adjustment mechanism must be put in place to ensure that the governance plan is regularly reviewed and fine-tuned based on its implementation status. ⑥ Efforts to amplify publicity and education should be intensified to boost societal awareness and backing for the governance of sports services aimed at the elderly. It is crucial to encourage society at large to acknowledge and address the athletic needs of the elderly, thereby nurturing a supportive social environment.

## 5. Conclusions

The governance of sports service for the elderly in urban communities is a long-term and complicated task, which requires the joint participation and efforts of the government, communities, enterprises and society. Through in-depth discussion on the planning principles of sports service for the elderly in urban communities, this study has defined the core principles such as people-oriented, equality and justice, diversification and individuality, and sustainable growth, which has laid a solid foundation for improving the quality of life of the elderly and promoting their physical and mental health. In terms of specific implementation, this paper puts forward some safeguard measures, such as formulating detailed implementation plan and annual plan, establishing working mechanism of government leading, community implementation, enterprise and social participation, strengthening financial guarantee, improving laws, regulations and policy support, and establishing regular evaluation and adjustment mechanism, so as to ensure the effective implementation of planning principles. Through the implementation of the sports service planning and governance scheme for the elderly in urban communities, it is expected to promote the standardization, efficiency and sustainable growth of sports services for the elderly in urban communities and provide better sports services and quality of life for the elderly. In order to meet the individual needs of different elderly people, we should continue to enrich the service content, improve the service quality, and strengthen cooperation with all parties to jointly promote the continuous optimization and development of sports services for the elderly in urban communities.

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