

Motivation and Strategies for the Elderly to Participate in Soccer

Yaochuan Chang¹. Hanyang Wang¹. QianXin Li² and Yazhen zhang^{3*}

¹School of Physical Education and Health, Zhaoqing University, Zhaoqing 526061, China

²Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur 56000, Cheras, Malaysia

³Ningde Normal University, Ningde 352000, China

Email: 675689744@qq.com

How to cite this paper: Chang, Y., Wang, H., Li, Q. X., & Zhang, Y. Z. (2025). Motivation and Strategies for the Elderly to Participate in Soccer. *Education and Social Work*, 1(1), 159–164. ISSN Print: 3079-515X. ISSN Online: 3079-5168.
<https://doi.org/10.63313/ESW.9018>

Published: 2025-04-17

Copyright © 2025 by author(s) and

Erytis Publishing Limited.

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0).

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



Abstract

This study explores the process and thoughts of the elderly participating in football, and the differences in learning motivation and strategies, and uses the research results as a reference for the community to carry out suitable football activities for the elderly. The research object is to conduct a questionnaire survey on the learning motivation and strategy of the elderly over 50 years old who participate in football activities. The questionnaire survey platform is Tencent online questionnaire. It focuses on the learning motivation and strategy of elderly people participating in football activities, covers basic information such as gender, age, and exercise frequency, and deeply explores the key factors that affect the learning motivation and strategy of football activities. Based on the above research results, the research conclusions and suggestions are made.

Keywords

Silver-Haired People; Football; Learning Motivation; Strategy

1. Introduction

Elderly people refer to people over 50 years old. The motivation for participating in football is to maintain physical health and life vitality, or to enjoy fun. This study explores how the thinking of elderly people over 50 years old about participating in football activities affects their health. Most middle-aged and elderly people know that they must exercise every day, but there is no completely correct thinking about how to exercise. Only physical activity is exercise. This leads to many sports injuries, lack of interest, and discomfort and negative departure in the team. Leisure is considered to be an activity carried out after work or similar work, and this is usually also considered an objective condition for defining leisure (Kelly, 1990a). After entering old age, people withdraw from the labor market, although they have a lot of free time, but they have lost their work role. It can be seen that through participating in leisure sports, the elderly can resist aging, maintain physical fitness, slow down the rate of degeneration, promote health and prevent

diseases, improve the quality of life of individuals, relieve stress, increase interpersonal interaction, and obtain psychological satisfaction and other benefits, thus effectively delaying aging.

Silver-haired people are defined as people over the age of 50. Whether they are motivated to participate in football for their physical health and continued vitality, or for fun, and what strategies they use are the subjects of this study. This study examines how older adults over the age of 50 think about the health benefits of participation in football. Most of the adults interviewed knew that they must exercise every day, and how to exercise did not always have the right thinking. Only physical activity was exercise. This leads to a lot of injury to sports, or lack of interest, as well as discomfort and negative departures in the team. Leisure is seen here as an activity undertaken outside of work or similar work, and this is often seen as an objective condition for defining leisure (Kelly, 1990). When they reach old age, they retreat from the labour market and, although they have a lot of free time, they lose their working role. Thus, the participation of the silver-haired group in the literature on learning motivation, Cropley, M., Ayers, S., & Nokes, L. (2003) It has been pointed out that motivation can be called the driving force that leads to an individual's behavior, which allows an individual to engage in activities on a continuous basis, and thus triggers an engine when certain goals arise. Some scholars interpret motivation as based on intrinsic, personal characteristics such as need, interest, fun, and curiosity; Other scholars' interpretations are based on external and environmental factors such as reward, punishment, honor, social pressure, etc., i.e. they generally group motivations into internal and external motivations (Deci & Ryan, 1985) 。 In terms of the literature on learning strategies, Weinstein & Underwood (1985) divides learning strategies into several categories. Among them, support strategies are to reduce anxiety, concentrate, and arrange learning time. Meta-cognitive strategies are defined as setting learning goals, choosing learning strategies, evaluating learning outcomes and taking remedial measures. This study will therefore explore the current status of the motivations and strategies for the participation of the silver-haired population in football and explore the participation factors and composition strategies.

In addition, researchers found that many elderly people dropped out of learning football in the study, and based on the above literature, this study explores the direction of the needs of elderly people in the community and how to use learning motivation and strategies in the process of participation to make elderly people enjoy the fun of football.

2. Methods

This study is based on the theme of "Learning Motivation and Strategies of Participating in Football", and the quantitative research tool used is the "Learning Motivation Scale" and the "Learning Strategy Scale" as research tools, and the research is conducted by questionnaire survey method. In order to make this questionnaire have a good content validity, after completing the first draft of the questionnaire, three scholars and experts in the relevant field were invited to review the first draft of the questionnaire. Through the

revision and suggestions of scholars and experts on the content and meaning of the questionnaire first draft.

The research object is the members of four teams in Guangzhou, Qingyuan, Zhaoqing and Hong Kong, Guangdong Province. Through the online questionnaire platform, 100 questionnaires were filled out and more than 90% of the questionnaires were returned. Among them, 92 were valid questionnaires and 8 were invalid. After the recovery, we will analyze and discuss through SPSS software, and finally summarize the research conclusions and recommendations.

3. Discussion

3.1. Basic data of the elderly with white hair

(1) The proportion of men among the elderly participating in the survey is significantly higher than that of women. Of the 92 valid questionnaires, 81 were from men, accounting for 88%, and 11 were from women, accounting for 12%.

Table1. Gender ratio

Background variable	Group	N	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	81	88
	Female	11	12

(2) The proportion of participants in the 50-54 age group is the largest. Among the 92 valid questionnaires, the proportion of those aged 50-54 was 46.0%, accounting for 42 people, which was higher than that of other age groups.

Table2. Age participation rate

Background variable	Group	N	Percentage (%)
Age group	50~54	42	46
	55~59	20	22
	More than 60	30	33

3.2. Motivation of the elderly to participate in leisure sports

(1) The motivation for the elderly to participate in leisure sports is diverse and positive. The high proportion of "strongly agree" and "agree" in the motivation scale shows that the motivation of the elderly to participate in football is positive.

(2) The motivation of the elderly to participate in leisure sports mainly revolves around health, interest, time, and socialization. The statistical analysis summarized four main points: Health factors (about 50%): Most respondents emphasized that health is the main motivation for participating in leisure sports, including maintaining physical health, delaying aging, and enhancing physical fitness. Interests and hobbies (about 25%): Interests and personal preferences are another important motivation, and many people participate in sports because they enjoy it or get pleasure from it. Time and economic factors (about 15%): Time and economic conditions are important external factors that affect participation in leisure sports, including lack of time and economic budget constraints. Social and emotional factors (about 10%): Some people participate in sports because they want to make new friends, spend time with their families, or get emotional satisfaction and

self-affirmation through sports.

Table3. Motivation of older people to participate in recreational sports

Item	Completely Agree (%)	Agree (%)
1	53.3	39.1
2	41.3	48.9
3	45.7	43.5
4	37	43.5
5	45.7	35.9
6	48.9	45.7
7	41.3	45.7
8	45.7	48.9
9	54.3	41.3
10	56.5	39.1

3.3. Strategies for Elderly Participation in Leisure Sports

(1) The proportion of people who exercise every day among the elderly is slightly more than half. Among the 92 valid questionnaires, 47 people answered "yes" to daily exercise, accounting for 51.0%, which is slightly more than half.

(2) When elderly people participate in leisure sports, they tend to strengthen their sports ability through social interaction. Most elderly people choose to improve their leisure sports ability by consulting friends, sharing videos, and learning with others. For example, "I will consult and invite friends to enhance my leisure sports ability" received 75 agreements, indicating that social interaction is an important strategy.

(3) When learning leisure sports strategies, the elderly tend to combine multiple methods, including self-study, professional guidance, social interaction, and utilization of network resources. The statistical analysis summarized four main points: Self-study and exploration (about 30%): Many elderly people learn leisure sports skills through personal efforts, exploration, reading books and visual materials, emphasizing individual initiative and self-improvement. Professional guidance and consultation (about 25%): Some respondents tend to consult professional coaches, participate in professional training courses, or learn by observing the actions of professionals, showing the importance of professional guidance and high-quality learning resources. Social interaction and group participation (about 20%): Some elderly people choose to learn new skills by discussing with friends, participating in club activities, or communicating in the community, which not only helps to improve skills but also adds fun to social interaction. Network and multimedia resource utilization (about 25%): With the development of technology, more and more elderly people learn leisure sports by watching videos, using network teaching resources and social media, which is convenient, flexible and easy to access.

(4) Gender has a small impact on the daily exercise of the elderly, and male participation is slightly higher. The proportion of men and women who exercise every day is not sig-

nificantly different, with 89.0% of men and 87.0% of women exercising every day, both slightly higher than women, indicating that gender differences have a limited impact on exercise participation, but men are slightly more active.

Table4. Gender difference

Gender	T	F
Male	89%	87%
Female	11%	13%

(5) The proportion of daily exercise in the 55-59 age group is relatively high

The proportion of people who exercise every day is 53.0% for those over 60 years old, 45.0% for those between 50 and 54 years old, and 60.0% for those between 55 and 59 years old, which shows that people between 55 and 59 are more active in exercise.

Table5. Exercise population over 50 years of age

Age group	T	F
50~54	45%	55%
55~59	60%	40%
More than 60	53%	47%

Conclusions

From the above research results and discussions, it is shown that the motivation of the elderly to participate in leisure sports is diverse and quite positive, mainly around the four aspects of health, interest, time and social interaction. Among them, the proportion of health factors is the highest, followed by interest and hobby. In terms of participation strategy, the elderly tend to strengthen their sports ability through social interaction, and learn through a variety of methods such as autonomous learning, professional guidance and network resources.

Based on the above, it can be inferred that the motivation for the elderly to participate in football is positive and mainly due to health and interest factors. The strategies for participation include four factors: social interaction, autonomous learning, professional guidance, and network resources. The football needs of the elderly require the relevant units to further promote the concept of health and football knowledge, and increase the relevant venues, so as to meet the needs of the elderly's interest in football. At the same time, the construction of community or group organizations can be strengthened to provide more opportunities for social interaction among the elderly, thus promoting communication and mutual growth among the elderly, and forming ball friends to facilitate the participation of the elderly in football. In addition, attention should be paid to the integration of professional guidance and network resources, so as to provide the elderly with more convenient and efficient learning channels, thus promoting the elderly to actively participate in football and improve their quality of life.

References

- [1] Cropley, M., Ayers, S., & Nokes, L. (2003). People don't exercise because they can't think of reasons to exercise: An examination of causal reasoning within the transtheoretical model. *Psychology, Health & Medicine*, 8, 409-414.
- [2] Dannecker, E. A., Hausenblas, H. A., Connaughton, D. P., & Lovins, T. R. (2003). Validation of a stages of exercise change questionnaire. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 74, 236-247.
- [3] Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior*. New York: Plenum.
- [4] Kelly, J.R., "Leisure and Aging: A Second Agenda. *Society and Leisure*", 13(1), 1990a, pp.145-167.
- [5] Weinstein, C. E., & Underwood, V. L. (1985). Learning strategies: The how of learning. In J. W. Segal, S. F. Chiman, & R. Glaser (Eds.), *Thinking and learning skills (Vol. 1) --- Relating instruction to research*. Hillsdale: LEA.