
RESEARCH ARTICLE

Elderly Care in Hangzhou Advantage. Catch-up Pattern Explanation

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ABSTRACT

By the end of 2018, the elderly population aged 60 years and above in Hangzhou was 1,744,400, accounting for 22.53% of the total population. The superposition trend of population aging, aging, inability and empty nesting is obvious. To address this problem, the Hangzhou Municipal Government has used its own advantages to rationally plan, innovate and develop in recent years to contribute to the cause of elderly care and promote social civilization. Hangzhou has taken a number of measures in the field of elderly care, aiming to build a comprehensive and sustainable basic elderly care service system and improve the quality of life of elderly individuals. Hangzhou encourages social forces to participate in old-age care, forming a diversified governance model led by the government, with social participation and market operation. This model not only improves the efficiency and quality of elderly care services but also provides useful experience for social governance innovation. • Intelligent elderly care exploration: Hangzhou actively explores the intelligent elderly care model, uses scientific and technological means to improve the level of elderly care services, and provides a demonstration of the digital transformation of the national elderly care industry. Practice of the Healthy China Strategy • Healthy Retirement: Hangzhou promotes the healthy retirement of the elderly and prolongs healthy life expectancy through the combination of medical care, health management and other measures, which is highly consistent with the "Healthy China" strategy.

KEYWORDS

Hangzhou area. ;advantages; Innovative development; Multiple measures; Digital intelligence

ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

With the development of society and the intensification of population aging, the issue of old age can become the focus of attention from all walks of life. In Hangzhou, this problem is prominent. According to the latest data, the resident elderly population aged 60 and above in Hangzhou has reached 2.111 million, and the elderly population aged 60 and above has reached 1.932 million, accounting for 23.15% of the city's total population. Hangzhou has entered a moderately aging society 4. In the face of such a large group of elderly people, how to let them enjoy their old age in peace is an important issue that Hangzhou urgently needs to solve. In recent years, Hangzhou has continuously explored and innovated in the construction of the elderly service system and has achieved a series of remarkable results. "During the 14th Five-Year Plan, Hangzhou proposed building "digital wisdom Hangzhou · livable paradise" at a high level and accelerate the construction of a socialist modern international metropolis. In the field of health care, Hangzhou proposed the following: focus on the construction of "Digital Wisdom Hangzhou · Livable Paradise" and the demonstration area of common prosperity; continue to promote the innovation and reform of the integration of medical care and health care; focus on "integration, quality, precision and intelligence"; improve "all-round guarantee, full-cycle management, full-element integration, whole social participation, full-chain development the "aging work mechanism"; fully implement the construction of the "Six major" system; achieve the goal of "healthy aging and happy aging"; and promote the high-quality development of the cause of aging.

2. The advantages of the natural environment in Hangzhou

Hangzhou is located in the subtropical monsoon area and has four distinct seasons. It is hot and rainy in summer and mild and rainy in winter. The average annual temperature is approximately 18.6°C, the annual humidity is approximately 70.3%, the annual precipitation is approximately 1167.2 mm, and the annual sunshine duration is approximately 2101.3 hours. It is a good place for retirement and leisure.

As the second largest forest area in Zhejiang Province, Hangzhou has a forest area of 16.516 million Mu, with a forest coverage rate of 65.35%. It has 2 national scenic spots, 2 national nature reserves and 50 forest parks of various types. Hangzhou has a total of 11 national forest health bases (including pilots), 1 national forest health pilot construction county, one national forest health care pilot construction (township) town, 1 Chinese forest health care house, 1 Chinese forest oxygen bar, 14 Zhejiang forest health care bases, 16 Zhejiang forest health care famous towns (forest leisure health towns), 87 Zhejiang forest oxygen bars, 95 Zhejiang forest houses, and a total of 9 categories 227 Place. After screening, sorting, and removing repeated selections, a total of 179 health resources were prescribed in Hangzhou. Rich forest resources and a good ecological environment provide unique resource advantages for the development of the forest health industry. Hangzhou is a natural oxygen bar that has been used to recuperate elderly people.

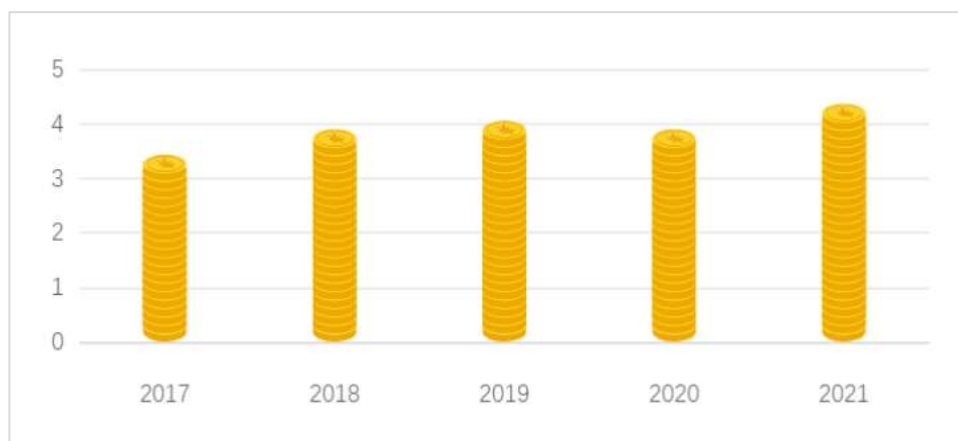
Hangzhou is surrounded by natural resources such as West Lake, the Xixi wetland, the Grand Canal, the Qiantang River, etc., and continues to accelerate the development of the three products. "Wetland Group", creating an international wetland city with rich water resources, gives Hangzhou the reputation of the "Wetland Water City".

3. Social advantages of Hangzhou

3.1 Economic consumption capacity

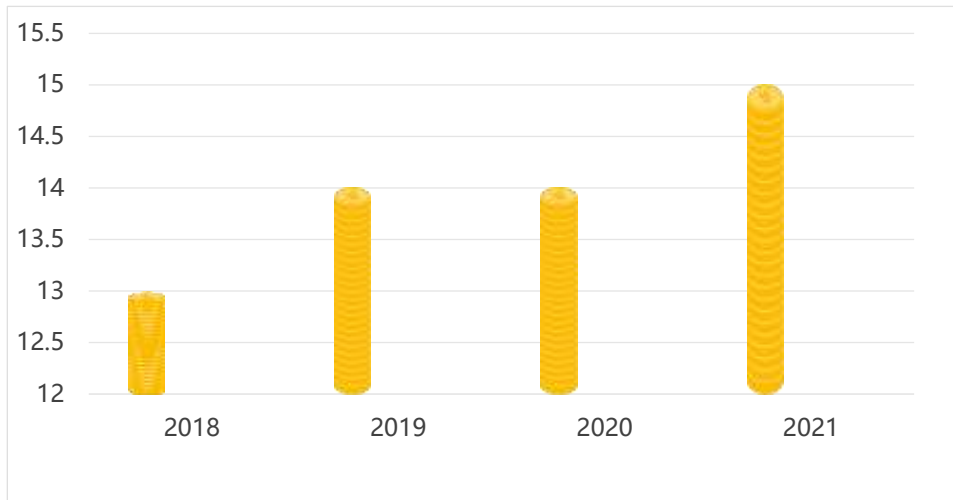
As shown in Table 1, according to the statistics of the Hangzhou Bureau of Statistics in 2021, the per capita disposable income of all residents in Hangzhou will be 67,700 yuan, and the per capita consumption expenditure in Hangzhou will be 44,600 yuan. As shown in Table 2, the Hangzhou per capita GDP will be 151,000 yuan per person in 2021. As shown in the table, per capita consumption and per capita GDP have roughly increased annually. Hangzhou residents have sufficient consumption capacity and a certain ability to support their own elderly economy.

Table 1 : The per capita consumption expenditure of Hangzhou residents is 44,600 yuan/person in 2021



Data source CEIdata

Table 2 :Hangzhou per capita GDP is151,000yuan per person in 2021



Data source CEI data

3.2 Transportation capacity and preferential policies

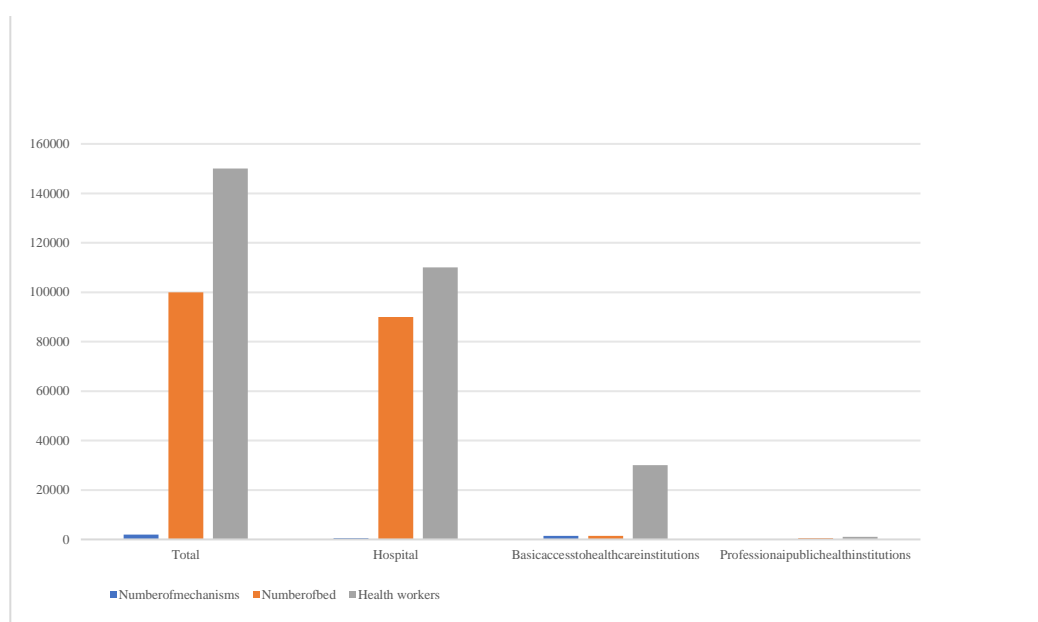
Elderly people also need to visit relatives and friends and travel together in daily life. Therefore, convenient transportation is also one of the prerequisites for old age. Hangzhou has built a "four-in-one" public transportation system. With the comprehensive completion and operation of the third phase of rail transit in Hangzhou in 2022, a "four-in-one" urban public transportation travel system has been formed with rail transit as the main body, public cars and trams as the basis, and water buses and public bicycles as supplements. Among them, the rail transit operating mileage has reached 516 kilometers, ranking sixth in the number of cities. The average daily passenger volume is 3.88 million, ranking seventh in the country. There are 1,085 public car and tram operating routes, with an operating mileage of 17,900 kilometers and an average daily passenger volume of 2.47 million. There are 5,327 public bicycle service points and 124,000 vehicles, with a maximum daily rental volume of more than 473,300 people, and the cumulative rental volume exceeds 1.254 billion, free use. The rate has reached 98%, and the operation scale ranks first in the world; there are 4 water bus routes, with an average daily passenger flow of more than 3,100. Transportation is convenient and well connected. The excellent water transportation, land transportation and air transportation network connects Hangzhou with Shanghai, Nanjing, Ningbo and other surrounding cities. Hangzhou city stipulates that elderly people aged 60--69 years in the city can take all bus routes and water buses equipped with IC cards on board toll machines with elderly discount IC cards and renting public bicycles. Elderly individuals over the age of 70 can also apply for a senior discount IC card and enjoy top-up plus preferential treatment. In addition, elderly individuals aged 70 and above can take buses No. 1--499 and No. 700--799 for free with relevant documents. During off-peak hours (except at 7:00--8:30 a.m. and 17:00--18:30 p.m.), elderly people over 70 years old can take the bus for free and half-price during peak hours. Policy for elderly people from other places: Elderly people from other places can also apply for preferential IC cards for elderly people in Hangzhou. If they are elderly people aged 70 and above, they can also enjoy the same preferential policies as the local elderly.

3.3 Medical security

Medical security is indispensable in elderly care services. With increasing age, the incidence of underlying diseases requires timely medical treatment. It is also very important to provide medical care at home. For example, in recent years, with the support of the 4.91 million yuan Central Special Lottery Public Welfare Fund, West Lake District, Hangzhou city has implemented an action project to improve basic elderly care services at home and in the community. In response to the needs of most elderly people at home, the "one bed for elderly people" service was launched to provide professional, accurate and continuous door-to-door medical and health services for elderly people at home. Table 3 shows that by the end of 2024, there were 28,424 medical institutions in Hangzhou, including 415 hospitals; 2,405 primary medical and health institutions; and 11 professional public institutions and 11 other institutions. There were 100,968 beds; 95,889 hospital beds; 2,897 primary medical and health institutions; 1,186 professional public health institutions; and 996 other institutions. There were 145,789 health technicians;

110,276 hospitals; 32,456 primary medical and health institutions; 2,248 specialized public health institutions; and 809 institutions.

Table 3 : Analysis on the number of medical institutions, beds and health technicians in Hangzhou from October To December 2024



The table is from Hangzhou Municipal Health Commission.

4. Hangzhou Retirement Model

4.1 Travel and retirement

With the development of society, the needs of elderly people are no longer limited to old age. They need various cultural and entertainment activities to enrich their lives, such as reading, music, painting, and tourism. In recent years, Hangzhou has also followed. In the Yangtze River Delta in China, 24 of the 300 residential destinations and 100 healthy elderly destinations were selected. For example, Liwu village, Xukou town, Fuyang District, is 75 kilometers away from downtown Hangzhou. The Laoshan Xiaodie Kong Dream Pastoral Ecological Tourism Area integrates ecological living, mountain village retirement, vacation research, pastoral leisure, etc., with a total area of 4200 mu. With the theme of ecological health, the Laoshan Xiaodie Kong Dream Pastoral Ecological Tourism Area is an experience place for the development of cultural research, vacation and leisure, traditional Chinese medicine ecological travel and retirement, the forest economy, and sports and health tourism.

4.2. "One-on-one" household to accompany the elderly

At the beginning of 2024, the Civil Affairs Bureau of Binjiang District launched the community version "Multigenerational Building", which opened the home care model of "neighborhood mutual assistance". Through "one-on-one" household entry, it accompanied the elderly nearby. The companions need to provide no less than 10 hours of loving companionship for the elderly in pairs during the first month. Every month, they can receive a rental subsidy of 500 yuan, as well as discounts for dining in designated (community) canteens and other benefits. This mutual model not only alleviates the inner emptiness of the empty-nested elderly but also relieves the pressure on the living capital of some modern young people.

4.3. The practice of "intelligent digital old-age care"

First, the upgrading of consulting services. The city's unified manual service hotline 96345100 has been opened to provide policy answers, facilitating inquiries, service consultations, etc., for elderly individuals, with a total of 32,970 answers. Through an intelligent pension butler, only a small amount of personal information such as age and household registration on the mobile phone terminal needs to be entered, and the policy treatment, processing channels and processing materials you can enjoy in real time can be matched.

Two is a security guard upgrade. For example, the first batch of intelligent early warning and monitoring of elderly people living alone in the province was carried out on Xiaohu Street. Water and electric meter monitoring transformers were used to collect and record the water and electricity consumption data of 318 elderly people living alone 24 hours a day. When the elderly's water consumption continues to exceed the set time or exceeds the set time without changing the T data, the alarm is triggered, and the elderly helper checks in time.

Three is a nontactile experience upgrade. To normalize epidemic prevention and control, the application of intelligent elderly care should be expanded. By launching contactless meal pick-up in the elderly canteen, the smart dining table provides self-service food selection, automatic recognition and active settlement. As long as the "face recognition" file is complete, the elderly can realize "face-swiping eating" in the elderly canteen with smart dining tables installed in the city. The elderly care institution "Cloud House Viewing" provides elderly individuals and their families with the ability to access and navigate the surrounding elderly care facilities through the mobile phone app or WeChat official account. A total of 150 elderly care service institutions provide VR panoramic guidance to help the elderly have a more intuitive understanding of their favourite elderly care institutions without leaving home.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Development significance

The elderly in Hangzhou are not only about making full use of it. Owing to their unique natural advantages, they seize the opportunity to promote the harmonious development of society and rely on big data digital intelligence to help society take care of the elderly conveniently. Hangzhou has always been at the forefront of development. In the future, facing the cause of elderly individuals, I believe that they will continue to study and make a solid contribution to the cause of elderly individuals. The development of elderly care in Hangzhou not only improved the quality of life of the elderly but also promoted social harmony, economic development and improved the level of governance, providing a useful reference for the construction of the national elderly care service system.

5.2 Underdevelopment and suggestions

Although the development of Hangzhou elderly care has achieved remarkable results, there are still several shortcomings. The specific problems and improvement suggestions are as follows: unreasonable regional layout: the distribution of elderly care institutions in some areas is uneven, such as Xixing Street in Binjiang District, where there are more elderly care beds but fewer elderly care beds in Changhe Street and Puyan Street. Community facilities are uneven: some elderly care service rooms in old residential areas are small in area, poor in location, incomplete in function, and lack suitable aging facilities. Professional care is weak: the services of the community home care service center are mostly for the convenience of life and entertainment, and professional services such as rehabilitation nursing and cognitive disability care are insufficient. The layout of elderly care services should be optimized, and resources should be integrated: planning from the perspective of the whole district; integrating the capacity of district-level, street-level and community-level elderly care institutions; breaking the boundaries of service projects; and increasing construction, promoting the construction of family care beds, encouraging the development of community small elderly care institutions, and adding "microspace" for disability and dementia care.

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