

# China Short Comings and Promotion Paths of Community Fitness Public Service Construction in the Promotion of National Fitness Strategy

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**Abstract:** In the process of promoting the national fitness strategy, the development of national fitness in China has experienced a transformation process from standardization to equalization to digitalization and intelligence. Community residents' fitness service is facing the "last mile" problem, and the supply of fitness service is difficult to meet the individual needs of residents, resulting in shortcomings in management, supply and spatial layout. The practice case of community fitness public service construction shows that it is necessary to strengthen the construction of grass-roots, build a pluralistic co-governance structure and cultivate and develop grass-roots sports organizations in order to enhance the overall strength of community fitness public service construction.

**Keywords:** National Fitness Strategy, Residents' Fitness, Community Fitness Facilities, Fitness Service

## 1. Introduction

National fitness is the foundation and guarantee for all people to strengthen their physique and live a healthy life. In the promotion of the national fitness strategy, the main contradiction of China community residents' fitness has been transformed into the contradiction between the growing need for a healthy life and the unbalanced and inadequate fitness supply. At present, community residents' fitness service is facing the "last mile" problem, and the supply of fitness service has changed from the early "whether there is" to the diversified demand of "excellent or not". How to make up for the shortcomings of the diversification of community fitness public services needs to explore the collaborative path to make up for the shortcomings from the theoretical level and practical exploration.

## 2. The development process of public service for national fitness

The development of national fitness in China has gone through a transformation process from standardization to equalization to digitalization and intelligence. China government promulgated and implemented the promulgation and implementation of the Outline of the National Fitness Program in 1995 to the promulgation of the first specialized national fitness administrative regulation in 2009, and then to the promotion of national fitness as a national strategy in 2014. The state has successively issued the National Fitness Plan (2016-2020) and the National Fitness Plan (2021-2025), and successively issued the Opinions on Building a Higher Level Public Service System for National Fitness and the Work Plan for Upgrading National Fitness Facilities (2023-2025). The development of national fitness in China in the past 30 years has basically formed a development strategic system of "four haves", "three basics" and "three mainstays"[1].

### 2.1 National Fitness Public Service Standardization

The promulgation of the Outline of National Fitness Program and the implementation of the Sports Law of the People's Republic of China not only raise national fitness to the level of national development, but also provide legal reference for the construction of national fitness standardization. In the five-year development plan and annual plan, the state has made it clear that all localities should carry out national fitness programs or carry out national fitness activities, and in 2009, it promulgated the National Fitness Regulations, approving August 8 of each year as the National Fitness Day. Since 2011, the State Council has issued the National Fitness Plan every five years, which indicates that the national fitness work has entered the stage of standardization and legal management.

## ***2.2 Equalization of public services for national fitness***

In 2014, the State Council issued "Several Opinions on Accelerating the Development of Sports Industry and Promoting Sports Consumption", proposing for the first time that national fitness should be promoted to a national strategy. The 13th Five-Year Plan for National Fitness defines the nature of the development of national fitness, the internal and external relations, the pattern, the key points and the future trend of each element. The 14th Five-Year Plan for National Fitness, as a continuation of the 13th Five-Year Plan, pays more attention to the equalization of fitness supply, emphasizes the construction of fitness standardization, and strives to build a higher-level public service system for national fitness.[2].

When the contradiction between the people's growing needs for physical fitness and the unbalanced development of fitness facilities is prominent, "where to go for fitness" has become a difficult problem.[3]. Based on this, the General Office of the State Council issued "Opinions on Strengthening the Construction of National Fitness Facilities and Developing Mass Sports", and the General Office of the General Administration of Sports issued "Key Points of Mass Sports Work in 2023" to solve the problem of "Where to Go for Fitness". The State Sports General Administration has developed more than 5.74 million social sports instructors at all levels through four major actions: strengthening the foundation of fitness facilities, improving quality, providing excellent services and increasing benefits. It has built 80,435 fitness venues, 6,953 outdoor fitness venues, 752 national fitness activity centers, 441 sports parks, 979 comprehensive fitness plazas and 3,073 community sports venues, with a per capita sports venue area of 2.89 square meters and 21,100 fitness trails.

## ***2.3 Digital and intelligent national fitness public service***

The Opinions on Strengthening the Construction of National Fitness Facilities and Developing Mass Sports and the Guidelines for the Construction of National Fitness Information Service Platform (Trial) issued by the State Sports General Administration clearly promote "internet plus Fitness" and improve the intelligence, informationization and digitalization of national fitness public services. With the development of sports and digital information technology, with the application of new technologies such as 5G, big data, cloud computing, Internet of Things and artificial intelligence in the field of mass fitness, it provides new means for community fitness public services. Community intelligent fitness kiosks, intelligent fitness equipment and intelligent interactive experience screens can collect and sort out people's health data and fitness data through intelligent devices.[4-5]. The Action Plan for Upgrading National Fitness Facilities (2023-2025) also proposes to promote the transformation of urban fitness facilities from "having" to "excellent", make full use of the city's "Yinbian", and build "small but beautiful" fitness venues such as small fitness centers, small sports parks and small multifunctional fitness stadiums to create a high-quality "ten-minute fitness circle".

## **3. Community fitness public service status**

### ***3.1 Community fitness facilities***

The problem of "where to go for fitness" restricts the development of urban residents' fitness activities. In response to the residents' fitness problems, all provinces and cities responded to the call of the State Sports General Administration and implemented the "National Fitness Facilities Improvement Action" to expand the increment of fitness facilities by accelerating the construction process of fitness facilities. By building stadiums, gymnasiums, national fitness centers, swimming pools, sports parks, fitness trails, ball games venues, fitness squares and pocket parks according to local conditions, the city will improve the node fitness facilities. The government encourage all communities to make full use of leftover materials to create a "ten-minute fitness circle", accelerate the construction and renovation of fitness facilities and the renovation of fitness venues in old communities, and support social forces to build a "people's gym" by using roadside space, space under bridges, riverside space and old factories.

Judging from the current changes of mass fitness scenes and preferences, most bodybuilders prefer community public venues, mainly concentrated in community national fitness centers, sports parks, citizen squares, fitness paths and other venues.[6]. Among them, gymnasiums, park squares and fitness paths are the main places for adults and the elderly to participate in fitness activities, community squares, residential roads and gymnasiums are the venues for women's fitness activities, and indoor and outdoor ball venues and track and field venues are mainly for youth training. Indoor venues are mainly

ball games, swimming and gyms/clubs, and family fitness has become a fitness choice for working people after work. Community commercial sports venues have gradually become the fitness choice of young and middle-aged people and high-educated groups, especially in gymnasiums, yoga halls, swimming pools and badminton venues, which account for 16% of the community sports population. The survey shows that 82% of the public think that outdoor public fitness equipment can meet their fitness needs, and the proportion of people who are dissatisfied with the equipment is gradually decreasing.

### ***3.2 Fitness habits of community residents***

According to "Research Report on Mass Fitness Behavior and Consumption in 2022" and "National Fitness Trend Report in 2022", the number of people who participate in fitness activities more than twice a week in China has reached 303 million, and it is expected to reach 416 million by 2026, nearly twice the number in the United States and Europe. According to the statistics of cities and income levels, young and middle-aged people in first-tier and new first-tier cities prefer light and moderate regular exercise, while middle-aged and elderly people in second-and third-tier cities and below mainly take moderate regular exercise or health care and relaxation projects. The frequency of male exercise is 3-4 times a week, mainly moderate strength exercise, and female exercise is 1-2 times a week, mainly light rhythmic events. Judging from the exercise motivation of the fitness crowd, men prefer to keep fit and hone their will, while women pay attention to losing weight, shaping and stretching. The survey shows that the proportion of men who exercise three to four times, five to six times and more than six times a week is higher than that of women. Women's light exercise population accounts for 23%, which is higher than that of men's 17%.

### ***3.3 Community fitness programs***

With the continuous promotion of the national fitness strategy and the increase of community stadiums, swimming pools, gyms and other sports venues, people's fitness exercises have changed from ordinary sports such as inter-class exercises, running and playing ball games to more fashionable sports such as square dance, yoga and badminton. At present, the residents' fitness activities are mainly gait/walking, square dance, ball games, running and swimming, cycling and dancing. Men are mainly engaged in ball games, fitness, outdoor running and equipment, and they like moderate and high-intensity strength exercise. Among them, teenagers are mainly engaged in ball games and riding, while middle-aged people are mainly engaged in basketball, fitness and running, while old people like hiking/walking, mountaineering and Tai Chi. Women love dancing, aerobics and other sports, focusing on slimming and shaping the arms, abdomen, calves and other parts. Young women tend to have high-intensity rhythmic gymnastics, while middle-aged and elderly women mainly take light aerobics and square dance.

## **4. Community fitness public service construction shortcomings**

As an important carrier of urban modernization, community is an important space for people to pursue high-quality life.[7]. There are shortcomings in management, supply and spatial layout in the diversification of community fitness public services in China.

### ***4.1 Management shortcomings***

To build a social governance pattern of co-construction, co-governance and sharing. This points out the direction for community residents' public service innovation and system improvement in the new era. The structure of urban residents' fitness in China has changed obviously. From disturbing people by square dance to the question of "where to go for fitness", the shortcomings in the management of community fitness public services are highlighted. To make the national fitness more orderly, it is necessary to strengthen the construction of grassroots fitness service system, innovate management concepts and build a multi-collaborative governance system. At present, there are still some practical problems in the national fitness, such as "grabbing" the reserved venues, disturbing people in public places, and conflicts in fitness activities. The main body of community fitness management is community neighborhood offices or neighborhood committees. As the "last mile" managed by the higher government, it is difficult to effectively manage the national fitness affairs within the jurisdiction due to the management authority and shortage of manpower.[8]. Most of the time, it can

only complete the fitness tasks or events assessed by superiors, and it is difficult to guide fitness organizations, residents or interest groups in the jurisdiction to jointly carry out public service work.

As a non-profit organization, community fitness organizations have some problems in the process of operation, such as irregular organizational construction, unclear internal division of labor, inactive organizational activities, and lack of maintenance funds. Sports associations, societies and residents form an invisible dependence on the superior government in community fitness, and often carry out related activities according to the government's instructions, without seriously combining the residents' own actual fitness needs, resulting in insufficient willingness of residents to participate in community fitness, and treat the grassroots community fitness governance with an attitude of staying out of it.[9]. Neighborhood committees, fitness clubs, fitness clubs and residents are difficult to form a cooperative mechanism because of their respective positions and their own interests, which leads to "sweeping the snow in front of the door" in the development of fitness activities.

#### ***4.2 Supply short board***

At present, community residents' fitness service is facing the "last mile" problem, and the supply of fitness service has changed from the early "with or without" to the personalized demand of "excellent or not". Shortcomings of supply are reflected in the following aspects: 1) The supply of fitness content is single. The fitness structure of community residents has changed obviously, and the fitness needs of young, old and middle-aged groups are diversified, so it is difficult for the government to standardize fitness venues to meet their needs. There is a certain overlapping of fitness time among groups, which leads to a short-term supply shortage of fitness venues. 2) Fitness supply focuses on facilities. With the implementation of the "Action/Plan for Upgrading National Fitness Facilities" and "Phnom Penh Silver Corner" policies in various regions, the number of community fitness facilities has been increased to some extent, but it is difficult to really promote it in various communities due to the limitations of local financial investment. 3) Fitness supply despises service. At present, community fitness venues are mainly concentrated in community squares, parks, stadiums and fitness trails, with middle-aged and elderly people gathering spontaneously.[10]. In the actual fitness process, there is a lack of professional social sports instructors to guide and organize fitness, which leads to people's lack of fitness expression and exchange feedback in a fixed fitness field.

#### ***4.3 Spatial layout short board***

According to the survey bulletin on the state of national fitness activities in 2020 and the research report on the behavior and consumption of national fitness in 2022, open sports spaces such as the national fitness center (45%), sports parks (42%) and open-air squares (30%) are the main sports scenes of national fitness in China. The survey of public fitness willingness shows that increasing public sports venues can obviously promote public participation in fitness activities, especially sports parks and community sports venues that can carry a variety of ball games are obviously sought after by young fitness people. The unreasonable spatial layout of community sports fitness lies in: 1) the type and structure of sports facilities are unreasonable, fitness facilities are concentrated in traditional single fitness equipment, and there are few venues and facilities built for the needs of teenagers and children; 2) The location of community fitness equipment is unreasonable, and the sports equipment of urban residents' houses is often concentrated in remote corners, and all kinds of fitness equipment are scattered, which leads to poor community fitness atmosphere.[6]; 3) The layout experience of fitness equipment is poor. At present, the community only solves the problem of whether there are public fitness facilities, and does not fully consider the personal feelings of residents in the process of using them, which leads to conflicts such as square dance venues.[11].

### **5. Community fitness public service construction practice**

To solve the "last mile" problem of community fitness public service, we should not only build a higher level of national fitness public service system in theory, but also explore the innovative model of grassroots fitness public service in practice. Based on the construction and service process of the national aerobics dance community education activity base in Huangpu District, Guangzhou, this study explores the practical path to make up for the shortcomings of community fitness service in China.

### ***5.1 Community Fitness Public Service Base Construction***

The demonstration base of community education and exchange activities of national aerobics dance in Huangpu District of Guangzhou is jointly built by the Social Sports College of Guangdong Sports Vocational and Technical College, the Rising Sun Youth Club of Tianhe District of Guangzhou and the Community Public Welfare Promotion Association of Huangpu District of Guangzhou, which mainly provides fitness public services for 12 communities in Huangpu District. The division of labor in the base construction is as follows: The Social Sports College of Guangdong Sports Vocational and Technical College is responsible for the technical guidance and competition organization of the national fitness community, and provides specific venue services such as physical fitness test, physical fitness training, aerobics dance, badminton, basketball, tennis and swimming. Huangpu District Community Public Welfare Promotion Association, as the governing unit of 17 streets in Huangpu District, Guangzhou, is responsible for the promotion of public welfare activities in various communities, with 3 full-time managers and 16 service personnel. The association has 6 cultural and artistic activity centers and 12 community activity centers, which carry out various residents' activities in different communities every week and serve more than 50,000 community residents every year. As a carrier of residents' fitness service, Rising Sun Youth Sports Club has 4 full-time management service personnel and 30 part-time coaches, mainly providing fitness guidance, competition organization and social instructor training for community activity centers.

### ***5.2 Community Fitness Public Service Content***

The content of the national fitness service includes the following four points: (1) Teaching guidance of aerobics, cheerleading, square dance, national square dance, fitness street dance and yoga courses in six community cultural and artistic activity centers; (2) Popularize and promote fitness lectures to residents in 12 communities, and simultaneously broadcast graphic information on WeChat WeChat official account and short video platforms; (3) To assist all communities to establish a national aerobics dance competition team; (4) Jointly build units to carry out community weekend stage activities, community national aerobics dance competition and Huangpu District national aerobics dance competition.

### ***5.3 Community Fitness Public Service Collaboration***

Huangpu District Community Public Welfare Promotion Association provides a service platform for residents' fitness by relying on the management service personnel of its community street cultural and artistic activity center and community activity center. The Rising Sun Youth Sports Club regularly provides fitness technical guidance, competition team training, competition organization and other services with professional teachers and the activity center of the community public welfare promotion association. The Social Sports College of Guangdong Sports Vocational and Technical College has the qualification of Guangdong Provincial Professional Appraisal Station for Special Types of Work, and has established the training system and assessment system for national fitness social sports instructors, which can train professional social sports instructors for community fitness residents. In the process of base construction, a "five-society linkage" collaborative mechanism has been formed, which takes residents' community as the service platform, community sports organizations as the service carrier, social sports instructors in professional colleges as the service support, and community fitness residents as the participants.

### ***5.4 Community Fitness Public Service Achievements***

The results of the multi-cooperation of the residents' fitness service in Huangpu District are as follows: (1) Systematic fitness course guidance activities were carried out for each street, with a total of 20,000 people benefiting; (2) Through community fitness activities once a week and stage fitness exhibition once a month, the atmosphere of community fitness activities is effectively enhanced; (3) Carry out street aerobics dance competitions and hold Huangpu District National Aerobics Dance Competition; (4) Training and identifying 30 social sports instructors for street national fitness, strengthening the fitness organization strength of residents in various streets of the community.

## **6. Community fitness public service promotion path**

### **6.1 Strengthen the construction of grass-roots**

As the "last mile of serving residents", grassroots communities should always take strengthening grassroots construction and consolidating the country's governance foundation as the red line running through fitness governance in promoting the national fitness strategy. In the fitness work of community residents, grassroots organizations should play a leading role in coordinating and coordinating the work of all parties. Strengthen the leadership of grassroots community work and establish an organizational system composed of community organizations, community branches, and groups. Ultimately, a community fitness public service network will be constructed with community organizations as the core, neighborhood committees as the leader, residents as the main body, industry committees and community sports organizations as participants.

### **6.2 Building a multi-governance structure**

With the increasingly complex social structure, it is difficult for community grassroots governance to cope with the increasingly complex fitness needs only by the community street office/management Committee itself. In the face of the increasing diversity of community fitness subjects, on the one hand, we should create a social governance pattern of national fitness, co-construction, co-governance and sharing, and integrate the forces of multiple subjects by mobilizing the enthusiasm of the broad masses of people. On the other hand, it is necessary to change the traditional concept of a single management subject in the past and rely on a multi-collaborative governance system to allow fitness residents to participate in community fitness governance through standardized channels.

The construction of multi-co-governance structure needs to give full play to the roles of neighborhood offices, neighborhood committees, sports organizations and bodybuilders in community fitness public services, and reach the greatest consensus by weighing the interests of many parties.[10]. Finally, a community fitness governance structure is formed, which is dominated by community neighborhood committees, dominated by residents, supplemented by sports associations and supplemented by social sports organizations.

### **6.3 Cultivate and develop grass-roots sports organizations**

As the carrier of community fitness public service, sports organizations undertake the tasks of guiding residents' fitness, undertaking the purchase of community fitness services and organizing community fitness events. However, due to the lack of professional leaders and financial support, the daily operation of community sports organizations is not standardized. Therefore, it is necessary to use the manpower and financial resources of community neighborhood offices or management committees to stimulate the internal vitality and development momentum of sports social organizations and promote standardized operation and healthy and orderly development. Through the establishment of standardized articles of association and management system, we will strengthen the service training of key personnel of sports organizations and improve the efficiency of organizational services.

## **7. Summary**

In the new era, community fitness public service must always adhere to and strengthen the overall leadership, adhere to the governance concept of taking community residents as the service center, meet people's growing fitness needs by continuously improving the supply of fitness public services, and create a community fitness public service pattern of co-construction, co-governance and sharing.

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