

Digital Disparities and Elderly Health Perceptions: A Longitudinal Analysis

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ABSTRACT

In the digital era, online multimedia profoundly influences daily lives and health of the aging population. The number of individuals classified as "silver surfers" is continuously increasing, and the health of the elderly has become a pressing concern that demands immediate attention. This study is grounded in the theory of spatial mobility and employs a range of analytical methods, including the potential growth model, the cross-lagged model, and moderated mediation effects. We investigate the influence of Internet usage on self-rated health of aging population, drawing from the Chinese Household Tracking Survey spanning 2016 to 2020. The findings reveal that ageing population in urban areas consistently outperform their rural counterparts in both internet usage and self-rated health. It is noteworthy that there is a positive correlation between internet usage and self-rated health. Furthermore, the intensity of internet engagement among older adults influences their health self-assessment through factors such as exercise frequency and feelings of loneliness, with the urban-rural dichotomy acting as a moderating variable. The positive effect of Internet usage on the health of the rural ageing population is greater than that of the urban ageing population. It would be prudent for policymakers to harness the potential of the digital age, promote the development of elderly healthcare.

Keywords: Internet Usage; Exercise Frequency; Loneliness

How to Cite

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