

Research on Sexual Passion of Middle-Aged and Elderly Women

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Abstract

Objective: To understand the sexual health status of different age groups and the relationship between them by studying the sexual passion of middle-aged and elderly women.

Methods: The research on sexual passion was conducted by questionnaire among 316 middle-aged and elderly female students in 13 classes of 9 majors from nearly 5000 students in the main campus and the central campus of Wuhan University for the Elderly in China, and the sexual health level of different age groups was quantified by using the sexual passion related index.

Results: 274 valid questionnaires were received, and the age of the respondents was 41 - 86 years old; 44.5% of them were ≤ 59 years old and 55.5% were ≥ 60 years old. 36.1% of the people lost or temporarily had no partner because they were unmarried, divorced or widowed. The ratio of unaccompanied people to find partners was 45.5%; 80.3% of them have partners, 71.9% have sex (89.5% of the partners); Sex frequency: 35.5% people < 1 time/month; 23.9% people once to twice a month; 10.2% of people ≥ 3 times/month. 33.5% people can have orgasm; 48.2% people often get sexual pleasure; 35.5% believed that sex and marriage were very important or important; 11.1% thought it was difficult or impossible to grow old together without sex. 48.2% had sexual problems, 36.0% never asked for help; 35.0% had vaginal dryness or pain during sexual intercourse; 14.0% people lack general sexual knowledge; The sexual passion index of the 40 year old group was similar to that of the 70 year old group, and was significantly higher than that of the 50 year old and 60 year old groups, indicating that there might be a periodicity of sexual passion; The middle-aged people have more problems in sex education, sex psychology, physiology and environmental factors than the elderly; Perimenopause is a frequent period when such problems occur.

Conclusion: There is no absolute negative correlation between the sexual passion and age of middle-aged and elderly women. We should pay attention to the periodicity of sexual passion so as to pay attention to the needs of all ages in sexual health services.

Keywords: Middle Aged and Elderly Women; Sexual Enthusiasm

Introduction

Not long ago, the World Association of Sexual Health (WAS) put forward a constructive proposal to the World Health Organization (WHO) on the sexual health and well-being of perimenopausal and postmenopausal women. This proposal has not only received a positive

response: “Thank WAS for advocating not only this issue, but also broader sexual health and happiness (including happiness), and putting people at the center of everything we do.” WHO also released a briefing on the global situation online for the first time on this year’s “World Menopause Day” (October 18, 2022).

The document clearly recognizes that the sexual health and well-being of perimenopausal and postmenopausal women are ignored in many countries, resulting in the lack of SRHR services. These methods are included in the process of sexual health and life happiness.

In response to this particular challenge, WHO proposes to raise awareness of its impact on national health and socio-economic development; Advocate the integration of diagnosis, treatment and consultation into the universal health coverage; Promote the integration of training in menopause and treatment programmes into pre service curricula for health workers; Emphasizes the adoption of a life cycle approach to ensure that women have access to appropriate health information and services in order to promote healthy ageing and a high quality of life before, during and after menopause; Wait for 4 measures.

We (the two authors of this article, Zha Jianzhong and Li Songlin) have carried out a research on “the sexual passion of middle-aged and elderly women” from the perspective of sexology and gynecology. The participants were 41 - 86 years old and divided into groups according to age (10 years interval). As such studies are rare, sorting out and publishing relevant data will be beneficial to the implementation of these measures by WHO.

Objective of the Study

Among nearly 5000 students in more than 10 professional categories in the main campus and the downtown campus of Wuhan University for the Aged, 316 middle-aged and elderly female students in 13 classes of 9 majors, including computer network, painting, photography, English, costume design, singing, piano, were randomly selected for the survey, accounting for about 13% of the total number of female students.

Methods

It is conducted in the form of questionnaire, anonymous, centralized self filling and instant collection. The test questions are based on the questionnaire “China Women’s Sexual and Reproductive Health Network Survey” published on the Internet by the national health authorities, including age, education level, personal economic status, partners, sexual status, sexual health awareness, and needs for related issues.

Quality control

The investigation was carried out by Wuhan Keli Women’s Sexual Health Institute in cooperation with Wuhan University for the Elderly, and a detailed plan was formulated. Two to three full-time investigators carry out activities with the assistance of the head teacher and the student head, and check and take back the questionnaires immediately after they are completed.

Statistical methods

SPSS13.0 software and other relevant methods were used for statistical analysis.

Result

Recovery rate

The number of participants was 316, and 274 valid questionnaires were received, with a recovery rate of 86.7% (274/316).

The basic situation

The minimum age span of the sample objects is 41 years old and the maximum is 86 years old. 122 people aged ≤ 59, accounted for 44.5% (122/274); 152 people aged ≥ 60, accounted for 55.5% (152/274), most of them were elderly. See table 1 for the proportion results of the age groups and the educational level and economic status of each group.

Age group/ year	Sample size Case (%)	Education level			Personal economic status	
		≤ Junior high school	College	≥ University	Cling to	Independence
40~	39 (14.2)	7.7	92.3	0	79.5	20.5
50~	83 (30.3)	15.7	78.3	6.0	63.9	36.1
60~	98 (35.8)	17.4	66.3	16.3	46.9	53.1
70~	51 (18.6)	9.8	64.7	25.5	23.5	76.5
≤ 86	3 (1.1)	0	2/3	1/3	0	3/3
Total	274 (100)	13.9	73.3	12.8	51.8	48.2

Table 1: Basic information of survey respondents %.

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It can be seen from table 1 that the educational level of the sample objects increases with age, and the proportion of high-education increases; economic conditions also increase with age, and the proportion of high-income increases.

Marriage, partner and status quo

The results of marriage, partner and current situation are shown in table 2.

Age group/ year	Divorced		Widowed		Unmarried		Asian intimacy		Partner status		
	Propor- tion	Find a partner	Propor- tion	Find a partner	Propor- tion	Find a partner	Propor- tion	Find a partner	Deletion ratio	Find a partner	No com- panion
40~	23.1	9/9	0	0	0	0	7.7	2/3	30.8	91.7	2.6
50~	15.7	7.7	0	0	0	0	7.2	0	22.9	5.3	21.7
60~	12.2	8.3	12.2	58.3	5.0	2/3	5.1	0	32.7	31.3	22.4
70~	9.8	1/5	43.1	77.3	3.9	2/2	7.8	0	64.7	60.6	25.5
≤86	1/3	1/1	2/3	2/2	0	0	0	0	3/3	3/3	0
Total	14.6	32.5	13.1	72.2	1.8	4/5	6.6	11.1	36.1	45.5	19.7

Table 2: Marriage, partner and current situation %.

It can be seen from table 2 that the proportion of unaccompanied or temporarily unaccompanied due to divorce, widowhood, sub-intimacy (contradictory separation) and unmarried accounts for 36.1% of the sample size; The number of people accounted for 16.4% of the sample size; the actual unaccompanied ratio accounted for 19.7% of the sample size.

Among different types of unaccompanied people, the ratio of finding a partner is as follows: unmarried > widowed > divorced > sub-intimate.

Among unaccompanied people of different ages, the ratio of finding a partner is as follows: 40 groups > 70 groups > 60 groups > 50 groups (the 80 groups have too few samples and have not been sorted, the same below).

Sub-intimacy is normal and occurs in different age groups, the proportion is between 5.1 - 7.8%.

Sexual health status and differences

See table 3-5 for sexual health status and differences. See table 3 in the results section for concomitant sexual status.

Age	n the sam- ple Companion	Most recent activity			Sex ratio in the sample	Sex frequency (times/month)		
		< December	(12~18) moon	Never have		< 1	1~2	≥3
40~	97.4	92.1	7.9	0	97.4	31.6	26.3	26.3
50~	78.3	64.6	12.3	7.6	72.3	38.3	30	11.7
60~	77.6	47.4	21.1	11.8	68.4	41.8	20.9	1.5
70~	74.5	23.7	26.3	21.1	58.8	23.3	16.7	6.7
≤86	3/3	—	—	1/3日	2/3	—	—	—
Total	80.3	55.5	16.8	10.5	71.9	35.5	23.9	10.2

Table 3: Concomitant sexual status problems %.

It can be seen from table 3 that the partner ratio in the sample is 80.3%; the sex ratio is 71.9%; (accounting for 89.5% of the partner population), 34.1% of the people have sex frequency at least once a month, different age groups. The proportion is the relationship is as follows: 40 groups > 50 groups > 70 groups > 60 groups.

The results section for the questions related to sexual feelings is shown in table 4.

Age group/ year	Long-term asexual			Masturbate		Sexual pleasure			Sexual fantasy		
	Feeling bad	Uncomfortable	Relieved	<12 months	Never have	Often	Rare	Never	Companion	Other	No
40~	7.9	15.8	15.8	55.3	21.1	52.6	23.7	15.8	7.9	31.6	44.7
50~	1.7	21.7	6.7	25.0	36.7	61.7	23.3	15.0	15.0	8.3	41.7
60~	1.5	16.4	7.5	23.9	29.9	37.3	23.9	9.0	9.0	1.5	40.3
70~	10.0	26.7	10.0	26.7	20.0	43.3	10.0	3.3	16.7	3.3	36.7
≤86	—	—	—	1/3	0	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	4.1	19.3	9.1	31.0	28.4	48.2	21.3	11.2	11.7	9.6	40.6

Table 4: Questions related to sexual feelings %.

It can be seen from table 4 that 23.4% of the patients suffered from long-term asexual discomfort and discomfort, and the proportions of different age groups showed the following relationship: 70 groups > 40 groups > 50 groups > 60 groups.

31.% had masturbation within one year, and the ratio of different age groups was as follows: 40 groups > 70 groups > 60 groups > 50 groups.

48.2% had sexual pleasure from time to time, and the ratio of different age groups showed the following relationship: 50 groups > 40 groups > 70 groups > 60 groups.

The results section for the questions related to sexual quality is shown in table 5.

Age group/year	Change in sexual position			Way to orgasm				Performance evaluation			Sex life satisfaction	
	Often	Some-times	Never	Sexual intercourse	Masturbate	Have both	None	Confidence	Generally	Self-abasement	Satisfy	Dissatisfied
40~	7.9	60.5	23.7	34.2	0	23.7	7.9	10.5	47.4	7.9	57.9	7.9
50~	5.0	48.3	18.3	15.0	1.7	18.3	16.7	11.7	40.0	1.7	38.3	15.0
60~	3.0	29.9	25.4	7.5	1.5	10.4	11.9	3.0	29.9	1.5	19.4	9.0
70~	3.3	43.3	13.3	20.0	3.3	10.0	6.7	10.0	43.3	0	36.7	16.7
≤86	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	4.6	43.1	20.8	16.8	1.5	15.2	11.7	8.1	38.1	2.5	35.0	11.7

Table 5: Questions related to sexual quality %.

It can be seen from table 5 that among the sexual population, 47.7% often change their sexual positions, and the proportions of different age groups are as follows: 40 groups > 50 groups > 70 groups > 60 groups.

33.5% of people can achieve orgasm, and the proportions of different age groups are as follows: 40 groups > 50 groups > 70 groups > 60 groups.

In the evaluation of sexual ability, the proportion of inferiority complex is as follows: 70 groups < 60 groups < 50 groups < 40 groups.

The proportion of dissatisfied sex life is as follows: 70 groups > 50 groups > 60 groups > 40 groups.

Existing problems and potential needs

The results of existing problems and potential needs are shown in table 6-8.

See table 6 for the results section on attitudes related to sex and marriage.

Age group/year	Sex and marital relations			Asexuality and growing old together			Prolonged function		
	Important	Generally	Unimportant	Cannot	Difficulty	Can	Willing	Not opposing	Unwilling
40~	57.9	0	7.9	0	7.9	47.4	7.9	47.4	0
50~	33.3	16.7	13.3	5.0	11.	28.3	8.3	23.3	11.7
60~	20.9	7.5	7.5	3.0	1.5	25.4	4.5	11.9	9.0
70~	46.7	6.7	6.7	3.3	16.7	36.7	6.7	26.7	10.0
≤86	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	35.5	8.6	9.1	3.0	8.1	32.0	6.6	24.4	8.1

Table 6: Attitudes related to sex and marriage %.

It can be seen from table 6 that 35.5% of the sexual population think that the relationship between sex and marriage is important or very important, and the proportion relationship of different age groups is as follows: 40 groups > 70 groups > 50 groups > 60 groups.

11.1% think that asexuality is impossible or that it is difficult to grow old together, and the proportion relationship of different age groups is as follows: 70 groups > 50 groups > 40 groups > 60 groups.

If there is a way to prolong sexual function, 31% of people accept and may accept it, and the proportional relationship of different age groups is: 40 groups > 70 groups > 50 groups > 60 groups.

The results section for questions related to sex education is presented in table 7.

Age Group/year	Sex exchange			Pre-sexual caress			Living conditions			Living style		
	Someti-mes	Often	Never	Enou-gh	Gene-rally	Never	Alone or with company	2 gene-rations	3 gen-erations	Share the same bed	Separa-te bed	Housing
40~	68.4	31.5	0	57.9	23.7	15.8	26.0	31.6	0	26.3	31.6	0
50~	58.3	23.3	5.0	55.0	5.0	16.7	26.7	21.7	1.7	45.0	11.7	0
60~	43.3	26.9	20.9	43.3	7.5	13.4	16.4	13.4	10.4	20.9	7.5	7.5
70~	36.7	26.7	20.0	36.7	20.0	13.3	50.0	13.3	6.7	30.0	0	20.0
≤86	—	—	1/3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	51.3	26.4	18.3	48.2	11.7	14.7	26.4	19.3	5.1	30.5	12.2	5.6

Table 7: Questions related to sex education %.

It can be seen from table 7 that 59.9% of them can caress each other before sex, and the proportion relationship of different age groups is: 40 groups > 50 groups > 70 groups > 60 groups.

30.5% of them can maintain the same bed living style, and the proportion relationship of different age groups is as follows: 50 groups > 70 groups > 40 groups > 60 groups.

26.4% lived alone or only with their partners, and the ratio of different age groups was: 70 groups > 50 groups > 40 groups > 60 groups.

The results section for questions related to sexual health is shown in table 8.

Age group/year	Causes of Sexual Discord			Related symptoms		Lack of sexual knowledge		Sexual problems	
	Physiological	Psychology	Other	Vaginal dryness	Painful sex	Erogenous zone	Uterus and sex	Ask for help	Never ask for help
40~	0	10.5	7.9	15.8	7.9	23.7	0	23.7	42.1
50~	8.3	6.7	8.3	48.3	8.3	13.3	8.3	16.7	30.0
60~	3.0	0	1.5	23.9	3.0	4.5	3.0	3.0	40.3
70~	3.3	0	0	20.0	3.3	3.3	0	10.0	33.3
≤86	—	—	—	1/3	—	—	—	—	—
Total	4.1	4.1	4.6	29.4	5.6	10.7	3.6	12.2	36.0

Table 8: Sexual health problems and needs %.

It can be seen from table 8 that 12.8% of people are sexually disharmonious due to physical, psychological or other factors, and the proportion relationship of different age groups is: 50 groups > 40 groups > 60 groups > 70 groups.

Vaginal dryness or pain accounted for 35%, and the proportion relationship of different age groups was: 50 groups > 60 groups > 40 groups > 70 groups.

10.7% of people don't know about sexual sensitive areas, 3.6% of people think that hysterectomy can't have sex, only 2.1% of people know about G-spot, and the ratio of erroneous understanding in each group is as follows: 40 groups > 50 groups > 60 groups > 70 groups.

Service scope and target groups

Considering the scope of services, we must first determine the sexual health needs of different groups of people. In order to make a more comprehensive judgment, we plan to compare the above-mentioned 15 items related to sexual behaviors and attitudes in table 2 to 7, and refer to statistics. The concept of intermediate frequency numbers, and on the basis of it, it is extended to assign coefficients to each proportional formula according to the order. The highest bit coefficient is 4, the lowest bit is 4, 3, 2, 1, and the coefficient sum of each question is 10. The corresponding coefficients are respectively Credited to different age groups, a total of 150. Take its frequency coefficient set, and use the "sexual enthusiasm index" for quantitative expression. The relevant results are shown in table 9.

Group	Frequency (coefficient) set	Frequency set rate %	Cumulative Frequency %
40~	46	30.7	30.7
50~	39	26.0	26.0
60~	20	13.3	13.3
70~	45	30.0	30.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0

Table 9: Overall assessment of sexual enthusiasm in each age group.

It can be seen from table 9 that the sexual enthusiasm index of 40 groups and 70 groups is equivalent, and it is significantly higher than that of 50 groups and 60 groups: it shows that there may be a sexual enthusiasm cycle; the cumulative frequency rate of ≤ 59 years old is 56.7%, which can be said as a whole. The sexual enthusiasm index of the young people is higher than that of the elderly (43.3%), but it should be noted that the 70 group has a higher sexual enthusiasm cycle.

Similarly, the proportions of sexual health problems listed in table 8 are sorted and processed by the method of frequency coefficients. The results are shown in table 10.

Group	Frequency (coefficient) set	Frequency set rate %	Cumulative Frequency %
40~	9	30.0	30.0
50~	11	36.7	66.7
60~	7	23.3	90.0
70~	3	10.0	10.0
total	30	100.0	100.0

Table 10: Overall assessment of questions by age group.

It can be seen from table 10 that the cumulative frequency set rate of ≤ 59 years old is 66.7%, indicating that middle-aged people have a higher proportion of problems in sex education, sexual psychology, physical and environmental factors than older people (33.3%).

Sex education and sexual health-related prevention and treatment should focus on the 50 - 40 group: that is, menopause and perimenopause.

Discussion

As WHO said in its briefing, "menopause is usually not discussed in the family, community, workplace or health care environment". Unfortunately, "in most countries, recognizing and obtaining menopause-related information and services remains a major challenge". Perimenopausal and postmenopausal women need access to high-quality health services and communities and systems that can support them.

Therefore, the targeted results of the baseline survey related to the project population will further contribute to the implementation of relevant measures. However, it is noted that universities for the elderly are a specific group, and the data obtained from the survey have certain limitations.

In particular, "In fact, in the aspect of sex, we are surrounded by various social influences, including religion, multiculturalism, socio-economic status, moral norms, media and politics. The occurrence of sexual behavior is the result of the joint action of many factors. Biological, psychological, social and cultural factors constitute a complex system, which has a role in all our sexual behaviors" [1].

The periodicity shown in the survey results may be related to the oriental culture and customs. Many women in 50 - 60 groups will devote their main energy, directly or indirectly participate in the support of the third generation, or even ignore or give up their personal physiological needs until these worldly affairs are completed. It is also easy to understand why the 70-year-old group has a high sexual enthusiasm.

Of course, only from the biological dimension. In recent years, the interdisciplinary study of sexuality and gynecology shows that "androgen T is positively correlated with sexual desire, and T has become a sufficient condition for female sexual behavior. Since E2 plays an important role in producing vaginal lubrication, it can be considered that E2 is a necessary condition for female sexual love. After physiological changes in menopause, E2 is only about 15%, while T is about 71%" [2]. "After natural menopause, androgen T is mainly produced by the adrenal cortex, and the level of androgen in the blood is positively correlated with sexual interest" [3].

It can be seen that after entering menopause, menopausal sex and non-reproductive sex may also experience nearly 30 years. This means that after menopause, the remaining sexual energy in the body will last for a long time, and this sexual energy needs to be released through sexual life. The comprehensive understanding of the sexual status of the majority of middle-aged and elderly women needs to be further accumulated and investigated in practice.

In this survey, the sample age ranges from 41 to 86 years old, almost covering the life of women after childbearing age, spanning nearly 50 years. In particular, the sexual enthusiasm index of group 40 is equal to that of group 70, and is significantly higher than that of group 50 - 60. Attention should be paid to the possible sexual enthusiasm cycle in order to prepare for a broader range of age services.

Although there are only three people in the 80-year-old group, they only get some information fragments. However, it is suggested that some of the elderly may be accompanied for life and may need sexual health services for life.

Conclusion

There is no absolute negative correlation between the sexual passion of middle-aged and elderly women and their age. We should pay attention to the impact of different social environments and cultures on sexual life, including the periodicity of sexual passion, so as to pay attention to the needs of all ages in sexual health services.

The implementation of the four measures of WHO will have a positive exploration significance for comprehensively solving the aging problem in population issues, promoting family and social harmony, and realizing the human rights issue of "everyone enjoys sexual health".

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