



The Effect of Outward Bound on the Social Integration of Chinese Migrant Children

Yuhang Zhou¹, Zhenyu Jin², Yuhong Wen^{1*}

¹Recreation, Sport and Tourism, Beijing Sport University, Beijing, China

²China Swimming College, Beijing Sport University, Beijing, China

***Corresponding Author:** Yuhong Wen, Recreation, Sport and Tourism, Beijing Sport University, Beijing, China

Abstract: Purpose : Exploring the impact mechanism of Outward Bound on social integration of Chinese migrant children, providing reference for improving the level of social integration of migrant children. Methods: 43 sixth Grade students from a Migrant School in Beijing were randomly divided into experimental group (24) and control group (19). The experimental group participated in the outward bound for 8 weeks, twice a week, 60 minutes each time, while the control group participated in the routine physical activities at the same time. "Social Integration of Migrant Children" was used to measure the social integration level of migrant children. Results: (1) There are significant differences in the social integration level of migrant children with gender, different mobility time ($p < 0.05$); (2) After OB intervention, the social integration level of the migrant children was significantly higher after the experiment ($p < 0.05$), the social integration level of migrant children in the control group was not significantly different from that in the pre-test ($p > 0.05$). Conclusion: Compared with routine physical activities, outward bound have a stronger effect on the social integration of migrant children, and there are some differences in different demographic backgrounds.

Keywords: Outward Bound; Migrant children; social integration

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the reform and opening-up, the urbanization process has accelerated, and a large number of people have moved from rural to urban areas to seek employment opportunities, resulting in a huge "floating population". According to the seventh census data, in 2021, China's urban permanent population is 912 million, but the urbanization rate of registered population is only 45.4%, and the scale of China's floating population reaches 385 million⁰. "The national population migration trend has entered a stage characterized by family-oriented migration," said Wang Qian, director of the floating population Department of the National Health and Family Planning Commission⁰. In 2020, the number of children of China's migrant population is about 130 million, more than 40% of the number of children in China, among which the number of migrant children is 71.09 million, doubling the number of Chinese migrant child population compared with 2010⁰.

Due to the dual urban and rural household registration system in China, migrant children who enter cities with their parents are strangers to new cities. The marginalized cities will lead to many psychological problems such as negative emotions, social integration barriers and strong perception of discrimination⁰. Migrant children are exposed to urban life earlier than their parents and show a more

urgent desire to integrate into the city⁰. Therefore, how to make migrant children maintain a healthy attitude in the disadvantaged environment and promote social integration is a topic worth studying⁰.

Migrant child is an independent individual, so the key factor affecting the social integration of migrant children is biological difference⁰. Meng's research found that the social integration level of female migrant children in public schools is higher than that of male children⁰, which is consistent with Zhou's research that male children's social integration is worse than female children's⁰, but Hao's research showed that there was no significant difference in the degree of gender social integration⁰. In terms of age, Hao found that the social integration level of migrant children in junior high school was lower than that of migrant children in primary school⁰, which was consistent with the research conclusions of Zhou⁰ and Meng⁰. In terms of mobility time, Hao's research results show that migrant children with longer mobility time in a new environment will have a better social integration effect⁰, while Meng finds that when migrant children's mobility time increases⁰, their social integration level presents a wave curve of first rising, then falling and then rising. Therefore, the factors influencing the social integration of migrant children should be analyzed according to the actual situation and life background.

In the "Sports Terminology", it is believed that sports are an important component of culture⁰, which is a cultural activity carried out using physical activity as the basic means to promote physical and mental health development or improve sports performance⁰. Research has shown that the social network of sports provides social support, serves as a cultural guide, helps immigrants transition and promotes their social integration⁰.

Leisure sports is a form of activity that realizes the purpose of leisure by means of sports⁰. In the past decade of research, scholars have pointed out that leisure sports play a very obvious role in promoting and strengthening social support and friendship⁰. As a part of leisure sports, outward bound emphasizes a personal peak experience⁰. Through experiential courses, outward bound can set up teaching situations to allow teams and individuals to complete physical activities in the context of games, thereby enhancing the sense of team unity⁰, honing the will of groups and individuals, developing potential, and improving group mental health and social integration⁰. It can be seen that outward bound is based on games. It allows trainers to shape their abilities and improve themselves in the process of immersive experience⁰. Although routine physical activities are widely used and emphasize the promotion of comprehensive physical and mental development of children, but dominant functions of physical activities are tended to be emphasized in practice, such as enhancing physical fitness and improving physical quality, while the cultivation of children's personality is ignored. Instead, outward bound, as a new way of learning and training, focuses on psychological development based on physical activity. It has significant characteristics different from routine physical activities.

The above studies provide research evidence for the view that outward bound promotes social integration, but do not provide strong empirical evidence for why and how the outward bound can promote social integration, including special groups. Therefore, it is speculated that participating in outward bound may be a potential path to promote their social integration.

2. METHOD

2.1. Procedure and Sample

A total of 100 students from Grade 5 and Grade 6 of a Migrant school in Beijing were selected as pre-experimental subjects. A pre-experimental survey was conducted using the " Social Integration of Migrant Children " to exclude students who were unclear about the experiment and the questionnaire⁰, as well as had low cooperation. Finally, 43 sixth grade students were selected as experimental research

subjects, randomly divided into an experimental group of 24 and a control group of 19. The experiment was conducted with the consent and support of the subjects, teachers, and parents. Participants signed an informed consent form approved by the Sports Science Experiment Ethics Committee of Beijing Sport University (No.2023243H), as well as from the parents of underage migrant children.

2.2. Experimentation Program

This study adopts a mixed experimental design of 2 (experimental group, control group) x2 (pre-test, post-test), with different sports interventions (outward bound, routine physical activity) as independent variables, social integration as dependent variable, and hope as potential variable. Natural experimental methods between-group and inter-group are used. The experimental design of the experimental group is divided into four themes: breaking the ice (kaleidoscope, strong winds, etc.), personal challenges (high stage speeches, etc.), efficient communication (blind square formation, lifeline, etc.), and team melting (life journey, circle of excellence, etc.). Routine physical activity including radio exercises, rope skipping, track and field (arm swinging, starting, etc.), martial arts basic skills, football basic leg techniques, etc. All use extracurricular activities for a period of 8 weeks, twice a week, with 60 minutes of exercise intervention each time. The intervention plan has been approved by experts.

2.3 Measures

2.3.1 Social Integration

The "Social Integration of Migrant Children" developed by Zhuo includes 4 dimensions and 41 questions⁰. This scale is in line with the characteristics of social integration of Chinese migrant children and can comprehensively measure the social integration status of migrant children. "Integration" represents the cultural collision and infiltration between the migrant population and the population in the destination, and ultimately integrates together, with bidirectional characteristics. "Integration" expresses the behavior, culture, and Conceptual and economic aspects both hope to actively integrate into the mainstream social system of the destination, with unidirectional characteristics. However, domestic literature does not strictly distinguish between them⁰. Currently, scholars believe that the term "integration" is more suitable for the social adaptation process of the "rural—urban" migrant population in China⁰. In this study, the scale Cronbach's α coefficient is 0.84, and the fitting index for confirmatory factor analysis is $\chi^2/df=1.12$, RMSEA=0.03, and CFI=0.94.

2.4. Data Analysis

Firstly, the demographic characteristics and social integration of the sample were analyzed by the means, standard deviations. Then, SPSS27.0 was used to use matched samples t- test to explore the promotion effect of outward bound on the social integration of migrant children. Then, independent sample t-test and one-way ANOVA were used to explore whether there were differences in the social integration level of migrant children in different demographic indicators such as gender, mobility time and residence place. Finally, Ordinary Least Squares Regression Model was used to explore the influence of outward bound on migrant children's social integration. Setting $p<0.05$ as statistically significant.

3. RESULTS

According to the independent sample t-test, it can be concluded that, before the experiment, there was no significant difference in various dimensions of social integration and hope between the experimental group and the control group, indicating that the social integration and hope levels of migrant children in the two groups were homogeneous and could be compared for research.

3.1. The Difference of Social Integration Level Before and After The Experiment

The matched samples t- test was used to test the scores of migrant children's social integration, and the results showed that the social integration level of the experimental group was significantly different before and after the experiment, while the difference between the control group was not statistically significant (see Table 1).

Table1. The difference of social integration level before and after the experiment (N=43)

Dimension	Group	t	p
Cultural integration	Experiment group	-8.775	<0.0001**
	Control group	-0.848	0.408
Interactive integration	Experiment group	-3.595	0.002**
	Control group	1.830	0.084
Indentity integration	Experiment group	-6.237	<0.0001**
	Control group	-1.864	0.079
Mental integration	Experiment group	-8.198	<0.0001**
	Control group	-0.959	0.350

NOTE: **p<0.001

3.2. The Influence of Outward Bound Movement on the Social Integration of Migrant Children

The Ordinary Least Squares Regression Model was used to examine the influence of outward bound participation on migrant children's social integration. The dependent variable is social integration. The results of OLS are shown in Table 2.

Table2. Results of OLS of the effects on the social integration of migrant children (N=43)

	Model 1 (Culture)	Model 2 (Interactive)	Model 3 (Indentity)	Model 4 (Mental)	Model 5 (Social)
OB	1.64** (0.16)	1.45** (0.19)	0.88** (0.22)	1.56** (0.18)	1.46** (0.12)
Gender	0.34* (0.16)	-0.10 (0.21)	-0.43 (0.25)	-0.02 (0.19)	-0.09 (0.16)
MT	0.62** (0.10)	0.44** (0.11)	0.45** (0.14)	0.49** (0.11)	0.49** (0.08)
Domicile	0.17 (0.10)	0.04 (0.12)	0.19 (0.12)	0.24* (0.11)	0.15* (0.07)
constant term	0.76 (1.86)	1.23* (0.51)	1.97** (0.56)	1.36** (0.48)	1.35** (0.29)
R ²	0.743	0.579	0.45	0.717	0.773

Note: Culture= Cultural integration; Interactive= Interactive integration; Indentity= Indentity integration; Social=Social integration; OB=outward bound; MT=mobility time;

**p<0.001; *p<0.05; Numbers in parentheses are standard errors.

4. DISCUSSION

It can be seen from the data in Table 2 that gender, mobility time and domicile also play an important role in the social integration of Chinese migrant children. Specifically, when other factors remain unchanged, female migrant children are significantly higher than males in the cultural integration, which is consistent with the results of Meng0. In terms of interaction integration, identity integration, mental integration and total score, male migrant children have higher scores than female migrant children, but there is no significant difference, this is in line with hao's findings0. Although a number of foreign research results show that with the progress of society, the traditional gender role consciousness is gradually replaced0, but the traditional gender awareness in Chinese society has

rebounced⁰, and still deeply affects women's behavioral choices in the real space. Since ancient times, men have been expected to grow up as strong, independent and extroverted characters, while women have been endowed with weak, reserved and meticulous introverted psychological qualities, and have different personalities and ways of dealing with things and society. Therefore, the concept of gender roles has a direct impact on individuals' adaptive behavior to society⁰.

The longer the mobility time, the higher the level of social integration of migrant children, which is consistent with the results of previous studies⁰⁰. The longer the migrant population has lived in the migrant place, the higher the sense of identity with the migrant place, and the more integration obstacles that individuals with short mobility time need to adapt to⁰. Studies have shown that the length of residence has a significant impact on the migrant population staying in the migrant place⁰.

Migrant children in different places of residence show significant differences in the scores of mental integration and social integration. The geographical environment, economic level, history and culture of different regions lead to different cultural habits and lifestyles, and the geographical conditions, human environment and development level are different, forming different cultural circles. As a result, the psychological development and the degree of adaptation to the migrant are different in the east and west, the north and the south, the coastal and the inland areas, which is consistent with the results of previous studies: the integration and residence intention of the floating population in the north presents a spatial pattern of "high in the north and low in the south"⁰.

As can be seen from Table 1, compared with the control group, the social integration level of the experimental group was effectively improved after the outward bound.

According to the data in Table 2, after controlling for variables such as gender, mobility time and domicile, participation in outward bound has a significant positive impact on models 1 to 5, indicating that participation in outward bound does improve the social integration of migrant children to a certain extent⁰. More importantly, the intervention of outward bound has a positive impact on the four dimensions of social integration. Different from routine physical activities, outward bound are team sports games, and the participation of migrant children in outward bound not only increases the communicate with teammates and enhance friendship⁰, but also, under the set specific circumstances, It enhances the sense of identity of the local culture and its own new identity⁰.

Migrant children have different cultural habits behind their dual identities as urban and rural people, and the cultural differences between urban and rural areas cannot be ignored. A series of changes in cross-cultural situations will bring stress and affect psychological adaptation⁰, and the outward bound provides challenging simulation situations for migrant children to simulate possible problems in study and life. The focus of guidance is on migrant children, through certain physical and intellectual activities, two-way trigger cognitive activities, emotional activities and volitional activities, overcome negative psychology with strong will and perseverance, ensure that students show their true self in the project⁰, generate emotional communication with the surrounding environment and other participants, and finally find a way to win. Success and failure in the process will let migrant children know their true self, treat success and failure correctly, feel the value of their own existence, and obtain a sense of self-verification. Moreover, the victory of the project is completely based on the unity of both sides. Migrant children need to constantly change their roles and responsibilities in the team, and give feedback and share in both directions⁰. Help them to acquire and accept more knowledge and understanding of urban people and urban life, maintain and accept rural culture, gradually accept urban cultural atmosphere in urban life, and develop strong faith and willingness to help other qualities in the process of participation, so as to make the interpersonal relationship between migrant children more harmonious. Improve

communication ability and social integration level, internalize moral norms in practice, and realize ideal social order.

However, routine physical activities are mostly personal events, focusing on individual display and completion. Compared with the characteristics of outward bound the consistency of individual and team goals, the communication in the events are far more than that of routine physical activities. For example, routine physical activities such as martial arts and track and field show the characteristics of "go it alone", and tend to enhance the subjects' self-control and physical quality.

4.1. Limitation

Several limitations were worthy of be note. The first limitation was that this study selected sixth grade students from a Migrant School in Beijing, no additional public schools or private schools with migrant children mixed with local children were selected. Different types of schools are faced with different situations in social integration. The sample scope and diversity can be expanded in the following studies. Second, there are many factors that affect the social integration of migrant children, such as the management style of the head teacher in the control group and the experimental group, and the family education style, etc. During the experiment, it is difficult to fully control the irrelevant variables, which may have an impact on the research results.

4.2. Implications for the Practice

Family education can affect children for life and can not be ignored. As an intervention means to improve the social integration of migrant children, outward bound can be carried out and developed in the communities where migrant children live, so as to change the traditional mode of family education, encourage in-depth communication between parents and children, improve the closeness between family members, and make greater progress in family education. It can also promote the social integration of migrant children from various angles by improving the adaptability of families. As a course that integrates the characteristics of fun, experience and innovation, outward bound can have a positive impact on migrant children's mental health, interpersonal relationship and team cooperation compared with traditional physical education. Relevant departments and school teachers can actively encourage outward bound for migrant children and customize reasonable and scientific outward bound programs. To provide guiding opinions for migrant children's learning and expansion sports, and promote their physical and mental healthy development.

5. CONCLUSION

In summary, the findings of the current study have shown that the social integration of migrant children is different in demographic backgrounds. Compared with routine physical activities, outward bound as a part of leisure sports breaks through the traditional sports education mode, helps participants to influence deep psychology through personal experience, and can promote the social integration level of migrant children. It is a suitable way to promote positive life and improve social integration and mental health in the long run.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

YZ: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal analysis, Investigation, Software, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing. ZJ: Software, Visualization, Writing – review & editing. YW: Resources, Supervision, Writing – review & editing.

FUNDING

This research was supported by Key Laboratory of Physical Fitness and Exercise, Ministry of Education,

Beijing Sport University(No.2020YFC2006700). The funding source had no role in the study design, analysis or interpretation of the data, writing the manuscript, or the decision to submit the paper for publication.

ETHICS STATEMENT

The studies involving human participants were reviewed and approved by the Sports Science Experiment Ethics Committee of Beijing Sport University(study name“‘The effects of Outward Bound on the social integration of migrant children, ”2023243H).

INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Due to ethical restrictions, some access restrictions apply to the data underlying the findings. However, reasonable requests to access the datasets should be directed to the corresponding author after obtaining the permission signing the usage agreement for research purpose.

REFERENCES

- Ning J Z. (2023). Main data of the 7th national Population Census. http://www.stats.gov.cn/sj/zxfb/202302/t20230203_1901080.html [Accessed February 3,2023]
- Wang Q.(2016). “National Health and Family Planning Commission China floating population development report” <http://www.nhc.gov.cn/xcs/s3574/201610/a6d3a604596a4ca3acf0dad31d891c13.shtml> [Accessed October, 2016]
- Song G W, Luo F. (2014). Mental Health Education of Migrant Children in the Urbanization Process. *J. of Jiangsu Normal Uni. (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)*,40(03):149-154.
- Tian H B.(2021). Research on the performance characteristics of leisure sport specialization. Zhejiang University. DOI:10.27461/d.cnki.gzjdx.2021.002926.
- Ryba T V, Stambulova N B, Ronkainen N J.(2016). The work of cultural transition: An emerging model. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 7: 427.
- Cai Y Y, Zhan D L. (2016). The relationship between the sense of hope in core self-evaluation and social adaptive behavior of junior middle school students. *Journal of Campus Life & Mental Health*,14(05):325-329.
- Zhou J F, Deng X M, Shi Y,et al..(2013). A comparative study of school integration between migrant children and local children: Based on the theoretical perspective of social integration. *Youth studies*, (02):9-21+94.
- Meng Y J. (2008). A comparative study on the social integration of migrant children. Capital University of Economics and Business.
- Chen J H. (2012). Analysis of Expanding Training on College Students’ Psychological Health and Social Adaptability of Study. Wuhan University、 Scientific Research Publishing. Proceedings of Conference on Psychology and Social Harmony (CPSH2012) .Wuhan University、 Scientific Research Publishing: Scientific Research Publishing :582-584.
- Dong J, Tan D L, Zhang Y. (2019). The Relationship Between Migrant Children’s Social Support and Urban Adaptability: The Mediating Role of Hope and the Moderating Role of Whether Only-Child or Not. *Chinese Journal of Special Education*, No.228(06):78-84.
- Cao C Y. (2009). Discrimination of sports leisure and leisure sports—and deliberation with Boffin Ma Hui di. *Journal of Guangzhou sport University*, 29(01):57-60.
- Henderson K A, Gibson H J. (2013). An integrative review of women, gender, and leisure: Increasing complexities. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 45(2): 115-135.
- Han Q. (2018). Research on the influence of outward bound on college students' social adaptability. *Journal of the Knowledge Economy*, (21):112-113.
- Wang C S. (2007). Experimental research on developing outward bound training teaching in physical education in higher vocational colleges. Beijing Sport University.
- Hao Z. (2015). A study on the social integration and integrating strategies of Chinese Migrant Children. east China normal university.
- Ling Y, Hu H N, Lu J Z, et al. (2020). The Relationship between Family Support and Life Satisfaction in Left-

- behind Children: A Chain Mediating Effect of Hope and Gratitude. *Chinese Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 28(05):1021-1024+1008.
- Zhuo R. (2015). The Characteristics of Floating children's social integration and the impact of family environment. Jilin University.
- Yue Z S, Li S Z, Marcus W. F.(2012). Concept Construction and Empirical Analysis of Social Integration for Rural-Urban Migrants in China. *Modern Economic Science*,34(01):1-11+124.
- Yang J H. (2009). From isolation, selection to integration: Theoretical considerations on social integration of floating population. *Population Research*,33(01):17-29.
- Xu A Q. (2010). Family Attitudes towards Gender Roles: Analysis of Experiences in Stereotypical Tendencies. *Collection of Women's Studies*, (02):18-28.
- Feng X T, Xiao J. (2014). Research on the difference between urban and rural women's gender role consciousness in China. *The Journal of Humanities*, (11):107-116.DOI:10.15895/j.cnki.rwzz.2014.11.014.
- Corrigan E A, Konrad A M. (2007). Gender role attitudes and careers: A longitudinal study. *Sex roles*, 56: 847-855.
- Su L F. (2017). A Study on Measurement and Influencing Factors of Citizen's Level of Floating Population in China [J]. *Chinese Journal of Population Science*,(02):12-24+126.
- Luo K Y, Cai G L. (2021). Characteristics of flow population in border counties of Yunnan Province and its influencing factors of the residence intention in Journal of Jiangsu Normal University (Natural Science Edition),39(01):42-46.
- Li G Y. (2005). Discussion on the future popularization and development of outward bound in terms of its characteristic and function. *Shandong Sports Science & Technology*, (04):48-49.
- Schwartz A L, Galliher R V, Domenech Rodríguez M M. (2011). Self-disclosure in Latinos' intercultural and intracultural friendships and acquaintanceships: Links with collectivism, ethnic identity, and acculturation. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 17(1): 116.
- Marni Goldenberg, Leo McAvoy, David B. Klenosky. (2005). Outcomes from the Components of an Outward Bound Experience [J]. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 28(2):
- Jayson Seaman, Robert MacArthur, Sean Harrington. (2020). Dartmouth Outward Bound Center and the rise of experiential education, 1957–1976. *History of Education Review*, 49(1):

AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHY



Yuhong Wen (1968-), Female, doctorate, professor, main direction of studying: Exercise and health promotion, swimming teaching.



Yuhang Zhou (1999-), female, master, main direction of studying: sport psychology; Physical Education Training



Zhenyu Jin (1999-), male, master, main direction of studying: Physical Education Training ; sports biomechanics; swimming teaching

Citation: Yuhong Wen, et.al., "The Effect of Outward Bound on the Social Integration of Chinese Migrant Children" *International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education (IJHSSE)*, vol 11, no. 8, 2024, pp. 1-8. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.20431/2349-0381.1108001>.

Copyright: © 2024 Author. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.