

Age-Friendliness Assessment Results for Busan Metropolitan City

1. Purpose of Research

There is a need for research in order to implement an elderly welfare plan in accordance with the regional attributes and state of affairs in Busan Metropolitan City. Research will also facilitate a systematic and comprehensive promotion of future elderly welfare plans. This study will serve as a preliminary investigation for developing a guideline for registering with the WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities by assessing and identifying methods to improve age-friendliness.

2. Research Design

1) The contents of this analysis have been categorized into 10 topic areas

(Table 1):

Table 1. Contents of analysis

<input type="radio"/> Outside spaces and building	<input type="radio"/> Respect and social inclusion
<input type="radio"/> Transportations	<input type="radio"/> Civic participation and employment
<input type="radio"/> Housing	<input type="radio"/> Communication and information
<input type="radio"/> Social participation	<input type="radio"/> Community support and health services

2) Research Period

- Study period: August 5, 2015–September 4, 2015

3) Contents of Research

- Research field: Assessment of age-friendliness in Busan Metropolitan City
- Subjects: Individuals over 60 years of age living in Busan
- Sample size: 525 individuals over 60 years of age living in Busan (random sampling and quota sampling in parallel)
- Research method: 1:1 interviews

4) Data Processing

- Raw data were processed with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) after the editing and coding processes. Statistical processes were selectively applied based on each question's properties.

3. Age–friendliness Assessment Results for Eight Major Topic Areas

1) Outside Spaces and Buildings

□ Assessment results

- Regarding questions about “Outside Space and Buildings,” “There is an easily accessible park or walking trail by my house” was the response that ranked the highest with a score of 2.99. “The surrounding living environment (water, air, garbage disposal, etc.) is clean” scored 2.89. “Current living area is safe and the risk of crime is low” followed with a score of 2.85. There are numerous difficulties pertaining to the use of various facilities and buildings, including a lack of consideration for elderly users.

□ Core issues

- There are a number of difficulties pertaining to the use of various facilities and buildings,

reflecting a lack of consideration for elderly users.

- There are many safety concerns because of the lack of anti-skid treatments in crosswalks, inadequate visual and auditory signals, and failure to provide adequate crossing time.
- There is an insufficient number of parks that can be accessed easily by the elderly for a livable urban environment that is not only age-friendly but also attractive to all generations.

2) Transportation

□ Assessment results

- In terms of transportation-related survey questions, the score for the following selections was the highest (2.97): “Public transportation is reliable and runs frequently late at night and on holidays” and “I can easily reach destinations that I want at any time using public transportation.” “There is no difficulty in transfer between bus and subway” scored 2.79. “There is easy access to the bus stop, subway station, and taxi stand in the area in which I live” followed with a score of 2.69.

□ Core issues

- Although public transportation is mostly used by the elderly, there is a significant lack of convenience and safety in terms of bus stop locations and ease of getting on and off the bus.
- Currently, using public transportation requires too much vertical movement on stairs, and the pedestrian crossing time is too short.
- Despite the fact that transportation facilities and information are rapidly changing and becoming more complex, it is very difficult to acquire relevant information.

3) Housing and the Residential Environment

□ Assessment results

- For housing-related questions, “My current residential area is safe” ranked the highest with a score of 3.02. “My current housing is safe” scored 2.90 and “The housing prices in my current

residential area are reasonable” followed with a score of 2.65.

□ Core issues

- Recently, there has been an increase in the housing expense burden for the elderly, especially in the metropolitan city area.

- Elderly people are finding it difficult to continue to live in their current residences after retirement, and there is no relevant information on or access to subsidies for house remodeling.

- There is a lack of variety in terms of elderly welfare housing facilities that accommodate different situations or characteristics of the elderly.

4) Social Participation

□ Assessment results

- Regarding questions about social participation, the following selection scored the highest: “There are sufficient transportation options to participate in various events and visit attraction places” (2.79).

“Various events, meetings, and attractions take place in easily accessible locations” scored 2.66. “Events take place at a convenient time for participation by the elderly” followed with a score of 2.57.

□ Core issues

- There is a lack of variety in social events in which the elderly can participate.

- Recreational and athletic activities in which everyone can participate do not take place very often.

- Locations or facilities for events, activities, and meetings in Busan Metropolitan City or our borough are neither varied nor easily accessible.

5) Respect and Social Inclusion

□ Assessment results

- For questions regarding “Respect and Social Inclusion,” the following selection scored the highest (2.79): “People who offer services are polite and friendly.” “Busan Metropolitan City or

our borough readily reflects the opinions of the elderly when implementing welfare-related policies or providing services” scored 2.62. “I can easily find elder care supplies (such as canes, diapers, etc.) or acquire related services at stores or market” scored 2.59.

□ Core issues

- Family-oriented events or programs provided by the local community or schools in which everyone can participate are lacking. Furthermore, there is difficulty promoting an understanding and exchange between generations.

- There is a lack of recognition regarding the elderly’s contributions to the local community.

- Special benefits and services for the overall elderly population are lacking; rather, they are concentrated among a small portion of this population.

6) Civic Participation and Employment

□ Assessment results

- For questions regarding “Civic Participation and Employment,” the following selections scored the highest, with a score of 2.39: “There are a lot of volunteer opportunities in which the elderly can participate” and “Public, private, and nonprofit decision-making organizations promote participation of the elderly.” “There is an increase in job opportunities for the elderly” scored 2.34. “Discrimination based on age is prohibited in all steps of employment, including the recruitment process, employment retention, promotion, and training” followed with a score of 2.33.

□ Core issues

- Volunteer opportunities for the elderly are lacking.

- There is no provision of education or information for after-retirement reemployment.

- Job opportunities for the elderly are lacking.

7) Communication and Information

□ Assessment results

- Regarding questions pertaining to “Communication and Information,” the following selection scored the highest (2.82): “In the case of questions or concerns, people kindly offer guidance at public institutions, hospitals, community welfare centers, etc.” “I receive a variety of information from the neighbors” scored 2.79. “I’m able to get sufficient information required for post-retirement life from the places where I often go (such as the senior community center, community welfare center, culture center, etc.)” followed with a score of 2.62.

□ Core issues

- Information provided by published newspapers, brochures, broadcast captions, or automatic response services is difficult to understand.

- Electronic keypads (such as bank automated teller machines, or ATMs) encountered in everyday life are difficult to manipulate.

- It is difficult to learn the necessary skills or use computers or the Internet at public places (e.g., government institutions or public libraries) free of charge or at a reduced rate.

8) Community Support and Health Services

□ Assessment results

In terms of questions regarding “Community Support and Health Services,” the following response scored the highest (2.90): “I can always receive appropriate treatments from hospitals or health centers when in need of hospital consultations or treatments.” “Hospitals, health centers, and community welfare centers are located in convenient locations” scored 2.85. “There are easily accessible nursing homes, sanitariums, and senior welfare centers where I live” followed with a score of 2.83.

□ Core issues

- There is difficulty in terms of receiving information, education, and training regarding health care.

- Health, medical, and welfare service facilities in Busan Metropolitan City or our borough have not been constructed for convenience or easy accessibility of the elderly.
- The administrative process for receiving health or welfare services is difficult and not straightforward.
- Social welfare service information is not conveyed appropriately, making it difficult to acquire such information.