

Study on the Temporal and Spatial Behavior Characteristics of the Daily Activities of the Post-95 Gay Groups in Shenzhen from the Perspective of Queer Geography

-- Based on Activity-travel Diary Surveys and Interview of Few Samples

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Abstract

Homosexuals, interacting with cities and having obvious group characteristics in their spatial behaviors, play an important part of urban population, especially in big cities. Research on the temporal and spatial behavior characteristics of post-95 gay groups help the better understanding of this group, as well as caring this vulnerable groups and making up the research gap. From the perspective of queer geography, this study uses methods of travel diary surveys and interview and selects 5 interviewees in Shenzhen for in-depth investigation. It is found that, influenced by education, work, living location and emotional state, the respondents differ evidently in behavior characteristics. But the overall frequency and scope of activities show a law of attenuation with distance, and the time arrangement of working day and rest day is roughly the same. In addition, all the respondents promoted the re-conceptualization and re-territorialization of space under heterosexual hegemony in Shenzhen from the perspective of entity and virtual space.

Keywords

Queer Geography; Post-95; Gay Groups; Daily Activities; Behavioral Characteristics.

1. Introduction

"Queer", a synonym for homosexual groups, originally equals to "strange" or "devilish", and later obtained derogatory sense. Queer Theory is a sex theory rising in the 1990s, which is about all those who do not conform to mainstream culture and gender norms in terms of sexual orientation. This theory challenges the traditional binary sex structure of, and advocates the flexibility of gender and sexual orientation [1]. Under this, homosexuality research is no longer only about minorities, but how social practice organize society into a whole through sexualizing body, behavior, identity and social relations [2]. Queer theory significantly improved the marginalization of homosexuality research [3].

Since the 1980s, based on Feminism and Post-structuralism, Human Geography explores the internal operation, symbolic production and value connotation of "culture", and uses these contents to investigate the composition, order and competition of "space", which is called "Cultural Turn". In this context, new Cultural Geography is also more interested in discussing the phenomenon of "discriminated others" in social space [4], such as homosexuals, people with disabilities, etc. Lefebvre put forward Space Production Theory, which holds that space is a kind of social product constructed with fluidity, politics and strategy [5], and Foucault radiated the scope of his research to the perspective of the relationship between "culture, space and power", advocating the publicity and non exclusiveness of public space, which is freely used by all

people [6]. In his theory, the narrator has the advantage of discourse power and can block the space according to his own preference or value judgment, which leads to the non-entry of the vulnerable ones (such as homosexuals).

Influenced by the above theories, Queer Geography is a new branch of geography science that introduces queer perspective, under which the existence of homosexuality in a specific space is the space under the definition of heterosexuality [7]. Mainly studying homosexual identity and space politics, it emphasizes re-conceptualization and re-territorialization of space under heterosexual hegemony [8]. Michael Warner opposes that heterosexuality is taken for granted and occupies a dominant position in society. Through marriage, law and related systems, a set of natural laws has been formed, it dominates all aspects of public life [9].

Homosexual space politics is of great significance to gay group's fight for public space, which is also the main means of the affirmative movement, such as the "fight" for rights of homosexuals to the people's Park in Guangzhou, China in 2009. From the perspective of Queer Geography, there is an inevitable connection between homosexuality and space, that is, homosexuals often have to gather in a certain space range to complete identity and social interaction. In the book *Their World*, Li Yinhe pointed out that in the 1990s, gay men in Beijing often gathered in parks or baths socialize [10]. Such semi-hidden places formed space of "representation", in where their sexual orientation was seen through by each other.

Time Geography, a methodology to reveal the relationship between human behavior and objective environment, was put forward by Swedish geographer Hagerstrand in the 1960s, [11]. It emphasizes the restriction of time and space on individual behavior, and is mostly applied to the study of one's travel. Relevant research is mainly based on the micro scale. In order to obtain the detailed space-time activity trajectory, it is necessary to collect individual behavior data by traditional methods including Recall Method and Activity Dialog [12].

Limited by the actual social context of China and the natural vulnerable social status of homosexuals, the research on homosexuality in China is less, and focuses only on medicine, psychology, sociology and other fields. Compared with heterosexuals, whether homosexuals show more obvious differences in behavioral characteristics is unknown, neither whether homosexuals show different characteristics because of their specific categories, nor the effects of social status, age, educational background and emotional status on their temporal and spatial behavior. Therefore, this paper, from the perspective of Queer Geography, uses activity logs, interviews and other methods of Time Geography, selects a small number of samples to study the spatio-temporal behavior and characteristics of young gay men in Shenzhen. Gay men are an indispensable part of society, whose interaction with the city through behavior also affects all aspects of the city. Such research is a concern for the vulnerable groups in society, which helps policy makers to formulate and adjust policies.

2. Concept Definition and Research Methods

2.1. Definition of Concepts

2.1.1. Post-95 Gay Men in Shenzhen

The research area is Shenzhen City, Guangdong Province, which is a well-known immigrant city in China. In 2012, Shenzhen ranked fifth in the total urban gay population [13], with a certain proportion of gay men in its population, and more samples can be studied. Homosexuality refers to those who only have lust and love for the same sex [14]. Therefore, the study defined "post-95 gay men in Shenzhen" as a group of men who were born between 1995 and 1999 and lived in Shenzhen for a long time and only had sex with men. Most of these people are unmarried and have a more open cognition of marriage and love. Compared with the post-60s and Post-70s gay men, they have higher self-identity, better self-expression ability and more social interaction behavior, which greatly reduces the obstacles of data acquisition.

2.1.2. Behavioral Characteristics of Daily Activities

In this study, daily activities, which can be divided into two types: work-day activities and rest-day activities, are the general name of activities carried out by individuals in daily time unit. Residents' daily activity space and activity mobile system reflect residents' use of urban space and the formation mechanism of their behavior space, and provide a micro perspective to explain the relationship between urban internal space and residents' behavior [15]. From the perspective of time, the study of behavior characteristics mainly includes activity sequence analysis, time rhythm, time allocation and so on; from the perspective of space, the study of behavior characteristics mainly starts from the perspective of space-time path, commuting between regions and so on.

2.2. Research Method

2.2.1. Research Design

This study mainly uses the activity log method to record the daily activities of the interviewees from December 28, 2020 to January 10, 2021. The log records the starting and ending time, place, companion and commuting situation of each activity in detail, and subdivides the activity types into sleep, housework, shopping, work, study, etc. In order to ensure the continuity of activities, respondents need to ensure that the start time of each activity is the end time of the previous activity. The study also conducted face-to-face or telephone interviews with the interviewees every weekend to ensure the accuracy of the content of the activity log, and confirmed or discussed the relevant issues with the interviewees.

In the case of a limited number of samples, the study intends to conduct in-depth analysis on the spatio-temporal behavior characteristics of each interviewee: at the individual level, it mainly studies the activity sequence, time rhythm, time allocation, spatiotemporal path, activity area range, etc. of each interviewee, and visually expresses these characteristics. Meanwhile, it pays attention to the investigation of the interviewee from the perspective of Queer Theory to explain their behavior. The research also examines whether these respondents have the third sexual characteristic, and analyzes whether these people contribute to the space politics of homosexuals.

2.2.2. Profile of Research Objects

Table 1. Basic information of interviewees

Numble	Name	Age	Educational Background	Living Address	Work or school address	Emotional status
1	Zhang XX	25	Bachelor Degree	Huixin Apartment	Fumin Metro Station	In a relationship
2	Xiao XX	22	Master's Degree	Peking University (Shenzhen)	Peking University (Shenzhen)	Single
3	Liu XXXX	25	Master's Degree	South University of Science And Technology	South University of Science And Technology	Single
4	Zhang XXXX	24	Master's Degree	Harbin Institute of Technology (Shenzhen)	Harbin Institute of Technology(Shenzhen)	In a relationship (partener is in other city)
5	Su XX	22	Bachelor Degree	Huaqiang Garden	Central University of Finance and Economics(Beijing)	Single

Under the definition of relevant concepts, combined with the requirements of this paper for a small sample size, through snowball sampling method, five post-95 gay men living in Shenzhen were selected. These respondents have different occupations, emotional status, educational background, etc. Their specific situation is as Table 1.

3. Analysis on the Characteristics of Daily Activities of Interviewees

3.1. Interviewee 1

Interviewee 1 is the only post-95 gay man who has worked among the five interviewees. He resigned in the second half of 2020 due to the postgraduate entrance examination and found a new job on January 4, 2021. Therefore, only 1.4 ~ 1.8 are classified as working days. Screening out the activities that haven't been carried out in two weeks, we can get the following line chart of time series sorting, in which the horizontal axis is the specific date, and the vertical axis is the total duration of the activities, in minutes.

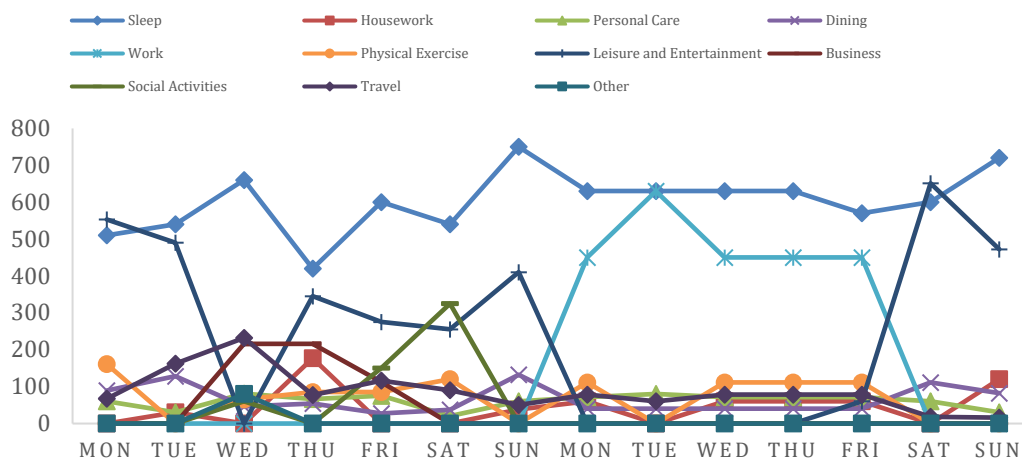


Figure 1. Activity Sequence line chart of interviewee 1

The types of duration activities of interviewee 1 are diverse, including housework, personal care, etc. Among them, the most time used was sleeping, followed by work and leisure and entertainment, and activities such as dining, personal care, physical exercise showed stability, that is, the interviewee would spend a certain amount of time on this activity every day.

I prefer physical exercise, and I will spare at least an hour to do it every day. The gym is very close to my home, and it is cheaper, and the equipment is also quite complete. I like it because I pay more attention to my shape, plus gym is also a good place to make friends.

For him, some activities showed instability (such as going out to work, shopping, social intercourse, etc.), but physical exercise always accounts for a stable proportion in his daily activities. In the two weeks of participating, only some cases did not work out of time and date with boyfriend. In the selection of location for this activity, the main influencing factors include distance, price, environmental conditions, etc.

By my observation, there are a lot of gay in gym. They go to fitness to increase attractiveness. And in the gym, you can often meet some gay, and you can know that he is gay at a glance, that is, "gaydar" is ringing (identifying that the other is gay).

Gym in big cities is becoming the spatial carrier of social communication of gay group since gay men care more about appearance improvement. It is also being given or created a sense of place, a "representation space", in where gay men complete identity confirming, which challenges the heterosexual "space hegemony".

Go to gay bars? I will never go there. One is that I do not want others to know my sexual orientation. The second is that I think the place is too messy (such as people with HIV or other infectious diseases). Plus, I'm not basically a man with a rich nightlife.

For the interviewee, the gym was the only place where he would go in and out. This place is safe, and do not expose the homosexual attributes to other heterosexuals. "Explicit gay" places such as gay bars are not accepted by him for it cannot protect the privacy of sexual orientation and the safety of sexual behavior of individuals. The life habits and whether they work are also the reasons for influencing the choice of behavior. For example, people without the habit of sleeping late do not choose to go to the bar frequently, and those who have work will avoid it because the activity may affect the normal work on the next day.

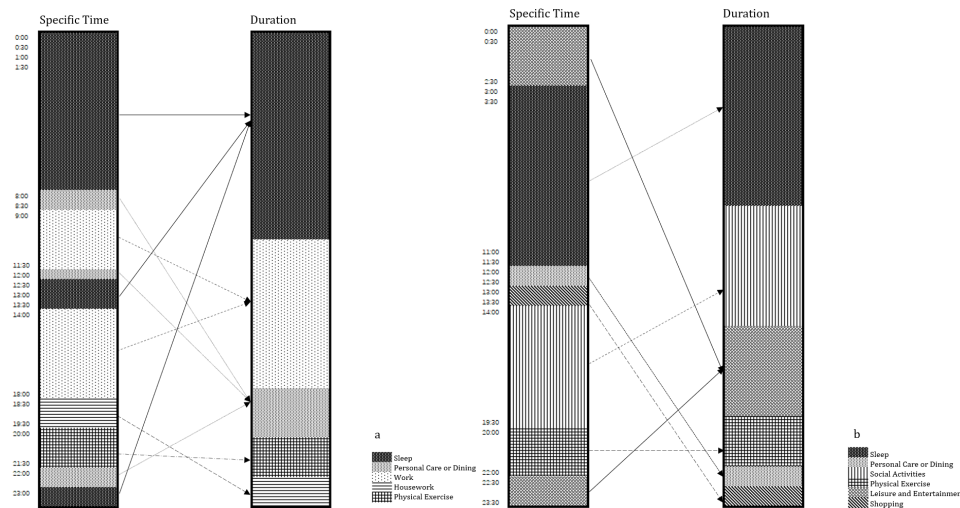


Figure 2. Comparing with Activity Sequence Analysis and the Time use Analysis (a: on workdays; b: on rest days)

In addition, according to whether it is a working day or not, its spatiotemporal behavior can also be divided into significant characteristics. During the workdays, he spent most of their time on work and sleep, with little or no time for recreation. On the restdays, the interviewee not only has a lot of time for entertainment activities, but also have rich and diverse overall activities. The most representative work day activities (January 7, Thursday) and rest day activities (December 31, Saturday) of the respondents were selected, and the time activity sequence was drawn as Figure 2. By comparison, it can be found that the biggest difference between the activities of interviewee 1 on working day and rest day is the flexibility of activity time. When the total sleep time is roughly the same, the time arrangement is obviously different. The interviewee on working day has to choose to go to bed early and get up early because of the fixed working time, but in the rest day he has more control over personal time.

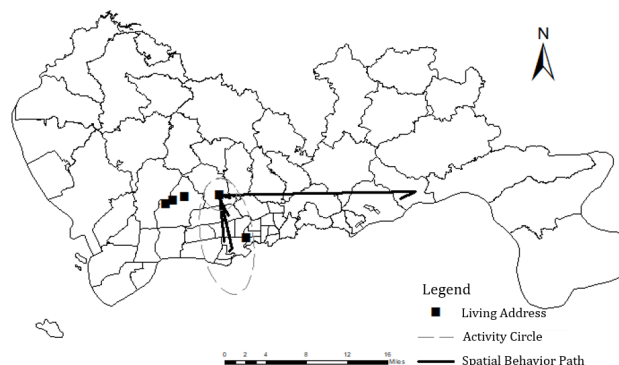


Figure 3. Interviewee 1's spatial behavior path

Using ArcGIS to mark all the places visited by interviewee 1 within two weeks, we can easily draw out corresponding spatial behavior path (without marking the return trip). It can be seen that interviewee 1 has a large range of space activities and strong travel ability. The farthest travel location is Dameisha, and the activity is to celebrate the new year with his boyfriend. The scope of travel is mainly concentrated in the vicinity of home and company, which generally presents a double circle structure of circular activity circle with home as the center and oval activity circle with home and work place as the long axis.

3.2. Interviewee 2

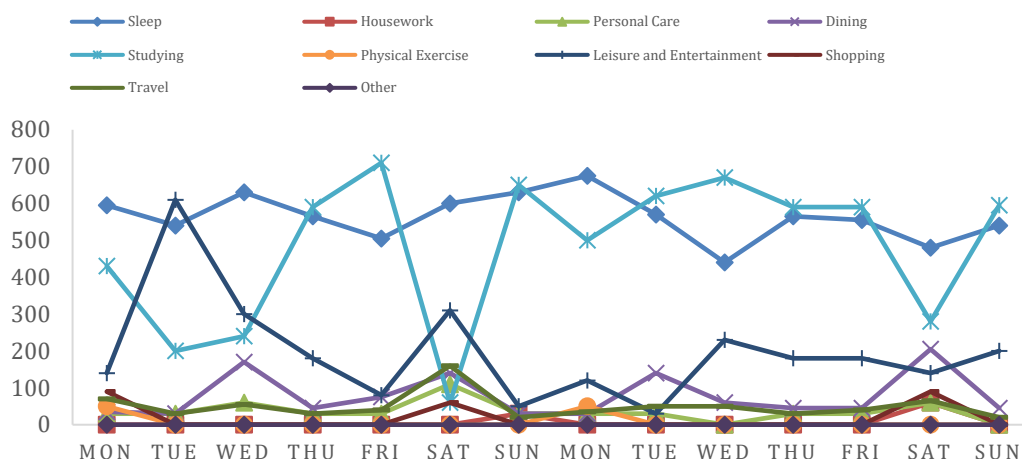


Figure 4. Activity Sequence line chart of interviewee 2

By Figure 4 of interviewee 2, it can be seen that three activities that he spent most time in two weeks were sleep, studying and leisure and entertainment, in which the time allocation of sleep activities was the most stable and that of leisure and entertainment activities was the most unstable. Only once did leisure activities take more time than sleep and study, which is a special case for having fun with his classmates.

What I do every day is very simple, that is, sleep, study and play. Sometimes I spend more time studying than sleeping. Because of the great pressure of scientific research, I can't finish my job without getting papers published. Only when my classmates ask me out, will I go out.

In terms of activity type, the interviewee's activity is relatively plain. He is not keen to spend a fixed amount of time to go to the gym every day, but choose to do physical exercise at a fixed time every week, showing a certain periodicity.

I don't like sports very much, and I don't have a big social circle, so I don't go to fitness for the sake of bodybuilding. I basically run in the track and field every Monday for about an hour, although I'm not very willing.

By observing the line chart, we can also find that the time allocation of their learning activities tends to appear "V" shape. By interviewing, it is concluded that this kind of time arrangement mainly comes from "compensation psychology". Learning as a necessary daily activity, respondents tend to plan the time of the activity on a weekly basis. Specifically, if more time is spent on leisure and entertainment and less time is spent on learning on a certain day, the interviewees will "compensate" for the learning time on the next day to ensure that the learning task is completed on time.

The main job of students is to study. In my university, a lot of activities are unavoidable, so we have to socialize (because this is a small group or group with high homogeneity). I prefer to make a schedule. I will make it clear what I want to do every week. If I know that I will spend a lot of time

playing with my classmates one day, I will increase my investment in scientific research the day before and the day after.

His daily activities are dominated by a pre-planned schedule, indicating a regulated life style. When roughly divided his activities into sleep activities and other activities, and the sequence diagram based on dichotomy can be drawn. The time arrangement of his activities shows great stability, and there is no great difference between working days and rest days.

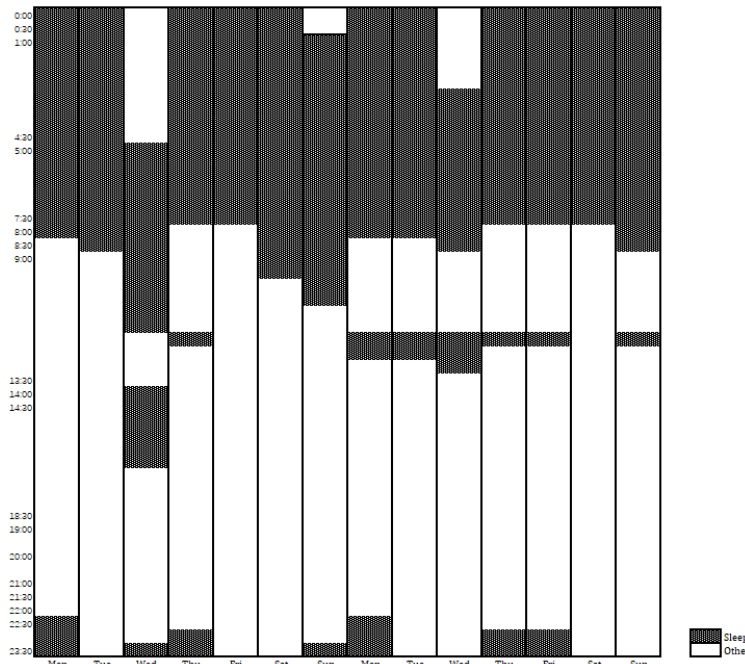


Figure 5. Activity Sequence of interviewee 2 based on dichotomy

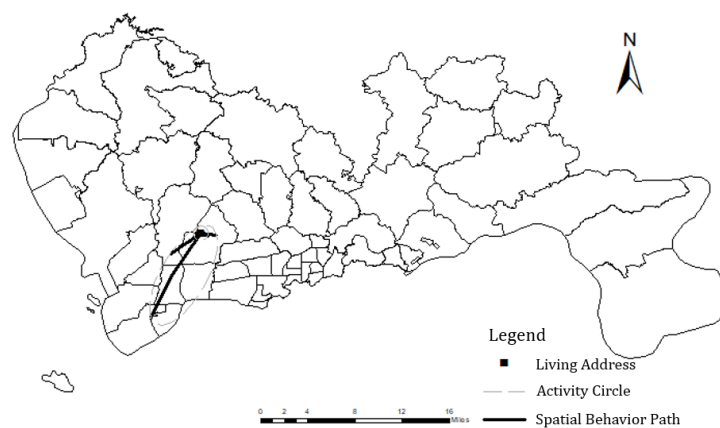


Figure 6. Interviewee 2's spatial behavior path

From figure 6, the scope of space activities of the interviewee mainly concentrated in Nanshan District of Shenzhen City, and the choice of activity sites was mostly near his university. This is closely related to the fixed types of activities, the limited available time and travel capacity. The activity of the interviewee also presents a double circle structure, that is, a circle with the dormitory as the center, and a wider range of external oval circle. Among them, the main behavioral factor determining the size of the outer circle is leisure and entertainment. Because of the limited services and leisure places near the University Town, the interviewees and his classmates prefer to go to higher-level places of consumption that are far, on the rest day.

Through in-depth analysis, it can be found that most of the daily activities of the interviewee were completed independently, a small number of activities were accompanied by classmates, and he did not go to places with obvious "queer sense of place" or gay gathering.

This is mainly because the circle of my university is too small. We should always watch our own behavior. What happens to you may be known by the whole university the next day. At present, I have no plans to come out and am busy with scientific research, so I don't have the courage and time to go to places where gay will go. And I don't have much interest in these places. They always give me a sense of chaos.

The limitation of such activities mainly comes from the protection of personal privacy, the limitation of time and the cognition of "queer place". From the perspective of physical space, it can be considered that the behavior of the interviewee is not significantly different from that of heterosexual men. However, social and self needs are indispensable and important, especially for vulnerable groups. Homosexuals' emotional needs need to be met, and social activities must be carried out theoretically. However, the way to meet this demand has changed from the traditional, more exposed and dangerous physical space to the virtual space with the Internet as the ecological environment and homosexual social software as the carrier.

3.3. The Rest Interviewees

Among the remaining interviewees, interviewees 3 and 4 have the same educational background, while interviewee 5 is an undergraduate, with different learning stages. In addition, interviewee 5 returned to Shenzhen ahead of schedule after completing the undergraduate course. During the interviewing period, interviewee 5 was active in Shenzhen, Hong Kong and Sanya, and often traveled to and from high-speed railway stations, airports and other places. From this point of view, the available time and potential activity scope of interviewee 4, interviewee 3 and interviewee 5 increased in turn.

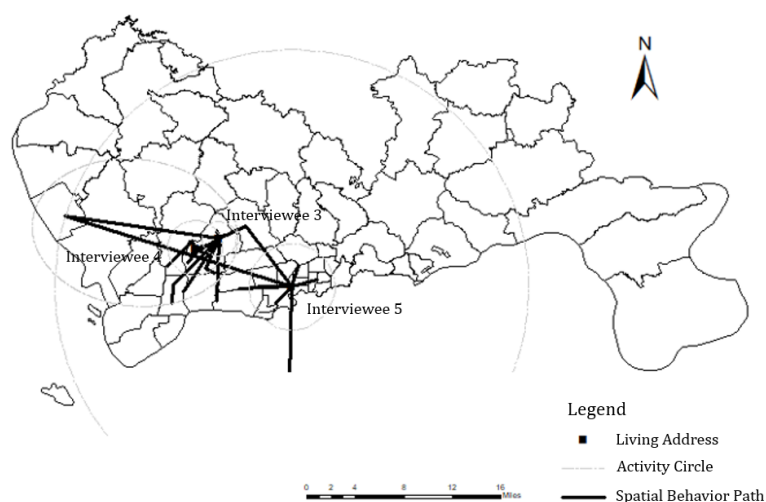


Figure 7. The rest interviewees' spatial behavior path

The main influencing factors on their spatial behavior path include emotional state, available time, personality and so on. For example, for interviewee 3, his single status makes him have great social needs. He is eager to get to know more "new kind" and start a relationship by going in and out of the queer places. This is the only one interviewee who chooses to go to the "explicit gay gathering place" initiatively.

I'm very anxious now. I haven't been in love so far, so I usually socialize with some friends even on weekdays. It's not fun to go to gay bars once in a while. Basically through gay friends, to meet some new gay friends.

He believes that there is no formal platform or place for homosexuals to socialize in Shenzhen, most of the space is still dominated by heterosexuals, and the space rights of homosexuals are not guaranteed. However, this problem is ignored by city leaders, even gay men themselves, because it is not urgent, serious or worse.

There are a lot of gay in Shenzhen, but it's hard to find the one you like. Sometimes I hope the government can help us. Of course, it's funny to say that. I think the issue of homosexuality in China is still very obscure, not to the point where the government and the people have to make their stand.

Interviewee 4 already has a stable emotional relationship, and his emotional communication is completely satisfied by his distant boyfriend, and there is not enough motivation to visit queer places in real space. He spent the least time in gay related activities.

I'm busy doing experiments every day, and I haven't been out of school for nearly a month. I met my boyfriend when I was an undergraduate. I have a good relationship. I don't need to go to a gay bar.

As for interviewee 5, his main behaviors were traveling in Sanya, leisure in Shenzhen and taking exams in Hong Kong. He spend the least time on work or study among the five respondents, who is also the only one who spend more time on tourism. Similar to interviewee 2, he do not choose to go to real homosexual gathering places for related social activities, but prefer to use related dating software.

4. Conclusion

In this study, five post-95 gay men in Shenzhen were selected as the research objects. The daily activities of the interviewees during two weeks were recorded by the activity log method, and the problems presented in the log were deeply discussed with the interviewees. The study found that the five interviewees showed significant differences in temporal and spatial behavior characteristics due to different learning and working conditions, living places and emotional states. Like the scope of on-the-job ones is wider, and the scope of school ones is obviously limited. Moreover, on-the-job people often have more abundant types of activities, such as business and work matters, since they need to deal with more complex social relations. Also, the time and space behavior path of on-the-job people between working days is relatively fixed and regular, while the behavior on non-working are more flexible. The activities of the interviewees show a law of attenuation with distance, that is, they prefer to choose the place near their residence for daily activities. Meanwhile, it can be found that different interviewees choose different queer places, some tend to go directly to explicit gathering places such as gay bars, some tend to go to recessive gathering places such as gyms, and some tend to protect personal privacy, refuse to go to gay gathering places and choose virtual cyberspace instead. For all the respondents, they basically mentioned gay bars, which is more like a pronoun, reflecting that for the post-95 respondents, the location of gay activities in Shenzhen is relatively single, or monotonous.

The sample size of this study is very limited, the conclusions of this study are not representative, and can not well summarize the temporal and spatial behavior characteristics of post-95 gay men living in Shenzhen. However, it is relatively novel to study gay men from the perspective of queer geography. In the future, the study intends to further expand the sample size and the scope of the research object, in order to objectively describe and obtain the characteristics of group activities and influencing factors.

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