

Towards an Active-Spiritual Care Model

Exploring the Drivers of Energetic Seniors' Social Re-Engagement Intention

Chiou-Fong Wei¹ Jing Yu^{1, *}

¹ *Business School, Nanfang College, Guangzhou, Guangzhou, China*

^{*} *Corresponding author. Email: 10603788@qq.com*

ABSTRACT

Population ageing has become one of the most significant social transformations in the 21st century. All world's countries are trying to do something to cope with this growing problem. However, those kinds of seniors' care that only provide the physical and safety needs, excluding mental and spiritual needs. The mechanism of seniors' active-spiritual care (SASC) for the promotion of social development by seniors has not yet been established. Because the seniors who are still energetic after retirement are eager to contribute society. This paper aims to explore the relationship between social achievement motivation, perceived social risk, individual social capital, perceived social value, knowledge-sharing intention, and social re-engagement intention of energetic seniors from the perspective of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Partial least squares method was used to analysis 750 valid personnel interview questionnaires from residents over 60 years old. The results showed that energetic seniors' social re-engagement intention is directly determined by their perceived social value and knowledge-sharing intention, which are in turn directly determined by their individual social capital, social achievement motivation and perceived social risk. Finally, the SASC model may provide another corresponding theoretical and practical management reference for seniors' care service.

Keywords: *seniors' active-spiritual care, individual social capital, perceived social risk, perceived social value, knowledge-sharing intention, social achievement motivation, social re-engagement intention*

1. INTRODUCTION

Population aging has become one of the most significant social transformations in the 21st century, with implications for nearly all sectors of society, including public health, labour markets, family structures and intergenerational relationships [1]. All world's countries, including China, are trying to do something to cope with this growing problem. As China's most populous province, Guangdong is facing the problem of population aging. Based on the 2019 report by Statistics Bureau of Guangdong Province, the population aged 65 years and older in Guangdong had reached 9.78 million, accounting for 8.62% of the total provincial population and indicating that population aging is rapidly growing and has exceeded the generally accepted criterion. In response, Guangdong has ramped up support for services related to retired seniors who need care. The province has made progress in the following fields: (1) a preliminary socialized elderly care system that covers both urban centres and rural areas has been established; the system

is based on home care, community support and institutional support; (2) the health care system has been improved to significantly increase service capacity; (3) the basic health care insurance plan has been enhanced, and more emphasis has been placed on the health and wellness of seniors; and (4) the training system has been streamlined to train and develop more qualified workers for the senior care services sector [2]. However, those kinds of care that only provide the physical and safety needs is not enough for retired seniors who are still energetic (e-seniors).

Due to the absence of spiritual care, seniors suffer from a variety of mental illnesses resulting from emotional loneliness [3]. In particular, the seniors are at higher risk of suicide than other age groups [4]. The social issues caused by this phenomenon cannot be ignored. Therefore, in a rapidly ageing society, studying spiritual care for seniors and developing a system to deliver this type of care is of critical significance.

The seniors were contributors to social development in the past. Especially, e-seniors have a wealth of social experience, skills, and resources. They are still valuable human resources who can contribute to social development [5]. Although e-seniors have a perceived social risk, that is, their income is reduced and their bodies are gradually aging, their social and psychological needs still exist [6]. Therefore, deep in their mind, there is eagerness for socializing and for a sense of belonging. They long for a community that they can be a part of. In addition, many e-seniors are still eager to learn. After retirement, some people choose to learn computer skills or foreign languages to enrich themselves and keep pace with the changing society. They rejoice in knowledge gained [7]. This strong desire for learning drives them to pursue work that they believe is important and valuable (perceived social value), and they do their best to perfect that job. This is the often-cited social achievement motivation.

E-seniors who are working feel better regarding their social life, family life, income, themselves, and overall life quality than do those not working [8]. Statistics Bureau of Guangdong Province [2] indicated that the seniors living in Guangdong (especially those in the Pearl River Delta region), about 20% to 60% are still working. They may be working for their former employer or other organizations, engaging in social services, pursuing self-employment, or involved in other work. Retirees at lower ages (with an average age of 61.2) who are working again have better mental health and a better self-evaluation of their health condition than those who are not working. Many e-seniors are still eager to contribute to the community with their skills and talents. Therefore, their strong social achievement motivation can be easily aroused. This is especially pertinent to the talented seniors who have gained a wealth of knowledge and job skills from previous experiences and possess abundant individual social capital. Driven by social achievement motivation, they are more willing to share their work experience and knowledge (knowledge-sharing intention), participate in community services, or guide young people with their business start-ups (social re-engagement intention), so that they can make meaningful contributions to society [9].

Although the issues of re-engaging society for the-seniors seem important, there is little research in terms of re-engaging society for e-seniors. Currently, both the theories and practices with regard to re-engaging society for e-seniors are still weak. They mainly focus on providing services to retired seniors who need care, including creating universities for them, promoting “grey-hair” tourism, and offering entertainment programs. To fill the research gap, this study aims to explore the feasibility for the e-seniors to re-engage social development, and how to encourage those e-seniors to make use of their strengths and actively re-engage in social services so that they can enrich their life,

realize their own value, and enjoy a meaningful life. As such, this study proposes six constructs - individual social capital, social achievement motivation, perceived social risk, perceived social value (PSV), knowledge-sharing intention (KSI) and social re-engagement intention (SRI) - to develop a research framework and discuss their theoretical and managerial implications.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Measures

This study adapted the measurement items from previous studies and all scales contained multiple items. The items for each construct are listed as follows: ten items for social achievement motivation [10-11], six items for perceived social risk [12], six items for individuals’ social capital [13-14], five items for PSV [15-16], four items for KSI [17], and four items for SRI [18-19]. All questions were measured using the 5-point Likert scale (1 for strong disagreement and 5 for strong agreement).

2.2. Sampling and Data Collection

We chose the Pearl River Delta region as the research area. This region accounts for 55% population of Guangdong, and its geographic location, urban development, economic and cultural development has a determining impact on the entire province. The research participants are residents, those aged 60 years or over. Research staff employed the convenience sampling approach and interviewed participants to complete the questionnaires. The content-based validity of the instrument was initially established by sending it to 5 experts, including 3 elderly care managers and 2 associate professors from Guangzhou, all of whom specialized in elderly field. To ensure clarity, a pilot study was conducted where questionnaires were distributed to 40 Guangzhou residents who are over 60 years old to seek feedback on the design. Based on this feedback, several minor changes were made to tailor the questionnaire to the target audience. The survey was officially administered from February 1 to March 15, 2019. A total of 842 questionnaires were received. Excluding 92 invalid questionnaires, 750 valid questionnaires were obtained, representing a valid return rate of 89%.

Of the respondents, 56% of the questionnaire respondents were female, and 89.6% of the respondents had an education at high school level or above. Additionally, 87.7% of the respondents were 65 years or older. In terms of occupation, employees accounted for 43.73%, and supervisors accounted for 56.27%. In summary, the main participants of this survey are seniors with a middle and high education level who hold supervisory positions in firms, publicly funded nongovernmental organizations, or government

departments. The sample is a good fit for studying the feasibility of seniors' re-engagement in social development.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Measurement model

The value of Cronbach's alpha (α) [20] for each latent construct ranged from 0.915 to 0.959, which was higher than the suggested threshold of 0.7. Therefore, this implied good internal consistency reliability of the measurements. Fornell and Larcker suggested that convergent validity of the measurement items in each

construct should meet three conditions: (1) factor loadings (λ) must be significantly greater than 0.5, (2) the values of composite reliability (CR) must be greater than 0.7; and (3) the values of average variance extracted (AVE) must be greater than 0.5 [21]. The data in this study indicated that the factor loadings were above the threshold value of 0.7 (ranging from 0.547 to 0.954). The CR of constructs ranged from 0.930 to 0.967, which was higher than the threshold value of 0.7. Finally, the AVE of constructs ranged from 0.572 to 0.886, which was also higher than the threshold of 0.5. The reliability and convergent validity of the constructs are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Reliability and convergent validity of constructs

Construct	Items	Mean	SD	λ	AVE	CR	α
Social achievement motivation	10	3.879	0.632	0.547 [*] -0.852 [*]	0.572	0.930	0.915
Social re-engagement intention	4	3.883	0.649	0.868 [*] -0.945 [*]	0.830	0.967	0.959
Knowledge-sharing intention	4	4.107	0.637	0.922 [*] -0.954 [*]	0.879	0.967	0.954
Perceived social risk	6	2.261	0.839	0.845 [*] -0.926 [*]	0.792	0.958	0.947
Perceived social value	5	3.883	0.669	0.916 [*] -0.958 [*]	0.886	0.959	0.936
Individual social capital	6	3.841	0.523	0.676 [*] -0.827 [*]	0.586	0.948	0.941
Criteria	-	-	-	0.500 [*]	0.500	0.700	0.700

* $p < 0.001$, SD: Standard Deviation

Discriminant validity is examined by comparing the correlation between the construct and the square root of AVE. Discriminant validity is indicated if the AVE for each multi-item construct is greater than the shared variance between constructs. Because the square roots of

the construct AVE values were all significantly greater than the correlation values, the constructs in this study demonstrated acceptable discriminant validity [21]. The correlations and AVE of the study constructs are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Discriminant Validity of constructs

Construct	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Social achievement motivation	0.756					
2. Social re-engagement intention	0.491	0.911				
3. Knowledge-sharing intention	0.638	0.666	0.937			
4. Perceived social risk	-0.133	-0.209	-0.280	0.890		
5. Perceived social value	0.463	0.770	0.560	-0.173	0.941	
6. Individual social capital	0.520	0.606	0.594	-0.077	0.559	0.765

Note: The bold numbers on the diagonal are the square roots of the AVEs. The off-diagonal elements are correlations between constructs.

3.2. Structure model

The assessment of the model's quality is based on its ability to predict endogenous constructs [22]. The coefficient of determination (R^2), the path coefficients (β), and their respective p -values are three assessments used to evaluate the proposed model. R^2 , which represents the percentage of the variance explained for

the dependent constructs, is usually employed to measure a model's predictive accuracy. The β s and their p -values represent the hypothesised relationships between the constructs. By specifying a structural model in PLS and running its algorithm along with the bootstrapping procedure with 5000 bootstrap samples in SmartPLS 2.0, this study obtained the β s, their respective p -values and the R^2 coefficients of the endogenous constructs.

Figure 1 indicates that PSV, KSI, and SRI have R^2 values of 0.366, 0.568 and 0.673, respectively, all greater than 0.25 [23]. They meet the standards set forth by researchers. In other words, the structure model has acceptable forecasting ability. Figure 1 also indicates that individual social capital has a positive impact on PSV ($\beta = 0.433, p < 0.001$) and KSI ($\beta = 0.271, p < 0.001$). Social achievement motivation has a positive impact on PSV ($\beta = 0.226, p < 0.01$) and KSI ($\beta = 0.385, p < 0.001$). Perceived social risk has a negative impact on PSV ($\beta = -0.110, p < 0.05$) and KSI ($\beta = -0.172, p < 0.001$). PSV has a positive impact on KSI ($\beta = 0.200, p < 0.01$) and SRI ($\beta = 0.578, p < 0.001$). Finally, KSI has a positive impact on SRI ($\beta = 0.342, p < 0.001$).

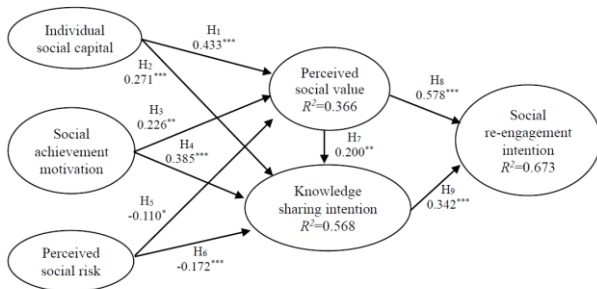


Figure 1 Result of SASC model

4. CONCLUSION

4.1. Research findings

The empirical research finds that it is feasible to support energetic retirees who have abundant social experience, knowledge, and resources and encourage them to be re-engaged in social development. First, data in Table 1 indicate that except for perceived social risk, which has an average value of 2.261 (less than 3), all other constructs have an average value from 3.841 to 4.107 (all greater than 3). It can be concluded that the seniors are still valuable human resources who will contribute to social development. In making decisions regarding re-engaging in social development, these seniors demonstrate high levels of social achievement motivation, individual social capital, PSV, KSI, and social re-engagement intention; furthermore, they indicate low perceived social risk.

Second, individual social capital, social achievement motivation, and perceived social risk are determinants for PSV and KSI; furthermore, social achievement motivation is the behavioural outcome of PSV and KSI. In other words, while confronted with the increasingly serious challenge of population ageing, in order to encourage energetic retirees to re-engage in social development and live an active, spiritual life, society needs to reinforce seniors' social achievement motivation, reduce their perceived risks related to their physical conditions and monetary interest, encourage them to share their resources in personal and social relationships, and enhance their PSV and KSI.

Population ageing is a global issue; this phenomenon has become increasingly prominent in China. The proportion of seniors in China is rapidly growing and has exceeded the generally accepted criterion. This phenomenon has brought about far-reaching impacts on the political, economic, cultural, and social landscapes in China. Tackling the issue of population ageing is an important question that China's industries, governments, and the academic community are working hard to address. The findings of this paper may inform academic research as well as practical courses of action aimed at addressing population ageing. The rest of the paper will discuss the theoretical and managerial implications of the findings, the limitations of the research, and recommendations for improving future research.

4.2. Theoretical implications

This study develops a new approach for the academic community to better understand the feasibility of energetic seniors re-engaging in social development. First, despite the volume of literature, existing research has mainly focused on providing physical services to seniors who need care. There is little research that focuses on spiritual care for seniors; studies on SASC for the population of energetic retirees are even rarer. Building on previous research and interviews with experts, this research applies Maslow's hierarchy of needs and proposes four new constructs—social achievement motivation, perceived social risk, PSV, and social re-engagement intention; together with individual social capital and KSI, these constructs are used to develop a new framework for SASC. The research further examines the relationships between the six constructs and tests the feasibility of seniors in the Pearl River Delta region re-engaging with social development. Second, the framework of SASC has a strong ability for forecasting. It can accurately explain the structural relationship between the determinants of PSV and KSI and the behavioural outcomes and confirm that SASC is feasible. This attribute will inform subsequent research on population ageing.

Finally, PSV and KSI are of paramount significance. As the two cognitive factors in the SASC framework, they have a major impact on energetic seniors' social re-engagement intention. These two key factors also interact with each other: PSV has a greater impact on social re-engagement intention than KSI; however, via the mediation effect of KSI, PSV constitutes a stronger force in enhancing energetic seniors' social re-engagement intention. In addition, PSV is a mediation variable in the individual relationships between individual social capital, social achievement motivation, and perceived social risk and KSI, and it reinforces these relationships. This finding also informs subsequent research on population ageing.

4.3. Managerial implications

Seniors have become the population with the highest suicide rate in China. The provision of physical care for seniors is not sufficient. We believe that to fundamentally address the population ageing issue, retired seniors should be divided into two large groups: “retirees who require care” and “retirees who are still energetic”. For the seniors who require care, in addition to satisfying their physical and safety needs through income support and the social security system, we should place more emphasis on meeting their spiritual needs so that they experience affection and feel respected and recognized. Energetic seniors have a wealth of social experience, skills, and resources; they are still valuable human resources who can contribute to social development. Research indicates that seniors who are working again feel better regarding their social life, family life, income, themselves, and the overall life quality than those who are not working. If we can foster energetic seniors’ social achievement motivation, reduce their perceived social risk associated with their physical condition and monetary concerns, and encourage them to contribute their social capital, share knowledge, and actively participate in community services and social development, their spiritual care will improve. If staff working at government agencies tasked with tackling the population ageing issue hope to persuade energetic seniors to re-engage in social development, they need to have a good grasp of the determinants of PSV and KSI.

First, this study has confirmed that SASC is feasible. Reinforcing seniors’ social re-engagement intention can be achieved through enhancing their PSV and KSI. In terms of social re-engagement intention, seniors are not as strong as young and middle-aged people, either physically or spiritually; therefore, based on their own circumstances, seniors can choose to volunteer at hospitals, schools, communities, environmental and religious organizations, charities, and government departments close to their home, or they may choose to guide university graduates in job searches or in their efforts to start a business. In terms of PSV, the key is convincing seniors that re-engagement in the work discussed above is meaningful and that this work helps other but also brings dignity to their own life by enabling them to contribute to society. In terms of KSI, seniors who held supervisory roles in public and private enterprises should be encouraged to share their abundant knowledge and work experience with society and young people. In cases where seniors do not have previous experience with the work they are going to undertake, they can learn through training; after becoming familiar with the nature of the work, seniors can share with others. For example, seniors can be trained on how to sort garbage, how to recycle, and how to make the best use of garbage, and then they can be tasked with a supervisory

role of reminding residents in their communities to recycle.

Second, reinforcing seniors’ PSV and KSI can be achieved through enhancing their individual social capital and social achievement motivation and through reducing their perceived social risk. In terms of reinforcing PSV, individual social capital has a greater effect than social achievement motivation. In practice, to encourage seniors who have high levels of education and held supervisory positions in public or private enterprises to share their resources in social and interpersonal relations, organizations with which seniors are working may choose to issue certificates or uniforms to the seniors to enhance their sense of belonging to the organization; this may even attract more relatives, friends, and colleagues to join them. In terms of enhancing KSI, social achievement motivation has a greater effect than individual social capital, and PSV has a mediation effect. Measures should be taken to make seniors feel that the work they are engaged in is important and meaningful and that they can have a fun and stimulating experience. For example, the communities or institutions where seniors work can hold knowledge contests and provide physical and spiritual awards to those who excel. The awards can include points for exchanging everyday living supplies, coupons, and certificates issued in public ceremonies.

Finally, perceived social risk has a negative impact on seniors’ PSV and KSI. This impact is not strong; however, seniors do experience a reduced income and physical condition after retirement. Therefore, the risks related to their physical condition, time, and monetary interests as well as psychological and social risks should still be carefully monitored when re-engaging in social development. Measures to reduce seniors’ perceived social risk include making full use of existing policies or social welfare, scheduling physical examinations for seniors, and controlled hours of work. These measures will help to ensure the physical, psychological, and financial safety of seniors.

4.4. Limitations and suggestions for future research

While this research expands our knowledge in the field of spiritual care for seniors, it does have certain limitations. First, the research sample consists of residents who are above 60 years old in Guangdong’ Pearl River Delta region; the research findings can inform policy development regarding population ageing for this area, but the sample is not representative of seniors across the country. Future research may consider expanding the research area (the first and second-tier cities in each province, such as Beijing, Shanghai, and Shenzhen). Second, due to staff, supply, and funding constraints, the survey was administered through convenience sampling and random interviews; this approach has some limitations. Future research should employ more diligent

methods to increase data accuracy, such as experiments or panel database research, so that the findings will be more robust. Third, a review of seniors' situation abroad indicates that seniors' willingness to participate in community services or social development is affected by a variety of factors, including gender, education level, profession, and positions in their career (e.g., the tendency for females to participate in community services or environmental activities is higher than that of males). In the future, research should be conducted to further analyse these variables to examine whether the factors that constitute SASC would be affected by different demographic variables. Finally, subsequent research may introduce longitudinal studies to examine the causal relationship among the factors that constitute SASC by collecting sample data at different time points; this approach will address the limitations that may exist in cross-sectional research.

REFERENCES

- [1] Z Cheng, J Ma, Evolution and measures of China's population ageing, *Academic Exchange*, 2018, Vol. 12, pp. 101-109.
- [2] Statistics Bureau of Guangdong Province, Analysis of Guangdong's population development, 2019, http://stats.gd.gov.cn/tjfx/content/post_2268233.html.
- [3] E Courtin, M Knapp, Social isolation, loneliness, and health in old age: a scoping review, *Health & Social Care in the Community*, 2017, Vol. 25 No. 3, pp. 799-812.
- [4] EC Conti et., Safety planning to manage suicide risk with older adults: case examples and recommendations, *Clinical Gerontologist*, 2020, Vol. 43, No. 1, pp. 104-109.
- [5] Y Li, Analysis on the characteristics and influencing factors of volunteer service participation of the elderly in China, *Inner Mongolia Social Sciences*, 2019, Vol. 40 No. 4, pp. 164-171.
- [6] AH Maslow, A dynamic theory of human motivation, in C.L. Stacey, M. DeMartino (Eds), *Understanding Human Motivation*, Howard Allen Publishers, Cleveland, OH, 1958, pp. 26-47.
- [7] Y Li, J Lu, Social participation of the elderly in China: connotation, status quo and challenges, *Population and Family Planning*, 2018, Vol. 11, pp. 14-17.
- [8] S Guo, H Li, A comparative study on the degree of mental aging between working and no working retirees, paper presented at the Eighth Annual Academic Meeting of the Professional Committee of Geriatric Mental Health of China Mental Health Association, Lanzhou, China, 2006.
- [9] S Chen, S Wei, X Wang, Research on factors influenced reemployment intention of the urban retirees, *Studies of Psychology and Behaviour*, 2014, Vol. 12 No. 5, pp. 688-694.
- [10] RM Steers, DN Braunstein, A behaviourally based measure of manifest needs in work settings, *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 1976, Vol.9, pp. 251-266.
- [11] S Fineman, The work preference questionnaire: A measure of managerial need for achievement, *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 1975, Vol. 48, pp. 11-32.
- [12] Y Chen, X Yan, W Fan, M Gordon, The joint moderating role of trust propensity and gender on consumers' online shopping behaviour, *Computers in Human Behaviour*, 2015, Vol. 43, pp. 272-283.
- [13] N Lin, A network theory of social capital. In D Castiglione, JW van Deth & G Wolleb (Eds.), *The handbook of social capital* (pp. 50-69). London: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- [14] H Gil de Zúñiga, N Jung, S Valenzuela, Social media use for news and individuals' social capital, civic engagement and political participation, *Journal of computer-mediated communication*, 2012, Vol. 17, No.3, pp. 319-336.
- [15] VA Zeithaml, Consumer perceptions of price, quality, and value: a means-end model and synthesis of evidence, *Journal of marketing*, 1988, Vol. 52, No. 3, pp. 2-22.
- [16] CF Chen, MH Tsai, Perceived value, satisfaction, and loyalty of TV travel product shopping: Involvement as a moderator, *Tourism management*, 2008, Vol. 29, No. 6, pp. 1166-1171.
- [17] DI Castaneda, MF Ríos, WF Durán, Determinants of knowledge-sharing intention and knowledge-sharing behaviour in a public organization, *Knowledge Management & E-Learning: An International Journal*, 2016, Vol. 8, No. 2, pp. 372-386.
- [18] D Kim, Under what conditions will social commerce business models survive? *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 2013, Vol. 12, No. 2, pp. 69-77.
- [19] K Verleye, P Gemmel, D Rangarajan, Managing engagement behaviours in a network of customers and stakeholders: Evidence from the nursing home sector, *Journal of service research*, 2014, Vol. 17, No. 1, pp. 68-84.
- [20] LJ Cronbach, PE Meehl, Construct validity in psychological tests. *Psychological Bulletin*, 1955, Vol. 52, No. 4, pp. 281-302.
- [21] C Fornell, DF Larcker, Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 1981, Vol. 18, No. 1, pp. 39-50.
- [22] JF Hair, M Sarstedt, L Hopkins, VG Kuppelwieser, Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM): An emerging tool in business research, *European Business Review*, 2014, Vol. 26, No. 2, pp. 106-121.
- [23] JF Hair, GTM Hult, CM Ringle, M Sarstedt, *A Primer on Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)*, 2nd Ed., Sage: Thousand Oaks, 2017.