



Research on Promoting the Labor Participation of the Elderly in Beijing in the Context of Population Aging

Yufei Shi

Harbin University of Commerce, Harbin, China

shiyufei0818@163.com

Abstract. Beijing has stepped into a moderately aging society in 2021, and encouraging the elderly to engage in labor participation is one of the important measures for Beijing to cope with population aging. By analyzing the influencing factors of the labor participation rate of the elderly in Beijing, it is found that the labor participation of the elderly in Beijing suffers from the problems of low willingness of the elderly to participate in the labor force, incomplete protection system for the labor participation of the elderly, and weak social support. On this basis, it is proposed that the Beijing municipal government should improve the delayed retirement system, formulate regulations and policies to support the labor participation of the elderly, strengthen geriatric education and vocational skills training, and improve the health services for the elderly, so as to increase the labor participation rate of the elderly in Beijing and realize the effective use of the elderly manpower resources.

Keywords: elderly, labor force participation rate, population aging.

1 Introduction

In 2023, the number of elderly people in Beijing will continue to rise, and the aging process will accelerate, with advanced ageing becoming more prominent; the proportion of the resident population aged 60 and above will be 1.5 percentage points higher than the national average, and the proportion of the household population aged 60 and above will be 30.2%, exceeding 30% for the first time. This rapid aging of the population has gradually reduced the role of the “demographic dividend”, and promoting labor force participation of the elderly is one of the most important measures for Beijing to actively cope with the aging of the population.

In this study, we focus on older people in Beijing who are 60 years old and above but still continue to participate in the labor force, which includes not only those who continue to work under the current system of prolonging the retirement period, but also all the labor force participation that can generate economic income after retirement. In the face of the aggravation of the population aging problem, fully exploiting the potential of Beijing's elderly manpower resources plays an important role in alleviating the pressure of labor shortage, optimizing the allocation of labor resources, alleviating the burden of social pensions, and promoting the sustainable development of the economy

and society. The purpose of this study is to analyze the influencing factors and existing problems of the labor participation of the elderly in Beijing, and to propose practical promotion strategies based on theoretical analysis, with a view to providing theoretical support and decision-making references for the city of Beijing and the country as a whole in dealing with the challenges of population aging and realizing the effective use of the human resources of the elderly.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Research on Factors Affecting Older People's Labor Participation

Zhenhui Huo and Qiang Li (2023) argued that pension levels can have a significant dampening effect on labor force participation among older adults, with higher pension levels producing a larger income effect, and older adults being more inclined to consume their leisure time^[1]. Tove Midtsundstad and Roy A. Nielsen (2019) examined the relationship between adult education completed after the age of 40 and subsequent active participation of older adults in employment and showed that increasing formal education level has a significant impact on subsequent labor market participation^[2]. Thomassen Kristina (2022) found through his study that higher age and poorer health reduce the likelihood of re-employment among older adults^[3]. By analyzing the individual characteristics of the elderly, Yuting Huang and Jinxiu Zhou (2021) pointed out that men's labor force participation rate is higher than women's, and that both men and women's labor force participation rate tends to decrease with increasing age^[4].

2.2 Study on Countermeasures to Promote the Labor Participation of the Elderly

Yunxiang Tian (2025) argues that the employment capital of the elderly can be continuously innovated and expanded by strengthening the human capital training mechanism for older people who are interested in employment, strengthening the promotion and encouragement of employers, expanding employment opportunities in accordance with the community life circle of older people's homes, and assisting older people to rebuild their confidence and self-exploration^[5]. Xianyu Meng (2024) suggests that special labor protection should be implemented for the elderly and a job redesign system should be established to strengthen the employment incentive system for the elderly and at the same time improve the legal system for the equal employment of the elderly, prohibit age discrimination in employment, and clarify the status of the employed elderly as workers^[6]. Lu Liu (2021) argues that encouraging delayed retirement, improving the pension insurance system, and paying attention to the moderation of the level of pension benefits are the only ways to utilize the age-appropriate labor resources more fully^[7].

3 Influential Factors on Labor Participation of the Elderly in Beijing

3.1 Pension Status

The social pension system currently implemented in Beijing ensures the basic needs of the elderly and reduces their financial pressure, while at the same time inhibiting their willingness to participate in the labor force. According to data from the nation's seventh population census, 83.69 percent of the elderly in Beijing have their source of income from pensions. The labor participation of the elderly is affected by the level of the pension, and when the amount of the pension rises from a lower level, the income effect dominates, thus suppressing the labor participation of the elderly. When the social security system provides adequate pensions and benefits to the elderly, they may be more inclined to choose a life in retirement than to continue working.

3.2 Educational Attainment

The level of education is the main factor influencing the choice of employment and the direction of career development of workers. In Beijing, the proportion of older persons with a high school education or higher is 46.9%, while the proportion of older persons with a high school education or higher is only 13.9% nationwide. Elderly people with a higher level of education usually have better learning ability and are more likely to engage in some mental work in their early age, which provides conditions for them to participate in labor. However, the more educated the elderly are, the more stable their occupations are before retirement, and the more savings they have when they reach retirement age, the less likely they are to continue to participate in the labor force due to financial pressure.

3.3 Health Status

The health status of older persons is a key determinant of their labor force participation rate. The number of healthy older persons in Beijing accounts for only 48 percent of the total older population, and compared with workers in better health, older persons who are ill but still participate in the labor force for the same number of working hours may have weakened occupational skills and work capacity as a result of their illnesses, leading to a reduction in their labor output per unit of time and in the marginal efficiency of their labor. This condition may prevent them from performing physical work or working long hours, which in turn leads to a decline in labor force participation.

3.4 Social Attitudes and the Policy and Legal Environment

Social perceptions and the policy and legal environment can also affect the labor force participation rates of older persons. Older persons may be more motivated to continue participating in the labor force if they are perceived as having a responsibility to

continue working and providing financial support to their families. In addition, some countries or regions may implement policies that encourage older persons to continue working, such as providing tax benefits or other incentives. Where the policy and legal environment is discriminatory or restrictive, it may reduce the willingness and opportunities for older persons to participate in the workforce.

4 Problems of Labor Participation of the Elderly in Beijing

4.1 Low Willingness of Older Persons to Participate in the Labor Force

The willingness of the elderly in Beijing to participate in labor is relatively low. In Beijing, starting from January 2022, the per capita monthly income of the city's residents who are entitled to the basic pension and welfare pension will increase by 40 yuan. 2022, the total amount of subsidies provided to the elderly in Beijing will reach 3.109 billion yuan, with an average of 928,300 monthly disbursements. These welfare measures will be able to provide basic livelihood security for Beijing's elderly population, thus reducing their dependence on work income and their reluctance to engage in labor. Second, as they age, older people may drop out of the labor market due to health problems and a lack of ability to adapt to new technologies and new ways of working. Finally, some older persons may prefer to play a role in the family, take care of grandchildren or enjoy retirement rather than participate in the labor force.

4.2 Inadequate Safeguards for the Labor Participation of Older Persons

In Beijing, there are still deficiencies in the mechanism for guaranteeing labor participation for the elderly. Article 44, paragraph 2, of China's Labor Contract Law states that "when a worker begins to legally receive basic pension insurance benefits, his or her labor contract will be terminated." From a legal point of view, it is impossible to establish a labor relationship between an elderly person and an enterprise or institution; when an employer has a labor dispute with an employee he or she employs who has legally obtained old-age insurance or a retirement pension and files a lawsuit with the people's court, the people's court shall handle the case on the basis of a labor relationship. In a labor relationship, workers lose vital protections, such as work injury insurance and minimum wage standards. Moreover, Beijing has not formulated corresponding laws and regulations to provide more employment incentives or protections for the elderly, which hinders the effective development and utilization of the city's human resources for the elderly.

4.3 Weak Support for Labor Participation of Older Persons

In Beijing, older people's access to the workforce is relatively narrow, both because the labor market does not provide adequate services for older people and because social

organizations and individuals have failed to adequately create employment opportunities for older people. Data from the 2020 Labor Statistics Yearbook show that more than half of older people in Beijing are able to find jobs only by entrusting them to friends and relatives. Second, today's job search methods are primarily designed to serve young and middle-aged workers, with insufficient support for older people's participation in the labor force.

5 Recommendations for Countermeasures

5.1 Improving the Flexible Delayed Retirement System

By improving the existing flexible deferred retirement system so that it maximizes the use of the human resources of older persons willing to participate in the workforce, passive deferral of retirement will be transformed into an active choice. This will not only allow older people who lack the ability to work to withdraw from the labor market, releasing more employment opportunities, but will also motivate older people with strong labor capacity to continue working in order to earn a higher income than their pensions. In addition, Beijing needs to adjust the level of pensions appropriately and keep them within an appropriate range, so that they ensure that the basic needs of the elderly are met while encouraging them to participate in the labor force and, to some extent, help to reduce the financial burden of pensions.

5.2 Formulation of Regulations and Policies to Support the Labor Participation of Older Persons

The Government can strengthen its supervision of the older labour market through legislation, offering tax breaks and incentives to enterprises that employ a certain percentage of older workers, and penalizing enterprises that discriminate against or exclude older persons from employment. Second, the Beijing municipal government can provide incentives and subsidies for the employment and entrepreneurial activities of the elderly to motivate them to participate more actively in employment and entrepreneurial activities. Finally, Beijing should introduce policies specifically targeting female older workers to reduce social discrimination against age and gender and provide more social support and job opportunities.

5.3 Strengthening Gerontological Education and Vocational Skills Training

Beijing can conduct training activities for re-employment through a variety of means, such as universities for the elderly, the Internet and online learning, and encourage the active participation of social forces in vocational training for the elderly, in order to help reintegrate the elderly workforce into the labor market. By making full use of the functions of the Beijing Senior Citizens' Association and the Senior Citizens' Talent Center, an information platform for senior citizens can be created and optimized to

ensure a smooth connection between training activities and the job market. Finally, the Beijing municipal government should promote community-based education for the elderly and enrich the content and forms of education in order to help the elderly participate in the labor market.

5.4 Sound Health Services for the Elderly

The Government should increase investment in health services for the elderly and improve the quality and efficiency of those services. It should also strengthen the management and standardization of health check-ups for the elderly population to ensure that accurate health assessments are provided and that scientific health management programmes are formulated for the elderly. There is also a need to strengthen publicity to encourage them to take the initiative to seek medical care and to make rational use of the medical welfare policies provided by the State for the elderly. Finally, there is a need to improve the quality of medical and nursing staff, increase professional skills training, and continuously improve the quality and level of service, so as to provide more professional, efficient and humanized medical and health services for the elderly population.

6 Conclusions

In the context of population aging, Beijing can reduce the negative impact of population aging if it can reasonably develop and utilize the human resources of the elderly and stimulate the labor participation rate of the elderly. Based on an in-depth analysis of the influencing factors and existing problems of the labor participation of the elderly in Beijing, this paper concludes that the Beijing government can stimulate the willingness of the elderly to participate in the labor force in Beijing by improving the flexible delayed retirement system, formulating regulations and policies to support the labor participation of the elderly, strengthening gerontological education and vocational skills training, and improving the health services for the elderly. In the future, through continuous in-depth research and practical exploration, the construction of a more perfect and effective system to promote the labor participation of the elderly can realize the full employment of the elderly group and maximize the social value, and promote the harmonious and sustainable development of the economy and society.

References

1. Huo, Z.H., Li, Q. (2023) Research on the impact of old-age security on labor participation of the elderly in China—an empirical analysis based on CFPS2020 data. *Journal of Anshun College*, 25(04): 102-108.
2. Kristina, T., Emil, S., Jonas, V., et al. (2022) Barriers and Facilitators of Re-Employment among Senior Workers: Prospective Cohort Study. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(18): 11536-11536.

3. Midtsundstad, T., Nielsen, R.A. (2019) Lifelong learning and the continued participation of older Norwegian adults in employment. *European Journal of Education*, 54(1): 48-59.
4. Huang, Y.T., Zhou, J.X., Zhang, W.X., Xu, M.X., Liu, W.J. (2021) Analysis of factors influencing the labor supply of middle-aged and elderly people under the perspective of population aging. *Journal of Lanzhou College of Arts and Sciences (Social Science Edition)*, 37 (06): 83-88.
5. Tian, Y.X. (2025) Research on the innovative path of employment capital enhancement for the elderly in China under the background of delayed retirement. *Governance Modernization Research*, 41(02): 76-85.
6. Meng, X.Y. (2024) The Rule of Law Path to Promote the Employment of the Elderly under the Perspective of Positive Aging. *Jiao Tong University Law*, (02): 117-131.
7. Liu, L. (2021) Research on the Impact of Pension Insurance on Re-employment of Retired Elderly Population. *Enterprise Reform and Management*, (22): 103-104.

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits any noncommercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

