



Research on Re-Employment of the Elderly from the Perspective of Aging

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Abstract. Re-employment of elderly individuals has played a crucial role in alleviating labor shortages and promoting active aging due to the increasing global population aging. Combining with domestic and foreign literature, the comparison and analysis of elderly employment patterns in three typical countries, Germany, the United States, and China is done in this article. Comparative research revealed that Germany relies on a flexible retirement system and a vocational training system that ensures the continuity of employment for older adults. Furthermore, America relies on the Anti-Aging Discrimination Law to promote non-standardized employment, and the government cooperates with companies that form an elderly education system. The system has the ability to enhance the professional abilities of the elderly population. Last but not least, China is limited in focusing on the low-skilled service industry and the Digital Adaptation Dilemma. It stands to reason that China has to strengthen policy innovation, mature service systems and implement the process which using digital technology to enhance the efficiency, capabilities, and value creation. Overall, Nowadays, many researchers are concentrating on the macro perspective, and by combining interdisciplinary approaches, we can explore localization paths.

Keywords: Re-Employment of Older Adults, Population Aging, International Comparison, Digital Divide, Social Security.

1 Introduction

Chinese government publishing ‘National Long-Term Plan for Actively Responding to Population Aging’ emphasizes that population aging as an important trend of social development, is not only a manifestation of human civilization's progress, but also be the long-term basic national condition of China in the future. In recent years, there has been a substantial increase in the speed of the number of elderly people worldwide, especially in developed countries. For instance, 25% of individuals in Europe are elderly people aged 60 and over. Furthermore, as the most populous developing country, China has entered an aging society since the end of the 20th century. According to government reports, both the figure for the elderly and the percentage of people which are covered by old people had witnessed continuous growth. More precisely, starting at 126 million people in 2000, the number of elderly people aged 60 and above showed

an upward trend, which reached 249 million people in 2018. This period from 2000 to 2018 saw a substantial increase in the proportion of elderly population from 10.2% to 17.9%. Obviously, China has a large elderly population and is aging rapidly. It is reasonable to assume that the aging population is a product of socio-economic development when society reaches a certain stage. And with it comes a host of negative consequences, such as persistent structural imbalances in the labor force, lack of motivation in economic growth, deactivation of social welfare mechanisms and changes in traditional intergenerational relations [1]. Therefore, using positive attitude to response aging population which is global challenges and difficulties we all face. The United Nations and the World Health Organization convened a world conference on aging issues and released a report calling for a positive and healthy approach to aging. Besides, China has elevated its response to aging to a national strategy in its 'National Medium- and Long-Term Plan for Actively Responding to Population Aging' that highlights the necessity and urgency of actively addressing population aging, empowering older adults in human resource development, and promoting re-employment to address labor shortages. The trend of aging is universal and irreversible. However, the elderly population is an important human resource. Promoting employment among the elderly is an important aspect and practical approach to positive aging [1,2].

Previous articles have reviewed relevant research on the implementation of population aging in developed countries and the implications for China. For example, some scholars compared developed counties with China, and other scholars have summarized and reviewed global population aging. However systematically and logically organizing and summarizing existing literature is fundamental to comprehensive and accurate understanding of how to convert huge elderly population into social productive forces through healthy and effective approaches for re-employment. Based on the above, this article is structured as follows, first and foremost, according to nature of the state, this study illustrates and contrast characteristics of re-employment among older adults in representative countries from their social development phenomena and related policies. In addition, the article demonstrates looking forward the global trend of elderly re-employment and implications for re-employment among older people in China. Last but not least, the article summarizes domestically and internationally existing research on elderly employment respectively and provides suggestions for improving existing literature.

2 A Comparative Study of Research on Re-Employment Among Older Workers

Based on the socio-economic characteristics of each country and the differences in their social welfare system, this section mainly divided into three different types of re-employment models for the elderly which is composed of the welfare state model of Germany, the free market-dominated model exemplified by the United States and The Model for Economic Transformation in China. In short, existing literature has inter-

puted that feasibility of re-employment for older adults under this model and the implications for actively addressing population aging from the perspectives of social phenomena and policy endorsement.

2.1 Welfare State (Germany)-Social Security

As one of the first countries in Europe that entered population aging, Germany had become super-aged society stage since 2008. There are relevant scholars who have examined human resource development for older individuals in relation to Germany's flexible retirement policy and other retirement policies. German citizens between the ages of 55 and 65 have the freedom to decide whether to retire. And it depends on their conditions if they want to have a flexible choice of working hours until they reach their legally retirement age. Additionally, the German government has launched a career advancement plan for older individuals, which calls for cooperation between regional governments and companies. Given that they contribute to providing more and better job opportunities for older people [3,4].

Some scholars explored the impact of reforms to Germany's social security system on re-employment among elderly. To be specific, the Hartz Reform in Unemployment Insurance stipulates that the government compensates unemployed individuals who are over the age of 50. In addition, the reform encouraged enterprises to hire staff aged 55 and over which can reduce or exempt enterprises from unemployment taxes and fees. Moreover, implementing social assistance system on pension insurance. Adopting a minimum pension and relaxing the conditions for receiving a full pension aim to enhance the life quality of elderly people with low incomes. Furthermore, with the help of special assistance for the elderly and funded entirely by the government, a basic social livelihood security system is established for low-income elderly people. The employment rate for people aged 55 to 64 in Germany increased dramatically to 7% in 2021, as evidenced by the data, which means employment rate among older workers has a considerably climb [5].

2.2 Free market-driven (United States)-Elderly Education System

Some researchers investigate The U.S. Legal System for Senior Education. Manifesting of 1976 which focuses on encouraging older individuals to positively participate in various elderly education activities. The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1978 clearly states that employers shall not discriminate against job applicants on the basis of age. Because of that retirement education rapidly has developed. The Comprehensive Vocational Training Act of 1982 is designed to allocate funds to each state for vocational training programs for adults, including older adults, who are not equipped capacity to enter the workforce [6].

Table 1: Selected U.S. Laws on elderly education

1976	The U.S. Legal System for Senior Education. Manifesting	Motivating elderly individuals to take part in various elderly education initiatives in a positive manner.
1978	The Age Discrimination in Employment Act	Job applicants' age should not be used as a reason for employers to discriminate against them. The rapid development of retirement education is a result of that.
1982	The Comprehensive Vocational Training Act	Creating a fund allocation for each state to provide vocational training programs for adults, including older adults, who are not prepared to enter the workforce.

AS shown in Table1, these politics in the chart explicit require government and businesses to offer educational and learning opportunities and specific implementation approaches for old people. It is conducive to helping them cope with the demands of new technologies that they cannot keep up with in their old age. At the same time, the elderly human resources market could benefit from further developing the advantages of work experience [7].

With the economic times of the Internet coming, internet technologies have become one of the essential skills. However, it appears that the elderly are unable to join the emerging tech community and gradually becoming socially isolated. There has been research into the ‘Internet+’ model in the United States for providing elderly education services to marginalized groups. Cooperating with the government and businesses, it offers a gateway to overcoming the digital divide. The government is actively advocating for the widespread availability of free broadband in communities, specifically concentrating on elderly groups that are disadvantaged and have low incomes and difficulty accessing digital technology. A number of pilots projects were launched by the coalition government agency in collaboration with several local housing organizations. Not only connecting to a broadband network for each family but also providing offline computer skills training courses in neighbourhood which in order to aid old people in bridging the digital divide. Companies and major platforms respond to the demands of elderly people by designing and developing free online courses and apps that are convenient for these vulnerable groups to operate [8,9].

Additionally, the mental health of older adults is a crucial factor in promoting positive re-employment. Some relevant scholars have found that the US government and businesses are actively concerned about the physical and mental health of the elderly, strengthening social recognition and immersion of this older marginalized group and minimizing dependence on family members and the government. Reinvigorating their social skills through the elderly education system, it is to catalyze their subjectivity and self-respect that can avoid situations where one has power but no ability, or ability but no power.

2.3 Developing Countries (China) -Low-skilled service industries and Technological Challenges

China, being a country with a large population, experienced a demographic dividend during the 1970s and 1980s. However, with the aging population continuously deepening, the demographic dividend had disappeared. This has led to issues such as labor

shortages and imposing fiscal burdens on the government. According to research conducted by scholars, the catering, retail, and domestic service industries are currently the most popular job choices for younger elderly workers in China. It is commonly recognized that these careers have identical characteristics, that is low-skilled service industries with low recognition and low wages [10]. The idea that these works not only satisfy their sense of accomplishment and loneliness but also has brought about new changes to traditional intergenerational family relationships is gaining ground. More precisely, compared to traditional single side of intergenerational relationships, the income from re-employment of younger elderly people is significantly composed of the family income. Therefore, they have the ability to provide strong support for daily household expenses, children's education, medical care, and other expenses. A new two-way intergenerational relationship has been established finally [11,12].

The Chinese government has announced a policy to postpone retirement in response to the aging population issue. It is claimed that male employees now have the statutory retirement age of 60 to 63, while the retirement age for female employees has been extended from 50 and 55 to 55 and 58, respectively. There are multiple purposes that are based on this strategy as indicated below. The primary objective is to motivate younger seniors to continue working in their current positions and fully utilize their experience and expertise to reaffirm their self-worth. The second goal is that facilitates compensation for labor supply shortages and effectively alleviate demographic changes by extending the working lifespan of younger elderly people in a moderate way. In summary, the strategy offers strong support for stable economic and social development.

Various researchers believed that older workers are at risk of being replaced by robots. Nowadays, the development of technology has not only boosted the demand for sophisticated skills but also accelerated the depreciation of human capital. But the cost-benefit trade-off of updating older workers' skills determines whether they can continue to work. China has the potential to benefit from the institutional systems of other countries' strengths in tackling this dilemma. For example, improving the social security system; under the rapid advancement of technology, vigorously exploring the balance between technology and employment for the elderly population. Utilizing the essence of their systems to stimulate the simultaneous progress of economic growth and social development [13].

3 Trends and Insights into Re-employment among Older Adults

3.1 Global Trend Analysis

In 2002, the Second World Assembly on Aging was held by the United Nations in Madrid. The Madrid Political Declaration adopted at the conference predicts that the population aged 60 and over varied over the period, rising from 600 million in 2000 to 2 billion in 2050, with the proportion expected to rise from 10% to 21%. The data change indicates that the world's population structure is experiencing unprecedented

changes. With the accelerating pace of global ageing, re-employment of elderly effectively paves the way for actively addressing population aging. Therefore, scholars have examined the reasons and trends behind global aging. Both developing and developed countries need to reform and improve their social security systems for older workers, according to their research report [14,15]. For instance, in healthcare for the elderly, Germany and Japan have pioneered innovative long-term care systems. What's more, reforming the pension accumulation system is fundamental to innovation and improvement of the social welfare security system. Meanwhile, The digital divide, which cannot be bridged, is a common problem faced by older workers around the world, thereby, how to solve this employment challenge, it needs countries and international organizations to work together overcoming[15].

3.2 Implications of China's Experience

In China and abroad, employment patterns among the elderly have been studied and compared by various scholars. There are a number of recommendations for the future employment of older people in China. First and foremost, in contrast to the United States and Japan, which have experienced wealth first, China is currently in an aging phase. China's specific circumstances should be taken into consideration when filling the gaps in forward-looking policies, which should be based on relevant Chinese government agencies. Guided and endorsed by policy, the government organizes and coordinates with other social organizations to promote employment among the elderly. Secondly, the system of re-employment services for older adults should be improved and employment alternatives for older adults should be innovated and enriched. Enhancing the social welfare security system requires collaboration between state and government departments and social organizations. Incorporating creative reforms in unemployment, medical care, and pension insurance, as well as gaining knowledge from the advantages of social insurance systems in other countries. Lastly, gaining knowledge from the varying elderly education systems in the United States and Germany. This is because that the options for elderly education in China are limited, and the number of beneficiaries is limited. To be specific, the primary form is free community universities for the elderly, which are intended for retired government officials. Companies need to take the lead in caring for younger elderly employees, in addition to the government's gradual reform of the elderly education system. Older people's employment is moving from low-skilled service industries to high-tech tertiary industries, which represents a new era of human resource development.

4 Conclusion

Overall, in the context of global population aging, this paper examines the characteristics and policies of re-employment for older individuals within different institutional systems. In-depth explanation of the trends and measures for boosting re-employment among the elderly in various systems which is conducive to summarizing practical implications for China. The research of domestic scholars on re-employment among the elderly has concentrated on policy analysis and the comparison of urban and rural

groups, and in these research fields, they have achieved a lot of research results. The study explored how elderly employment affects society from the perspective of the national policy of delaying retirement and new intergenerational relationships. Actively promoting re-employment among older people in China is based on this theoretical foundation. Foreign scholars have devoted more attention to improving and safeguarding the working conditions of older adults, highlighting the significance of safeguarding the physical and mental health of elderly workers and enhancing relevant systems. Although scholars from both China and abroad have different viewpoints, the situation is diverse. Positive aging offers solid theoretical research and practical experience summaries from the perspective of the deepening global aging trend, regardless of its location. Domestic scholars tend to use a more macro perspective in their research when compared to other scholars. In addition, compared to foreign research, domestic research methods do not have in-depth interviews or qualitative research, and are more inclined towards quantitative analysis. As far as practical implications for China are concerned, the content is lacking in innovation and novelty. This paper is aimed at overcoming the limitations of single-country comparisons in response to the current shortcomings. Comparing and analyzing the countries, they were separated into three institutional systems because of their national heterogeneity. While doing so, the target research group is expanded to include vulnerable elderly people employed in low-skilled service industries.

As a summary, scholars at home and abroad have provided a theoretical basis for positive aging throughout the world. It has played an important role in promoting the theoretical and practical development of re-employment for elderly people in various national systems. At the same time, it can be used as a guide for case studies and policy recommendations related to employment of elderly people in various social systems. Nonetheless, there are still some areas that need improvement in future research. Specifically manifesting on the three points listed below. To begin with, future research must be able to overcome the limitations of individual disciplines, conducting exchanges among different disciplines and analyze them thoroughly, including economics, sociology, and digital technology. Secondly, at the theoretical level, it should be combined with practice, conducting background investigations on national policies, socioeconomic development conditions, and the characteristics of old-age employment in society. For example, to illustrate, the features of low-age elderly employment in China should be merged with the socialist system with Chinese features, and innovative ideas should be actively proposed. In the end, we will strike a balance between social security and the redevelopment of elderly human resources, emphasizing the analysis and resolution of digital divide issues faced by the elderly population.

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