

# An Empirical Study on the Construction of Education Service System for the Elderly -- Taking Zhejiang as an Example

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**Abstract:** How to solve the people's livelihood problem of "one vote is difficult to obtain" in elderly education and scientifically construct the elderly education service supply system in the new era has become a major strategic issue to actively cope with the aging population. This article takes Zhejiang Province as the research object, digging deeply into the construction and development of its elderly education service system. Focusing on improving the supply of education services for the elderly, a new "trinity" elderly education service supply system of "general school + grassroots + network" has been constructed, and a "Zhejiang model" for the construction of elderly education service system has been constructed, in order to provide beneficial enlightenment for the development of other areas in the field of elderly education in China.

**Keywords:** Elderly education; Community elderly education; Elderly intelligent education; Service system

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## Fund Project:

This paper is part of the research results of Zhejiang Education Science planning project "Research on the Construction of Zhejiang Elderly Education Service System under the background of Common Prosperity" (project number: 2023SCG195)

Part of the research results of Wenzhou Social Science Key Research Base in 2023: Research on the Construction of Wenzhou "One old and one young" Education Service System

## 1. Question raising

Zhejiang has entered a deep aging society, in 2022, the province's population over 60 years old will be 13.29 million, accounting for 20.2%, of which 9.81 million people aged 65 and above, accounting for 14.9%. Data show that Zhejiang Province is ushering in the explosive growth of the elderly population, it is expected that by 2025 the total number of 60 years old and above registered elderly population will reach about 15 million, accounting for about 28%, the permanent resident elderly population will reach 15.5 million, accounting for 25%. This unique population structure has brought unprecedented opportunities to the field of education for the elderly in Zhejiang Province, but also accompanied by a series of challenges. The existing service system of education for the elderly in Zhejiang Province appears to be overburdened, with many deficiencies in school running institutions, educational resources, teachers, curriculum and other aspects. It is particularly noteworthy that with the development of social economy and the progress of science and technology, the needs of modern elderly people are also changing. They are no longer satisfied with the traditional way of supporting the elderly, and more pursue personalized and diversified learning and lifestyle.

## 2. Value implication

As one of the core needs after the growth of the elderly population, the importance of education for the elderly is self-evident. Education can not only provide the elderly with knowledge and skills, but also meet their pursuit of spiritual life, help them better integrate into society and enjoy their later years. In the context of the current national emphasis on common prosperity, "old learning" is not only the immediate needs of the elderly, but also the embodiment of social civilization and progress. How to ensure that every

elderly person can enjoy the quality of education resources, how to build a scientific and meet the diversified needs of the elderly education service system, has important value significance.

At the macro level, the study of education services for the elderly is a strategic task to actively cope with the aging population in the process of common prosperity, and a major issue that cannot be avoided for the long-term stability of the country. It can provide policy basis for the country to solve the problem of education for the elderly, and provide Chinese experience and solutions for the development of world education. At the middle level, solving the market demand of “one vote is difficult to obtain” for the elderly education, alleviating the contradiction between the growing educational demand of the Chinese people and the relatively backward educational supply, is conducive to the real popularization and improvement of the elderly education in our country. At the micro level, it provides practical basis for improving the quality of life of the elderly, improves the quality of life and life value of the elderly, and is conducive to enhancing the sense of gain and happiness of the elderly.

### **3. System construction**

#### **3.1 Professional leadership: Promote the construction and improvement of senior education general school**

Education for the elderly is not only an extension of traditional cultural education, but also a response to the contemporary elderly’s pursuit of spiritual abundance and social participation rights. Professional leadership is particularly prominent in this field, injecting new vitality and depth into senior education.

Wenzhou, for example, understands that education for the elderly is not just about providing a place to learn, but about creating an environment that fosters learning, communication and growth. In September 2012, Wenzhou Municipal Government integrated four adult colleges and universities, including Wenzhou Radio and Television University and Wenzhou University for the Elderly, as the general School of Wenzhou Education for the elderly, expanding the original campus of the University for the elderly from one campus to six campuses, expanding from the original “one-point school running” to “one main multi-point school running, East, west, North and South”. It basically covers the elderly population in the new and old urban areas. When expanding the campus of the university for the aged, we not only consider the geographical distribution and acceptance ability, but also pay attention to the teaching environment, facilities and curriculum design of the campus. Such initiatives enable more elderly people to access more diverse and cutting-edge educational content in a comfortable environment.

Innovation and diversity in curriculum design is another highlight. In addition to the traditional calligraphy, dance, music and other popular courses for the elderly, Wenzhou has also set up nearly 100 special courses in combination with local characteristics and the interests of the elderly. This kind of meticulous care and satisfaction has greatly improved the enthusiasm of the elderly to learn.

Teachers are the core of education. For geriatric education, what is needed is not only professional knowledge, but more importantly, the ability to communicate with the elderly and the enthusiasm for geriatric education. Wenzhou is to capture this point, and actively promote the “general school-grassroots” teacher distribution connection, aiming to create a professional and friendly senior education teacher team.

#### **3.2 For the grassroots: actively explore the elderly to go to school nearby**

Faced with the educational needs brought by the growing elderly population, Wenzhou has made active attempts and explorations in the field of education for the elderly with its unique strategies and actions. The city knows that in order for every elderly person to truly realize “old learning”, the most fundamental thing is to let educational resources sink to the grassroots and ensure the convenience and accessibility of learning.

The establishment and layout of the elderly learning Park in the community, so that the majority of elderly people no longer need to go abroad, even at their own door or nearby communities, they can find a quiet and comfortable learning environment. This not only lowers the threshold of their learning, but also greatly improves their learning enthusiasm and participation. The popularity of TV university network extends the tentacles of education to every family, so that the elderly can choose the right course according to their own time and interests, and enjoy a flexible and personalized learning experience.

Let the elderly go to school at their doorstep, which is almost a common call for the elderly to learn what they need. Wenzhou actively explores the “two-in-one” integration and sharing mechanism of senior schools and community schools, and builds senior schools in community schools at the street and town level, and senior learning courts in community schools at the village (residential) level. At the same time, drawing on the practices of chain operations, the promotion of a unified vision system, enrollment promotion, educational administration system, teaching support and quality standards (see Table 1).

Figure 1: Data of the Community School for the Elderly in Wenzhou, 2022

District	Number of schools for the elderly			Number of Courses			Number of students		
	Total	Spring Semester	Fall Semester	Total	Spring Semester	Fall Semester	Total	Spring Semester	Fall Semester
Lucheng	116	58	58	218	107	111	11859	5856	6003
Ouhai	59	28	31	118	56	62	3919	1843	2076
Longwan	41	21	20	82	42	40	2838	517	2321
Dongtou	9	1	8	15	1	14	724	90	634
Total	126	108	117	433	206	227	19340	8306	11034

Data Source: Wenzhou Community Education Leading Group Office

This model in Wenzhou has successfully narrowed the gap between urban and rural and regional education for the elderly, and has also provided valuable experience and inspiration for other cities. More importantly, this “close door” learning mode not only meets the learning needs of the elderly, but also stimulates their social desire to a certain extent, helps them establish a broader social network, and improves their quality of life and happiness.

### 3.3 Information benefits the people: Deepening the practical exploration of “wisdom to help the elderly”

The vigorous development of information technology has opened a new door for the education of the elderly. Especially in Wenzhou, the application of this technology not only enhances the interest of education, but also greatly improves the convenience of learning. Television, as an indispensable device in every family, has become a bridge connecting the elderly with knowledge.

Fully aware of this, Wenzhou has moved quickly to launch TV channels tailored for the elderly and “senior college” TV classes. This not only provides rich learning resources for the elderly, but more importantly, it solves many practical problems such as difficult for the elderly to go out and inconvenient transportation. They can sit on the couch at home and receive all kinds of knowledge through distance learning. No need to travel far, knowledge and wisdom are at your fingertips.

What is more worth mentioning is that the educational content under this mode is very rich, covering many aspects such as health, entertainment, life skills, etc., to meet the multi-faceted learning needs of the elderly. Moreover, through the interactive way, the elderly can also ask questions and communicate, which enhances the interaction and effectiveness of learning.

Education for the elderly is a common cause of the whole society. Through strategic layout and practical exploration, Zhejiang Province has promoted the innovation and development of education for the elderly, opening a diversified and convenient learning window for the elderly. The rational distribution of education for the aged in the province has been continuously expanded, which has expanded the coverage and benefit of education for the aged and formed a new pattern of development of schools for the aged. Adopt the idea of “sweet potato education”, insist on vigorously promoting the construction of “elderly university at the doorstep” in urban and rural grassroots, and initially realize the elderly to go to school nearby; Information benefits the people, breaks the learning boundary, allows the elderly to learn from time to time and from everywhere, and effectively promotes the work of “wisdom to help the elderly”. A vibrant “trinity” education system for the elderly covering the whole province has been established, and the proportion of the elderly who regularly participate in education activities in the city’s elderly population has continuously increased, and a unique road of education for the elderly with Zhejiang characteristics has been created.

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