

Exploration of Pathways to Actively Promote the Re-employment for the Elderly from the Perspective of Aging Population

Mengxi Chen

University of Southern California, Los Angeles CA.90089, United States

E-mail: 839923626@qq.com

Keywords: Elderly people; Re-employment; Socio-economic Pressure; Pathway

Abstract: Since the 20th century, the people of the world have experienced two world wars and economic and cultural development to different extents. Population, as a subject of economic development, bears the influence by civilization change, medical care and social construction. This paper mainly discusses the exploration on promoting the re-employment for the elderly in China. I will make references to the policy support in reemployment for the elderly people in Japan and the United States and expound the benefits of promoting reemployment for the elderly people and social and economic development in China, and summarize the possible problems and impacts.

1. Why We Should We Concern the Issue

As is known to all, the economic progress brought by modern civilization and the improvement of health and medical conditions reduce the mortality rate of the population. At the same time, the high level civilization brought by economic development enables people to actively display their values after meeting the basic living conditions. Today, China, as a country with a large population, is gradually transforming into a country with an aging population. Although China is still in the developing stage, aging has never stopped its development. European countries began enter the aging societies in the 19th century. The first world War and the second world War contributed to the ageing of Europe. The United States suffered a postwar baby booming after World War II, the elderly population have had different impacts on all countries. The impact on health systems in western countries is characterized with common features.[1] In Brazil, a country that is only beginning to experience a rapid rise in its elderly population share, pensions already account for 13% of all public spending. In Italy, for every 100 workers, there are 71 pensioners. And in addition to Brazil and Italy, France and Germany also spend more than 10% of GDP on public pensions, with Japan not far behind.

As the aging of population was put on the agenda by China in 1980s. We have the largest population in the world and China has a large population base with a late start, so the social and economic problems caused by aging should not be underestimated. The re-employment of the elderly is conducive to reducing the burden of the younger generation, while strengthening the momentum of socio-economic development.[3] Global aging brings more economical pressure to the society. The pension and the health care expenditures influence the economic status of both the family and country. In China, re-employment of elders is needed due to the growing society pressure. There were 176030k of 65+ people in China, 2019, which pointing out that China was an aged society.

When talking about an aging society and re-employment, it is inevitable to mention America and our neighboring country Japan that are advanced in science and technology, Japan is the world's third-largest economy, which share similar culture with China and, at the same time, due to the factors such as economy, humanities and the social structure of more people with high age raising no child, as a result, Japan had became the aging nation prior to China. According to a report by the People.com.cn that the proportion of people over 65 years old in Japan exceeded 25% of the total population. Meanwhile, the natural population decreased by about 253,000, and the total fertility rate maintained at around 1.4%. The labor force aged 15-64 again decreased to below 80 million

after 32 years." People over 65 account for 1 percent of the total population in Japan, which is posted on people.com.cn, April 6, 2014.

The elderly in Japan account for a high proportion of the national population. At the same time, most of the elderly in Japan are eager to have their own pace of life and they have a strong sense of independence. Therefore, the elderly in Japan are still eager to have a new job to gain income after retirement. [2] The elderly are vulnerable ones and the physical function and some mental functions of the middle-aged and elderly decline accordingly, which means that the elderly need more social support. Japan has made efforts in legal and policy aspects to support the re-employment of the elderly.

2. National Level: Legal Policies

Legal protection: Japan enacted the "Law on Employment Security for the Elderly" in 1986, which was further improved in 2004, urging Japanese business, big or small, to start raising the retirement age to 65 in 2006. The law has enabled the Japanese firms with provision that employees with the age exceeding 60 should have their retirements to sign new employment contract with elder workers by adopting re-employment system. Few companies are willing to abolish the retirement system outright and impose a mandatory retirement age of 65 on all workers. The law provides benefits for both elderly in Japan and business owners.[4] Most of the old employees fail to work a long time like young workers under high load environment, so the old employees can choose shorter working hours. The provision of the law enables the company owners to reduce the working time and intensity according to the actual situation of the company. Instead, the work with high intensity can be distributed to young workers, and thus the human resources can be reasonably allocated and the cost is saved. With the introduction of this law and policy, Japan has adopted policies to support the elderly who are willing and able to start their own businesses. For example, human resource consulting centers for the elderly have appeared in some regions to provide Q&A services and assistance for the elderly to start their own businesses and find new jobs. At the same time, some large companies have also set up departments for the seniors with shorter working hours, providing opportunities for older employees to give full play in their spare time working in their own companies. When we look at America on the opposite of the Pacific Ocean, the re-employment of the American people is frequently pertinent to their personal values and religious beliefs due to different values. Many of their re-employment is based on community service. Older Americans love community volunteer activities (they don't like staying at home and they are eager to keep social contact, so they usually stay active through community service or religious volunteering. In terms of the employment of the elderly in the United States, it has to be mentioned that as early as the 1960s, the United States had already set its sights on the middle-aged and elderly who were discriminated in work, and the United States Congress passed the *Legislation of Employment against Age Discrimination* in 1967.[5] Moreover, due to the superiority of legal education in the United States, the enterprises that hold discriminatory manners toward the Americans had received due punishments through the resistance of the Americans and social support. In 2018, for example, Codie Rael, aged 58, took her employer Sybron Dental Specialities to court, saying that her former employer KaVo Kerr had repeatedly attacked and slandered her simply because she was no longer young. Codie was compensated \$31 million with the verdict by the Los Angeles Supreme Court.[6] The success of such cases undoubtedly serves as a warning to ageist enterprises. At the same time, the United States has also set up relevant regulatory bodies, such as the *Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)*, and so on.

3. Foundation for the Re-employment of the Elderly in China

In China, three major bases are formed for the elderly in employment. First of all, the re-employment population of the elderly in China is much larger than that of Japan and the United States. By 2050, China will have nearly 500 million elderly people over 60 years old. Secondly, at

the level of national policy, China is gradually improving the *Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of the Rights and Interests of the Elderly* issued in 1996, and is encouraging the society and universities to cultivate talents who can make contributions to the aging society in accordance with the fact that the elderly population is rising.[8] Thirdly, in terms of national development, although traditional Chinese culture advocates healthy living, the need of human resources and economic development will soon put the re-employment of the elderly on the agenda.

4. Targets for the Re-employment of the Elderly

The re-employment of the elderly can be classified into two categories. First, the elderly with a higher educational background, who have been working in specific posts or institutions during their youth, thus accumulating valuable experience. Their re-employment will be achieved by the continuation of their original jobs or professions. For example, a expert in logging working for China National Offshore Oil Corporation returned to work at the age of 70 under the re-employment policy. This kind of elder people serve as the role of "teachers and workers" when they are reemployed. They can bring experience to young employees in the workplace, or they can act as teachers to help young employees familiarize themselves with their fields without overstepping their authority. Secondly, some of the elderly who cannot continue to engage in works with requirements on professional skills with the increase of age and those who lack professional skills, these older people generally come from rural areas or combined urban and rural areas with a low level of education, and may mainly engage in physical labor in their youth and middle age.[7] With the increase of age and strain in somatic function, they are no longer suitable for physical work. Some of these old people move to cities or more developed areas with their children, or stay at home to become left-behind elderly.

5. How to Deal With the Challenges Faced By the Elderly in Employment

5.1 Social Policy

Governments and institutions at all levels may implement incentive measures to reward or reduce or exempt enterprises that give preferential treatment to elderly talents to enable the enterprises to assume the responsibility of developing the post for the elderly. Second, we should set up re-employment agencies for the elderly, such as the "*Exchange Center for the Elderly*" and the "**The Human Resources Consulting Office for the Elderly**" to provide guidance for the employment of the elderly. Third, to implement laws against age discrimination in employment and carry out law popularization. Fourthly, to explore the activity of the elderly in the community, and set up volunteer service station for the elderly in the community, so that the elderly can fully participate in social activities.[9]

4.2 Behaviors of Enterprises

With the further development of aging process and the reduction of labor force in China, business owners will gradually realize the necessity and obligation of recruiting elderly talents. Therefore, enterprises can, at the employment level, change the age limit for employees so that elderly talents can join in. Second, the company can set up a special training department to train older workers without experience and professional skills, so as to create a win-win scenario of saving costs and cultivating talents. Third, we can learn from Mitsui of Japan that older staffs who are willing to contribute their remaining energy can be distributed to departments with more flexible working hours and less work intensity.

4.3 Social Publicity

First, the publicity of a new elderly life, the old as a new age model of life. Second, promote outstanding older workers and praise them for their achievements and experiences. Third, the

elderly should be encouraged not to be confined to their own small families, continue to give play to social values, and publicize the professional idea that "the older, the more valuable", such as doctors, scholars and inheritors of intangible cultural heritage. [10]The new type of life of the elderly should be advocated and accomplishment in the old age should be the paragon in new type of elder life. Second, outstanding senior workers should be advocated and they should be awarded for their achievements and experience. Third, the elderly are encouraged to continue to give full play in social undertakings, rather just be confined in the family matters. The occupational concept of "The more in age means more values" should be accepted such as doctors, scholars and inheritors of intangible cultural heritage.[10]

6. Conclusion

The issue of aging of population has been a global concern and the elderly are encouraged to have re-employment, which is regarded as the imperative means for the solution of shortage of human resources. Japan and America have offer us enlightenment in social policies that policy support and publicity are needed in re-employment for the elderly. Meanwhile, enterprises are required to enjoy satisfactory sense of social responsibility for re-employment of the elderly. Besides, the passion of the elderly in job and the value in work should be well recognized by the general public.

References

- [1] The Economist. "Brazil's Pension System: Tick Tock: The Senate debates a small measure to help disarm an economic time bomb". March 24, 2012. <http://www.economist.com/node/21551093>
- [2] In Japan, the elderly above 65 years old account for 1/4 of the total population. <http://www.huaxia.com/xw/gjxw/2014/04/3842864.html>
- [3] Jiang Zheyin; To meet the diverse needs of the elderly in response to aging population[J];Wuhan Journal;01 Edition, 2011
- [4] Li Qinmei; Study on aging population in Sichuan Province[J];China Collective Economy;36 Edition, 2009
- [5] Liu Fan; Research on the reemployment of the elderly in urban areas in China under the background of aging population [D]; Jilin University; In 2013,
- [6] Bao Yuxiang; Study on the impact of aging population on regional economic development [D]; Shandong Normal University; In 2010,
- [7]. Liu Ping. A study on the impact of aging population on China's economic growth [D];Shandong University; In 2013,
- [8] Xu Xiaofei; The impact of aging population on China's GDP and its composition [D];Dongbei University of Finance and Economics; In 2012,
- [9] Cheng Yunfei; A study on the re-employment of urban elderly in Beijing [D];Capital University of Economics and Business; In 2015,
- [10] Wang Tiantian; Research on the reemployment of the elderly in China under the background of aging population [D];Jilin University; In 2016,