

# Exploratory Study on “Silver Age” Intellectual Inheritance Model in the Context of Positive Aging

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**Abstract:** Positive aging has become a social consensus, so China is promoting the implementation of a national strategy to actively cope with population aging. “Silver age” intellectual inheritance in China is not only of great significance but also has very favorable conditions. To this end, it is necessary to promote intellectual inheritance and strengthen publicity to create a favorable social atmosphere suitable for “silver age” intellectual inheritance by making corresponding institutional arrangements and policy adjustments to provide fundamental protection for “silver age” groups. The government should promote economic development and increase financial investment to provide a better environment for “silver age” intellectual inheritance. This can provide more support and opportunities, improve the service system, innovation and enrichment of the inheritance form, and enhance the adaptability and stability of the “silver age” group in social development.

**Keywords:** Active aging; Intellectual inheritance; Silver aging

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## 1. Introduction

As China enters into an aging society, the life expectancy of the population continues to increase while the birth rate continues to decline. The aging problem is increasingly serious, with a widespread and rapid impact. Maslow’s hierarchy of needs and the theory of individual behavioral and decision-making interpretation show that human beings make a certain behavioral motivation based on an individual’s certain needs, these needs in order from low to high are physiological needs, safety needs, social needs, respect needs, and self-actualization needs<sup>[1]</sup>. The term “silver age” refers to the 60-year-old group with re-employment intention in the labor force. The concept of positive aging is derived from the background of a good aging life. Positive aging highlights the three pillars of health, participation, and security. Geriatric education should focus on the value demands of the elderly group and introduce new models so that it enable the elderly to satisfy their psychological needs and achieve self-realization. Hence, this will not only enable the elderly to satisfy their psychological needs and

realize their self-worth but will also enable them to implement the new theory of positive aging in life.

## **2. Theoretical guidance**

### **2.1. The current situation of senior aging group**

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on the formulation of the national economic and social development of the 14th Five-Year Plan and the vision of the 23rd Five-Year Plan for the first time explicitly put forward the implementation of the national strategy to actively respond to the aging of the population <sup>[2]</sup>. The active aging policy framework highlights the status and rights of older people as actors in society. In an increasingly aging society, older people are undoubtedly an important part of society and are important participants, sharers, and builders <sup>[3]</sup>. According to the seventh national census report, the total number of elderly people aged 60 and above in China is 264 million, accounting for about 18.7% of the total population <sup>[4]</sup>. According to the prediction, by 2030, the total number of elderly people aged 60 and above in China will reach 360 million, accounting for about 25% of the total population. By 2050, the total number of elderly people over 60 years old in China will exceed 400 million, accounting for more than 30% of the total population <sup>[5]</sup>. At present, the retired senior professionals and technicians in China have reached more than 800,000 people, accounting for about 40% of the serving senior professionals and technicians. Among them, 90% of the retired seniors are young elderly group under 70 years old, who can continue working and have rich knowledge and experience. With the prolongation of human life expectancy and the improvement of geriatric health, the elderly who have reached the legal retirement age still have the residual enthusiasm and ability to give full play to their values, and have the willingness to participate in social work <sup>[6]</sup>. Making full use of these elderly manpower resources will bring long-term benefits to the development of society <sup>[7]</sup>.

### **2.2. Active aging**

Active aging is defined as enhancing the quality of life of older people by optimizing their opportunities for health, participation, and security to make their lives more comfortable, dignified, and rewarding <sup>[8]</sup>. Positive aging is proposed based on successful aging, healthy aging, and productive aging. Active aging means that older people still have the potential, opportunity, and right to participate in economic, political, spiritual, and cultural activities, to contribute to society to the best of their ability, and at the same time to get the protection of the society in the need of help. This proactive attitude and approach create a virtuous community to improve the quality of life of the elderly and to help them cope with the challenges of aging <sup>[9]</sup>. The active role of older people in society is emphasized, including passing on culture, providing wisdom, offering experience, and playing an important role in the family, society, and institutions. The prevalence of positive aging reduces the impact of negative stereotypes on the behavioral and cognitive functioning of older adults and helps to mitigate the reduced quality of life of older adults due to co-morbidities <sup>[10-11]</sup>. It promotes health and well-being in older adults and reduces the incidence of depression, loneliness, and other adverse emotions. Promoting the re-employment of the elderly is not only the national positive response to the challenges of aging but also the full development of a large number of elderly manpower resources policy orientation and an important way for the elderly to realize their productivity <sup>[12]</sup>. Their experience and wisdom can be used to teach a new generation, alleviate the pressure caused by the imbalance in the age structure of the population, and create more employment opportunities and consumer markets, thus enhancing the overall growth of the national economy.

### **3. Development of the “silver age” intellectual heritage**

As society continues to progress and develop, people gradually pay more attention to the inheritance of wisdom and begin to recognize its value, so that it still has a role in modern society. The progress of science and technology has provided tremendous development opportunities for intellectual inheritance. Statistical report on the development of the Internet in China shows that as of December 2021, the size of China’s elderly Internet users aged 60 and above reached 119 million, and the results of the development of information technology in the era of the digital economy have benefited the elderly group, bringing new opportunities and challenges to the labor supply of the elderly <sup>[12]</sup>. Zhang’s study indicated that in the era of the increasing aging society and rapid development of the digital economy in China, the use of the Internet can significantly promote the employment level of the elderly <sup>[13]</sup>. Beijing City Construction Group takes enriching the spiritual and cultural life of the elderly as its focus and actively builds interest and hobby teams so that the elderly can participate in healthy and beneficial cultural and sports activities to transmit positive energy and realize the joy of old age <sup>[14]</sup>. People can spread and popularize traditional culture more easily through the Internet and social media. Intellectual heritage has also shown an internationalization trend. The exchange and integration between different countries have enabled the transmission of wisdom to be extended to other countries and regions. The trend of intellectual transmission is diversified and modernized. By attaching importance to the value of intellectual inheritance, promoting the progress of science and technology, international exchange and integration, and innovating with the times, society can better develop civilization with human wisdom to revitalize contemporary society.

### **4. Exploring the development trend of wisdom inheritance**

To cope with population aging, the government needs to build a policy system and social environment of old age to promote filial piety and respect for the elderly. Industries should consider the roles of the elderly in the labor force so that the “silver age” wisdom inheritance mode will develop more and more rapidly. The development and utilization of the knowledge resources of the elderly is the key to national governance in solving labor issues in China. Population aging brings diversified problems, so more and more researchers are working on the social participation of the elderly after retirement, which accelerates the development of the “silver age” knowledge inheritance model. With the rapid development of Internet technology, the young generation can find their needs for knowledge and skills from Internet knowledge, but the lack of ideals and beliefs and the blind guidance of life choices brought by the Internet have also arisen. Most of the groups participating in youth education are the groups of first-time parents and first-time graduates, although they have a certain amount of knowledge, they lack social practice and experience. The situation has made them characterized by broad knowledge, active thinking, distinctive personalities, and complex ideals, so the “silver age” mode of intellectual inheritance is also facing great opportunities and challenges.

### **5. Simulation of building a bridge of intellectual inheritance**

#### **5.1. The significance of bridging intellectual inheritance**

Intellectual inheritance refers to the process of passing on the knowledge and experience of the previous generation to the new generation. This process can better promote the public’s cognitive and cultural literacy, better utilize their creativity and innovation, and promote social progress and development. The transmission of art or culture is usually not a teaching and learning monopolized by individual artists or scholars, but a certain number of educated people with a certain cultural form and artistic paradigm <sup>[15]</sup>. With the continuous

development of technology and social stage changes, intellectual inheritance is also constantly developing and updating. At present, the maturity of digital technology makes it a new means of intellectual inheritance through short video apps, digital libraries, digital archives, VR, AR, and other technologies, thus presenting various cultural materials to society in a more interesting way. In turn, it plays an important role in promoting cultural industry and economic development in human civilization. The transmission of intellectual knowledge makes it possible to repeatedly identify and utilize explicit knowledge, which is conducive to the rational utilization of knowledge and efficient innovation. The “silver age” intellectual inheritance makes full use of the rich working experience of the resource group, allows the new generation of young people and senior knowledge groups to utilize the advantages of human resources, and helps to reduce the loneliness of the senior groups. It also answers the questions of the new generation of young people and guides the direction of growth, which is conducive to the healthy development of the new generation of young people.

## **5.2. Feasibility analysis**

From the theoretical point of view, the research related to intellectual inheritance has entered the vision of scholars both locally and internationally and has caused extensive discussion. At present, there is less research on the construction of platforms related to intellectual inheritance, and there is still a lot of research needed on evaluation systems, platform construction, management programs, and so on. Researchers can start from the point of view of simulating the construction of the platform, combine it with the existing theoretical support, and put forward the conception of the development prospect, overall structure, functional requirements, and beneficiary groups of the construction of the intellectual inheritance platform, to form a more complete and fundamental theoretical system.

From a practical point of view, some network platforms in China have already been built and put into use in the intellectual exchange system, such as the short video application, Bilibili. Bilibili offers an online learning function, where users can freely upload teaching videos for the audience to watch and learn, including the elderly as video creators who can pass their experiences and knowledge to the new generation by filming teaching videos. The innovation of this function also coincides with the intention of intellectual inheritance. Although there are different types and focuses of intellectual inheritance methods, lessons can be learned from the construction of other short video platforms in terms of online organization and operational structure.

## **5.3 Principles of bridge building for intellectual inheritance**

Based on the principle of authenticity, the construction of the wisdom inheritance platform is conducive to the communication and cooperation between the elderly and the new generation, better realizing the value of the elderly themselves, and transferring and sharing experience and knowledge with more people. The authenticity and reliability of each information content support establishing a responsibility system.

Based on the principle of open access, the platform allows content to be shared freely so there can be a large number of data resources. The use of open access to reduce the price and access barriers can allow communication between the generations and promote knowledge innovation. By fully utilizing these information resources, they can better contribute to public services and economic development<sup>[16]</sup>.

Based on the principle of respecting individual rights, the construction of the platform requires a large number of users to support its data operation, and corresponding measures should also be established to protect the basic rights of all users, including but not limited to the protection of personal privacy, respect for individual wishes, equality, and mutual benefit.

## 5.4. Forms of wisdom inheritance construction

Online platforms can become the bridge between professors and students, while offline teaching events can provide teaching aids for professors and guidance for the youth. So by promoting the number of users of both methods, the full use and integration of information technology resources can be achieved. Using long videos with detailed knowledge points of the course and short videos with simplified and shortened courses can reach a wide audience without losing the essence of the course. The audience should be taught to solve problems to encourage thinking. The network media platform can allow two-way communication by enabling feedback from learners. Feedback from learners can be analyzed to optimize communication methods to avoid communication barriers caused by modern term usage that are incomprehensible to senior intellectuals and can take care of the psychological health of the elderly by preventing them from being affected by undesirable remarks. Suggestions from the elderly are sorted out and then published on the corresponding platforms. The learners' ideas, suggestions, and comments can be analyzed from time to time for research. By setting up a time duration for the video, the elderly will not take too long to continuously expound on the old stories, which take into account the limited physical strength and energy of the senior intellectuals. So the course can be planned by setting up the time for starting and ending the class, fixing the specific content of each lesson, and reminding the elderly to not overelaborate. China has not yet reached a sound and perfect level in the construction of the old-age security system as well as social and economic development <sup>[17]</sup>. Therefore, the layout of the “silver age” wisdom inheritance in the form of regularized volunteer services provides a basis for decision-making and a model for the development of the elderly industry.

## 6. Discussion

The intellectual inheritance model can maximize the solution to the lack of value and mental health problems of the “silver age” group and can make full use of the resources of the elderly manpower. Under the current socio-economic and national conditions, it is highly feasible to realize the development of “silver age” human resources. The model of intellectual inheritance in education affects the re-employment decision-making of the elderly and focuses on the connection between the “silver age” group and the new generation of youth's demand for their knowledge and skills. By allowing experienced elderly such as the “silver age” to provide relevant guidance to young people, more young people will be able to achieve success, and in the process of passing on their knowledge and skills, they will be able to achieve self-fulfillment, thus achieving the effect of a two-way solution to the problem.

The system of passing on knowledge focuses on the process of passing on experience, skills, and culture from the “silver age” to their offspring or the next generation. It can cultivate personal professionalism, and the inheritors can master professional skills by learning the lessons from the previous generation and through continuous learning and practice. The implementation of the intellectual inheritance model can also cultivate talents for the country. Through the exchange and inheritance from generation to generation, the comprehensive quality of talents can be enhanced, and more capable, thoughtful, and innovative talents can be cultivated to promote the development of society <sup>[18]</sup>. After a long time of accumulation, intellectual inheritance can provide society with the best knowledge, experience, skills, and culture for the society, and these cultural data can also be stowed in various forms such as databases. This process promotes the development of social economy and national science and technology, and effectively improves the comprehensive strength of the country. In the context of active aging, the exploration and research of the “silver age” wisdom transmission model has helped young people to solve the difficulties and problems encountered in the process of education and teaching and has also allowed valuable experience from famous teachers to be shared. The advantages and resources of the

“silver age” are fully utilized to broaden the channels for the young generation to supplement their knowledge by leading and demonstrating. The platform passes on the experience and culture of the “silver age” to the young generation, which meets the knowledge needs of the young generation and also develops a new purpose after retirement in the elderly group. Letting the elderly participate in social and economic development again can improve their physical and mental health, reduce their sense of loneliness and loss, and improve their quality of life. This also provides opportunities for aspiring elderly to give full play to their expertise and enhance their sense of self-worth, happiness, and fulfillment, and for the country to solve the issues between China’s economic and social development and the relative shortage of human resources by utilizing their intellectual resources. Reusing their intellectual resources not only promotes the construction of a socialist economy but also solves the issues of the supply and demand of talent and alleviates the inevitable requirement of the talent crisis. The social development of the country’s aging population requires elderly human resources who have profound knowledge and the ability to master, grasp, and apply knowledge. This high-quality, highly educated, high-contribution group is important in the development of the aging of the population and the social and economic development of the country <sup>[19]</sup>.

## 7. Conclusion

Exploration of “silver age” wisdom inheritance under the background of positive aging allows the new young people to receive a spiritual way of future growth, and build a communication bridge between the “silver age” group and the youth group. Through the construction of this platform, the new youth can communicate with the elderly in a relaxed and happy atmosphere, so that the value of the elderly can be appreciated, which gives them more strength and conviction to face the future.

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## Disclosure statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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