

Exploration of the Art Education Model for the Elderly under the Concept of Lifelong Education

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ABSTRACT

As an important component of the lifelong education system, art education for the elderly can not only slow down the cognitive decline of the elderly, effectively regulate their physiological and psychological states, but also cultivate their sentiments, improve their aesthetic sense, and meet their spiritual needs. However, against the backdrop of actively practicing the concept of lifelong education, the high-quality development of art education for the elderly still faces practical constraints such as uneven distribution of resources, the singularity of course content and teaching methods, and the relatively lagging construction of the teaching staff team. Based on the above issues, this article proposes countermeasures and suggestions to optimize the allocation of educational resources, enrich the educational curriculum system, and strengthen the construction of teacher teams, hoping to provide useful references for the innovative development of art education models for the elderly.

KEYWORDS

Art education for the elderly; The concept of lifelong education; Elderly education; Population aging

1 Introduction

With the acceleration of global population aging, the proportion of elderly people in society is increasing day by day. As of the end of 2024, the elderly population aged 60 and above in China exceeded 310 million, accounting for 22.0% of the total population, an increase of 13.34 million people and a 0.9 percentage point increase in proportion compared to 2023. In this situation, elderly education not only directly affects the quality of life and spiritual needs of the elderly, but also has a profound impact on social harmony, stability, and sustainable development. As an important part of lifelong education, elderly education refers to educational activities carried out with the elderly as the educational target, aiming to promote the physical and mental health development of the elderly. It is implemented by setting up learning contents that are beneficial to the overall improvement of the quality of the elderly, providing them with diversified opportunities for continuous learning and self-improvement. High-quality elderly education not only helps improve the quality of life of the elderly, but also enhances their sense of social participation. It is an important way to achieve the all-round development of the elderly and promote the high-quality development of the silver economy. As a key component of elderly education and an important part of senior universities, art education for the elderly can cultivate the ability of the elderly to express emotions and themselves through art activities such as music, dance, painting, calligraphy, etc., help them continuously gain aesthetic experience and spiritual pleasure, thereby improve their quality of life. It is an important way to promote profound spiritual nourishment and self-actualization. However, currently, elderly art education still faces many challenges in its development, such as insufficient resources for elderly art education, and the lack of diversified teaching methods. It is difficult to fully meet the growing and diverse art learning needs of the elderly, which is not conducive to promoting the vigorous development of elderly art education. Therefore, in the context of accelerating the construction of a lifelong education system, this article deeply explores the practical challenges faced by the elderly art education model, analyzes the practical paths for building a diversified, personalized and sustainable elderly art education system, in order to provide useful references for promoting high-quality development of elderly education, actively responding to population aging, and promoting social and cultural prosperity and progress.

2 The connection between the concept of lifelong education and art education for the elderly

British educator Basil Yeaxlee first proposed the term "lifelong education" in 1929 when he published "Lifelong Education". The concept of lifelong education was proposed by French educator Paul Lengrand under the promotion of UNESCO. It emphasizes that the concept of lifelong education is a means to achieve equal educational opportunities, aiming to respond to tknowledge society and technological changes, promote educational equity, and continuously meet the development needs of people in social life and practice. The core of the concept of lifelong education lies in breaking through the limitations of traditional education in terms of time and space dimensions, advocating that education should cover the entire process of an individual from birth to death, and integrating various forms of formal and non-formal education to meet the learning needs of different stages of life, promoting the all-round development of individuals and continuously enhancing their social adaptability. With the continuous deepening of the aging population, China is committed to building an education system that serves lifelong learning for all, which has gradually drawn

attention to the concept of lifelong education and integrated it into the education development strategy. As a key concept and practical orientation in the process of China's educational modernization, the concept of lifelong education plays a crucial supporting role in promoting educational equity, enhancing the quality of the nation's citizens, and driving social development.

The establishment of the concept of lifelong education has prompted educational goals to shift from the previous relatively single imparting of knowledge or skills to focusing more on meeting the artistic learning needs and spiritual and cultural pursuits of the elderly at different life stages. This makes art education for the elderly no longer merely regarded as a supplementary and recreational activity, but an important way for the elderly to achieve self-development and enrich their spiritual world. This shift in goal orientation makes art education for the elderly more in line with their intrinsic demands for art learning, providing strong guidance for the development of art education for the elderly. The concept of lifelong education has made society realize that art learning for the elderly is not unnecessary or leisurely, but an important component of their lifelong learning and development. This cognitive shift can encourage educational institutions, cultural departments, community organizations, and other sectors of society to increase their emphasis on art education for the elderly, providing diversified support such as educational resources and venues for the development of art education for the elderly.

3 The realistic constraints of the art education model for the elderly under the concept of lifelong education

Under the concept of lifelong education, art education for the elderly has achieved certain development results, but there are still a series of problems in the process of constructing an art education model for the elderly, which restrict the improvement of the quality of art education for the elderly.

Firstly, uneven distribution of resources constrains the development of art education for the elderly. Under the advocacy of the concept of lifelong education, art education for the elderly should be a universal education for all elderly people. However, in reality, the uneven distribution of resources has become a major obstacle to the high-quality development of art education for the elderly. From a geographical perspective, there is a significant gap between cities and rural areas in terms of access to art education resources for the elderly. Cities often concentrate a large number of art venues, cultural activity centers and other hardware facilities, which can invest more social resources in art education for the elderly. However, due to factors such as lagging economic development and limited funding, rural areas lack artistic education resources, specialized art education venues, and basic teaching equipment. From the perspective of social resource investment, the government and social forces tend to invest more resources in elderly education institutions in urban areas. In contrast, numerous grassroots elderly activity centers and community elderly learning institutions in rural areas find it difficult to obtain sufficient resources, resulting in relatively limited opportunities and platforms for the elderly to choose from for art learning, which hinders the effective expansion of art education models for the elderly in a wider range of groups and regions. Secondly, the single curriculum content and teaching methods hinder the innovation of art education models for the elderly. At present, the singularity of curriculum content and teaching methods in art education for the elderly contradicts the diversity and flexibility advocated by the concept of lifelong education. In terms of course content, art education for the elderly still focuses on common traditional art forms such as calligraphy, painting, singing and dancing, and pays less attention to emerging fields like digital art creation, art appreciation and criticism, making it difficult to meet the increasingly diverse art learning needs of the elderly. In terms of teaching methods, some regions still rely mainly on traditional teaching methods taught by teachers when carrying out art education activities for the elderly. Neither has modern information technology been fully utilized to carry out blended teaching that combines online and offline methods, nor has personalized teaching plans that are in line with the learning characteristics and interests of the elderly been designed. This single curriculum content and teaching method make art education for the elderly lack attractiveness and innovation, making it difficult to stimulate their enthusiasm for continuous and in-depth learning of art, and restricting the development of art education models for the elderly towards a more dynamic and adaptive direction.

Thirdly, the construction process of the teaching staff is relatively lagging behind. The teaching staff is a key element in ensuring the quality of art education for the elderly and promoting the upgrading of art education models for the elderly. However, the problem of weak teaching staff is currently prominent. On the one hand, professional art education teachers are already relatively scarce, and there are even fewer willing to devote themselves to the field of art education for the elderly. This is because compared to other stages of education, art education for the elderly lacks attractiveness in terms of salary and career development opportunities. On the other hand, the existing elderly art education teachers also have deficiencies in terms of knowledge structure and teaching ability. Although some teachers possess certain professional knowledge in art, their mastery of geriatric education psychology and teaching methods is limited, making it difficult for them to conduct targeted teaching based on the learning characteristics and needs of the elderly. Furthermore, due to the lack of a systematic training mechanism for elderly art education teachers, the teaching staff is unable to keep up with

the new trends and requirements of art education development, and thus cannot provide strong talent support for the upgrading of the elderly art education model, thereby affecting the high-quality development of the elderly art education cause under the concept of lifelong education.

4 Innovative path of art education model for the elderly under the concept of lifelong education

4.1 Optimize the allocation of educational resources and promote balanced development of art education for the elderly

The rational allocation of resources is the foundation of innovative art education models for the elderly. Firstly, the government should play a leading role in formulating scientific resource allocation policies, increasing investment in resource scarce areas such as rural areas, and narrowing the gap in artistic education resources for the elderly between urban and rural areas. For example, specialized elderly art education activity centers can be built in rural areas, equipped with basic art teaching equipment and teachers, in order to provide a place for the elderly to learn art. At the same time, it is necessary to promote the rational flow of social resources, encourage enterprises, social organizations, and individuals to participate in art education for the elderly through donations, cooperative education, and other means. Special attention should be paid to the resource needs of grassroots elderly activity centers, community elderly learning institutions, etc., and resources should be gradually inclined towards these weak links. In addition, it is necessary to establish a unified platform for sharing art education resources for the elderly, integrate various art education resources, break geographical and institutional limitations, enable elderly people in different regions to easily access high-quality art education resources, promote the balanced development of art education for the elderly in different regions, and provide solid resource guarantees for innovative art education models for the elderly.

4.2 Improve the education curriculum system and stimulate the vitality of art education for the elderly

Enriching course content and innovating teaching methods are key to enhancing the attractiveness of art education for the elderly. In terms of curriculum design, in addition to retaining traditional advantageous art courses, we should vigorously develop emerging art courses, such as digital photography art, art and health integration courses, etc., in order to better meet the diverse interests and needs of the elderly. At the same time, emphasis is placed on the hierarchical nature of the curriculum, from basic introduction to advanced improvement, so that elderly people of different levels can find suitable learning content for themselves. In terms of teaching methods, relevant educational institutions should make full use of modern information technology to carry out blended teaching that combines online and offline methods. Educational institutions can provide teaching videos and build interactive learning communities through online means, making it convenient for the elderly to study anytime and anywhere. Meanwhile, educational institutions need to organize practical activities and set up art creation workshops offline to enhance the learning experience and interactivity. In addition, it is necessary to design personalized teaching plans based on the learning characteristics of the elderly, pay attention to individual differences, and adopt methods such as group cooperative learning and project-based learning to stimulate the learning initiative and creativity of the elderly, making the art education model for the elderly more dynamic and innovative.

4.3 Strengthen the construction of the teaching staff team and lay a solid talent foundation for art education for the elderly

A high-quality teaching staff is an important talent pillar for promoting the innovative development of art education models for the elderly. On the one hand, it is necessary to strengthen the training of existing teachers, regularly organize teachers to participate in professional training, and cover topics such as elderly education psychology, cutting-edge art education concepts and methods, in order to enhance teachers' teaching abilities and professional qualities. At the same time, it is necessary to encourage teachers to conduct teaching research and innovative practices, and explore new models and methods that are suitable for art education for the elderly. On the other hand, it is necessary to improve the salary and professional honor of elderly art education teachers, establish a scientific and reasonable salary system and incentive mechanism, reward and commend outstanding teachers, enhance the attractiveness of this profession to professional art education talents, and attract more talents to join this field.

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