

Research on the Practice of Art Education in Colleges for the Elderly under the Background of Aging Society

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Abstract: *With the development of society, China is now showing the characteristics of an aging population. As a link to adult education, senior citizen education is the later stage of the development of lifelong education. Therefore, elderly education is an essential educational link for China to build a learning society and strengthen the cultivation of the ideological and cultural quality of the whole people. The continuous improvement of the elderly education work is of great significance to enrich the ideological and cultural life of the elderly and to realize the construction of a learning-oriented society. With the rapid development of the senior colleges in various regions of China, when they optimize and reform the senior education curriculum, they should strengthen art education in old teaching. Through the study of art, the elderly can not only experience a colorful life but also help to enrich their spiritual world, cultivate their sentiments, and be conducive to the development of physical and mental health. This paper takes the current social aging as the research background and explores the problems in the art education work of elderly universities. In addition, through continuous optimization of the teaching system and in-depth education reform, the feasibility of art education in colleges and universities for the elderly has been strengthened.*

Keywords: *Aging; Social development; Education for the elderly; Lifelong education; Art Education*

1. Introduction

With the aging of the social population, China's population structure is the oldest in the world. At the same time, the degree of aging is also increasing. Social essential services meet the needs of the elderly in their later years, realize the socialization of the elderly, give play to their social value, and reflect the policy system of caring for the elderly and an excellent social environment. With a series of problems existing in the current population, aging has become a topic of common concern to society. As an important place for the elderly to communicate and learn, the university for the elderly embodies the concept of lifelong education in China. Therefore, in completing the aging education, the university for the elderly should continuously optimize the curriculum design of the elderly education and use art courses to increase the motivation of the elderly to learn. In addition, we must strengthen the rational allocation of school and social resources and give full play to the personal and social values of the elderly.

2. Senior Citizen Education

Elderly education can enable the elderly to continue to participate in educational activities aimed at the characteristics of the elderly group and is also a product of the development of population aging. Currently, elderly education has become an important part of China's education, and it is of great significance to accelerate social development and promote the construction of a learning-oriented society. The education of the elderly is different from teaching other age groups, and the curriculum design of the elderly education no longer emphasizes professionalism, occupation, and further education. It focuses on the unique teaching content of life, spirit, mentality, and so on. The teaching goal and teaching task of senior citizen education are to expand the horizons of the elderly, enrich their lifestyle, and improve their physical quality. To better respond to the current trend of social aging in China, the State Council and other relevant departments have issued a series of relevant policy documents to encourage people to participate in the construction of elderly education and to give play to the social value of the wisdom of the elderly. The elderly are an essential and valuable asset for national development. Therefore, it is necessary to give full play to the value of the elderly and promote social development. We should further

improve the quality of China's elderly education, actively promote the modernization of China's education, and speed up the process of building a learning-oriented society [1].

3. Art Education for the Aged

Art education for the elderly is an essential part of the teaching content for the elderly. It mainly focuses on art courses such as calligraphy, painting, singing, and dancing and uses art as a teaching carrier to carry out various activities. By participating in art learning, the elderly can cultivate their sentiments and improve their aesthetic taste, which is conducive to cultivating the cultural literacy of the elderly and enriching their inner spiritual world. With the development of information technology and the application of educational technology, senior colleges can carry out offline and distance learning when carrying out art teaching. Moreover, the government has established a complete teaching system for the elderly to meet the learning requirements of elderly groups with different learning abilities in different regions. By reforming and optimizing the content of art teaching for the elderly, it can not only strengthen the cultivation of the cultural literacy of the elderly group but also help to improve the cultural literacy of the Chinese population as a whole.

4. The Value of Art Education in Universities for the Aged

4.1 Help Older People Find Self-Worth

The content of art teaching in the university for the elderly is diverse, and related teaching work can be carried out from different aspects. The elderly group has entered into retirement for an extended period, partly in the stage of self-confusion. After completing their social work responsibilities, they will lose themselves and cannot find personal value, which makes the elderly lose their pursuit. Therefore, at this stage, the spiritual world of the elderly is relatively poor, and their inner life is relatively empty. Art education, on the other hand, pays more attention to the guidance of the spiritual life of the elderly, which primarily makes up for the spiritual blank of the elderly after retirement. The lessons disseminate positive ideas through diverse art forms such as calligraphy, painting, music, and dance so that the elderly can continue to realize their value [2].

4.2 Exertion of Social Value of Elderly Groups

In the face of the aging of Chinese society, to further strengthen the utilization of China's human resources, we should give full play to the social value contained in the elderly group and jointly participate in the construction of society. Compared with other groups, older groups have richer production and life experience. Their production, life experience, and ability to professionally operate advanced technology are still of high economic and social value. For example, when educators reach retirement age, they can still participate in the education work for the elderly. In this process, the social value of the elderly can be realized not only in economic labor but also in intelligence. The elderly gain more social recognition in the interaction, strengthening their sense of participation and satisfaction. In addition, the elderly group has also witnessed the critical process of China's historical development, the founding of the People's Republic of China, the country's demise to today's prosperity, and countless significant events in the country's development. Therefore, the value of the elderly is also reflected on the spiritual level. Thanks to their hard and glorious years in this country, the older group has a higher sense of patriotism, loyalty to the people, devotion, patriotism, and strong faith. To sum up, middle-aged and older people have a stronger sense of morality and can actively spread spiritual thoughts and strengthen the construction of a moral demeanor in learning.

5. Problems in Art Education in Universities for the Aged

To enhance the cultural construction of China and improve the country's cultural soft power, taking the elderly education as an example, it is necessary to strengthen the art education in the elderly education. However, there are still some problems to be solved in the art education of senior colleges.

5.1 The Development of Art Education for the Elderly Needs to Be Improved

Compared with other education systems, senior citizen education in China started relatively late. The

first university for the elderly in China was established in Shandong Province in the 1980s. In the beginning stage, art teaching was not thoroughly carried out [3]. At the social level, the number of people participating in university studies for the elderly is still relatively small. Most of the elderly do not have an awareness of learning, and there are few students in the university. Moreover, the number of elderly learning groups is growing relatively slowly. The infrastructure for middle-aged and elderly education must also be improved in construction. However, art education resources are more inclined to preschool education, compulsory education, and general higher education, and relatively little is provided for the elderly education.

5.2 Imperfect Curriculum System Construction of Art Education

First, art education develops slowly in the university teaching system for the elderly, and the self-learning awareness of the elderly is not strong. Therefore, it will lead to a relative lack of educational resources in art teaching in elderly universities. Second, the elderly organize art courses in some universities. Without forming a complete curriculum teaching system, and a lack of targeted education, the value of art education in university education for the elderly cannot be considered. Third, in establishing arts education courses, senior colleges mainly refer to the curriculum design of the corresponding colleges and select relatively simple arts courses according to the learning characteristics of the elderly, so there are fewer categories to choose from in the arts education system. At the same time, the slow comprehension of the content of teaching materials on art has led to a decline in motivation to learn and a lack of comprehension of teaching content and has not contributed to the development of sustainable art education.

5.3 Lower Number of Older Persons Receiving Education

Most elderly education is mainly carried out in large cities or county towns, but in larger rural areas, there is very little elderly education. Lousy publicity of the concept of lifelong education will lead to the elderly in rural areas not having high enthusiasm for learning, and the art education provided by the university for the elderly does not conform to their life philosophy. On the other hand, some older people are less educated and have not completed primary education, making them unable to adapt to the current systematic university education model. In addition, the elderly need to pay a certain tuition fee to enter the university, which will increase the burden on the family to a certain extent, so the elderly do not desire to study at the university.

6. Strategies of Art Education in Universities for the Aged

6.1 Human-oriented Concept of Art Education

Regarding the form of art teaching, art education for middle-aged and older people is unique. The content of art teaching in senior colleges needs to be designed according to the needs and actual conditions of the elderly, and practical teaching should be carried out. So the teaching work of the university for the elderly implements the people-oriented educational philosophy. In practical teaching, the elderly can achieve the purpose of learning from old age. When carrying out art teaching in senior colleges, it is necessary to distinguish between senior activities and senior art education. For example, when carrying out the teaching of vocal music, the classes for the introduction of vocal music, vocal music singing, vocal music training, and vocal music performance can be set up for the vocal music art courses. In addition, the elderly choose the appropriate lessons according to their vocal level. The art teaching forms divided by stages can meet the learning needs of the elderly with different artistic literacy and meet the requirements of entry-level learning and the learning needs for further communication [4]. In the design of art teaching content, the music style and the corresponding era music that the elderly are more interested in should be selected. Adding appropriate music content through the curriculum design can strengthen the elderly's interest in music learning and give full play to the elderly's learning. The school ensures that educational content is more oriented to the learning needs of older students, implements the educational concept of properly teaching students, and enables students to complete their art education in a relaxed and comfortable learning environment. What is more, in teaching methods, teachers must constantly optimize and adjust teaching practices and choose methods that align with the elderly. For example, the method of learning while singing can be adopted in the vocal music class. This teaching method can allow the elderly to effectively learn music by imitating the teacher's vocalization during the singing and help the elderly to master the skill of singing more quickly and constantly improve

their ability. In addition, the elderly can also learn more art knowledge and enhance their artistic accomplishment.

6.2 Perfection of Art Teaching System in Universities for the Aged

Although senior education is an integral part of China's education system, there is a big difference between senior education and China's regular education. It is not for academic qualifications and certificates that the elderly group participates in the study and training of the elderly university. However, the curriculum design of the elderly university should still adhere to the combination of theory and practice and constantly improve the curriculum system. At the same time, in art teaching, it is necessary to strictly regulate the arrangement of various teaching activities and teaching contents to ensure that the elderly can learn art knowledge and skills [5]. For example, in the professional study of artistic instrumental music, it is necessary to comply with the basic rules of musical instrument teaching and gradually increase the difficulty. The university's disciplines for the elderly no longer set the study period but are determined according to the interest of the elderly in art learning and the efficiency of learning. The learning efficiency of large classes in instrumental music education is relatively low [6]. Therefore, art education must provide small-class classroom teaching to ensure that each student can receive targeted guidance from teachers and avoid low learning efficiency caused by large-class education. For art teaching content with a certain degree of difficulty, teachers can conduct individual demonstrations, or one-to-one targeted teaching for the elderly to ensure the teaching effect.

6.3 Encourage Older Persons to Demonstrate Their Personal and Social Value

Art education in senior universities is different from professional art students. Art learning for seniors is more about cultivating sentiment and enriching their inner world [7]. The Elderly have stronger patriotism and strong enthusiasm for giving back to society and exerting their value. Therefore, in addition to designing classroom teaching content, elderly universities also need to organize extracurricular practical activities. In this way, it can give the elderly a platform to show themselves and reflect on their value in participating in social activities. For example, universities for the elderly can organize choirs, dance performance groups, bands, etc. of the elderly universities, and regularly allow the art team to participate in social and cultural performances. Art and cultural activities can improve the artistic accomplishment of the elderly but also encourage the elderly to exert their value and repay society, giving them a stronger sense of self-identity and satisfaction [8].

7. Conclusion

Under the current background of aging, the country should pay more attention to the elderly, provide them with higher-quality services, improve their quality of life in their later years, enrich their spiritual world, and cultivate their sentiments. Based on the concept of lifelong education, we must actively encourage the elderly to participate in the learning of the elderly university, to gain exposure to more knowledge in the process of learning, to exert personal and social value, and to gain personal satisfaction. "Never too late to learn." When this goal is achieved, the elderly can learn and enjoy themselves. Doing so will help promote the high-quality development of Chinese society and accelerate the construction of a learning-oriented society.

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