

*Original Paper*

Research on the Development of a  
Preschool-Education-Informed Travel and Wellness Service  
Model in the Context of the Silver Economy

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**Abstract**

*Population aging has fueled the growth of the senior citizen economy, with travel and wellness tourism becoming a core sector and ushering in a golden age of development. However, challenges remain, including limited service offerings, insufficient spiritual enrichment, a shortage of professional talent, and inadequate resource integration. Promoting the deep integration of preschool education with travel and wellness tourism, leveraging the mature service system, activity organization methods, and humanistic service philosophy already established in preschool education, can effectively address the shortcomings in the development of travel and wellness tourism. This integration can broaden the scope of wellness services, strengthen humanistic care, stimulate the vitality of the senior consumer market, promote the development of the travel and wellness tourism industry, provide new avenues for the development of other industries, and pave new paths for the growth of the senior citizen economy.*

**Keywords**

*Silver economy, preschool education, travel and wellness tourism, service model*

**1. Introduction**

As the aging population accelerates, diversified demands for elderly care consumption are emerging. The silver-age economy is shifting from mass-market consumption to high-quality, experiential consumption, with travel-based health and wellness tourism becoming a prominent emerging industry. Currently, the public's demand for health and wellness services has moved beyond basic daily care to include emotional support and physical nourishment. Exploring the integration and development of different industries has become a breakthrough for travel-based health and wellness tourism to overcome its development challenges. Early childhood education possesses advantages such as mature

scene operation, interactive services, and emotional companionship, which highly align with the needs of improving the quality of travel-based health and wellness tourism. The integration of these two sectors is of great significance for enriching health and wellness service models, improving the elderly care service system, and unlocking the incremental value of the silver-age economy.

## **2. The Integration Logic of the Silver Age Economy with Preschool Education and Travel-Based Wellness**

### *2.1 The Development Connotation and Industrial Characteristics of the Silver Age Economy*

The silver-age economy is a new economic form centered on the consumption needs of the elderly, encompassing areas such as elderly care, wellness, leisure, and culture. It is a product of economic structural transformation and upgrading against the backdrop of an aging population. With socio-economic development and the improvement of the elderly care security system, the consumption capacity of the elderly has increased, and their consumption desires have become more diversified, personalized, and spiritual. The silver-age economy has shifted from traditional basic elderly care consumption to a consumption model focused on quality, experience, and spiritual fulfillment. The modern silver-age economy is no longer limited to guaranteeing the lives of the elderly; it places greater emphasis on the physical and mental health, spiritual enrichment, social participation, and value realization of the elderly population. The industry's development also exhibits characteristics such as cross-sector integration, diversified innovation, and personalized services. As a new form of the silver-age economy, travel-based wellness tourism relies on regional ecology, cultural and tourism resources, and elderly care facilities. Its core competitiveness lies in providing the elderly with high-quality, immersive elderly care experiences, which aligns perfectly with the quality-oriented and diversified development core of the silver-age economy, offering vast potential for development and upgrading.

### *2.2 The Adaptability of Preschool Education to Enabling Travel and Wellness Tourism*

Preschool education, based on scientific educational concepts, engaging activities, and warm companionship, aims to cultivate well-rounded individuals both physically and mentally. Its service logic and content system align with the needs of the high-quality development of travel-based health and wellness services. The preschool education industry has deeply cultivated services such as immersive scenario creation, engaging activities, emotional guidance, and everyday companionship, forming a relatively complete experience in nurturing and humanistic services and a scenario operation mechanism. This effectively addresses the shortcomings of traditional health and wellness services, which emphasize material aspects while neglecting spiritual ones. Travel-based health and wellness services primarily utilize leisure and recreational environments with a relaxed and free atmosphere, suitable for implementing various interactive activities, cultural and sports activities, and holistic development programs in preschool education. The intergenerational interaction model can break the monotony of solitary living for the elderly, enrich their travel experiences, revitalize their physical and

mental well-being, and expand health and wellness services from basic physical care to spiritual nourishment, achieving a comprehensive upgrade in the value of health and wellness services.

### **3. Existing Shortcomings in the Development of Current Travel and Wellness Services**

#### *3.1 The Content of Travel and Wellness Services Remains Relatively Homogeneous*

In recent years, the rapid expansion of China's travel and wellness industry has been accompanied by increasing investment in infrastructure construction. Numerous wellness destinations have improved accommodation conditions, transportation accessibility, ecological environments, and medical support facilities. While these improvements have enhanced the material foundation of wellness tourism, service innovation has not progressed at the same pace. Many projects continue to rely on traditional service models centered on accommodation, sightseeing, health monitoring, and basic leisure activities. (Geng, 2026)

From an ecological perspective, elderly wellness needs emerge within a complex interaction between individuals and their surrounding environments. Older adults participate in travel and wellness programs not only to improve physical health but also to seek social engagement, emotional fulfillment, cultural enrichment, and opportunities for self-development. However, many wellness destinations provide standardized products that fail to recognize the diversity of elderly experiences, lifestyles, and personal interests. Retired professionals, active elderly travelers, elderly individuals living alone, and older adults with chronic diseases often receive nearly identical service packages despite having very different expectations.

A noticeable phenomenon is the tendency of different regions to imitate successful wellness models without adapting them to local cultural resources or consumer characteristics. Similar accommodation arrangements, sightseeing routes, health lectures, and recreational activities can be found across numerous destinations. Such replication weakens regional competitiveness and reduces the attractiveness of wellness tourism products. As a result, many elderly consumers perceive little difference between destinations and gradually lose enthusiasm for repeated participation.

The excessive emphasis on physical facilities has also encouraged local governments and enterprises to evaluate project success primarily through indicators such as investment scale, construction area, and visitor numbers. Comparatively less attention has been given to service quality, participant satisfaction, and long-term well-being outcomes. This imbalance restricts the development of innovative wellness products and limits the industry's ability to respond to changing demands associated with population aging. (Yang, 2025)

#### *3.2 Insufficient Humanistic Care and Spiritual Support*

The pursuit of healthy aging extends beyond disease prevention and physical maintenance. Emotional security, social belonging, cultural participation, and psychological well-being are equally important components of later-life quality of life. Nevertheless, many travel and wellness programs continue to

interpret health primarily through a biomedical lens, focusing on physical indicators while overlooking the emotional and social dimensions of aging.

Within the ecological systems framework, the elderly individual's daily interactions with family members, peers, service staff, and community networks constitute an important microsystem influencing well-being. Many older adults experience shrinking social circles following retirement, widowhood, or the migration of adult children. For some participants, joining travel-based wellness programs represents an opportunity to rebuild social connections and regain a sense of purpose. However, existing services often provide limited opportunities for meaningful interpersonal interaction. In many wellness institutions, organized activities remain largely recreational rather than relational. Singing performances, sightseeing excursions, and fitness exercises are arranged regularly, yet opportunities for emotional expression, peer support, life-story sharing, and community participation remain scarce. Staff members are generally trained to address daily living needs and basic health management but may lack knowledge of elderly psychology and communication strategies. Consequently, emotional concerns such as loneliness, anxiety, grief, and social isolation frequently remain unaddressed.

At the mesosystem level, coordination among families, wellness institutions, local communities, and social organizations is often weak. Family members may have limited involvement during wellness programs, while local cultural organizations and volunteer groups rarely participate in service delivery. The absence of these supportive relationships reduces opportunities for elderly individuals to establish broader social networks and experience a stronger sense of belonging.

As population aging accelerates, elderly consumers increasingly seek experiences that contribute to personal growth, cultural engagement, and emotional fulfillment. The limited provision of humanistic care restricts the industry's capacity to meet these expectations and undermines the broader goal of promoting active and meaningful aging.

### *3.3 Shortage of Interdisciplinary Professionals*

Human resources constitute one of the most critical foundations of service quality in the travel and wellness industry. Despite continuous expansion of the market, the supply of qualified professionals has not kept pace with the growing complexity of elderly care needs.

Many institutions employ staff members with backgrounds in nursing, health management, hospitality, or tourism. Although these professionals are capable of providing basic care services, wellness tourism increasingly requires interdisciplinary competencies that extend beyond traditional occupational boundaries. Employees are expected to understand aging physiology, elderly psychology, recreational activity design, cultural programming, communication skills, risk management, and group facilitation. Such comprehensive expertise remains relatively uncommon.

From the perspective of ecological systems theory, professionals act as key mediators connecting elderly individuals with various environmental resources. Their knowledge and skills influence how effectively participants engage with social networks, cultural activities, health services, and learning

opportunities. When staff members lack interdisciplinary training, interactions tend to focus on routine management tasks rather than personalized support and developmental engagement.

Current training systems also exhibit structural limitations. Many institutions rely on short-term induction programs emphasizing operational procedures and safety management. Opportunities for continuing professional development are often limited. Universities and vocational colleges have yet to establish mature educational pathways specifically designed for integrated travel and wellness services. As a result, the industry faces difficulties attracting and retaining professionals capable of working across multiple domains.

The shortage of interdisciplinary talent affects not only service delivery but also innovation capacity. Without personnel who understand both elderly needs and emerging industry trends, organizations may struggle to design distinctive products, establish collaborative partnerships, and respond effectively to evolving market demands.

#### *3.4 Limited Cross-Sector Resource Integration and Weak Collaborative Mechanisms*

The development of travel and wellness services requires cooperation among multiple sectors, including healthcare, tourism, culture, education, social services, and community organizations. Despite growing recognition of this need, cross-sector collaboration remains relatively fragmented in many regions.

At the exosystem level, policies, institutional arrangements, and organizational networks significantly shape the quality of wellness services available to older adults. However, many wellness projects continue to operate independently, relying primarily on their own facilities and internal resources. Connections with external organizations are often temporary and project-based rather than strategic and long-term.

For example, educational institutions possess expertise in lifelong learning, intergenerational communication, and recreational program design. Cultural organizations hold valuable resources related to local heritage, artistic activities, and community participation. Healthcare institutions can contribute professional support for disease prevention and health management. Yet these resources are frequently dispersed across different administrative systems and rarely integrated into a coherent service ecosystem.

The lack of stable cooperation mechanisms further constrains resource sharing. Organizations often face barriers related to funding allocation, responsibility division, information exchange, and performance evaluation. As a result, partnerships remain superficial and are typically limited to occasional events or short-term collaborations. Sustainable cooperation frameworks capable of supporting long-term service innovation have yet to become widespread.

At the macrosystem level, the historical separation between industries continues to influence organizational behavior. Tourism, healthcare, elderly services, and education have traditionally developed within distinct policy and management systems. These institutional boundaries make it

difficult to establish integrated governance structures capable of coordinating diverse stakeholders around common goals.

The fragmented nature of resource integration ultimately reduces service efficiency and limits the industry's capacity to provide comprehensive support for elderly well-being. A more collaborative ecosystem is necessary to connect scattered resources, encourage knowledge sharing, and create richer wellness experiences that respond to the multidimensional needs of an aging population.

#### **4. Pathways for Constructing a Preschool Education-Empowered Travel and Wellness Service Model under the Silver Age Economy Perspective**

##### *4.1 Constructing an Immersive Health and Wellness Service System that Fosters Symbiosis between the Elderly and Children*

Leveraging the advantages of preschool education scene operation and interactive services, a new type of travel and wellness environment that integrates the elderly and children has been created, breaking through the closed and one-way characteristics of traditional wellness services. Based on the spatial environment and resource advantages of the travel and wellness base, open, interactive, and shared activity spaces are built to meet the needs of regular intergenerational interaction. Using established preschool education activities such as fun games, handicrafts, artistic performances, and picture book reading as vehicles, lightweight interactive activities tailored to the participation characteristics of the elderly are created, reducing participation barriers caused by age differences. The elderly can experience a relaxed and enjoyable environment during the interaction, reducing the loneliness caused by traveling alone and enriching their daily travel life. This immersive symbiotic model can reshape the service scene of travel and wellness, liberating wellness spaces from their original single function of residence and rest into comprehensive scenes with multiple functions such as leisure, interaction, nourishment, and wellness, meeting the experiential consumption needs of the silver-age economy.

##### *4.2 Develop Personalized Health and Wellness Services Empowered by Education*

Based on the holistic development philosophy of preschool education, we enrich the soft services offered by travel-based health and wellness programs, creating a tiered and personalized health and wellness service system. We adapt classic preschool education services to the physical condition, interests, and spiritual needs of the elderly population, removing high-intensity and low-adaptability content while retaining engaging, relaxing, and therapeutic service modules. We design regular health and wellness activities based on needs such as physical and mental relaxation, interest cultivation, emotional healing, and mental activation, including craft activities, classic children's song singing, fun and educational games, and nature science experiences. We employ diverse activities to stimulate the elderly's mental activity, enhance their positive outlook on life, and improve their overall well-being. We adjust the difficulty and methods of activities according to the different needs of elderly people of different age groups, focusing on the needs of both younger, healthy seniors and older seniors requiring health and wellness care, thereby improving the precision and matching of health and wellness services.

(Tong, Jing, & Zhang, 2025)

#### *4.3 Establish a Regular Operation Mechanism for Two-way Integration*

A long-term and stable operating mechanism is key to the successful implementation of the service model. It is essential to create a normalized operating system that integrates preschool education with tourism and wellness tourism. Deep integration of preschool education professional resources with tourism and wellness tourism industry resources is crucial, enabling comprehensive integration in terms of talent, content, concepts, and scenarios. Wellness institutions can introduce professional preschool education service teams to design, organize, and implement distinctive wellness tourism activities, ensuring the professionalism and continuity of wellness services. Seasonal adjustments to the wellness tourism activity system should be made based on seasonal characteristics, tourism cycles, and the changing needs of the elderly population, thus forming a normalized and institutionally guaranteed wellness service system. Simultaneously, leveraging the cultural and tourism resources of tourism and wellness tourism can enrich preschool education's outdoor experiential activities, achieving a dual promotion of wellness and education services. This two-way integrated operating model can break down industry barriers, create a new industrial business model, and promote the transformation of the tourism and wellness tourism industry from a single elderly care service to a diversified and comprehensive service.

#### *4.4 Construct an Industrial Support System that Fosters Talent Development, Empowers Individuals, and Facilitates Cross-sector Collaboration*

To address the challenges of a shortage of wellness and healthcare professionals and superficial cross-sector integration, this initiative leverages the strengths of preschool education to create a comprehensive industry support system encompassing talent development, resource integration, and long-term collaboration, thus solidifying the foundation for industry development. (Lin, 2024) From a talent development perspective, it establishes a school-enterprise cooperative, two-way practical training model. This involves collaborating with universities' preschool education programs to add specialized wellness and healthcare service courses, integrating key elements such as preschool interactive skills, geriatric psychology, and wellness and healthcare service standards to cultivate wellness and healthcare professionals with diverse skills. Furthermore, it provides regular specialized training for existing wellness and healthcare practitioners, enhancing their skills in event planning, emotional support, and venue management to build a professional and standardized service team. Regarding cross-sector collaboration, it breaks down industry barriers, creating a shared resource mechanism integrating preschool education, wellness and healthcare, and cultural tourism. This integrates educational courses with high-quality resources such as cultural tourism venues and wellness and healthcare facilities, achieving resource complementarity and value symbiosis. (Liang, 2025)

## **5. Conclusion**

The booming development of the senior economy has opened up vast opportunities for innovation in

the travel and wellness industry, making cross-industry integration an inevitable trend. The effective integration of preschool education with travel and wellness services can transform the service model, address shortcomings in humanistic and spiritual services, cultivate service personnel with multi-skilled capabilities, and open up channels for collaborative development across multiple industries. This integrated model caters to the diverse consumption needs of the elderly, transforming elderly care services from simply providing material support to a comprehensive enhancement of both physical and mental well-being. This not only improves the core competitiveness of the travel and wellness industry but also stimulates the development of the senior economy, providing a continuous driving force for the long-term healthy development of the elderly care industry.

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