

# Implementation Strategy and Impact of the Silver Age Lecture Program Supported by Educational Finance

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## Abstract:

This article mainly explores the core role of education finance in promoting the development of education in the Western region, especially how education finance has improved the education quality of the first two pilot universities in Xinjiang by optimizing the salaries, subsidies, and benefits of silver-aged teachers. The Silver Age Lecture Program, as an innovative talent support policy, has been found to optimize the salary structure, subsidy mechanism, and treatment guarantee of silver-age teachers. This not only attracts and retains more silver-age teachers, but also effectively enhances their teaching enthusiasm and educational quality. Through detailed case analysis, the key role of education finance in teacher treatment, professional development support, and promoting educational equity has been revealed, providing practical guidance for the effective implementation of the Silver Age Plan in the western region. At the same time, it is suggested that special policies be introduced at the national level to implement wage tax reductions and provide more subsidies for silver-aged teachers who reemploy during the period of receiving pensions, to fully enhance the work enthusiasm and economic situation of elderly employees.

**Keywords:** Silver Age Plan; education finance; teacher's salary

## 1. Introduction

According to data released by the National Bureau of Statistics, as of the end of 2023, the population aged 65 and above in China will exceed 210 million. According to the United Nations' criteria for aging, the proportion of people aged 65 and above in the

total population exceeds 14%, indicating that China has entered a moderately aging society. China has reached 15.4% in 2023, indicating that China has entered a moderately aging society. The intensification of population aging is an important trend in social development and a fundamental national condition for China for a long period to come. During the 14th

Five-Year Plan period, the elderly population in China will exceed 300 million. The education sector will also experience a peak in teacher retirement. Teachers are the primary resource for educational development, a powerful support for technological self-reliance and self-improvement, and an important guarantee for talent team building. In China, excellent teachers are extremely valuable educational resources. In this situation, recruiting silver-aged teachers and fully tapping into their professional and experience advantages, with the support of national education finance, can not only ensure the full employment of the working-age population, actively respond to population aging but also tap into the residual heat of retired teachers. Through “passing on and mentoring”, it can transform “blood transfusion” into “hematopoiesis”, improve the teaching staff level of assisted schools and assisted areas, and also help achieve high-quality development of local education, forming a win-win situation in the whole society [1].

This article takes education finance as the core perspective, focusing on the implementation strategies and impacts of the Silver Age Plan in the development of education in the Western region, especially exploring in depth the role of teacher salaries, subsidies, and benefits in promoting the improvement of education quality. By analyzing the current situation and problems of the treatment of silver-aged teachers under the support of education finance, this study aims to reveal the key role of financial investment in optimizing the teaching staff and improving the quality of education and provide a scientific basis for the formulation of education finance policies in the western region.

## 2. Overview and Implementation of the Silver Age Plan in the Western Region

### 2.1 Overview

The Silver Age Program is a policy discourse, and the Silver Age Western Lecture Program is mainly aimed at the scarce majors urgently needed by industries, sectors, and enterprises in the Western region, selecting outstanding retired teachers from universities to support teaching and research [2]. After retired teachers arrive at Western universities, they mainly carry out course teaching, teaching guidance, research projects, and team-building guidance. At the same time, it is supplemented by forms such as short-term lectures, distance education, synchronous classrooms, and academic lectures (reports). Adopting the methods of transmission, assistance, and guidance, can guide the teachers of the assisted universities to do a good

job in teaching and research and impart advanced teaching methods and research concepts to them.

Zhu Luobin pointed out the increase in the average healthy life expectancy of elderly people in China, as well as the expectation of most elderly people to continue working for the rest of their lives after retirement. China has a large number of elderly labor force, and the idle labor resources of the elderly are a huge waste. There are a considerable number of retired and reemployed individuals in daily life, but Chinese laws lack protection for them. It is suggested to draw on the legal policies of various countries around the world and protect the legitimate rights and interests of retired and reemployed groups based on the actual situation in China [3]. Give full play to the advantages of outstanding retired teachers in universities, enhance the moral education, team building, and scientific research innovation capabilities of Western universities in China, promote the construction of “Double First Class” universities in western regions, and improve the development level of higher education in western regions.

The first batch of pilot universities of the Silver Age Western Lecture Plan are the Karamay Campus of China University of Petroleum (Beijing), Tarim University, and West Yunnan University of Applied Technology. In the later stage, the pilot scope will be determined according to the implementation effect and local needs. This article mainly takes two universities in Xinjiang as examples to analyze the specific implementation path.

### 2.2 Provides Safeguard Measures for Silver Aged Teachers to Support the Western Region

#### 2.2.1 Financial security measures, analysis and evaluation

It can be seen from the notice of the Ministry of Education on issuing the Implementation Plan for Supporting Western Universities’ Silver Age Teachers (hereinafter referred to as the “Plan”) that there is a subsidy difference between long-term and short-term aid teachers. The subsidy standards for long-term aid teachers (80000 yuan/year for associate senior teachers and 100000 yuan/year for senior teachers) are more favorable compared to short-term aid teachers (6400 yuan/month for associate senior teachers and 8000 yuan/month for senior teachers), which reflects encouragement and support for long-term aid teachers, is conducive to stabilizing the education force, and promotes the continuous improvement of education quality in the western region. In addition, recipient universities may increase subsidies appropriately according to the situation, which reflects flexibility and is conducive to attracting more high-quality teachers to participate. At the same time, multiple policies were implemented in parallel to

safeguard the rights and interests of silver-aged teachers. In terms of pertinence and flexibility, the national finance has designed targeted funding guarantee measures for lectures in the western part of the Silver Age Plan, which not only considers the differences in different professional titles and types of teaching activities but also gives recipient universities a certain degree of autonomy, reflecting the flexibility and adaptability of policies. In terms of encouragement and incentive mechanisms, through differentiated subsidy standards, the national finance has effectively stimulated the enthusiasm of teachers to participate in Western education, especially the generous subsidies for long-term aid teachers, which helps to attract and stabilize teaching resources and promote the sustainable development of Western education. In terms of enhancing the attractiveness of comprehensive guarantee, in addition to direct subsidies, comprehensive guarantee funds further enhance the attractiveness of the Silver Age Plan, which helps attract more retired teachers to participate and provide strong support for education in the Western region. The potential challenges that exist, although the country and recipient universities bear the majority of the costs, still need to pay attention to the local financial burden capacity, especially in economically underdeveloped areas. Ensuring the sustainability of funding is the key to implementing the Silver Age Plan.

In summary, the national finance provides comprehensive and flexible funding support measures for lectures in the western region of the Silver Age Plan, effectively motivating teachers to participate and improving the implementation effectiveness of the plan.

### **2.2.2 Policy safeguard measures, analysis and evaluation**

In terms of policy guarantees, the personnel relations and retirement benefits of the dispatched teachers remain unchanged, and they enjoy the same welfare benefits as similar and same-level personnel in the assisted units, including family visits, winter and summer vacations, etc. For teachers who have not taken leave, the receiving unit shall reimburse one family member for transportation expenses to and from the receiving location by regulations, ensuring the reunion of teachers and their families. In terms of work and living conditions, the assisted universities are responsible for providing a good working environment and necessary teaching and research equipment, ensuring the convenience of teachers' lives, and making every effort to do a good job in daily service work. Aid universities pay attention to the lives of teachers and their families, provide remote teaching facilities and equipment, and assist in solving difficulties in work and life. In terms of health and medical security, medical expenses

during the aid period will be handled according to personal medical relationships and regulations, and both parties will provide supplementary support through commercial insurance, campus funds, and other means. Aid-assisted universities provide convenience for teachers with chronic diseases who require regular medication, and teachers who are sick or injured can enjoy benefits such as condolences by the system of the assisted school. In terms of family care and support, aid universities pay attention to teachers' families, solve their difficulties in work and life, embody humanistic care, and ensure that teachers have no worries.

The policy guarantee design for Silver Age teachers to support the western region, starting from multiple dimensions, ensures the rights, working conditions, health protection, and family care of teachers during the aid period. The unchanged personnel relations and retirement benefits ensure the stability of teachers' original lives and professional identity; Welfare benefits and vacation regulations, especially the reimbursement of transportation expenses for those who have not taken vacation, reflect the care for teachers and their families; Optimizing work and living conditions to ensure that teachers can focus on teaching and research; Family care and remote support, as well as comprehensive health protection measures, especially medical support for chronic disease management and accidental injuries, demonstrate the comprehensiveness and humanistic care of policies, providing a solid foundation for Silver Age teachers to participate in Western education.

The implementation of this policy guarantee system has not only effectively stimulated the participation enthusiasm of silver-aged teachers and enhanced the talent strength of education in the western region, but also improved the happiness and job satisfaction of teachers by providing comprehensive and thoughtful guarantees, promoting the improvement of educational equity and quality. The humanized design of policies, such as caring for family members and providing remote teaching facilities, solves practical problems in teachers' lives and work, reflecting the foresight and meticulousness of policymakers. However, the sustainability of policies and the pressure on local finances are key areas that need to be addressed in the future. Ensuring the long-term stable operation of policies and the sustainability of local finances is crucial for the long-term success of policies supporting western regions by senior teachers.

Overall, the policy guarantee system for supporting senior teachers in the Western region has achieved significant results in incentivizing their participation, improving education quality, and promoting educational equity. However, further improvements are still needed in terms of policy

sustainability, financial support, and resource optimization to ensure long-term stability and maximize policy effectiveness.

### **2.3 Case Study: Analysis of Measures Taken by the First Two Pilot Universities in the Western Region**

The Karamay campus of China University of Petroleum provides teachers with different types of pre-tax subsidies, annual awards, and other benefits. These subsidies and rewards are intended to motivate teachers to better complete their work tasks, encourage them to pursue excellence and innovation, and improve their quality of life. The amount and conditions of pre-tax subsidies vary depending on the type and level of the position. These subsidies to some extent reflect the school's recognition and compensation for teachers' work. Zhang Xiaofeng et al. analyzed the relationship between teacher identity and salary, emphasizing the decisive role of salary in the attractiveness of the teaching profession. This provides an important reference for the construction of a differentiated supplementary salary system in the Silver Age Plan [4]. Robert L. Clark et al. also pointed out that engaging in paid work after applying for retirement benefits may be an important way for individuals to work longer hours [5].

In addition to subsidies, the school has also established an annual reward mechanism to motivate teachers to better complete their work tasks. The amount and conditions of annual rewards vary depending on the type of position and responsibilities, such as teaching overload, guiding subject competitions, etc., all of which can receive additional rewards. This reward mechanism helps to stimulate teachers' work enthusiasm and creativity. The school also provides various benefits for teachers, including providing apartments, reimbursement of transportation expenses, and purchasing accident insurance. These welfare measures not only improve the quality of life of teachers but also reflect the school's humanistic care and support for teachers.

For teachers who have made special contributions to teaching, scientific research, or subject construction, the school has also established special contribution awards. This reward mechanism helps encourage teachers to pursue excellence and innovative spirit. For B-class teachers who are employed for a long time and meet the annual teaching requirements, the school allows them to apply for an extension of their service period and pay the subsidy difference, converting them to long-term A-class teachers. This policy helps to stabilize the teaching staff and motivate teachers to serve the school for a long time.

Tarim University has also provided differentiated salaries

and rewards to silver-aged teachers with different support periods in its support of the Silver Age Lecture Program. The support and guarantee measures provided for silver-aged teachers not only provide sufficient economic support in terms of salary, work subsidies, and excess work rewards but also provide comprehensive care and protection in terms of living and accommodation conditions, transportation and family visits, health security, etc. The aim is to attract and encourage outstanding teachers to go to Xinjiang to support the education industry, while also ensuring that teachers can enjoy good working and living conditions during the support period.

In summary, both of the aforementioned universities are located in the Xinjiang region of China and have been selected as the first pilot universities for the Silver Age Plan. This fact not only highlights the deep concern and strong support of the country for the development of higher education in Xinjiang but also marks the important mission and responsibility of these two universities in promoting the progress of regional education and optimizing and upgrading the teaching staff.

### **3. The Impact of the Silver Age Western Lecture Program Supported by Educational Finance**

Firstly, the significant expansion of scale and coverage, as well as the sustained investment in education finance, have significantly promoted the expansion of the "Silver Age Plan". From the initial pilot program in three universities in 2000, selecting 120 to 140 silver-aged teachers and supporting more than 50 schools, the plan will cover 24 pilot universities by 2023, increasing the number of selected teachers to 500 and expanding the number of supporting schools to about 200. This highlights the key role of education finance in promoting the scope and scale of project implementation.

Secondly, digital empowerment and service model innovation are emphasized in the "Plan". The investment in education finance not only supports the on-site teaching support of silver-age teachers but also promotes the improvement of open and flexible online and offline teaching support methods. The application of digital technology, such as online teaching platforms and remote guidance systems, not only expands the service scope of Silver Age teachers but also improves service efficiency, building an efficient communication and learning bridge between Silver Age teachers and teachers and students in Western regions.

Thirdly, to promote educational balance and cope with an aging population, with the support of education finance,

the Silver Age Teacher Program not only helps alleviate the shortage of educational teachers in the western region and promotes the balanced development of education, but also actively responds to the challenges of population aging. By utilizing the rich experience and knowledge of retired teachers, it injects new vitality into the education industry in the Western region. The addition of Silver Age teachers not only improves the quality of education in the Western region but also promotes the popularization of the concept of lifelong learning, contributing to the construction of a learning society and a learning-oriented country. Fourthly, the optimization of social atmosphere and policy support, the guarantee of education finance is not only reflected in capital investment but also includes the improvement of policy support and service guarantee system. The Plan emphasizes strengthening overall coordination, focusing on digital empowerment, improving service guarantees, and creating a strong atmosphere of concern and care for senior teachers throughout society. The research results of Feng Yikun indicate that the majority of elderly people seeking re-employment are satisfied with their lives after retirement, indicating that elderly workers, as valuable human resources, can contribute to social productivity [6]. However, there has been an ongoing debate about the potential conflict between the re-employment prospects of the elderly and the employment prospects of the young labor force. The comprehensive support of policies and the broad participation of society has provided a good working and living environment for senior teachers, enhancing the sustainability and attractiveness of the project.

In summary, the sustained support of education finance is the key to expanding the scale of the “Silver Age Plan”, innovating service models, promoting educational balance and addressing the challenges of aging. Through digital empowerment, policy optimization, and the creation of a social atmosphere, the Silver Age Teacher Program has not only played an important role in promoting the development of education but also provided strong support for building a social environment for lifelong learning for all.

## 4. Inspiration and Suggestions

### 4.1 Inspiration

The success of the Silver Age Teacher Program in Xinjiang has provided valuable experience for other cities in the western region. Attracting silver-aged teachers through financial support and subsidies not only solves the problem of shortage of high-quality educational resources in the western region to a certain extent but also promotes the improvement of educational quality. Hanna

van Solinge et al. found that the type of work an individual plans to do after retirement depends not only on the employment opportunities of older workers but also on their values and motivations [7]. Those who have a strong need to supplement their income stream in their later years can expect to plan paid work. As the retirement landscape of the 21st century continues to evolve and take shape, insights into the motives, causes, and consequences of post-retirement work plans should not only have an impact on policy discussions related to positive and healthy aging but also help stimulate employment creation pathways to ensure that older workers can find financial security and personal fulfillment when needed. Other cities in the Western region should learn from Xinjiang, increase financial investment, and optimize the policy of introducing silver-aged teachers. But at the same time, the Silver Age Western Lecture Program also faces challenges.

Firstly, the construction of the platform is not yet perfect, and there is a lack of effective promotion channels, resulting in many senior teachers knowing very little about it.

Secondly, physical condition and adaptation challenges. Although retired teachers have rich experience, their physical condition may have certain uncertainties. After arriving in the western region, it may be difficult to quickly adapt to the natural environment and harsh conditions, such as altitude sickness and dry climate, which can affect the sustained and stable development of teaching work.

Thirdly, there is a psychological gap. Some retired teachers may have become accustomed to their original living environment and work pace, and when they arrive in the Western region, they may face relatively backward teaching facilities, scarce resources, and a less positive teaching atmosphere, which can easily lead to psychological differences and reduce their teaching enthusiasm.

Fourthly, there are obstacles to the application of technology. With the development of educational informatization, modern teaching has increasingly high requirements for the application of technology. Some retired teachers may have difficulties in mastering and applying new teaching technologies, making it difficult to fully leverage the advantages of digital teaching and meet the growing learning needs of students in the Western region.

At the same time, there are also some issues, first of all, family concerns. Retired teachers often have family concerns and travel far away from their families to give lectures in the West for a long time, which may lead to anxiety and affect their teaching investment due to missing and worrying about their families. Secondly, there are difficulties in inter-school coordination. Different Western-assisted schools have differences in teaching management, curriculum design, and other aspects. Silver-aged teachers may face the problem of poor inter-school coordination

when giving lectures or exchanging ideas across schools, which may make it difficult to smoothly promote teaching plans. However, due to the lack of continuous professional development support, Silver Age teachers also need to constantly update their educational philosophy and teaching methods during the teaching process. However, the current plan may lack opportunities and platforms to provide them with continuous professional development, causing their teaching to gradually become out of touch with the times. Finally, the incentive mechanism is single, and the existing incentive mechanisms mainly rely on economic subsidies, with a relatively single form. For some retired teachers who focus more on spiritual pursuit and professional achievement, the motivational effect is limited and it is difficult to fully mobilize their enthusiasm and initiative. The research of Yao Hao and Jiang Fan points out that incentives and health factors have a significant impact on teachers' participation in the Silver Age Plan. A combination of policy tools should be adopted to provide diversified and selectable incentive guarantee packages. This indicates that policy design needs to balance material and spiritual incentives, such as honor recognition, academic support, and convenient living, to meet the needs of different teachers [8].

## 4.2 Suggestions

Given this, it is necessary to start by solving practical problems and actively explore relief paths that can effectively promote the high-quality construction of rural teacher teams by silver-aged teachers. The following are some suggestions.

Firstly, establish a teacher re-employment platform. Wenke Bu and Meng'en Zhao constructed a secondary development model for retired university professors based on the population development strategy. The research results indicate that family responsibilities, outdated theories of retired professors, the establishment of public and private schools, teachers, recruitment platforms, and the acquisition of effective information are important driving factors affecting the human resource development of retired professors [9].

Secondly, strengthen the assessment and protection of the physical condition of silver-aged teachers. During the recruitment phase, conduct a comprehensive physical examination of teachers to understand their physical adaptability. Provide targeted health guidance and necessary medical resource support for teachers who travel to the Western region to give lectures, arrange teaching tasks reasonably, and ensure that their physical condition can adapt to the Western environment. Ma Hongmei's research emphasizes the issue of wage cost accounting in relative

poverty and harsh environments. This not only ensures the attractiveness of the treatment for silver-aged teachers but also reflects the important role of financial compensation in regulating regional education balance. This discourse further emphasizes that education finance needs to implement differentiated financial compensation based on the specific conditions of the areas where silver-aged teachers are supported, to ensure the attractiveness and sustainability of the plan [10].

Thirdly, pay attention to the psychological construction and technical application ability of silver age teachers. Organize an experience-sharing session before departure, allowing experienced individuals to teach methods for coping with psychological differences. The assisted school should actively create a good atmosphere, respect teachers' opinions, and establish a psychological counseling mechanism to promptly solve teachers' psychological problems. Strengthen the content of educational technology in the training process, invite professional personnel for training, and equip recipient schools with advanced teaching equipment and technical support. Encourage teachers to collaborate with young teachers to explore new technologies.

Fourthly, address family concerns. Provide flexible work arrangements, allow teachers to regularly visit and contact their families, organize family condolence activities, and provide necessary care and assistance to their families.

## 5. Conclusion

Under the financial support of education, the Silver Age Western Lecture Program has demonstrated tremendous value. Overall, the national finance and school salary support provide a solid guarantee for this plan. On the one hand, it has attracted many experienced Silver Age teachers to participate in Western education, bringing high-quality education and improving the quality of local education, playing a demonstrative role in promoting the overall improvement of the teaching staff; On the other hand, narrowing the education gap between the East and the West has promoted educational equity to a certain extent, while inheriting educational experience and inspiring more people to devote themselves to the education industry. At the same time, in the future, it should continue to increase financial support, improve the treatment level of silver-aged teachers, attract more outstanding retired teachers to participate, and ensure the rational use of funds. Schools need to improve their support system, provide better working and living conditions, and strengthen cooperation with senior teachers. It also needs to strengthen the construction of the teaching staff and promote experience inheritance and innovation through

paired assistance. Gradually expand the coverage of the plan, explore new teaching modes and methods, and make greater contributions to the development of education in the Western region.

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