

# Research on the Training of Aging Service Talents Based on 1+X Certificate System

Yixi Zhang

Chongqing City Management College, 401331 No. 151, South Second Road, Huxi University  
Town, High-tech Zone, Chongqing, China  
Email: zhangyixi24@student.usm.my

To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARPED/v14-i1/23742> DOI:10.6007/IJARPED/v14-i1/23742

**Published Online:** 10 February 2025

## Abstract

With the acceleration of aging in China, cultivating high-quality professionals in colleges and universities is crucial to alleviating the demand for elderly care services. The article explores the importance of the "1+X" certificate system in elderly care in enhancing the quality of aging service professionals in colleges and universities. Recognizing the problems in the training of aging service talents in colleges, such as imbalance between supply and demand and lack of professional teaching staff. It assesses the value of 1+X certificate system in promoting the training of aging service talents, emphasizing construction of personnel training model for aging service under the background of 1+X certificate system. Drawing on research results and comparisons with neighboring countries like Indonesia, this article identifies critical factors that affect how effective programs for character education are. Based on interviews with the elderly care industry, teachers and students in colleges and universities, this paper has determined the key factors affecting the application of 1+X certificates in elderly care majors. Through the collaboration of multiple stakeholders, effective integration of job demands and classroom teaching can be achieved. The deep cooperation between full-time teachers and part-time lecturers should be further strengthened to enhance the effectiveness of "Three Reforms of Teachers, Teaching Materials and Teaching Methods". Comprehensive coverage of the content of "Curriculum ideological and political" in the system of "three wide education" can promote the simultaneous enhancement of professional skills and moral qualities of the aging service talents.

**Keywords:** 1 +X Certificate System, Aging Service, Professional Talents, Talent Training.

## Introduction

By 2023, the elderly population aged 60 or above will reach 296.97 million, accounting for 21.1% of the total. The elderly population aged 65 and above is 216.76 million, accounting for 15.4%, which indicates that China has entered a moderately aging society (MCAC, 2023). In the face of the rapid growth of the elderly population, the sharp rise in demand for elderly care services, and the shortage of professional talents in the elderly care industry, the Ministry of Civil Affairs and other 12 departments jointly issued the first comprehensive policy document on the construction of elderly care service talent team in December 2023 - "Opinions on Strengthening the construction of elderly care service talent team". It points out

the direction for further optimizing the training mode of senior care service professionals in China. In addition, the Ministry of Education in China has included elderly care as one of the first pilot certificates in the "Notice on Doing a Good Job with the First Batch of 1+X Certificate System Pilot Work". The "1+X certificate system" means that students can obtain multiple vocational skill level certificates while obtaining academic certificates (Zhou & Sun, 2021). The significance of this study is that it has the potential to influence policy and practice, highlighting the role of 1+X certificates in enhancing the cultivation of elderly services talents and actively responding to China's aging population.

#### *The Supply of Talents in the Elderly Care Industry*

With the intensification of China's aging population, the demand for aging service talents has increased sharply. The supply of elderly service talents is facing great challenges. First, the total talent reserve is insufficient. The total number of senior management talents in China is not enough to meet the market demand. For example, the market demand for elderly care workers in China has increased to 6 million, but currently there are only 500,000 related practitioners (Sohu, 2024). Additionally, besides the shortage of care workers, there is also a scarcity of professional and technical personnel such as psychologists, nutritionists, rehabilitation therapists, as well as high-end management talent in institutions. Second, the degree of specialization is not high. The professional level of elderly care workers is generally low (Guo, 2024). Many lack professional knowledge and skills in elderly care services, and it is difficult to provide high-quality elderly care services. Third, there is a low sense of professional identity and a high turnover rate. The compensation and security for elderly care workers are not high, coupled with the lack of good career development prospects, which makes many talented individuals unwilling or unable to engage in elderly care work for the long term. Consequently, the high turnover rate of aging service talents affects the stability and continuity of service supply.

#### *Current Challenges in the Training of Aging Service Talents*

As of 2024, only 269 vocational colleges have established majors in elderly care, with merely 26 institutions approved for undergraduate education in this field. Moreover, these are predominantly located in the eastern and central regions. As the population of elderly people increases, the demand for talent in the field of elderly care services is also rising across China. However, the current reserve of professional talents in this area is far from meeting this demand. Due to the different process of marketization, the economic level of the eastern and western regions leads to great variations in the demand for elderly care in different regions. Moreover, the different modes of home care, community care and institutional care also lead to the differences in elderly care services. Therefore, the cultivation of aging service talents in different regions requires the joint cooperation of local governments, industry associations and vocational institutions to carry out unified layout. Due to insufficient integration of information and the superficial cooperation of industry and education, the latest demands of the job market cannot be promptly conveyed to vocational institutions, resulting in a lag in the scale and skill categories of talent training for elderly care services. Furthermore, teachers in vocational colleges specializing in aging services are mainly graduates with master's or doctoral degrees in related fields. Most of them transition directly from one academic institution to another, lacking practical work experience on the front lines of enterprises (Guo, 2024). Teachers who have experience in operating and managing eldercare facilities are particularly scarce.

*The Value of 1+X Certificate System in Promoting the Training of Aging Service Talents*

According to the 1+X certificate system, students in the aging service major are required to obtain the corresponding vocational skill level certificate while obtaining the academic certificate, which enhances the students' employability and industry adaptability, and effectively improves the training quality of aging service talents. In addition, the 1+X certificate system can also attract students from other related fields, which can not only increase the number of practitioners, but also lay the foundation for training composite talents for elderly care service (Guo, 2024).

Vocational education has both "educational" and "vocational" dual attributes (Li, 2023). To advance vocational education reform and improve the quality of vocational education in accordance with Chinese New Vocational Education Law, it is necessary to enhance the adaptability of vocational education based on the needs of the socialist market economy and societal development. The essence of 1+X certificate is a system that integrates college education and vocational training effectively, aiming at improving the pertinence and adaptability of talent training. To address the needs of digital and intelligent transformation in the current elderly care industry, the 1+X certificate system can facilitate synergistic collaboration among vocational institutions, enterprises, and governments (Yu, 2022). It aims to closely integrate industry, academia, and research, providing clear directions and clarifying ideas for teacher reform, curriculum reform, and teaching method reform (Wei, 2019).

The "1" in the "1+X Certificate system" represents the academic certificate obtained by students after completing the prescribed academic system education (Zhou & Sun, 2021), which reflects the comprehensive quality of students, including knowledge mastery, learning and innovation ability and professional ethics. "X" represents several vocational skill level certificates obtained by students while obtaining academic certificates, which reflects students' vocational skill level and practical ability. The organic integration and mutual empowerment of "1" and "X" courses can not only clarify the career planning and development direction of students in elderly care services, but also improve their professional identity. More importantly, with the industrial transformation and upgrading, the work skills and professional abilities of elderly care practitioners will also change, not only need to master the cultural quality and basic vocational skills, but also have a strong sense of teamwork, interpersonal communication skills and comprehensive management level. The 1+X certificate system has laid the foundation for improving the ability of innovation and creativity as well as continuous independent learning of aging service graduates.

*Construction of Personnel Training Model for Aging Service Under the Background of 1+X Certificate System*

With the refined development of China's elderly care industry, new jobs such as community elderly helpers and elderly bath assistants continue to emerge, which poses new challenges and opportunities for the training of professional elderly care service talents and practitioners' career planning. For new formats, new positions, new types of work and other mode changes, the 1+X certificate has created conditions for training "one person with multiple posts and multiple abilities" and "multi-skill" professional elderly care service management talents, and also provided the possibility for practitioners to broaden career promotion channels.

Combined with the regional demand for elderly care, the supply of elderly care services should be continuously optimized. In order to make the training of elderly care service professionals meet the needs of regional elderly care, the government should take the lead and encourage universities and industry associations to conduct research and analysis on the current situation and trend of local aging, and then visit and investigate welfare homes, elderly care institutions and urban and rural communities with high density of elderly population in the region, so as to analyze local elderly people from the aspects of urban-rural differences, economic status, health status and age structure Mouth distribution, and then form a list of elderly care service needs with local characteristics. Based on the regional demand for elderly care, combined with similar disciplines of elderly care services in local higher vocational colleges, the 1+X certificate system is used as the starting point to create a "elderly care +" professional group layout with regional characteristics, and gradually meet the effective supply of local elderly care service professionals.

The 1+X certificate system can coordinate the government, industry associations, leading enterprises and universities into the training system of professional talents, promote the docking of post needs and training requirements, scientifically plan the curriculum system, and effectively improve the training quality of elder care service talents. First, establish a professional construction committee composed of industry experts, HR of leading enterprises, training and evaluation organizations, college teachers, and outstanding graduate representatives to conduct research and analysis in five fields: elderly care and service, community elderly assistance service, elderly health consultation, operation and management of elderly care institutions, and marketing of the elderly care industry, and form a job vocational ability analysis and research report. According to the research report, the professional knowledge, technical skills and professional quality required for each post are clarified, and the talent cultivation specifications and X certificate scope of the senior care service professional group are finally determined. Second, according to the pilot opinions and suggestions of the "1+X certificate" system, the elder care service professional group organically integrates the vocational certificate training into the professional curriculum and teaching arrangements, realizes the accurate docking of the vocational skill level standard and the professional teaching standard, organically integrates the course content with the training content of the "X" certificate, and highly integrates the professional teaching process with the real operation of the post. School curriculum evaluation and vocational skill research complement each other (Zhou & Sun, 2021).

The characteristics of the 1+X certificate system require teachers to have professional teaching skills, solid theoretical literacy, and rich practical experience (Wei & Zheng, 2023). Therefore, cross-border cooperation between full-time teachers in universities and industry experts is conducive to a comprehensive, systematic and in-depth reform of "teachers, textbooks and teaching methods" in elder care services. First of all, the growth targets of full-time and part-time teachers should be targeted, and exchange and training activities should be carried out regularly around the targets (Wei, 2019). Through mutual learning and discussion, college teachers and part-time lecturers in the industry are encouraged to complement each other's advantages, which is helpful to improve the overall digital teaching ability, curriculum development ability, practical ability and certificate appraisal ability of senior care service professional teachers. Secondly, the two teachers' teams cooperate to collect, summarize and organize the stories, cases and videos in the elderly care service work

to form a constantly updated and highly practical digital teaching resource library. In addition, according to the law of spiraling vocational ability, vocational skill level standards and professional teaching standards are organically integrated, and digital technology is used to jointly develop various modular, hierarchical and convenient teaching materials for students. Finally, with the help of core digital technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data and virtual reality, we can work together to optimize the teaching process, organically combine online and offline, and efficiently carry out multiple intelligent teaching models. On the one hand, it can enable students to efficiently preview and consolidate basic knowledge, so that students can learn and simulate various common links of elderly care such as bathing, feeding, inserting urine tubes in a virtual environment, and enable students to have a deeper understanding of the work scene and nursing operation points.

In the training of elderly care service talents, colleges and universities should not only be limited to the training and improvement of vocational skills, but also pay special attention to cultivating students' humanistic care and social responsibility, so that they have a correct world outlook, life outlook and values. First of all, build a collaborative mechanism of all staff education. Under the leadership and guidance of ideological and political teachers, teachers of professional courses of elderly care service and practical instructors should jointly undertake the moral education tasks of their students, reconstruct the goal of education, fully explore the elements of ideological and political education, and integrate them into the teaching design, content arrangement and practice guidance through the silent teaching strategy. Secondly, we should build a cooperative mechanism for educating people in the whole process. Follow the law of vocational education and the law of the growth of skilled talents, integrate moral education into the whole process of education and teaching, the whole process of learning assessment and certificate identification, and the whole process of student life growth. Finally, the collaborative mechanism of all-round education should be constructed. The thought of students is not limited to the campus, the classroom, but should be fully extended to the integration of production and education, labor education, social practice (Xiang, 2022).

### **Conclusion**

The insufficient supply of elderly care service professionals has long been seen as a major challenge for China to cope with the aging population. Vocational universities and colleges are regarded as the training of professionals for the elderly, and it is of great practical significance and long-term development value to carry out research on training talents for the elderly service under the 1+X certificate system. It is also beneficial to deepen the reform of vocational education and meet the development needs of the current market for the elderly in China. Furthermore, integrating the 1+X certificate into the training of elderly care service talents can cultivate high-quality elderly care service talents with both morality and talent, and a high sense of responsibility and mission for the society, and can also alleviate the major problem of population aging.

### **Funding**

This research was supported by the China civil Affairs vocational Education Teaching Steering Committee (Project Name: Research on dilemma and improvement strategy of implementing 1+X certificate system for public administration and service majors; Grant Number: MZHZWKT-2023034).

## References

- Guo, Y. (2024). Practical Exploration of Talent Cultivation for Smart Healthy Aging Service and Management Professionals. *Contemporary Education and Teaching Research*, 5(4), 139-144. <https://doi.org/10.61360/BoniCETR242016150412>
- Li, Y. (2023). The Talent Training Mode of Vocational Colleges' Production-education Integration Innovation Professional Group Under the "1+ X" Certificate System. *The Educational Review, USA*, 7(10), 1589-1593. <https://doi.org/10.26855/er.2023.10.025>.
- MCAC. (2023). Statistical Bulletin on the Development of China's Civil Affairs. Retrieved from <https://www.mca.gov.cn/n156/n2679/c1662004999980001204/attr/355717.pdf>
- Sohu. (2024). Elderly care talents should be strengthened. Retrieved from [https://www.sohu.com/a/761837816\\_114988](https://www.sohu.com/a/761837816_114988)
- Wei, Z., & Zheng, F. (2023). Innovation research of "1+X" certificate system in applied undergraduate education. In *SHS Web of Conferences*, 153, 01019. EDP Sciences. <https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/202315301019>
- Wei, L. (2019). Research on Curriculum Reform of Vocational Education under the 1+X Certificate System. *Vocational Education Forum*, (7): 47-53.
- Xiang, K. (2022). Research on the Innovation Path of Production-Education Integration in Higher Vocational Colleges Based on the "1+ X" Certificate System. *Journal of Education and Educational Research*, 1(2), 140-145. <https://doi.org/10.16070/j.cnki.cn451388/g4s.2022.31.001>.
- Yu, J. (2022). Research on the Training Mode of standardized Software Technology Professionals under the "1+ X" certificate System. *Advances in Engineering Technology Research*, 1(2), 240-240. <https://doi.org/10.56028/aetr.2.1.240>.
- Zhou, F., & Sun, J. (2021). Exploring the Reform of "Teachers, Teaching Materials, and Teaching Methods" Based on the "1+ X" Certificate. *Journal of Contemporary Educational Research*, 5(10), 57-60. <https://doi.org/10.26689/jcer.v5i10.2624>