

A Cross-Cultural Study on the Cultural Adaptability of Elder Welfare: From Global Models to the China's Practices

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Abstract

With the rapid acceleration of global ageing, countries have developed various eldercare models to meet the growing challenges of an ageing population. As China transitions swiftly into an ageing society, it has been actively studying and adapting eldercare models from developed nations to address its rising demographic needs. However, many existing studies overlook the crucial role that cultural context plays in the acceptance and effectiveness of these policies. This paper takes a cross-cultural approach, using Geert Hofstede's cultural dimensions—Power Distance, Individualism vs. Collectivism, and Long-term vs. Short-term Orientation—to compare the adaptability of Japan's "family responsibility" model, Sweden's "state welfare" model, and the United States' "individual choice" model within Chinese culture. Additionally, it explores the tensions between China's traditional Confucian concept of filial piety (xiao) and modern approaches like community-based eldercare and intergenerational cohabitation, seeking pathways for integration. In adopting global models, China must carefully balance the universal and the specific, as well as external influences with local adaptation. By developing home and community-based care systems, creating a multi-tiered eldercare security framework, and advancing people-centered smart care solutions, China can significantly improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its eldercare policy implementation.

Keywords: elder welfare, cross-cultural, cultural adaptation, elder care models

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