

A Study on the Differences and Optimization Paths of Senior-Friendly Tourism Services between China and Sri Lanka

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Abstract: Against the backdrop of the globally accelerating population aging, senior tourism has emerged as a pivotal segment of the international tourism market. From a cross-border comparative perspective, this paper conducts an in-depth analysis of the disparities between China and Sri Lanka in the elderly tourism service system, focusing on four key dimensions: policy environment, service content, product features, and technical support. It further explores the respective strengths and weaknesses of the two countries in the construction of senior-friendly tourism service systems. The findings reveal that China boasts relatively advanced systematic policy support and technological application; however, there remains room for improvement in market segmentation and the humanization of services. In contrast, Sri Lanka stands out for its abundant natural wellness resources and traditional medical heritage, yet it faces prominent deficiencies in service standardization and infrastructure development. Drawing on the advantages of both nations, this paper proposes targeted optimization paths, including cultural integration and innovation, policy coordination and mutual recognition, the integration of service standardization and personalization, and technology empowerment while bridging the digital divide. The ultimate purpose is to provide theoretical references and practical guidance for the enhancement of transnational senior-friendly tourism service systems.

1. Introduction

Global population aging is one of the most significant demographic trends of the 21st century. According to World Health Organization statistics, the global population aged 60 and over will reach 1.4 billion by 2030 and increase to 2.1 billion by 2050 [1].

Goldman Sachs, in its report *The Path to 2075 — The Positive Story of Global Aging*, explicitly identifies the expansion of population aging from developed nations to emerging

economies worldwide. The report argues that global population aging is underpinned by two concurrent trends: rising life expectancy and falling fertility rates. Over the past five decades, the median population age in advanced economies has climbed from 30 to 43 years, whereas that in emerging economies has increased from 19 to 30 years. Projections suggest that by 2075, the median age will reach 47 years in advanced economies and 40 years in emerging economies [2]

For the working-age population, which defined as those aged 15 to 64, its share of the total population in advanced economies has declined from 67% in 2000 to 63% currently, and is forecast to drop further to 57% by 2075. In contrast, the working-age population share in emerging Asian economies is nearing its peak (at 66%) and is expected to fall to 61% over the next 50 years.

This evidence confirms that while population aging is more acute in developed countries, emerging economies—especially those across Asia—are also undergoing a period of rapid demographic aging.

In this context, the senior tourism market has rapidly emerged, becoming one of the fastest-growing segments in the international tourism industry. As an important means of enriching the spiritual and cultural lives of the elderly, tourism activities can enhance their quality of life and promote cultural heritage and the integrated development of the tourism industry. China and Sri Lanka are both important tourist destinations in Asia, but significant differences exist in their economic development levels, cultural traditions, and social welfare systems, leading to distinct characteristics in their senior-friendly tourism service systems.

China entered an aging society in 2000, and the pace of aging continues to accelerate. The "State Council General Office's Opinions on Developing the Silver Economy to Enhance the Well-being of the Elderly" explicitly states: "Expand tourism service formats... improve hotel and homestay service facilities that are enjoyable for all ages and family-friendly, and encourage the development of family travel tourism products." This indicates that China has systematically integrated senior tourism services into national policy planning. In contrast, although Sri Lanka also faces an aging population, its development of a senior-friendly tourism service system is still in its preliminary stages due to economic constraints, relying more on its natural resource advantages and traditional cultural elements to attract elderly tourists.

Current academic research on senior-friendly tourism mostly focuses on the construction of service systems within single countries or regions, with a relative lack of cross-border comparative studies. From a cross-border perspective, this paper systematically compares the differential characteristics of the senior-friendly tourism service systems of China and Sri Lanka, seeking optimization paths that align with their respective national conditions and achieve mutual benefits. This not only helps enrich the theoretical system of senior-friendly tourism but also provides practical guidance for tourism enterprises from both countries cooperating in the field of senior services, while also serving as a reference for other developing countries building their own senior-friendly tourism service systems.

2. Current State of Senior-Friendly Tourism Service Systems in China and Sri Lanka

2.1 Development Progress of China's Senior-Friendly Tourism Service System

The construction of China's senior-friendly tourism service system began in the early 21st century. After nearly two decades of development, a relatively systematic policy framework and service content have been formed.

At the policy guidance level, China, through documents such as the "State Council General Office's Opinions on Developing the Silver Economy to Enhance the Well-being of the Elderly," has explicitly put forward specific requirements for expanding tourism service formats, including "improving hotel and homestay service facilities that are enjoyable for all ages and family-friendly,

and encouraging the development of family travel tourism products." These policy orientations provide institutional guarantees for the development of senior-friendly tourism services.

In terms of service content, China has gradually built a multi-level senior tourism product system. In recent years, tourism products such as museum tours for the elderly, senior study activities, and silver-haired tourist trains have continuously emerged, and the service system has gradually improved. These products focus on combining the physical and mental characteristics of the elderly, highlighting the principle of "slow-paced and humanized" service, and implementing senior-friendly modifications in itinerary design, catering, accommodation, and health security. For example, in catering services, senior-friendly meals low in salt and oil with moderate softness are provided; in accommodation, room types with elevators and barrier-free facilities are selected to create a home-like living atmosphere.

At the technical support level, China actively promotes the integration of tourism experiences and senior-friendly technologies. On one hand, it develops immersive tourism projects such as intangible cultural heritage experiences and historical explorations, balancing knowledge acquisition and emotional resonance. On the other hand, intelligent services focus on the usage habits of the elderly, introducing features such as large-font interfaces, voice guides, real-time positioning, and one-click emergency calls to address the "digital divide." This concept of technological innovation and application is gradually advancing China's senior tourism services from basic protection to value enhancement.

But China's current senior tourism services still face problems such as imperfect institutional mechanisms, insufficient supporting facilities, mismatched supply and demand, and subpar service quality. Particularly in personalized services and spiritual consolation, there remains a gap compared to the actual needs of the elderly.

2.2 Development Characteristics of Sri Lanka's Senior-Friendly Tourism Service System

As an important tourist destination in South Asia, although Sri Lanka's senior-friendly tourism service system has not reached a systematic level, it has formed its own development characteristics by leveraging its unique natural resources and cultural traditions. In terms of the policy environment, Sri Lanka has not yet introduced specific regulations for senior tourism services, but its national tourism development plan has begun to pay attention to the construction of barrier free facilities and the development of elderly-friendly tourism products. Due to its level of economic development, government investment is limited, and senior services mostly rely on the independent provision by private tourism enterprises. Sri Lanka fully utilizes its natural wellness resources, such as climate therapy in coastal resorts and Ayurvedic traditional medicine wellness, to develop a series of senior tourism products themed on health and wellness. These products meet the strong demand of the elderly for health management and have become a characteristic advantage of Sri Lanka's senior tourism. In addition, Sri Lanka's cultural pilgrimage tourism also attracts many elderly tourists, including visits to Buddhist cultural heritage sites and traditional festival experiences.

Sri Lanka itself faces the issue of population aging. In 2019, the proportion of its population aged 65 and above was 7.8%, and it is projected to grow to 18.2% by 2050. The increase in the elderly population provides a basis for the growth of domestic demand for senior tourism. Meanwhile, Sri Lanka's pleasant climate, abundant natural resources, and relatively low cost of living make it attractive to foreign senior tourists. Many elderly from Japan, the United States, the Netherlands, the UK, and other countries enjoy traveling to Sri Lanka in winter, and they also hope to access medical and healthcare services during their travels. Furthermore, with the increasing consumption capacity of the global elderly population and the diversification of demand for tourism experiences, Sri Lanka, as an emerging tourist destination, is attracting more and more senior

tourists for vacations and leisure.

In terms of infrastructure construction, some cities like Wellawaya joined the WHO Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities in 2012, committed to creating an environment suitable for the elderly, installing ramps in public buildings, improving sidewalks, etc., to facilitate the travel of the elderly and disabled. In terms of tourism service facilities, some projects and venues specifically serving the elderly have emerged, such as the "Yatra-Inspired Living" retirement resort launched by Ninewells Hospital, located only 11 kilometers from the Bandaranaike International Airport, offering accommodation, catering, medical care, entertainment, and other services. Some tour companies have also launched silver-haired tour lines for middle-aged and elderly tourists, featuring slow-paced itineraries, considerate tour leaders, and incorporating local specialty food experiences, sari experiences, and other warm arrangements.

Sri Lanka welcomed 2,053,303 global tourists in 2024, achieving tourism revenue of 3.17 billion USD. It aims to attract 3 million tourists and achieve 5 billion USD in tourism revenue in 2025. Concurrently, the global silver-haired tourism market is developing rapidly. According to Grand View Research predictions, the global silver-haired tourism market size will reach 4.37 billion USD by 2030, with a compound annual growth rate of 14.4% from 2024 to 2030. Furthermore, Sri Lanka's own population aging trend is evident. In 2019, the proportion of its population aged 65 and above was 7.8%, projected to increase to 18.2% by 2050, which will drive the growth of domestic demand for senior tourism. Moreover, Sri Lanka has become the most popular solo travel destination for 2025, with the average age of solo travelers rising from 36 to 39 years, reflecting increasing attention from the senior groups to its tourism market.

Differences in the age-friendly tourism service systems between China and Sri Lanka span multiple core dimensions, ranging from service content and product characteristics to technology application. As shown in Table 1, China focuses on the integration of diversified products and smart technologies, while Sri Lanka places greater emphasis on natural experiences and manual services.

Table 1: Comparison of Senior-Friendly Tourism Service Systems between China and Sri Lanka

Comparative Dimension	China	Sri Lanka
Policy Support	Systematic policy guidance and financial support	Lack of specific policies, reliance on general tourism policy guidance
Service Content	Diversified product system: cultural experiences, wellness, study tours, etc.	Characterized by natural wellness and Ayurvedic traditional medicine
Product Features	Focus on safety and educational value	Emphasis on natural experience and spiritual cultivation
Technology Application	Active integration of smart elderly care technologies	Limited technology application, emphasis on manual services
Infrastructure	Gradually improving barrier-free facilities	Certain barrier-free facilities in main tourist areas, insufficient in other areas

Hotels in Sri Lanka's main tourist cities such as Colombo, Kandy, and Galle have begun to pay attention to barrier-free design, but the overall penetration rate is not high, and senior-friendly facilities are lacking in rural areas and historical and cultural sites. The senior-friendly transformation of its transportation system is also relatively lagging, which causes some inconvenience for elderly tourists.

2.3 Overall Comparison of the Two Countries' Tourism Service Systems for the Elderly

The construction of China's senior-friendly tourism service system exhibits characteristics of government-led, standards-first, promoting systematic development through top-level design. Sri Lanka, however, manifests more as a market-driven, characteristic development path, relying on the independent innovation of the tourism industry to form highlights in senior services.

From the perspective of service philosophy, China emphasizes safety and education equally, ensuring the safety of the elderly while focusing on the learning experience during travel. Sri Lanka places greater emphasis on the integration of nature and spirit, helping the elderly achieve physical and mental balance through the natural environment and traditional culture. From the perspective of coverage, China's senior tourism services are expanding from economically developed regions to the whole country, but the quality of service varies significantly between different regions. Sri Lanka's senior services are mainly concentrated in major tourist routes and high-end resort areas, lacking inclusiveness. From the perspective of sustainable development capability, due to continuous policy support and capital investment, China's senior tourism service system has strong development resilience. Sri Lanka, due to resource constraints, faces more challenges regarding the stability and sustainability of its senior tourism services.

3. Analysis of Differences in the Senior-Friendly Tourism Service Systems between China and Sri Lanka

3.1 Differences in Cultural Concepts and Service Philosophy

There are profound differences in the concept of tourism services for the elderly between China and Sri Lanka, mainly reflected in the cultural perception of "old age" and the philosophy of service. Traditional Chinese culture emphasizes respect for the elderly, which is reflected in tourism services as protective care and meticulous attention for elderly tourists. This service philosophy, on one hand, ensures the safety and comfort of elderly tourists; on the other hand, it may also limit their autonomous choices and challenging experiences. China's senior tourism products often feature tight schedules and comprehensive services but lack personalized space, with the elderly mostly completing tourism activities under the guidance of service personnel. Influenced by Buddhist culture, Sri Lanka's understanding of aging is more naturalistic, viewing old age as a natural stage of the life process. Therefore, its senior tourism services focus more on the harmonious interaction between the elderly and nature, as well as spiritual satisfaction. In terms of service methods, Sri Lanka provides more autonomous choices and free activity space, but safety protection measures are relatively insufficient. This difference in service philosophy leads to a sharp contrast in the senior tourism experience between the two countries: China emphasizes group activities and organization, while Sri Lanka prefers individual experience and freedom. From the perspective of cultural adaptability, Chinese tourists may experience safety anxiety towards Sri Lanka's service methods, while Sri Lankan elderly tourists may feel restricted by China's "over-protection." This difference in cultural concepts is an important factor that must be considered when constructing a cross-border senior tourism service system.

3.2 Differences in Policy Support and Industry Standards

China has formed a relatively complete policy framework for senior tourism. From the "State Council General Office's Opinions on Developing the Silver Economy to Enhance the Well-being of the Elderly" to the "14th Five-Year Plan for China's Tourism Development," clear requirements have been put forward for senior tourism services [3]. These policies cover multiple dimensions such as service standards, safety assurance, and product innovation, providing institutional guarantees for the development of senior tourism. At the same time, the Chinese government, through special support funds, focuses on supporting projects such as the senior-friendly renovation of museums and the development of senior study tour routes, reflecting strong policy execution. In contrast, although Sri Lanka's tourism policy includes expressions of concern for the needs of elderly tourists, it lacks specific policies and supporting measures, and has not formed a systematic standard system for senior tourism. This leads to a lack of guidelines for Sri Lankan tourism enterprises when providing senior services, resulting in uneven service quality. In terms of industry supervision, China has established a relatively complete complaint reporting mechanism and strengthened supervision, while Sri Lanka still has much room for improvement in protecting the rights and interests of senior tourists. There is a significant disparity in the number of senior tourism policies between China and Sri Lanka. As shown in Table 2, China issued a total of 12 relevant policies from 2019 to 2023, whereas only 2 such policies in Sri Lanka have been mentioned in the literature, with no specific policy provisions available.

Table 2: Comparison of Senior Tourism Policies and Environment between China and Sri Lanka

Policy Element	China	Sri Lanka
Top-Level Design	Specific policy documents and plans	No specific policies, scattered in general tourism planning
Financial Support	Government financial input and special support funds	Mainly relies on private investment and international aid
Standard System	Gradually establishing senior tourism service standards	Lack of industry standards and norms
Regulatory Mechanism	Sound complaint reporting mechanism and strengthened supervision	Imperfect regulatory system
Innovation Incentives	Launched a number of typical cases of senior tourism development	Lack of systematic innovation incentives

Differences in the policy environment directly affect the development path and scale of senior tourism in the two countries. China's systematic policy support promotes the rapid popularization and improvement of senior tourism services, while the lack of policy in Sri Lanka restricts the standardization and professional development of its senior tourism.

3.3 Differences in Service Content and Product Characteristics

Now senior tourism products are rich in types in Chinese market, forming a multi-level and multi-theme product system. It promotes the senior-friendly transformation of existing products,

optimizing facilities, service standards, itinerary pace, and other aspects. Also, it encourages enterprises to develop diversified new products, covering consumption levels from economical to high-end, and launching themed routes such as health and wellness tours, slow-living experience tours, and historical and cultural study tours. These products focus on the combination of knowledge, education, and entertainment, meeting the needs of elderly groups with different interests and consumption capacities. Sri Lanka's senior tourism products mainly revolve around its natural resources and traditional culture. The product types are relatively single but distinctive. Among them, Ayurvedic wellness tourism is its most competitive product, combining traditional herbal therapy, yoga meditation, and dietary regimen to provide physical and mental rehabilitation experiences for elderly tourists. In addition, Sri Lanka's eco-tourism and tea culture experiences also attract many elderly tourists, but these products lack sufficient senior-friendly modifications and often lack professional health management and emergency support. In terms of service details, China's senior tourism pays more attention to full accompaniment and health monitoring. Tour groups are equipped with accompanying medical support or connections to medical institutions, providing health monitoring and emergency assistance, coupled with special insurance covering sudden risks. Tourism experience projects are graded for risk assessment, age and health standards are formulated, and professional caregivers are arranged to accompany the group throughout. Sri Lanka is relatively lacking in these aspects, relying more on the self-management and safeguard of elderly tourists.

3.4 Differences in Technology Application and Innovation Models

In technology application areas, China actively promotes the integrated innovation of smart elderly care and smart tourism, using technological means to improve the quality of senior tourism services. Specific manifestations include: first, developing senior-friendly intelligent service systems, introducing functions such as large-font interfaces, voice guides, real-time positioning, and one-click emergency calls to solve the "digital divide" problem; second, encouraging tourism enterprises to cooperate with technology companies to integrate senior-friendly intelligent technology into scenarios such as itinerary planning and safety monitoring; third, building senior-friendly information service platforms, integrating resources such as attraction introductions, transportation, accommodation, and activity information, using large-font, high-contrast interface designs adapted to the reading needs of the elderly group. Sri Lanka is relatively lagging in the technology application for senior tourism, but it has made beneficial attempts in the modern transformation of traditional wellness technologies. Combining Ayurvedic medicine with modern health management to develop a physical and mental assessment and conditioning system suitable for elderly tourists [4]. Overall, the technology empowerment of Sri Lanka's senior tourism is still in its preliminary stage, and the level of digitalization and intelligence needs to be improved. In terms of innovation models, China has explored a "public welfare + market" dual-drive mechanism. The government provides financial subsidies for inclusive projects, such as discounts or subsidies for theme cultural and tourism products for the elderly. At the same time, museums can explore preferential activities such as a "cultural consumption points system," where points accumulated by the elderly from participating in activities can be used to offset study tour course fees or exchange for cultural and creative products, stimulating participation enthusiasm. Sri Lanka, due to resource constraints, focuses its innovation more on service process optimization and traditional cultural resource exploration, lacking systematic innovation.

4. Optimization Paths for the Senior-Friendly Tourism Service System from a Cross-Border Perspective

4.1 Path of Cultural Integration and Service Innovation

From a cross-border perspective, the optimization of the senior tourism service systems of China and Sri Lanka should first focus on cultural integration and service innovation. Specifically, it can proceed from the following aspects: First, establish a cultural mutual learning mechanism to promote the complementary advantages of the two countries in the philosophy of senior services. China can learn from Sri Lanka's service philosophy of respecting the autonomy of the elderly, increasing the experiential nature and autonomous choice of products while ensuring safety; Sri Lanka can introduce China's safety assurance system and emergency management mechanism to improve the safety and reliability of services. By holding China-Sri Lanka senior service cultural exchange forums, forming expert exchange groups, and other methods, deepen the understanding of each other's service philosophy and cultural background, laying the foundation for cultural integration. Second, develop integrated tourism products that combine China's organizational advantages with Sri Lanka's resource characteristics. For example, a "China-Sri Lanka Wellness Culture Tour" can be designed, combining China's Tai Chi, traditional Chinese medicine health preservation with Sri Lanka's Ayurveda and yoga meditation, allowing elderly tourists to gain more comprehensive health and wellness knowledge through comparative experience. A "Maritime Silk Road Memory Tour" can also be developed, using the historical and cultural heritage shared by the two countries to design cultural exploration products suitable for the elderly, meeting their dual needs for nostalgia and knowledge. Third, innovate service models, adopting a "Chinese Standards + Sri Lankan Characteristics" integrated service model. That is, based on Chinese service standards to ensure the standardization and safety of services, while integrating Sri Lanka's naturalistic service elements to enhance the experiential feeling and spiritual consolation function of the products. For example, arranging an appropriate amount of free activity time in group tours allows the elderly to choose experience content autonomously according to personal interests, achieving a balance between organization and flexibility.

4.2 Path of Policy Coordination and Standard Mutual Recognition

Aiming at the differences in policy environment and industry standards between China and Sri Lanka, it is necessary to strengthen policy coordination and standard mutual recognition to provide institutional guarantees for cross-border senior tourism services. Specific paths include: First, establish a China-Sri Lanka senior tourism dialogue mechanism to regularly exchange experiences in policy formulation, standard construction, and supervision of senior tourism between the two countries. Through this mechanism, China can convey the experience and technology of formulating senior tourism standards to Sri Lanka, helping it build a senior tourism standard system that suits its national conditions; Sri Lanka can share its characteristic practices in traditional wellness tourism with China, enriching the content of China's senior tourism standards. Second, promote standard mutual recognition, forming minimum service standards jointly recognized by both countries in areas such as safety assurance and basic services, providing guidelines for the development of cross-border senior tourism products. This can start from basic areas such as hotel barriers-free facilities, catering hygiene standards, and guides' emergency handling capabilities, gradually expanding to higher levels of standard mutual recognition such as service quality evaluation and tourist satisfaction measurement. Third, explore cross-border regulatory cooperation,

establishing a joint China-Sri Lanka senior tourism complaint handling mechanism to protect the legitimate rights and interests of elderly tourists. A China-Sri Lanka senior tourism service hotline can be set up to provide convenient consultation and complaint channels for cross-border tourists; at the same time, establish a shared blacklist mechanism for tourism enterprises from both countries, implementing joint sanctions against enterprises with poor service quality and repeated violations, forming regulatory synergy. Fourth, innovate financing mechanisms by establishing a China-Sri Lanka Senior Tourism Cooperation Fund to support cooperation between enterprises from both countries in senior tourism product innovation and service improvement. Fund sources can include government appropriations from both countries, international organization assistance, and private capital investment, focusing on supporting inclusive senior tourism projects and lowering the consumption threshold for elderly tourists.

4.3 Path of Service Integration and Talent Cultivation

To make up for the deficiencies in service content and product quality of the two countries, it is necessary to strengthen service integration and talent cultivation to improve the professionalism and humanization of senior tourism services. Specifically: First, build a China-Sri Lanka senior service resource platform, integrating the advantageous resources of both countries in the field of senior services, including professional institutions, talent teams, innovative products, etc., to provide comprehensive support for tourism enterprises. The platform can use digital means to establish a senior service resource database, facilitating queries and cooperation between enterprises of the two countries; regularly publish best practices in China-Sri Lanka senior tourism services, promoting successful experiences and innovative models. Second, strengthen the professional capacity building of service personnel, constructing a training system of "pre-job training + on-the-job improvement + quality supervision". Tourism enterprises cooperate with universities to develop special courses on elderly services, incorporating aged psychology, emergency care, and communication skills into compulsory content, regularly organizing "senior service workshops," and inviting experts to share cases of senior-friendly services. China and Sri Lanka can cooperate to conduct joint training for senior service personnel, exchange trainees for internships, and cultivate senior tourism service talents with an international perspective. Third, develop a "silver age" mutual assistance volunteer team, innovating the service model of "the young-old helping the old-old," and tapping the internal resources of the elderly group. Recruit healthy, low-age elderly with cultural expertise to serve as "silver age volunteers," who, after training, provide services such as companion visits, dialect explanations, and activity organization for older tourists. In China-Sri Lanka cross-border tourism, retired elderly from the destination country can be invited to serve as cultural guides, using their life experience and empathy to provide explanatory services with greater resonance for their peers. Fourth, establish a service quality evaluation mechanism, quantitatively assessing through indicators such as tourist satisfaction questionnaires and complaint response efficiency, forcing practitioners to improve their service awareness. A bilingual, Chinese and Sinhala/English senior tourism service quality evaluation tool can be developed to regularly measure and compare changes in service quality in both countries, providing a basis for continuous improvement.

4.4 Path of Technology Empowerment and Information Smoothness

Facing the special needs of elderly tourists in the digital age, China and Sri Lanka should strengthen technology empowerment and information smoothness to jointly solve the technical problems in senior tourism: First, cooperate to develop a digital platform for senior tourism, integrating functions such as itinerary planning, health management, safety monitoring, and

multi-language services, using senior-friendly designs such as large fonts and voice interaction to reduce the usage threshold for elderly tourists. The platform can set up an emergency call system connected to medical institutions in both countries to ensure timely response in emergencies. Through this platform, the entire process digital management of senior tourism services can be achieved, improving service efficiency and user experience. Second, jointly build a China-Sri Lanka senior tourism big data center to collect and analyze the behavioral characteristics, preference needs, and complaint suggestions of elderly tourists, providing data support for product innovation and service optimization. The data center can regularly publish China-Sri Lanka senior tourism development reports, revealing market trends and guiding enterprises to accurately develop products and services that meet market needs. Third, promote the interoperability and mutual recognition of senior-friendly intelligent devices to reduce the inconvenience caused by technical barriers to elderly tourists. For example, promote the unification of data standards for health monitoring equipment in the two countries, so that health data measured by elderly tourists in China can be read by medical institutions in Sri Lanka, realizing the continuity of health management. At the same time, cooperate to develop low-cost, easy-to-operate senior-friendly intelligent devices to increase the penetration rate of technology among the elderly group. Fourth, strengthen digital inclusion construction to help the elderly cross the "digital divide." While promoting intelligent technology, retain traditional service methods to meet the needs of elderly tourists with different levels of digital ability. Conduct smart technology training for elderly tourists to improve their ability to use digital tools and enhance their confidence and skills in participating in smart tourism.

5. Conclusion and Outlook

This study reveals the characteristics and shortcomings of China and Sri Lanka in terms of service philosophy, policy support, service content, and technology application through a comparative analysis of the differences in their senior-friendly tourism service systems.

The research shows that China's construction of a senior tourism service system has advantages of systematization and standardization, especially leading in policy support and technology application; Sri Lanka has formed its own characteristics by virtue of its natural resources and traditional wellness culture, but has obvious shortcomings in service standardization and infrastructure. Based on a cross-border perspective, this paper proposes optimization paths for the senior tourism service systems of China and Sri Lanka

The future construction of the China-Sri Lanka senior tourism service system should focus on the concept of "all-domain age-friendliness", integrating senior-friendly elements into all aspects of the tourism industry, achieving the transformation and upgrade from "senior-friendly tourism" to "all-domain senior-friendly tourism destinations." At the same time, attention should be paid to inclusiveness and sustainability, avoiding senior tourism becoming a high-end consumption, and ensuring that most elderly people can enjoy high-quality tourism services. In addition, with the advancement of the Healthy China strategy and the UN Sustainable Development Goals, how senior tourism deeply integrates with the health industry and cultural industry to form more inclusive and innovative business models is also an important direction for future research.

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