

Research on the Impact of Rural Public Service Supply on the Life Satisfaction of the Elderly

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Abstract

Based on the national micro data of the "China Elderly Society Tracking Survey" (CLASS) in 2023, this article empirically examines the impact of public service supply in rural communities on the subjective life satisfaction of the elderly and group differences. Through the construction of an ordered Logit model and other measurement methods, the study found that: First, the supply of rural public services has a significant and steady positive effect on the life satisfaction of the elderly. This conclusion is still valid after being tested for robustness by the OProbit model and OLS model. Second, heterogeneity analysis reveals that there are significant group differences in the impact of public services. Its effect on improving the life satisfaction of the elderly group with men and spouses is more obvious, while the impact on women and non-spouse groups is statistically not significant. This shows that the current rural public services are based on inclusiveness, and there is a structural imbalance in the welfare effect, and the precise support for vulnerable elderly groups needs to be strengthened. This study provides important empirical evidence and policy inspiration for how to accurately optimize the allocation of rural public services to improve the welfare of all elderly people under the background of the national strategy of rural revitalization and actively responding to population aging.

Keywords

Public Service Supply; Life Satisfaction; China's Elderly Social Tracking Survey (CLASS); Rural Elderly.

1. Introduction

Contemporary Chinese society is experiencing two profound and intertwined historical changes: the continuous advancement of rapid urbanization and the deep aging of the population structure. According to the latest data released by the National Bureau of Statistics, by the end of 2024, China's population aged 60 and above has exceeded 300 million, accounting for 22.1% of the total population. Among them, the aging rate in rural areas is significantly higher than that in urban areas, reaching a record high of 27.8%. Behind this data is the serious challenge facing China's rural pension security system: the continuous outflow of young and mature labor has led to the sharp weakening of traditional family old-age care functions, and there is a significant structural contradiction between the supply of rural old-age care services and the growing diversified needs of the elderly. Under this macro background, an in-depth exploration of the impact mechanism of rural public service supply on the life satisfaction of the elderly is not only of important theoretical value, but also related to the smooth implementation of the rural revitalization strategy and the effective implementation of the national strategy of "actively responding to population aging".

As a special group in the process of social transformation in China, the welfare of the rural elderly is directly related to social fairness, justice, harmony and stability. Compared with the

urban elderly, the rural elderly face more complex and diverse dilemmas: unstable economic sources, insufficient medical security, lack of spiritual and cultural life, weak social support networks and other multiple pressures. According to the latest data of China's Elderly Social Tracking Survey (CLASS) in 2023, 78.67% of the elderly in rural China suffer from chronic diseases, and 46.6% are female elderly people. Although the absolute value of the proportion of empty-nested elderly people is not high, their life satisfaction is significantly lower than that of non-empty-nested elderly people. These data clearly reveal the urgent needs of rural elderly groups in terms of health security, social support and spiritual comfort.

As an important carrier for the government to perform its functions, public services play an irreplaceable role in the rural elderly service system. Theoretically speaking, a perfect public service system can improve the quality of life of the elderly in many ways: first, the accessibility of basic medical services can effectively manage chronic diseases and delay the decline of physical function; second, the development of cultural and entertainment facilities and activities helps to enrich spiritual and cultural life and alleviate loneliness. And depression; Thirdly, the provision of living care services can make up for the lack of family care ability and reduce the burden on children; finally, the improvement of rights and interests protection services can enhance the sense of security and control of life for the elderly. However, there are still many problems in the supply of public services in rural areas in China, including unbalanced regional development, single service content, uneven quality, and poor matching with the actual needs of the elderly, which seriously restrict the effectiveness of public services.

It is worth noting that with the comprehensive recovery of normal operation of China's economy and society since 2023, the construction of rural public service system has entered a new stage of development. Governments at all levels have increased their investment in rural elderly care services, but under the premise of limited resources, how to realize the accuracy and efficiency of public service supply, so that it can truly benefit the elderly groups in need, has become the core issue facing current policymakers. Especially under the guidance of the goal of common prosperity, exploring how public services affect the life satisfaction of elderly groups with different characteristics is of great practical significance to promote social equity and narrow the welfare gap within the elderly.

From the perspective of academic research, the existing research on the life satisfaction of the elderly mostly focuses on the analysis of influencing factors at the individual and family levels, and the discussion on the role of public services at the community level is relatively insufficient. Although some studies have focused on the impact of public services, most of them use data from earlier years, which is difficult to reflect the latest results of the current rural public service system construction. More importantly, the existing research does not pay enough attention to the group heterogeneity of the impact of public services, and there is a lack of in-depth analysis of the benefits of vulnerable elderly groups (such as women and the elderly without spouses). The release of the 2023 data of China's Elderly Social Tracking Survey (CLASS) provides us with an authoritative window to observe the living conditions of the elderly in China in the post-epidemic era, so that this study can make a more accurate assessment of the impact of public services based on the latest data.

Based on the above background, this study uses the national survey data of CLASS 2023 to focus on the following issues: First, does the supply of rural public services have a significant positive impact on the life satisfaction of the elderly? Is this influence still stable after considering individual characteristics, family characteristics and other factors? Second, is there group heterogeneity in the impact effect of public services? In particular, is there a significant difference between elderly groups of different genders and different marital statuses? Third, based on the results of empirical research, how to optimize the supply structure of rural public services to more effectively improve the life satisfaction of the elderly, especially what targeted measures should be taken to promote the welfare of vulnerable groups?

The in-depth discussion of these issues not only helps to enrich the theoretical system of the study of the quality of life of the elderly, but also provides empirical basis and policy reference for the government to improve the rural elderly service system. In the new journey of building a modern socialist country in an all-round way, ensuring that the rural elderly share the fruits of development and realizing "the elderly have support, the elderly have medical care, the elderly have something to do, and the old age have something to have fun" is an important manifestation of promoting the substantial progress of common prosperity, and it is also an inevitable requirement for building an age-friendly society.

2. Literature Review

As a core indicator of the subjective well-being of the elderly, life satisfaction of the elderly has become the focus of research in the fields of gerontology, sociology and public management. The existing relevant research mainly focuses on the four levels of individual, family, community and social support, which provides a solid theoretical foundation for this research.

2.1. The Impact of Individual and Family Factors on the Life Satisfaction of the Elderly

A large number of studies have confirmed that the socio-economic characteristics, health status and family support of the elderly are the fundamental determinants of their life satisfaction. In terms of economic security and policy environment, Yang and Zhang (2022)^[1] found that public service satisfaction significantly shapes middle-aged and young people's cognition of eldercare responsibility, which indirectly affects the welfare of the elderly population through intergenerational expectations and family support dynamics. Their research, based on CGSS data, demonstrates that when middle-aged individuals perceive higher public service satisfaction, they are more likely to hold positive attitudes toward eldercare responsibility sharing between family and society, ultimately benefiting elderly family members' quality of life. In terms of health status, Jiang, Ji and Li (2023)^[2] empirically confirmed that the three pillars of active aging-health, participation, and security-significantly enhance elderly life satisfaction. Their study specifically demonstrates that good physical and mental health serves as a foundational protective factor for maintaining high life satisfaction, while the deterioration of physical function and the prevalence of chronic diseases significantly diminish the subjective well-being of the elderly. Furthermore, their research highlights that social participation (including community engagement and interpersonal interactions) and social security (including pension and medical coverage) jointly contribute to life satisfaction, providing a comprehensive analytical framework for understanding individual-level determinants. In terms of family support and community-based services, Sun (2025)^[3] further points out that the use of community home-based elderly care services is significantly associated with improved life satisfaction among the elderly. Based on longitudinal data from the China Longitudinal Aging Social Survey (CLASS) spanning 2016 to 2020, Sun's research reveals that community services complement family support functions-when children's financial support, emotional comfort, and daily care are insufficient due to geographic distance or other constraints, community-based services serve as an effective substitute and supplement, particularly benefiting elderly individuals in rural empty-nest households. The study also emphasizes that the existence of spouses remains crucial for providing emotional support and life companionship, but community services can partially compensate for the lack of family care when spousal support is unavailable.

2.2. The Impact of Community Public Service Supply on the Life Satisfaction of the Elderly

With the weakening of the family's old-age care function, the role of community public services as an external support system is increasingly prominent. Existing studies generally believe that the accessibility and quality of community public services have a positive impact on the life satisfaction of the elderly. In terms of medical and health services, Zhang and Ling (2024)^[4]revealed that basic community elderly care service supply enhances life satisfaction through the mediating role of self-rated health improvement. Their empirical analysis demonstrates that the convenience of primary medical and health services-such as establishing health files, providing regular physical examinations, and offering health consultation-can effectively manage chronic diseases in the elderly, reduce their health concerns, and consequently improve overall life satisfaction. The study particularly emphasizes that self-rated health serves as a crucial mediating variable, suggesting that the positive effect of community services on satisfaction operates largely through improving elderly individuals' subjective perception of their own health status. In terms of elderly care and cultural service facilities, Ma and Du (2025)^[5]highlighted that elderly-oriented allocation of rural public facilities, such as activity centers, fitness sites, chess and card rooms, libraries, outdoor activity venues, community canteens, and community elderly service centers, is crucial for improving elderly wellbeing in rural communities. Their case study of Daolang Town, Tai'an City, demonstrates that the presence and accessibility of diversified facilities significantly affect elderly residents' daily activity patterns and social engagement opportunities. Li, Yang and Yang (2024)^[6]further examined county-level rural public service facility construction and called for more age-friendly design and service optimization in underdeveloped areas. Their research on Yanshan County, Shangrao City, Jiangxi Province, reveals that the current situation of rural public service facilities faces challenges including unbalanced regional development, single service content, and poor matching with the actual needs of the elderly population, all of which severely constrain the welfare-enhancing effects of public services. Wang and Lu (2025)^[7]specifically emphasized the strategy of optimizing sports public services for rural elderly, arguing that physical activity facilities and organized sports activities contribute to both physical health maintenance and social engagement enhancement. Their study of Xinsha Village, Shaoxing City, demonstrates that targeted optimization of sports public services-including facility improvement, activity organization, and personnel training-can significantly improve elderly participation rates and subsequent life satisfaction. Taken together, these studies collectively demonstrate that community elderly service centers, elderly activity rooms, outdoor fitness venues, and other facilities provide essential platforms for social interaction, physical exercise, and spiritual and cultural life for the elderly, which help relieve loneliness, enhance social integration, and produce positive effects on life satisfaction. Pan and Ma (2022)^[8]similarly argued that optimizing community built environment based on elderly satisfaction is a key pathway to improving their overall life quality in China. Their research emphasizes that the physical characteristics of community environments-including facility diversity, accessibility, safety, and aesthetic quality-significantly influence elderly residents' daily activity patterns, social participation levels, and ultimately their subjective well-being.

2.3. International Research Perspective on Social Support and Life Satisfaction

International research on social support and life satisfaction of the elderly provides us with important theoretical reference and comparative perspective. Studies in Western contexts have found that social support significantly improves the life satisfaction of the elderly by promoting social integration and providing emotional support, and this impact is especially obvious among the elderly living alone. Extensive social participation and close social networks can effectively alleviate the loneliness of the elderly, which in turn has a positive impact on their

life satisfaction. Building upon this international consensus, domestic research has further explored the Chinese context from both macroeconomic and institutional governance perspectives. From a macroeconomic perspective, Ni, Tang and Chen (2024)^[9] found that equalization of public services and construction of an elderly-friendly society can effectively release elderly consumption potential, further improving their subjective well-being. Their research, based on the theoretical framework of public service equalization, demonstrates that when public services are more equitably distributed across regions and communities, elderly individuals gain better access to essential resources and services, which in turn enhances their economic security, health outcomes, and overall life satisfaction. The study provides a macroeconomic perspective on how public service systems generate welfare gains for the elderly population. From an institutional governance perspective, He and Lou (2024)^[10] emphasized that service-oriented government construction and precise active response mechanisms are essential for enhancing the effectiveness of basic elderly care services. Their research highlights the importance of institutional design in translating public service supply into tangible welfare gains for vulnerable elderly groups, arguing that without targeted policy mechanisms, the benefits of public service expansion may not reach those who need them most. The study particularly emphasizes that precise identification of vulnerable groups (including women, the elderly without spouses, and those with low economic status), differentiated service design, and effective implementation mechanisms are crucial for ensuring that public services genuinely improve the life satisfaction of all elderly populations, rather than merely achieving superficial coverage.

2.4. Research and Comment

In summary, the existing research has laid a good foundation for this topic, but there are still the following expandable points:

First, from the perspective of research, most studies regard public services as a whole of homogenization, or only explore the impact of a single type of service. There is a lack of careful examination of the comprehensive supply effect of public services, and it is less likely to make an in-depth analysis of the group heterogeneity of its impact.

Second, in terms of research subjects, there is a relative lack of specialized research on the elderly in rural areas, especially the literature on empirical analysis using the latest national microdata. The internal structure of the rural elderly is diverse, and there may be significant differences in the degree of benefit from public services, which has not been fully paid attention to.

Third, in terms of research perspective, the existing research is mostly limited to the domestic context and lacks a comparative analysis perspective that combines international research results with local practice.

Fourth, in terms of data timeliness, many studies are based on data before the epidemic or earlier, which is difficult to reflect the latest results of rural public service system construction and its impact on the welfare of the elderly under the background of rural revitalization and the country's active response to population aging strategy.

Therefore, this study will use the latest national data of China's Elderly Society Tracking Survey (CLASS) in 2023. On the basis of examining the overall impact of rural public service supply on the life satisfaction of the elderly, it will focus on group differences in gender, marital status and other dimensions, and draw on the research results of international community support theory, in order to reveal the structural characteristics of the public service welfare effect and provide more targeted empirical evidence for the accurate optimization of the rural elderly service system.

3. Research and Design

3.1. Data Source

The data used in this study comes from the 2023 National Survey of China's Elderly Social Tracking Survey (CLASS). CLASS is a national representative large-scale longitudinal survey project. Its samples cover a wide range, and the questionnaire content comprehensively covers the health status, economic status, family structure, social activities and subjective attitudes of the elderly and other dimensions. There are a total of 11,670 samples of CLASS 2023 data. This study limits the sample to the elderly aged 60 and above who live in rural areas and have complete core variables. By eliminating missing values and invalid answers, the sample size of 5,381 is finally determined.

3.2. Variable Description

Explain the variables. According to whether there are "elderly activity rooms, fitness places/facilities, chess and card (mahjong) rooms, libraries, outdoor activity venues, community canteens, community elderly service centers/post stations" in the community where the elderly live, 1 is assigned as "yes" and 0 is given as no.

Explained variables. This article explains the life satisfaction of the elderly. According to the satisfaction of the elderly, 1 = very dissatisfied, 2 = relatively dissatisfied, 3 = average, 4 = relatively satisfied, 5 = very satisfied.

Control variables. Through consulting the information, the control variables selected in this paper are divided into three aspects: personal basic characteristics, family characteristics and other characteristics. Basic personal characteristics include age, gender, marital status, education level, sleep quality, and whether there are chronic diseases; family characteristics include family population, number of children and way of living; other characteristics include economic status, whether to participate in endowment insurance and medical insurance.

3.3. Descriptive Statistics

According to descriptive statistics, about 73.72% of the elderly living communities in the sample have public service facilities, which reflects a certain level of coverage of rural public services, but also indicates that more than a quarter of rural communities still lack corresponding public service facilities. The overall mean value of the elderly's life satisfaction is 3.7835, which is between "general" and "relatively satisfied", showing that most elderly people have a positive evaluation of life; at the same time, the standard deviation of 0.7611 reflects that there are certain differences within the elderly group, and the satisfaction of a few elderly people is still at a lower level. The average age of the sample is 71.35 years old, and the standard deviation is 5.7984, indicating that the study subjects are mainly the elderly, and the age distribution is relatively concentrated. In terms of gender distribution, women account for 46.61%, with men slightly more, but still relatively balanced. 87.60% of the elderly have spouses, reflecting that most elderly people have a relatively stable marital status. The average level of education is 2.0330, indicating that the overall level of education is biased towards primary school and below, reflecting the educational background characteristics of rural elderly groups. In terms of health status, the average sleep quality is 3.6348, which is between "normal" and "better", and the overall sleep condition is not bad; the prevalence of chronic diseases is as high as 78.67%, indicating that the vast majority of elderly people are troubled by chronic diseases, suggesting that the need for health management is outstanding. In terms of family structure, the average family population is 2.74 and the average number of children is 2.46, reflecting the smallerization of rural families, but still maintains a certain child support network. Empty-nested families account for only 0.26%, indicating that the vast majority of elderly people in the sample live with their children or have enough family companionship. In

terms of social security participation, the participation rate of endowment insurance is 78.87%, and the participation rate of medical insurance is as high as 93.77%, which shows that the rural social security system covers a wide range of medical security, and there is still room for improvement in endowment security. The average economic self-assessment status is 2.0349, which is close to the "average", reflecting that the overall economic situation of the rural elderly group is at a medium level, but some groups are still in an economically vulnerable state.

Table 1. This article uses the definition and descriptive statistics of the main variables

Variable	Definition	Mean value	Standard deviation	Minimum value	Maximum value
<i>Explain variables</i>					
Public service supply	1= There are public service facilities in the living community 0=No public service facilities in the living community	0.7372	0.4402	0	1
<i>Explained variables</i>					
Satisfaction with life	1=very dissatisfied 2= Relatively dissatisfied 3=general 4= Relatively satisfied 5=Satisfied	3.7835	0.7611	1	5
<i>Control variables</i>					
<i>Individual characteristics</i>					
Age	Age(years)of the respondents	71.34808	5.7984	60	98
Sex	1=female 0=male	0.46608	0.4988	0	1
Marital status	1=have a spouse 0=have no spouse	0.8760	0.3296	0	1
Educational level	1=Uneducated 2=primary school 3=junior high school 4=high school 5=university and above	2.0330	0.4429	1	5
Sleep quality	1=very poor 2=comparatively poor 3=so-so 4=good 5=very good	3.6348	0.6932	1	5
Chronic disease	1=have a chronic disease 0=no chronic disease	0.7867	0.4097	0	1
<i>Family characteristics</i>					
Family population	Co-living family population (people)	2.7406	1.2601	2	13
Number of children	The number of children of the respondents (persons)	2.4623	1.1194	0	8
Mode of residence	1=Empty nest 0=Non-empty nest	0.0026	0.0509	0	1
<i>Other characteristics</i>					
Endowment insurance	1=participate 0=not participate	0.7887	0.4091	0	1
Medical insurance	1=participate 0=not participate	0.9377	0.2416	0	1
Economic conditions	1=below the average 2=average level 3=higher than average	2.0349	0.4429	1	3

4. Empirical Analysis

4.1. Model Setting

The research object of this article is the life satisfaction of the elderly in rural areas, and their satisfaction is assigned from 1 to 5 in order. This variable is a typical ordered multi-classified variable. There is a clear sorting meaning between levels, but the gap between levels is not equidistant. In metrological analysis, if the ordinary least squares method (OLS) is used for regression, it will forcibly regard ordered variables as continuous variables, ignoring their discreteness and sorting characteristics, resulting in estimation bias; if the multivariate Logit model is adopted, it is impossible to use the sorting information of "health level increment in order", and the loss model Efficiency. Therefore, in order to make full use of the sequence information of variables while respecting the nature of them, this paper chooses the ordered Logit model as the benchmark regression method.

$$\ln \frac{p}{1-p} = a_0 + a_i x_i + \varepsilon + C$$

In the formula a_0 represent constant term, a_i is the correlation, x_i represents social participation, C represents the control error term, ε random error term.

4.2. Benchmark Regression

Table 2 reports the results of the benchmark regression of rural public service supply to the life satisfaction of the elderly. Model (1) to model (4) adopts the gradual addition of control variables to observe the changes in the coefficients of core explanatory variables. The results show that in the model (1) that only includes the supply of public services, the coefficient is significantly positive at the level of 1% (0.2543). With the gradual addition of personal characteristics, family characteristics and other characteristics, although the coefficient value of public service supply fluctuates slightly, it has always remained positive and highly significant. In the complete model (4) that includes all control variables, the coefficient of public service supply is 0.2612, which is significant at the statistical level of 1%. This shows that after controlling other factors, the potential variable score of community ownership of public service facilities can significantly increase the life satisfaction of the elderly. This finding preliminarily verifies the core hypothesis of this study, that is, the supply of rural public services has a significant effect on the satisfaction of the elderly.

In terms of control variables, sleep quality, marital status and participation in endowment insurance have a significant positive impact on life satisfaction, which is consistent with theory and common sense. It is worth noting that empty nest living has a significant negative impact on life satisfaction, highlighting the importance of family companionship for rural elderly people.

Table 2. The overall regression result of rural public service supply to the life satisfaction of the elderly

	Model (I) Satisfaction	Model (II) Satisfaction	Model (III) Satisfaction	Model (IV) Satisfaction
Public service supply	0.2543*** (0.0621)	0.2872*** (0.0637)	0.2756*** (0.0639)	0.2612*** (0.0641)
<i>Personal characteristics</i>				
Age		0.0064 (0.0049)	0.0067 (0.0052)	0.0055 (0.0052)
Sex		0.0884 (0.0540)	0.0859 (0.0541)	0.0877 (0.0542)
Education level		0.0813** (0.03411)	0.0814** (0.0343)	0.0750** (0.0346)
Marital status		0.1906** (0.0846)	0.2783*** (0.0872)	0.2666*** (0.0876)
Sleep quality		0.2840*** (0.0439)	0.2913*** (0.0439)	0.2913*** (0.0437)
Chronic disease		-0.8490*** (0.0707)	-0.8486*** (0.0708)	-0.8313*** (0.0707)
<i>Family characteristics</i>				
Family population			0.0505** (0.0205)	0.0440** (0.0207)
Number of children			-0.0115 (0.02613)	-0.0064 (0.0264)
Mode of residence			2.4021 (0.5842)	2.4695 (0.5809)
<i>Other characteristics</i>				
Endowment insurance				0.2639*** (0.0771)
Medical insurance				-0.1249 (0.1176)
Economic conditions				0.3443*** (0.0684)

4.3. Stability Test

In order to ensure the reliability of the benchmark regression results, this study conducted a robustness test. As shown in Tables 3 and 4, whether it is replaced with the OProbit model (Table 3) or the OLS model (Table 4), the coefficient symbol and statistical significance of public service supply have not changed essentially. After controlling a series of variables, the coefficient of public service supply in the model (II) is still significantly positive. This fully

shows that the conclusion of benchmark regression is robust and not overly influenced by the form of model setting.

Table 3. Overall regression results after replacing with 0probit model

	Model (I) Satisfaction	Model (II) Satisfaction
Public service supply	0.1360*** (0.0350)	0.1498*** (0.0359)
Personal characteristics	uncontrolled	control
Family characteristics	uncontrolled	control
Other characteristics	uncontrolled	control

Table 4. Overall regression results after replacing with OLS model

	Model (I) Satisfaction	Model (II) Satisfaction
Public service supply	0.1006*** (0.0247)	0.1052*** (0.0244)
Personal characteristics	uncontrolled	control
Family characteristics	uncontrolled	control
Other characteristics	uncontrolled	control

4.4. Heterogeneity Analysis

Benchmark regression reveals the average effect, but the impact of public services may vary from group to group. This study further analyzes heterogeneity from the two dimensions of gender and marital status.

Table 5. Gender Heterogeneity Regression Results

Satisfaction	male	female
Public service supply	0.2183** (0.0906)	0.0430 (0.0943)
Personal characteristics	controlled	controlled
Family characteristics	controlled	controlled
Other characteristics	controlled	controlled

The results show that the supply of public services has a significant positive impact on the life satisfaction of the elderly male group (the coefficient is 0.2183, significant at the level of 5%),

but the impact coefficient on the female elderly group is relatively small and statistically not significant. This may be due to the differences in rural elderly men and women in resource access, social participation habits, etc., resulting in women's sense of benefit from community public services is not as strong as that of men.

According to Table 6, the supply of public services has a significant effect on the life satisfaction of elderly groups with spouses, with a coefficient of 0.2183, which is significant at the level of 5%, while the impact on groups without spouses (including widows, divorced and unmarried) is not significant. Spouses are the most important caregiver and source of emotional support for the elderly. The elderly without a spouse may face more complex difficulties, such as more financial difficulties, poorer physical and mental health, and stronger loneliness, which makes it difficult for a single community public service to significantly improve their overall life satisfaction.

Table 6. Results of heterogeneity regression of marital status

Satisfaction		
	No spouse	female
Public service supply	0.2183** (0.0906)	0.0430 (0.0943)
Personal characteristics	controlled	controlled
Family characteristics	controlled	controlled
Other characteristics	controlled	controlled

5. Conclusion and Policy Suggestions

5.1. Research Conclusion

This study uses the data of China's Elderly Social Tracking Survey (CLASS) in 2023 to systematically analyze the impact of rural public service supply on the life satisfaction of the elderly, and mainly draws the following conclusions:

First, the supply of rural public services has a significant and steady role in promoting the life satisfaction of the elderly, which confirms the positive value of improving the rural public service system in improving the subjective well-being of the elderly.

Second, there is obvious group heterogeneity in this influence. Public services have significantly improved the life satisfaction of men and the elderly with spouses, but the impact on women and the elderly without spouses is not significant. This reveals that under the appearance of inclusiveness, there may be a problem that the service content, access methods or publicity channels may not match the needs of vulnerable elderly groups (such as women and unspouses) in rural public services, and there is a "structural blind spot" in its welfare improvement effect.

5.2. Policy Suggestions

First, adhere to the combination of inclusiveness and precision. On the basis of continuing to expand the coverage of rural public services and ensuring that "everyone can reach", policies should pay more attention to "precise policies". We should conduct in-depth research on the specific needs of vulnerable elderly groups such as women and no spouses, and design and provide more targeted service projects. For example, hold cultural activities that are more in line with the interests of the elderly women, and provide more diversified spiritual comfort and daily care services for the elderly without spouses.

Second, promote the upgrading of public services from "hardware" construction to "software" services. It is not only necessary to build good facilities, but also to operate well and provide good service. The training of public service personnel should be strengthened to improve their service awareness and professional skills, especially the ability to understand and respond to the needs of vulnerable elderly groups. Encourage the development of community social organizations and volunteer teams to provide "one-on-one" help and guidance for the vulnerable elderly to help them better integrate and make use of public services.

Third, build an integrated old-age pension system of "public service + family support". Realize that public services cannot completely replace family functions. The policy should form a synergy by supporting family old-age care, such as providing subsidies or skills training for family members who care for the elderly, and taking public services as an effective supplement and support for family old-age care, and jointly play a role in improving the life satisfaction of the elderly.

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