

Urban and rural differences in self-efficacy of the elderly under the background of aging

-- Based on the tracking data of CLHLS

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Abstract: The results of the seventh national census show that the population aged 60 and above has reached 264 million people, accounting for the proportion of the total population increased by 5.44 percentage points than in 2010. Aging population is an important trend of social development and a basic national condition for a long period of time. Since our country entered the aging society in 1999, the scale of the aged population is increasingly large, and the degree of aging is increasingly deepening. At the same time, the rural pension problem is also relatively prominent, in addition to the construction of perfect hardware facilities, it is particularly important to pay attention to the mental health of the rural elderly. Based on the data of CLHLS (2018), this paper analyzes various factors affecting the self-efficacy of the rural elderly, and actively explores effective ways to promote the self-efficacy of the rural elderly.

Keywords: Aging; Rural; Self-efficacy.

1. The Proposal of The Problem

In 2020, China Development Foundation released the "China Development Report 2020: Development Trends and Policies of China's Aging Population" (hereinafter referred to as the "report"). The report said that since the country entered the aging society in 2000, the degree of China's aging population has continued to deepen. By about 2022, China's population over 65 will account for 14 percent of the total population, realizing the transition to an aging society, and by 2050, China's aging will peak, with 27.9 percent of the total population over 65. Large and rapid population ageing will pose economic, social and governance challenges. Compared with cities and towns, the elderly population in rural areas accounts for a larger proportion and is restricted by economic development and other aspects, so entering the aging rural society will face more difficult challenges. And in the context of rural revitalization, the improvement of the overall quality of life of the elderly in rural areas is a major issue of rural revitalization.

Self-efficacy is an important indicator to measure individual psychological state. Studies have shown that self-efficacy has a significant positive correlation with subjective well-being and life satisfaction, and a negative correlation with anxiety and depression. In the face of difficulties, self-efficacy can affect individual behavior choice, effort level, thinking pattern and emotional response pattern. A good sense of self-efficacy can improve an individual's sense of control over the environment, and then have a positive effect on the psychological state of an individual.

Therefore, the research on the influencing factors of rural elderly people's sense of self-efficacy based on data analysis will help promote the elderly to strengthen their sense of self-efficacy and have a positive effect on the new pattern of the overall rural mutual support for the aged.

2. Concept Definition and Literature Review

The concept of self-efficacy, first proposed by Bandura, is an important concept in sociological theories. It refers to an individual's subjective judgment on whether he or she is competent for something. Before the 1980s, Bandura defined self-efficacy as a relatively specific expectation about people's belief in their ability to complete specific behaviors and behaviors needed to produce certain results. Perceived efficacy expectation affects individuals' choice of goals and degree of effort. After the 1980s, Bandura saw self-efficacy as "the perception of self-control that affects one's world and the ability to survive as an integrated action of cognitive, social, and behavioral skills". In the 1990s, self-efficacy was defined as "people's belief in the process, motivation and ability of cognitive resources to initiate actions required by tasks". The concept of "self-efficacy" referred to in this paper adopted the definition proposed by Bandura in the 1980s.

The research on self-efficacy of the elderly is mainly concentrated in the field of social work and public health. The public health field mainly focuses on the correlation analysis between self-efficacy, subjective well-being, loneliness and depression in the elderly. Studies by scholars show that gender, marital status and educational level have a great influence on self-efficacy of the elderly who quit work (Yuan Xiaoxiaoqi et al., 3, 2021). In addition, interpersonal relationship and communication with children are also important self-evaluation indicators of self-efficacy of the elderly (Wang Yali et al., 8, 2020). Participation in social activities and community organizations has a positive effect on improving the self-efficacy of the elderly (Liu Qing, 2020). The higher the self-efficacy of the elderly, the higher the acceptance of the new way of life and the higher the ability to discriminate information (Diao Chunting, Zeng Meina, 2020).

In the field of social work, interventional studies of relevant cases are mainly conducted to improve the self-efficacy of clients through relevant theories and treatment methods of

social work. Nostalgia therapy can help the elderly recall the years when they were young, improve their positive self-cognition and thus enhance their self-efficacy (Feng Rong, 2021), while for special elderly groups, such as the elderly living alone and the elderly who lost their only child, group methods are often used to promote the patients to participate in group activities to improve their self-efficacy (Wu Hui, 2021).

To sum up, there are relatively many researches on improving self-efficacy in the medical field and social work field, which are concentrated in the medical and social work affairs field, and relatively few papers on data analysis.

3. Data analysis

At present, the difference between regional development and urban and rural development is very obvious. Is there a certain degree of difference in self-efficacy between the elderly in towns and villages and the elderly living in cities? Therefore, data analysis is conducted on the difference in self-efficacy of the elderly in urban and rural areas. Combined with the definition of self-efficacy, two groups of questions with the strongest applicability are selected for analysis in the questionnaire. The two sets of questions were: Do you feel that the older you get, the less useful you become and the harder you struggle to do anything? Are you full of hope for your future life? The two groups of questions were used as dependent variables to conduct one-way analysis of variance.

H0: There is a significant difference in the self-efficacy of urban and rural elderly.

H1: There is no significant difference in the self-efficacy of urban and rural elderly.

Table 1. One-way analysis of variance: The relationship between a feeling of the older you get, the less useful you are and the place of residence (N=15874)

variable	Option(I)	Option (II)	Mean difference
	(I)the current residential area of the interviewed elderly city	(J)the current residential area of the interviewed elderly town	0.28485***
		rural	0.27161***
	town	city	-
		rural	0.28485***
	rural	city	-0.01323
		rural	-
		city	0.27161***
		town	0.01323

Note: ***P<0.001, **P<0.01, *P<0.05

As can be seen from Table 1, there is a significant relationship between different residence places and the degree of self-evaluation of the elderly.

Through pairwise comparison, the following conclusions can be drawn: the evaluation of self-ability of the elderly living in urban areas is significantly higher than that of the elderly living in other villages and towns, 0.285 points higher than the average score of the elderly living in towns and villages, 0.272 points higher than the elderly living in villages, and both are significant at the level of 0.001.

The evaluation of self-ability of the old people living in towns and villages is not significantly higher than that of the old people living in the countryside, and there is no significant relationship between the evaluation of self-ability of the old

people living in towns and villages.

Therefore, it can be concluded that different places of residence have a strong influence on the self-evaluation of the elderly. Older people living in cities are less likely to think that they become less useful as they get older, while those living in towns and villages are more likely to think that they struggle to do everything and become less useful as they get older. In rural society, which is dominated by heavy manual labor such as agricultural labor, the physical loss caused by aging also reduces the elderly's sense of existence in rural society, which will eventually produce the pessimistic idea that the older they get, the less useful they are, and consume their sense of self-efficacy. As the elderly in the city grow older, they find their own new value in the rich cultural and recreational activities in the city, and finally effectively improve their sense of self-efficacy.

Table 2. One-way analysis of Variance: Whether you are hopeful about the future and the place of residence (N=15874)

variable	Option(I)	Option (II)	Mean difference
	(I) the current residential area of the interviewed elderly city	(J) the current residential area of the interviewed elderly town	-0.13858***
		rural	-0.14381***
	town	city	0.13858***
		rural	-0.00523
	rural	city	0.14381***
		town	0.00523

Note: ***P<0.001, **P<0.01, *P<0.05

As can be seen from Table 2, there is a significant relationship between different places of residence and elderly people's expectations for life prospects.

Through pairwise comparison, the following conclusions can be drawn: the elderly living in urban areas have significantly higher expectations for the future than those living in other villages and towns, with the average score 0.139 points higher than those living in towns and villages 0.144 points higher than those living in villages, and both are significant at the level of 0.001.

The old people living in towns and villages have no significant higher expectations for the future than those living in the countryside, and there is no significant relationship between the old people living in towns and villages.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the place of residence has a strong effect on the future expectations of older people. Older people living in cities have higher expectations for their future life, while those living in towns and villages are less willing to believe that their future life is full of hope. The expectation for the future mainly depends on the satisfaction level of the present life, and the obvious difference between urban and rural areas also makes us ponder what kind of living conditions make the elderly living in towns and villages have such low expectations for the future life.

Finally, we can conclude that the difference of residence has a significant impact on the self-efficacy of the elderly. The elderly living in the city have a relatively high self-efficacy, while the elderly living in the countryside have a relatively low self-efficacy.

According to the Chi-square test in Table 3, there is a significant relationship between variable "residence status" and variable "place of residence" in the population at the

significance level of 0.001. As can be seen from Table 4, most of the elderly people surveyed tend to live with their families. Among the elderly people in rural areas, 81.3% live with their children, which is the highest proportion, and the lowest proportion live in pension institutions.

Table 3. Crosstab: Residence status * Place of residence

	Urban	Town	Rural	total
cohabit	2755	4119	5623	12497
	78.7%	80.3%	81.3%	80.4%
solitude	413	848	1216	2477
	11.8%	16.5%	17.6%	15.9%
nursing facility	331	163	80	574
	9.5%	3.2%	1.2%	3.7%
total	3499	5131	6919	15549
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Chi-square value	493.729***			

Note: ***P<0.001

4. Analysis of specific reasons

According to the above data analysis, the self-efficacy of the rural elderly is relatively lower than that of the urban elderly, and the resulting self-efficacy of the rural elderly is significantly lower than that of the urban elderly, which mainly involves three reasons. First, the overall attitude of the rural elderly is relatively negative. Secondly, the lack of cultural and recreational activities in rural areas; Finally, the social security system is not as sound as the city. These three reasons are the main reasons for the low self-efficacy of the rural elderly.

Rural society is a settlement based on agricultural civilization, and manual labor is inevitable for every family engaged in agricultural activities. In Chinese culture, the traditional way of thinking of "perpetuating the family tradition" and "preferring sons to daughters" comes from the survival needs of heavy manual labor. Therefore, the physical loss caused by old age makes the elderly become the objects to be supported. Older people also lose their family status with age. Therefore, the elderly in rural society generally think that they are old and useless. This "useless" is the psychological result of not being able to engage in more manual labor. In addition to the self-denial of the elderly, the whole rural cultural atmosphere is also less friendly to the elderly. Young people do not pay attention to the mental health of the elderly, and regard the elderly as the objects in need of care, which gradually reduces their sense of self-efficacy.

At the same time, the social security system in rural areas is not as sound as that in urban areas, and years of heavy manual labor make their physical condition worse than that in urban areas. 81.3% of the elderly in rural areas live with their children and rely on subsistence allowances and children to support them. Many elderly people believe that they will be dragged down by their children when they get old, and have low expectations for their future life.

From the spiritual and cultural perspective, through the frequency statistics of 12,332 respondents in rural areas, as shown in Table 5, the elderly living in rural areas mostly do housework at home and rarely go out to participate in cultural and recreational activities such as square dance and Tai Chi. On the one hand, it is due to the lack of cultural and recreational activities in rural areas; on the other hand, it is due to the conservative characteristics of rural society. Many

elderly people lack the motivation to participate in cultural and recreational activities.

Table 4. Do you do housework at home?

	Frequency	Percentage	Effective percentage	
options	almost everyday	5187	42.1	42.6
	not daily, but once for a week	751	6.1	6.2
	not weekly, but at least once for a month	195	1.6	1.6
	not monthly, but sometimes	380	3.1	3.1
	never	5668	46.0	46.5
	don't know	3	.0	.0
	total	12184	98.8	100.0
	total	12332	100.0	

Therefore, the reasons for the low self-efficacy of the elderly in rural areas are both micro and macro. We should put forward relevant policy suggestions from these aspects.

5. Policy suggestions

First, to promote the construction of psychological aging of the aging society. The coming of aging society is an inevitable trend at present, and everyone will face the test of old age. Therefore, in addition to promoting the construction of hardware facilities to adapt to aging, it is equally important to promote the overall social psychological aging. Strengthen more relevant publicity, carry out age-friendly activities in communities (village committees), and involve young people to promote the reconstruction of the image of the elderly according to the age characteristics of the elderly, so that more people can change their view of the elderly, eliminate the prejudice of the elderly "can't do anything", and create a good social atmosphere for everyone's later life.

Second, we will improve the social security system in rural areas. A sound pension security system is the most powerful guarantee for the elderly. To improve the basic pension service system, on the basis of improving the basic pension service system and focusing on ensuring the needs of the elderly with special difficulties, we should actively develop inclusive pension services, safeguard and improve the livelihood of the elderly, gradually improve the well-being of the elderly, and promote social equity and justice. We will strengthen the people's stable expectations for elderly care services

Third, vigorously strengthen the construction of rural cultural talents. County and township levels should constantly increase the training of cultural talents. In addition to organizing professional teams to send culture to the countryside, we should be good at discovering all kinds of outstanding local talents. Through the establishment of a team of cultural talents at the village level, cultural activities should be enhanced to make more farmers willing to participate in various activities. It is a multi-dimensional and multi-tiered cultural guidance. When promoting the cultural forms that farmers enjoy, we should provide guidance to some "niche" and "difficult" cultural activities. For example, regularly organize reading activities, essay contests, painting

and calligraphy competitions, etc., to enhance the interest of participants, so as to drive more people to participate in such activities, and improve the grade and level of rural culture. We should constantly innovate the communication mode of rural culture and firmly grasp the communication mode of new media.

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