Research on the Dilemma and Countermeasures of the Rural Elderly

Ke Xu, Haolin Wang

School of Finance and Public Administration, Anhui University of Finance and Economics, Bengbu, Anhui, 233030, China

Abstract

After China enters a well-off society in an all-round way, we need to pay more attention to the spiritual needs of the rural elderly.The use of Internet technology affects the spiritual pension of the elderly, and is an important factor to improve the pension quality of the elderly in rural areas.However, the development of the elderly with low Internet literacy and imperfect Internet infrastructure have restricted their development. Therefore, this paper proposes to enhance the initiative of the elderly to use the Internet, improve the level of Internet use for the elderly through free training and other ways, and suggests that relevant government departments should increase the investment to improve the construction of rural Internet infrastructure facilities, so as to alleviate the negative impact of the digital divide on the welfare sharing of the elderly.This paper hopes that the rural elderly will set up new ideas in the Internet era, so that the rural elderly can enrich their spiritual life by using the Internet technology, and provide experience for improving the spiritual pension quality of the rural elderly group in the Internet society.

Keywords

1. Introduction

Common prosperity In the Fifth Plenary Session of the 19th CPC Central Committee, China stressed the need for common prosperity to be put in a more important position, and clearly proposed to " firmly promote common prosperity, constantly enhance the people's sense of gain, happiness, and security, and promote all-round human development and all-round social progress."Coordinating and solving the pension ditch and problems of the rural elderly is an inevitable requirement to promote common prosperity, and narrowing the gap between urban and rural elderly care level is the only way to promote social justice and harmony, and the integrated development of urban and rural areas and regions.According to the results of the fourth official sampling survey, the proportion of rural elderly people feeling lonely (43.8%) is much higher than that in cities, and their mental health problems are prominent.

Most elderly people in real life also face obvious Internet discrimination and the digital divide.Bridging the digital divide can help the elderly quickly into the information society to understand social information, through the use of the Internet, the elderly can use social software to keep in touch with relatives and friends and family, entertainment, learn all kinds of the knowledge about health, enhance their health literacy, these are promoting to improve the level of mental health of the elderly.

At present, domestic scholars on how the influence of the Internet in spiritual pension mainly involves the following points: First, the problem of spiritual pension for the elderly.Movement et al. (2016) shows that the rural elderly people with co-living spouses and good health tend to have independent retirement, and grid factors and demographic characteristics affect the

retirement choice of the elderly (Lawton, 1985; Erichsen & B u ssing, 2013).The influence of mobile phones or Internet on the spiritual pension of the elderly can be found in the analysis of their impact on their life satisfaction or happiness level. Currently, there are two different views: "network gain effect theory" and "present space substitution effect theory" (Hageetal., 2016; Peng Xizhe et al., 2019; Du Peng et al., 2020).The mental health of the elderly is mainly reflected by their subjective well-being and satisfaction with life, but there are also group differences.Economic conditions, however, rural areas more backward than urban, in the construction of spiritual and cultural related facilities is relatively weak, the rural elderly due to education level, vision limitations in the active enrich their spiritual world initiative and enthusiasm is poor, makes the rural spiritual pension problem exist big loopholes.Yang Zhenhua (2017) believes that whether the spiritual and cultural facilities are sound directly affects the spiritual pension situation of the elderly in rural areas. When the elderly want to carry out spiritual communication in the spiritual and cultural exchange places, they will often find that the imperfect facilities make them not get spiritual comfort.Therefore, under the background of the extensive development of digitalization, the Internet technology enables the rural elderly and put forward relevant policies to improve their quality of life and promote their mental health in the elderly.

Second, the research on the spiritual pension development of the elderly enabled by the Internet.There is no doubt that the trend of China's population aging is inevitable, coupled with the rapid development of digital society, the Internet is no longer a word for young people, but a necessary means for various social groups to enjoy life and carry out related activities.Du Peng et al. (2020) found that the "Internet + community" model has significantly improved the life satisfaction of the elderly.Some scholars, such as (Sumetal, 2009), Internet use skill level is positively correlated with elderly life satisfaction through empirical research.Lifshitz et al. (2018) concluded that different types of online activities had different effects on the life satisfaction of the elderly. Their research results finally showed that online leisure activities are the most popular online activities of the elderly, and the life satisfaction of the elderly would be higher when carrying out online leisure activities.

From the point of the current research, the following problems: first, the Chinese scholars mainly study the Internet on the impact of residents' life and development countermeasures, for the rural elderly of the special group related research is less, especially how to use the Internet technology to enrich the rural elderly spiritual needs related research.Foreign scholars on the Internet influence factors for the elderly spiritual endowment research the conclusion is more consistent, but compared with foreign countries, our country has urban and rural regional development imbalance and rural "digital divide" special problems, so it is necessary to organize and discuss the Internet usage of rural elderly spiritual pension, and analyze the problems and put forward the corresponding countermeasures.Second, the existing studies are mostly limited to the spiritual pension of the elderly in urban or rural areas, and they pay less attention to the challenges and countermeasures of the spiritual pension of the elderly from the perspective of Internet technology empowerment.Therefore, this paper re-examines the problems existing in the spiritual pension of the elderly in rural areas, studies the difficulties faced by the Internet to promote the mental health of the elderly from the dynamic perspective, and puts forward the countermeasures, which has a certain pioneering and innovative nature.

2. The Internet Use of the Elderly in Rural China

2.1. The Proportion of the Elderly Using the Internet is Increasing, and the Scale of Internet Users between Urban and Rural Areas Varies Greatly

According to the 48th Statistical survey on Internet development in China, as of June 2021,12.2 percent of the elderly people were on the Internet in June 2021, compared with only 5.2 percent

in 2017.As can be seen from Figure 1, in recent years, the scale of Internet users in China has been increasing and growing rapidly in groups.At present, China's existing administrative villages have fully realized "village broadband", poor areas communication difficulties and other problems have been historically solved, the construction of new digital infrastructure for the elderly groups to use the Internet, more and more elderly can participate in social and cultural activities through the Internet to improve the quality of spiritual elderly.
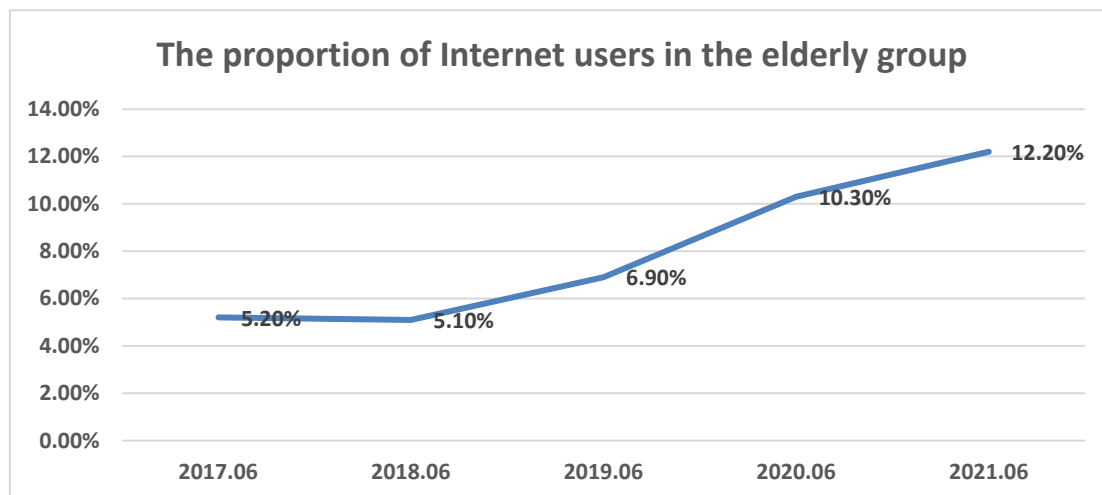

Figure 1. The proportion of netizens among the elderly group

2.2.   The Internet has Added New Elements to the Cultural Life of the Elderly

With the comprehensive development of society, the elderly paid more attention to material needs. In the past, nowadays, the elderly for cultural life are increasingly demanding. Compared with the past, the elderly are more concerned about whether the spiritual and cultural needs can be met.It is particularly urgent to leave the elderly left behind in the era of the Internet of everything, and the sharing of the dividends of the era of intelligence.Data show that the main content of online cultural participation in rural elderly people is watching news, watching movies and TV series, playing games and chatting online.The proportion of rural elderly watching news is 82.6%, rural elderly watching movies and TV series 41.2% and 13.5% (see Table 1). ("The Fourth Sample survey of the living conditions of the urban and rural elderly people in China").

Table 1. Internet Access Content of Rural Elderly People (Unit%)

Internet content	60-64 Years old	65-69 Years old	70-74 Years old	75-79 Years old	80-85 Years old	Age 85 +	ensemble
Watch the news	84.9	85.5	80.2	72.3	60.0	61.9	82.6
Watch movies and TV dramas	43.5	39.9	40.7	38.3	30.0	28.6	41.2
chat	17.3	16.4	12.8	8.5	15.0	9.5	15.8
shopping	6.2	5.2	3.5	6.4	0.0	0.0	5.3
play games	17.8	12.2	8.1	2.1	5.0	0.0	13.5
agiotage	2.2	1.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.9
other	7.4	9.9	11.6	19.2	25.0	33.3	10.4

In addition, 15.8 percent of the elderly people in rural areas chatted on the Internet.Due to the rural employment opportunities are relatively few and the improvement of urban infrastructure in various aspects of constraints make young people have choose to work and live, together with the habit of rural life, most of the rural elderly choose to live alone at home, the children in the background of the rural elderly to use the Internet voice chat function and children emotional communication demand.

2.3. Economic Conditions Affect the Internet Activities of the Elderly

The survey of elderly people with different economic conditions found that the content of their Internet activities did not show obvious differences or regular characteristics.However, Internet shopping is obviously excluded. As can be seen from Table 2, the better the elderly with economic income status, the higher the proportion of their shopping, which means that they will buy more goods through the Internet than the elderly with more general economic conditions.

Table 2. Economic status of the elderly Internet content (unit:%)

Internet content	Very well-off	More comfortable	Basically enough	More difficult	very difficult	ensemble
Watch the news	84.9	86.9	84.3	78.2	72.5	84.8
Watch movies and TV dramas	32.3	34.1	35.7	37.8	42.5	35.2
chat	21.1	21.8	20.3	20.3	28.8	20.9
shopping	15.4	13.5	11.4	6.6	8.8	12.0
play games	23.4	28.3	27.3	19.7	20.0	27.1
other	4.4	4.2	4.7	8.6	15.0	4.8

3. The Impact of the Internet on the Rural Elderly Groups

3.1. The Internet Enables the Elderly in Rural Areas

The social empowerment performance of the Internet for the rural elderly groups is first reflected in the Internet technology, which can provide convenience for the rural elderly to communicate with their children.As Yang Chrysanthemum (2009) and other scholars said, a family with a harmonious family relationship, its parent-child relationship is bound to be closer, and the spatial distance between children and their parents has a significant impact on the establishment of parent-child relationship, and also plays an important role in the formation of family cohesion.In contemporary China, the social scope of the elderly in rural China mostly revolves around geography and blood relationship. With the departure of relatives, geography occupies an important position in the social interaction of the rural elderly. Some elderly people are even reluctant to follow their children to live in the city just because of their surrounding friends.The emergence of the Internet, especially the voice and video chat functions of wechat, has broken the boundaries between region and time, enabling the rural elderly to communicate with their relatives and friends in other places and foreign countries.Second, the ever-changing Internet has expanded the social range of the rural elderly group.From the perspective of the application of the Internet, the elderly in the countryside will actively and passively join to the local village committee cadres established folks, rural style, volunteers, rural skills learning

group, etc., make part of the rural elderly can break the limitations of the surrounding area extend their social network, realize more have common interests, personality fit friends.

3.2. The Internet Enables the Life of the Elderly Groups in Rural Areas

The Internet makes many news and information and social events widely spread in the shortest time. Rural elderly people can follow their favorite video numbers such as CCTV News TikTok by downloading TikTok, Weibo and other platforms, so as to obtain the information or news they want to know anytime and anywhere.By using the Internet elderly groups can be more targeted to obtain some interested information, such as part of the elderly more concerned about state affairs, can focus on represented by CCTV news platform, some elderly for health knowledge, can through clove doctor WeChat public to obtain relevant information.At the same time, in recent years, more and more platforms have paid attention to the poor Internet level of the elderly, and have introduced a barrier-free mode to facilitate the operation of the elderly.All in all, the elderly in rural areas can quickly acquire the knowledge that they are interested in on the Internet platform, and their loneliness is relatively reduced (Wu Xinhui, 2017).

3.3. The Internet Enables Rural Elderly People to Receive Public Services

The rapid improvement of science and technology has driven the development of modern public service methods in the direction of intelligent and digital services, especially in the medical field and elderly care services (Jiang Xiaojuan, 2017).In the past, the elderly in rural areas may consider the Internet "irrelevant" or "the clouds in the sky are not visible", but now the attitude towards the Internet has changed to "must be used".However, in fact, most elderly people think that their level of Internet technology is far from the intelligent development level of public services in contemporary society.Take medical services as an example. At present, many rural hospitals have implemented online registration, online appointment, online payment and other services, but most rural elderly people cannot master relevant skills.

4. The Internet Enables the Elderly in Rural Areas

With the rapid development of Chinese society, people's continuous improvement of material living standards, the elderly have basically solved the problem of material pension, and the high-level spiritual needs of the elderly are increasingly prominent.In recent years, Internet technology and big data technology have brought opportunities and challenges to the mental health of the elderly. The opportunity lies in the progress of Internet technology has expanded the new business forms in the pension field, greatly improved the quality of the elderly, and effectively promoted the mental health of the elderly.The challenge is the Internet technology to empower the elderly in rural areas.

4.1. The Elderly in Rural Areas have Low Internet Use Literacy and Narrow Coverage

Zhang Siyu (2021) combined with Rogers innovation diffusion theory for the rural elderly acceptance of the Internet, he thinks the rural elderly attitude to the Internet is between fresh and curious stage, but most social groups, especially the Internet innovators, for Internet technology has reached unimaginable level, most rural elderly like children learn to walk stage, and other people have started to drive cars on the highway, lead to most rural elderly basic cannot find and enjoy the dividends of the Internet.With the rapid development of Chinese society, people's continuous improvement of material living standards, the elderly have basically solved the problem of material pension, and the high-level spiritual needs of the elderly are increasingly prominent.In addition, the data of Figure 1 shows that the proportion of Internet use by the rural elderly in China is only 0.5%, far lower than that of the urban elderly

group. Due to the backward infrastructure and poor economic conditions of the rural elderly, the application of the Internet in the coverage of the rural elderly group is narrow.

4.2. The Problem of the "Digital Divide" among the Elderly is Difficult to Solve

He Quan (2020) pointed out that the whole society should take the digital divide as a major problem in joint governance.The elderly alone cannot really solve the digital divide by learning or learning by Internet platforms and software developers.Liu Mingzheng (2021) analyzed the use of smart devices in the era of Internet technology from the perspective of the elderly, which is the biggest obstacle to improving the effectiveness of Internet empowerment.The elderly physical quality, especially memory level, vision or collaboration ability compared with the young people, the intelligent devices on the current market mostly based on the preferences of young people design equipment layout or related content, in this case, the elderly due to the influence of various factors is unable to identify or accept the design.Huang Chenxi (2020) that the Internet assigned to its mental health has another problem: the distance between generations will reverse influence intergenerational feedback, the intergenerational feedback in the elderly use the Internet, and most of the children for lack of enough time and patience to guide the elderly specific operation and use of the Internet, thus weaken the number of the elderly group.

4.3. The Internet Infrastructure and System is not Perfect

In the context of family and social changes, the inevitable weakening of family spiritual pension function (Ci Qinying, 2016; Rao Dan, Huang Jianyuan, 2018), especially the rural left-behind elderly spiritual pension is restricted by the spatial distance with their children (Chen Jihua, Huang Jianyuan, 2018).Therefore, Xu Lianming (2016) proposed to fully mobilize the enthusiasm and initiative of the elderly to enrich the spiritual world, so that the elderly can freely express their needs and preferences, while the outside world will provide corresponding support conditions according to the needs of the elderly.The public nature of the Internet and its enabling effect on spiritual pension enable the rural elderly to promote the "spiritual self-care" by using the Internet and solve the problem of spiritual pension.But make the rural Internet infrastructure is not perfect.According to statistics, the Internet penetration rate in rural areas is only 55.9%, and nearly half of the Internet has not been popularized.

4.4. The Government's Support for the Internet Enabling Spirit of Pension is not Enough, and the Guarantee Mechanism is not Perfect

Relevant government departments plays a key role in the rural pension service work, but because the rural government by financial funds, manpower and material factors, they to the rural elderly material attention is higher, for the rural elderly spiritual pension demand attention is low, support is weak.In contradiction, the rural elderly pay more and more attention to the needs of spiritual pension.In short, the imperfect pension security machine has had a great impact on the trend of spiritual pension socialization of the elderly (You Wubing, 2015).Therefore, Max Weber (2002) believes that only the social government can rationally handle the national event and make it reach an idealized state.The general background of the socialization of spiritual pension for the elderly requires the relevant departments to expand the coverage of the Internet use for the elderly and establish and improve various network facilities suitable for the elderly.

5. Policy Suggestions on Improving the Effect of Internet Enabling the Elderly in Rural Areas

For a period of time, China's aging population and digital intelligence will form a parallel development trend, which will bring great challenges for the elderly to adapt to the

development pace of the current era, but from a long-term perspective, promoting the Internet use of the elderly can be conducive to the mental health and social governance modernization of the elderly.As the widely spread on the Internet "the best filial piety is to accompany parents to keep up with this era", in the intelligent digital era, the Internet to empower the elderly, so that more rural elderly can enjoy the dividends brought by the development of the Internet, and let more rural elderly share the fruits of digital society development.Therefore, promoting the use of Internet skills for the rural elderly is the meaning of the question. The goal of the Internet to empower the elderly not only requires the rural elderly to change their thinking and actively learn Internet technology, but also has a lot to do with the encouragement and assistance of all aspects of family and society.

5.1. Enhance the Initiative of the Elderly to Use the Internet and Create a Good Social Atmosphere

First of all, the rural elderly should take the initiative to integrate the Internet into daily life, from the ideological level for the Internet don't care or shelved the idea, to realize the significance of learning Internet technology to meet their spiritual needs, reduce the Internet technology, don't define yourself first, think you never learn Internet technology.At the same time, the elderly in rural areas should realize that their children have a much higher mastery of Internet technology than themselves, give up the traditional top-down learning model and take the initiative to learn from their children how to obtain the information they want on the Internet.A close network of rural neighbors can also be used to enhance your confidence in using the Internet.Second, the grass-roots government departments should realize the necessity and importance of spiritual endowment is not weaker than material endowment, through the Internet technology use communication, Internet technology training, Internet world introduction to mobilize rural elderly groups to realize the benefits of Internet technology, and learn to use the Internet technology to broaden the social network.We can also call on more elderly people to learn Internet technology by teaching vanguard party members and advanced elderly examples taking the lead.Finally, should increase the concept of "science and technology for good" propaganda, let more Internet developers, intelligent equipment innovators noticed the special group of the rural elderly, according to the elderly memory level, vision decline age design friendly layout, innovation "fault tolerance" interaction mechanism, minimize the inconvenience of using smart devices or Internet platform, let the rural elderly "understand" smart devices.

5.2. We will Bridge the "Digital Divide" among the Elderly and Strengthen Training on Their Internet Use

Helping the elderly across the "digital divide" and building an Internet inclusive society for the elderly is a powerful way to promote the use of the Internet for the elderly.Although most of the rural elderly people with the growth of age and experience, their curiosity and ability to accept new things show a declining trend.However, some elderly people have high enthusiasm and enthusiasm in learning Internet technology. If they can help these elderly people to master Internet technology well, it will help to form a demonstration role and inspire more rural elderly people to take the initiative to try to learn and use Internet technology.From this point of view, the rural village committee and the council can assume more responsibility, the rural village committee can hold volunteer activities, call on the young generation to the elderly home for the elderly science some network knowledge, but also through practical cases to help the rural elderly to solve some of the basic Internet operation problems.In addition, according to the local rural elderly education background, regional customs and other factors to carry out targeted Internet technology propaganda activities also is an effective way, through group learning not only can help the elderly better through the Internet technology can assign its

spiritual endowment, and can integrate rural policy, science and health, subtly let elderly groups into the local grassroots governance, reduce their spiritual loneliness.

5.3. Improve the Infrastructure of Internet Technology and Promote the Aging of Technology Research and Development

In the context of the Internet era, the content and interactive design of Internet products should be actively improved to make their user experience better and more suitable for the elderly. First, we will increase financial input, focusing on strengthening the construction of digital information infrastructure in rural areas, include Internet information services in free basic public services, effectively promote the Internet speed and fee reduction and the popularization of telecommunications service facilities, and improve the accessibility of the elderly to Internet information technology. To provide preferential information infrastructure and services for the elderly, the elderly users can enjoy telecom price concessions or exemptions, and promote the use of the Internet among the elderly group. Second, from the Internet perspective of infrastructure, product design and network security, fully consider the special needs of the elderly, establish more specialized services for the elderly website, facilitate the elderly have the appropriate network space for entertainment, emotional communication or other information exchange activities, to meet the spiritual needs of the elderly.

5.4. Strengthen the Government's Supervision and Improve the Laws and Regulations on Network Management

Although the Internet can help the elderly understand social events, meet the needs of entertainment channels, but there are many bad websites, bad media to increase the click, spread some unconfirmed, eyeball news to mislead the elderly, and some illegal businesses will use the elderly fraud ability is poor, thin legal concept, such as temptation to buy a lot of useless goods or defraud the elderly a lot of money.These phenomena occur widely, and the elderly cannot distinguish which information is true and which information is exaggerated and false, making some rural elderly people choose to stay away from the Internet in order to avoid being cheated.The self-discipline of Internet merchants and platforms alone obviously cannot protect the rights and interests of the elderly.Relevant government departments should improve the management system of collection and editing, strictly control the source of information, ensure the authenticity, seek the release of information and strictly check to ensure the authenticity of the information spread on the Internet.Formulate relevant laws and regulations to punish the release of false, vulgar and other information such as illegal behavior.

6. Conclusion

Spiritual pension is a new concept produced in the progress of The Times and the tide of social development. It not only responds to the relevant national policies and guidelines, but also provides a rigorous policy basis for the construction of a comprehensive security system for the elderly from the theoretical level. In addition, the attention to spiritual pension also reflects the positive response in China's aging work. From the perspective of development, the construction of the spiritual pension system with the rapid development of digitalization in the Internet era, can effectively promote the rapid development of the spiritual pension of the rural elderly group, and fully protect the survival and development rights of the rural elderly. Only by ensuring the rich and colorful spiritual life of the elderly population can we provide more help for family harmony and social development, which is also the due meaning of realizing the "Chinese Dream" of great rejuvenation.

Acknowledgments

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