

Study on the Factors Affecting the Quality of Public Service

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Abstract: In order to understand the critical influence factors of the quality of public services, this study has collected hundreds of the existing literature in this field and listed in detail the factors affecting the quality of public service through literature review. We find that the direct provider's public service motivation plays an important role in the quality of public service.

1. Introduction

At present, Chinese governments and departments at all levels are used to promoting the development of various public undertakings with the "project system". When "entrusting" projects, project management technology can better solve the problem of "supervision" of projects, but it falls into the dilemma of insufficient "incentive" for "agents". Therefore, in order to improve the quality of public services, the establishment of an incentive mechanism for government employees, the direct providers of basic public services, has been discussed by many scholars, and the theory of public service motivation has been discovered.

2. The Role of Public Service Motivation

Perry et al. discussed the public service motivation and altruistic motivation of providers based on the research on the incentive basis of public service and prosocial motivation which have positive effects on the improvement of the quality of public services, which is different from previous studies that mostly motivate government employees from the perspective of performance-based pay.

Based on Perry's research, numerous literatures have also studied the positive correlation between public service motivation and individual work performance^[1]. In addition, Homberg, McCarthy and Tabvuma also used meta-analysis to analyze the relationship between job satisfaction and public service motivation, concluded that when individuals with public service motivation are given more opportunities to serve the public, their job satisfaction will be higher. This conclusion is consistent with many literatures^[2]. The higher the level of job satisfaction of employees in government departments, the more efforts employees will make to actively contribute to the organization, and the better their work performance will be^[3]. Usop and Bleik took teachers as examples and proved that teachers with high job satisfaction tend to produce better job performance. The work quality of government employees is a measurement dimension of work performance. It can be said that employees with higher public service motivation will provide better quality of basic public services.

The above literature shows that public service motivation is the driving factor to improve the quality of public services directly and through job satisfaction. It should be noted that so far, there are few research results on the negative effects of PSM. Only some literature studies show that public service motivation may have disadvantages, such as work pressure, value conflict and over management, overzealous behavior will have adverse effects on individuals and organizations, such as poor work-life balance and employee burnout. Some scholars ^[4] also pointed out that the positive relationship between public service motivation and public service quality has been verified in developed countries, but whether it is applicable to developing countries needs to be further verified. Therefore, in the practice of motivating providers to improve service quality through public service motivation, it cannot be generalized, but should be analyzed according to the specific situation.

3. The Role of Supply Mode

The existing literature agrees that the monopoly or non-market characteristics of the basic public service supply mode is one of the important reasons for the low service quality. Based on the case study of American local governance, some scholars proposed that public services could be realized by the government's own production, outsourcing to private enterprises, authorization to different producers, and a combination of the three. At present, a large number of literatures have verified the effectiveness of introducing market competition mechanism. Some scholars proposed that "privatization" should be taken as the choice to improve the quality of public services on the basis of 30 years of investigation on the public service supply mechanism of 47 countries, proposed a variety of public-private cooperation institutional arrangements such as government purchase. Many research results show that government purchasing public services can obtain the advantages of economies of scale, reduce operating costs, enhance the social responsibility of service providers, improve professional skills, and improve the efficiency of public service supply. Using Polish data, some scholars proved that school choice and competition mechanism would improve the efficiency of public education expenditure and the average quality of education, because the loss of students would affect the reputation of schools, the promotion opportunities and job satisfaction of principals and teachers. Even without economic incentives, schools would pay more attention to the quality of education. Some scholars measured the number of the school district in the metropolis competition, the competition between public schools on student achievement and the impact of expenditure per student, the results show that parents can choose schools by means of "vote with their feet" higher quality, lower taxes, or both areas to go to school, which makes public education spending to reduce, But the quality of schooling has improved. Similarly, some scholars found that competition leads to better performance in public schools. Millimet and Rangaprasad ^[5] used spatial interaction models to find that the educational input decisions of a district are influenced by competition among schools in neighboring districts. Hanushek and Rivkin ^[6] studied the influence of public school' competition by using the data of Texas, found that public school competition was of great help to the improvement of teacher quality. Literature on the impact of competition on the health quality of public services is also common.

As a concrete practice of effectively providing basic public services by using market competition mechanism, government purchase of services has been applied by many countries with the rise of new public management theory, and its practical effect has attracted a lot of literature attention. The wide application of PPP model and Outsourcing in the field of public service has attracted the attention of many scholars. They believe that the pattern of multiple participation of non-profit organizations and private enterprises introduces the advanced technology and management mode of private sector. Encouraging different subjects to launch full competition in service quality, which is directly conducive to the improvement and improvement of service quality. However, the negative

impact of PPP model and outsourcing on service quality has also attracted the attention of many scholars. Most literatures mentioned that the private sector, driven by self-interest motive, often adopts the strategy of reducing service quality to reduce service cost. For example, some scholars discussed public service theory mechanism of reverse outsourcing contract, mentioned that may arise between the contractor and the government "locking" phenomenon, the competitive and fairness, which service quality cannot be guaranteed, then withdraw the outsourcing services tend to be the last to choose. Schneider conducted an empirical study on the public-private partnership mode of American prisons and found that prisons managed by PPP mode tend to hire staff with low quality in order to pursue higher profits, which makes the service quality significantly lower. some scholars thought that when quality cannot be perfectly measured, the public sector needs to take risks to encourage the private sector to improve quality, so PPP is more suitable for services with low quality requirements. Whether it is the form of service outsourcing or the form of PPP mode that partially introduces market competition, its essence is to introduce competition. The improvement of public service quality from the perspective of competition can be traced back to Tiebout model. Residents can "vote with their feet" among regions, which is conducive to promoting the improvement of basic public service quality.

Although the innovation of public service supply mode jumps out of the idea of simply emphasizing the government supply to produce public services, the production and use of public services can never be avoided. At the same time, according to through the summary of the literature, we found that previous studies to in the perspective of public service supply, formed from the government for public service quality is low, the supply mechanism innovation research model for quality improvement, makes studies to provide public service itself, ignoring the influence of consumers.

4. The Role of Consumers' Service Expectation and Perception

When discussing the factors of influencing the public services quality, the demand level are explored, so it is more important that the formation mechanism of the gap between consumers' service expectation and quality perception. Therefore, all factors that affect the expectation and perception of public service quality will have an impact on the quality of basic public services. In the existing literature on the expectation of basic public service quality, some scholars took personal needs, word-of-mouth publicity and previous service experience as the main factors affecting customers' expectation of service when introducing the multi-stage model of customer service quality evaluation, which would directly affect the level of their quality evaluation. some scholars pointed out that customer expectation quality is influenced by market communication, image, word of mouth and customer needs. some scholars put forward that the expected quality of higher education recipients is affected by marketing communication, school image and other factors when analyzing the connotation of perceived quality of educates. Existing literature about the study of basic public service quality perception, Brown (2007) ^[7] had an empirical analysis based on the investigation data of Columbus, Ohio, points out that public service quality and whether the public associated directly or indirectly involved in the process of public service, and public service providers to interact with the public good and effective communication can help the public understand the government behavior, In addition, government employees have a better understanding of the public needs, thus achieving the improvement of service quality. The mechanism of public participation in decision making also has an important impact on the perception of service quality. Participatory budgeting means that citizens can express their will through conferences, forums and other platforms, determine the allocation of resources, change the incentives of political participants, decision makers and government officials, and thus improve the quality of public services.

In fact, it seems that the research on the influencing factors of service quality can be carried out from two levels: supply and demand, but in fact supply and demand are inseparable, which is explained in the SERVQUAL model ^[8]. Consumption and demand are intertwined in the five dimensions of the SERVQUAL model. In fact, the factors that affect the quality of basic public services are very complex. They are not as simple as we imagine. They are more empirical issues, which require specific analysis based on specific service types, specific industries and specific samples.

The improvement of public service quality is the basis of the equalization of public services, but the equalization of public services is not completely dependent on the level of public service quality, and the equalization of public services itself also needs quality improvement. Therefore, all factors affecting the quality of public services will affect the equalization of public service quality to different degrees. In addition, the equalization of public service quality also has its specific influencing factors. However, existing studies on the equalization of public service quality are relatively few, and most of them focus on the equalization of public service input, output and benefit distribution, which can be mainly summarized into the following categories:

First of all, investment is not equal. Due to the disparity of financial capacity, investment in public services varies greatly among different regions, which directly hinders the process of equalization of basic public services. As an institutional arrangement to balance regional financial resources, the transfer payment system has not really played a role, even aggravating financial inequality and affecting the equalization of basic public services. Secondly, there are regional differences, including government preferences and official characteristics. China's public service provision mechanism based on government's ability and preference but not public demand has resulted in great differences in public services around the world. In addition, under the political assessment system, the promotion incentive of officials will distort the input behavior in public services, and then affect the equalization level of public services. Finally, there is the lack of top-level design. In view of such a national strategy concerning the people's livelihood, it was not until the 12th Five-Year Plan that our country established national basic standards for basic public services through the 12th Five-Year Plan of the National Basic public services system. For a long time, local governments only rely on local policies, regulations and regulations with different standards as the basis for actions, which further aggravates the unequal degree of basic public services.

It should be noted that no matter input, output or benefit can represent quality. At present, there are very few studies on the equalization of quality, and a few studies discuss the equalization of public services from the perspective of equalization of rights, but it is essentially the equalization of public service quality. These studies are carried out from the following three aspects: One is institutional factors, such as transfer payment system. Some studies have considered how to equalize the quality of public services while ensuring input. For example, some scholars found that the poverty alleviation public transport subsidy policy in Bogota significantly promoted the accessibility and equity of transport services in the region. It is worth noting that the difference in public service standards will also affect the equalization of public service quality. For example, some scholars ^[9] found that different public health standards in two Canadian provinces would affect the equitable access to public health services. Some scholars pointed out that Ontario, Canada, has achieved equity in health services by modifying public health standards. The second is human factors, which mainly consider the characteristics of public service providers. As mentioned above, the difference in public service motivation of public service providers in different regions will affect the equalization of public service quality. In different regions, even if public service providers have the same motivation for public service, their differentiated personal qualities such as emotional intelligence, service attitude, it will also affect the equalization degree of public service quality through service quality. Third, exogenous shocks, such as natural factors and reforms in the field. For example, some scholars found in the study

of health care services in Afghanistan that location factors lead to inequality in the utilization of health care services in urban and rural areas. Some scholars, aiming at the referral reform implemented in China's hierarchical medical system in 2015, empirically analyzed the data of Beijing and found that the referral reform improved the overall accessibility of public hospitals in Beijing, but also exacerbated the inequality in the accessibility of medical resources in urban and sub-urban areas.

In conclusion, the equalization of public service quality has not attracted enough attention from the academic community, and the relevant literature is relatively rare and scattered. The research is basically carried out from the micro level, and the corresponding theoretical research is relatively weak, which does not match the current realistic need to focus on improving the quality of public services, should be further enriched and expanded in the future.

5. Conclusion

Based on the above literature, this paper believes that the following points need to be further studied in the analysis of the influencing factors of the quality and quality equalization of basic public services:

First, although the existing literature confirmed the public service motivation and job satisfaction, personal work performance and other aspects of the positive correlation, there is also a literature established PSM and positive relationship between self-reported performance ratings, given the PSM on individual job involvement will and willingness to meet the public organizational goals this positive relationship is reasonable. However, no studies have confirmed the relationship between PSM and public service quality and the influencing mechanism. Although work performance can be used as an indicator to measure the quality of public services to some extent, it still needs further verification. In addition, whether the effect mechanism of public service motivation on public service quality is consistent between developed and developing countries also needs to be further verified.

Second, although the existing literature has verified the causal relationship between performance perception and service quality, no literature has been found to explain and explain the mechanism of action between the two.

Third, there are abundant research on the influencing factors of the equalization of basic public services, but there are few research on the influencing factors of the equalization of quality in the existing literature. However, the influencing factors of equalization and quality equalization are not the same. There are overlapping places, but more differences. However, these influencing factors are extremely important, because in order to realize the equalization of basic public services from focusing on quantity to quality, it is necessary to first identify the factors affecting quality equalization.

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