

Research on the Innovation of Social Elderly Care Service Model Based on Sharing Economy

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Keywords: Elderly Care Services, Sharing Economy, Model Innovation

Abstract: faced with the problem of aging population in China, the traditional mode of social services for the aged has encountered an unprecedented dilemma, so it needs to integrate new external forces. The sharing economy is an emerging economic model that utilizes modern internet technology to re-optimize the allocation of social resources, becoming a new entry point to solve the aging problem. This paper puts forward a new model of elderly care services based on sharing economy, and gives the innovation direction of elderly care service model from the perspectives of service content, service object, service approach, service process and so on, hoping to provide the theoretical guidance for the development of social elderly care service suitable for China's national conditions.

1. Introduction

According to “statistical communiqué of the people’s republic of China on the 2018 national economic and social development”, China has 249.49 million people aged 60 or above, accounting for 17.9 percent of the total population. Among them, there are 166.58 million people aged 65 or above, accounting for 11.9% of the total population, by the end of 2018^[1]. According to internationally accepted standards, a country's entry into an aging society is usually defined as having 10 percent of the population over the age of 60 or 7 percent of the population over the age of 65^[2]. From this point of view, China has entered an aging society, but elderly care services develop slowly. A large number of elderly people face a decline in quality of life due to the lack of nursing service. Thus, how to solve the increasing pressure of supporting the elderly and improve the quality of life of the elderly population has become an important social problem. Nowadays, science and technology are developing rapidly, economic mode is under constant innovation, and the internet is booming. Especially in recent years, the emerging sharing economy model, relying on internet technology for rational allocation of various resources, has greatly promoted the mode innovation in the field of elderly care services, and becomes a new breakthrough to solve the problem of elderly care services.

2. The Definition of Sharing Economy and Elderly Care Model

Domestic scholars believe that the sharing economy is the sum of economic activities that use the Internet or other techniques to integrate modern information and share massive scattered idle resources, in order to meet diversified demands^[3]. From the perspective of economics, it is a process of re-optimizing the allocation of dispersed social resources, and the ownership of resources will not be transferred. This process can provide more diversified and accurate supply by improving the utilization efficiency of resources, reducing the utilization cost of resources, adjusting the allocation of capacity, and increasing the momentum in emerging areas.

Services for the elderly have become an important new force in the tertiary industry. With the increasing aging problem in China, it will become an indispensable part of harmonious social development in the future. Elderly care mode is the solidification of the form of old-age security but its establishment is not fixed. The traditional elderly care service mode will change with the changes

of social system, economic development level, social relations and technological changes.

3. The Current Situation of Traditional Elderly Care Model

Since ancient times, China has a tradition of “raising children to support parents in their old age”. With the gradual reduction of family size and the increase population of migration in recent years, this traditional mode is out of line with the needs of society in many aspects and no longer adapts to the current social situation. Especially in large and medium-sized cities, facing with the great pressure of social survival, young people can hardly look after themselves, and it is difficult for them to provide for the aged relying on blood relationship.

In recent years, community elderly care service has been mentioned in many places, which refers to some public services in a small area of the community to meet the needs of the elderly, mainly including some daily catering, health care and other aspects. However, due to the limited scale, personnel, venue and other factors, the services they can provide are very simple, so the elderly are often not satisfied. In the long run, there has been a situation of “hot community and cold elderly”, which means that community elder security is developing rapidly but its quality doesn’t satisfy the old.

In the face of this situation, it is urgent to improve the existing elderly care mode and make some innovation, so as to meet the increasing number of elderly population and the requirements of the masses for the improvement of elderly care service quality.

4. Innovation Direction of Elderly Care Service Mode Based on Sharing Economy

In recent years, the sharing economy has seen explosive growth, which has subverted the operation mode of many traditional industries, and it can also make great achievements in the field of elderly care services. The emergence of sharing economy has solved the social contradictions of aging society from the perspective of supply side. At the same time, it has also provided many new directions in meeting the needs of the elderly and injects new forces into the innovation of elderly care service mode.

4.1 Use Big Data Technology to Classify the Elderly Population and Provide Precise Services

Generally speaking, people who are over 60 years old are defined as the old, but there is a huge gap in the actual needs of those people. The traditional elderly care model rarely subdivides the elderly population, while big data technology is easy to filter and refine data, which is more conducive to service accuracy. In this paper, the elderly is divided into three types according to their self-care ability: 60-70 years old people are the young old, most of whom have self-care ability and have just left the work. They have a strong desire to interact with the society and most of them can continue to maintain the normal working state. 70-80 years old people are middle-aged old people, with rapid decline in various physical functions and certain medical requirements when they enter the assisted living stage. People over 80 years old are old aged people with aging organs, slow action and high requirements for medical conditions and levels.

Combined with the census data, each region can carry out dynamic management according to the age division of the elderly, and set priorities of elderly care activities based on the proportion of three categories of elderly population in the region. For regions dominated by young old people, a new sharing economic platform are established with widely used platforms or joint businesses to provided services such as clothing, food, housing, transportation, use and entertainment; for regions dominated by middle-aged and old people, the construction and content of the platform should increase services such as health care, medical care and other types of care. Meanwhile, a dynamic assistance mechanism is established among the three types of the old, in which young old people can help the elderly in daily activities, establishing a love mechanism which can be reflected through the platform, and the elderly can provide better learning and life samples combined with their own experience for the young and elderly.

4.2 Cross Regional Restrictions and Realize Mutual Support for the Aged between Urban and Rural Areas

Under the traditional economic model, the urban population flow, especially the elderly population flow, is generally carried out with the blood relationship as the link. It is difficult for the urban elderly population to enter the rural areas for their retirement life. The rural population flow generally takes the labor capacity as the core to move to the city, and the rural elderly population is basically not mobile because of the gradual loss of labor force. However, with the advent of the sharing economy platform, the channel of information transmission has been greatly widened, which has changed the traditional flow mode, making the regional crossing space multiply in geometric series. The elderly from the urban enter the countryside and integrate harmoniously with the old people left behind in the countryside, which enriches the spiritual world of urban and rural elderly population and greatly improves the quality of life of the elderly.

At present, with the aggravation of urbanization, there are a lot of idle resources in rural areas of China, such as land resources, population resources and so on. In particular, the rural natural landscape has a greater attraction to the elderly, and the cost of living is generally lower than that of the city^[4]. Especially for the young old, they are in good physical condition and do not rely on high-quality medical resources in big cities. Therefore, they can stay away from cities in stages and use idle houses and land in rural areas to meet the needs of rest and entertainment. In this way, it also promotes the economic development of rural areas, and effectively improves the utilization of land resources and human resources in rural areas. For the population in rural areas, it promotes the integration of urban and rural areas and improves the level of economic income by receiving the medium and long-term residential activities of urban elderly people, which is conducive to the harmonious and orderly development of the whole society.

4.3 Integration of Small and Medium-Sized Hospitals and Elderly Care Institutions

With the continuous growth of the elderly population and the gradual decline of various functions of the body, health care has become a normalization issue that every elderly must face. At present, the distribution of medical resources in China is not balanced. Large hospitals are overcrowded, while small ones are not. Therefore, small and medium-sized hospitals can give up the “large and comprehensive” operation mode, build a shared medical platform to provide professional services for all elderly care institutions, and carry out specialized treatment for common diseases of the elderly, which can avoid the elderly running back and forth between medical institutions and hospitals, and facilitate the elderly to enjoy basic medical services in the first time. Or even some small and medium-sized hospitals with low bed utilization rate can be transformed into a new type of elderly care institution combining staged medical treatment and elderly care, which is different from the traditional elderly care institutions that only provide basic living conditions, but specifically provide targeted medium and long-term treatment and recovery services for chronic diseases, providing a good combination of medical and nursing resources for a large number of elderly people with chronic diseases.

Traditional nursing homes can share bed resources, and small and medium-sized medical institutions can share medical resources. The combination of the two platforms will achieve a win-win situation. The scope of its customers has also shifted from regional to national or global.

4.4 The Government Purchases Elderly Care Services to Meet the Demand

Elderly care service is a kind of public service, whose quality directly affects the credibility of the government. With the emergence of the sharing economy model, the content of elderly care service activities that the market can provide is unprecedented surging, and the quality has been greatly improved. The charging standards of many projects, however, are beyond the economic bearing range of the elderly. The government properly purchases the elderly care services provided by each platform, and then performs its function of providing services, and gets rid of the traditional government departments to organize human and material resources to implement, reducing the financial burden and meeting the public needs. Taking the old people’s home as an example, the fixed

asset investment of traditional public old people's homes accounts for a large proportion. At present, the beds of public old people's homes in major cities are not easily available, and the government cannot afford to invest a lot of money to set up new nursing homes. Thanks to the emergence of the sharing economy platform, through the establishment of a bed sharing platform, the public, private and even some elderly people living alone can share their beds, leading to a substantial increase in market supply. By purchasing the right to use these beds for a certain period of time, the government can completely solve the situation of bed tension in public nursing homes.

The government's purchase of elderly care services is a market-oriented behavior of social security resources allocation of elderly care services. The emergence of sharing economy just meets the effective combination of market-oriented resource supply and demand, which makes it possible for the government to purchase elderly care services in a large range. The government should develop and share relevant data, encourage the market to create more sharing platforms, and increase the purchase of products with good application effect to meet the needs of a wider range of people. Of course, the government's access and supervision of the platforms should also be strengthened through the joint efforts of the state, society, enterprises, media and individuals^[5].

5. Conclusion

In December 2018, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences issued the Blue Book of Health Industry: Annual Report on China's Health Industry Development (2018), which points out that the improvement of the national living standards extends the life span and at the same time increases the pressure on China's elderly care. Today, China has become the country with the largest elderly population in the world^[6]. Therefore, the innovation of elderly care service mode is an important practical issue for today's Chinese society, and the emergence of sharing economy has opened up a new vision and provided more operability for our elderly care service innovation. Through the injection of new technology, it can not only improve the plight of the elderly in China, but also have some referential significance for other developing countries with the same problems.

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