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## THE IMPACT OF CITY SIZE ON URBAN LIVABILITY: AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF 41 CITIES IN THE YANGTZE RIVER DELTA

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### **Abstract**

In the context of Jiangsu, Zhejiang, and Anhui actively undertaking the deconcentration of Shanghai's non-metropolitan core functions and industrial transfers, studying the relationship between urban development and livability provides theoretical support for macro-level policy coordination and has important practical implications for the integrated development of the Yangtze River Delta. Based on panel data from 41 cities in the Yangtze River Delta from 2006 to 2021, this study constructs an evaluation index system for urban livability and systematically analyzes the impacts of population size, economic scale, and land area, as well as their heterogeneous effects. The results show that all three variables exert significant positive influences on overall urban livability. In more developed cities, population size exhibits a threshold effect, with livability improving significantly after surpassing a certain level. Economic scale and land area contribute to livability through marginal benefit effects. In less developed cities, these positive effects are even more pronounced. The study recommends adopting differentiated strategies based on city type and development stage to optimize urban scale and spatial structure, thereby enhancing livability at the system level.

*Key words:* city size, urban livability, panel threshold regression

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