

Online Appendix for “Happy Citizens Trust Their Rulers”

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Table A1 Descriptive statistics

VARIABLES	Observations	Mean	SD	Min	Max
<i>Panel A. Key variables</i>					
Political trust (PT)	77,891	5.045	2.637	0	10
Life satisfaction (LS)	77,891	3.723	1.056	1	5
Physical attractiveness (PA)	77,891	5.388	1.234	1	7
Physical discomfort (PD)	77,891	0.317	/	0	1
Parent-child relationship (PCR)	19,083	4.215	0.656	1	5
<i>Panel B. Control variables in main setting</i>					
Age	77,891	49.14	15.99	16	98
Female (female=1)	77,891	0.523	/	0	1
Per capital family income (10k/Yuan)	77,891	1.404	2.014	0	148
CPC member	77,891	0.086	/	0	1
Residence (urban=1)	77,891	0.468	/	0	1
Hukou (rural=1)	77,891	0.717	/	0	1
Family size	77,891	4.312	1.983	1	21
<i>Marital status</i>					
Single	77,891	0.086	/	0	1
In marriage	77,891	0.835	/	0	1
Divorced	77,891	0.015	/	0	1
Widowed	77,891	0.064	/	0	1
<i>Education level</i>					
Illiteracy	77,891	0.303	/	0	1
Primary school	77,891	0.216	/	0	1
Middle school	77,891	0.273	/	0	1
High school	77,891	0.136	/	0	1
Occupational college	77,891	0.044	/	0	1
University	77,891	0.028	/	0	1
<i>Occupation status</i>					
Student	77,891	0.037	/	0	1
Manager or business owner	77,891	0.031	/	0	1
Professional personnel	77,891	0.036	/	0	1
Staff in public sector	77,891	0.030	/	0	1
Staff in service sector	77,891	0.087	/	0	1
Agricultural practitioner	77,891	0.368	/	0	1
Worker in manufacturing sector	77,891	0.122	/	0	1
Unclear identity	77,891	0.013	/	0	1
Unemployment	77,891	0.010	/	0	1
Exit labour market	77,891	0.267	/	0	1
Evaluation of medical services	77,891	2.257	0.869	0	4
<i>Panel C. Variables used in robustness check</i>					
General trust	77,690	0.547	/	0	1
Happiness	28,822	7.565	2.086	1	10
<i>Education level of the spouse</i>					
Illiteracy	63,006	0.275	/	0	1
Primary school	63,006	0.233	/	0	1
Middle school	63,006	0.300	/	0	1
High school	63,006	0.128	/	0	1
Occupational college	63,006	0.040	/	0	1
University	63,006	0.024	/	0	1
Patience with CFPS interview	77,891	5.700	1.650	1	7
Self-rated social status	77,499	2.926	1.056	1	5
Upheaval	28,758	0.191	/	0	1

Table A2 The impact of life satisfaction on political trust: OLS estimation

	(1) Pooled OLS	(2) Pooled OLS	(3) FE	(4) FE	(5) RE
Life satisfaction	0.436*** (0.016)	0.410*** (0.015)	0.240*** (0.013)	0.229*** (0.013)	0.341*** (0.013)
Control variables	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Wave FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Individual FE	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	77,891	77,891	77,891	77,891	77,891
Number of persons	26,107	26,107	26,107	26,107	26,107

Note. Control variables include age (log-linearised), marital status, education level, residence, Hukou, CPC membership, occupation status, family per capita income (log-linearised), household size. All control variables are described in Table A1. Robust standard errors clustered at county level in parentheses.

* p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01.

Table A3 Results with full estimates for all control variables

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
<i>Panel A. First stage</i>							
	Dependent variable: life satisfaction						
Physical attractiveness	0.028*** (0.006)			0.028*** (0.006)	0.023** (0.011)		0.023** (0.011)
Physical discomfort		-0.056*** (0.012)		-0.055*** (0.012)		-0.020 (0.024)	-0.019 (0.238)
Parent-child relationship			0.104*** (0.018)		0.100*** (0.018)	0.099*** (0.018)	0.096*** (0.018)
Log age	-2.320*** (0.235)	-2.285*** (0.233)	-2.940*** (0.502)	-2.306*** (0.234)	-2.967*** (0.500)	-2.951*** (0.502)	-2.978*** (0.501)
<i>Marital status</i>							
In marriage	0.076* (0.040)	0.073* (0.040)	0.053 (0.110)	0.074* (0.040)	0.061 (0.111)	0.064 (0.111)	0.071 (0.112)
Divorced	-0.117 (0.072)	-0.110 (0.073)	-0.162 (0.168)	-0.109 (0.073)	-0.156 (0.169)	-0.157 (0.170)	-0.151 (0.171)
Widowed	0.049 (0.058)	0.046 (0.057)	0.015 (0.120)	0.047 (0.058)	0.022 (0.121)	0.025 (0.121)	0.032 (0.122)
<i>Education level</i>							
Primary school	-0.094 (0.068)	-0.098 (0.068)	-0.061 (0.111)	-0.097 (0.068)	-0.052 (0.110)	-0.068 (0.112)	-0.059 (0.111)
Middle school	-0.050 (0.078)	-0.055 (0.077)	-0.061 (0.128)	-0.053 (0.077)	-0.056 (0.127)	-0.071 (0.129)	-0.065 (0.128)
High school	-0.067 (0.085)	-0.074 (0.084)	-0.092 (0.168)	-0.074 (0.084)	-0.086 (0.168)	-0.096 (0.170)	-0.090 (0.170)
Occupational school	-0.036 (0.096)	-0.044 (0.095)	-0.063 (0.202)	-0.042 (0.095)	-0.055 (0.201)	-0.055 (0.200)	-0.047 (0.199)
University	-0.142 (0.116)	-0.152 (0.115)	-0.240 (0.223)	-0.151 (0.115)	-0.241 (0.222)	-0.218 (0.222)	-0.220 (0.221)
Hukou (rural=1)	0.002 (0.030)	-0.001 (0.031)	0.049 (0.077)	-0.001 (0.030)	0.048 (0.076)	0.038 (0.074)	0.037 (0.073)
Residence (urban=1)	0.034 (0.025)	0.041 (0.026)	0.058 (0.064)	0.037 (0.025)	0.053 (0.063)	0.058 (0.062)	0.053 (0.061)
CPC member	0.099** (0.039)	0.103*** (0.039)	0.198** (0.095)	0.099** (0.038)	0.193** (0.094)	0.188** (0.094)	0.182* (0.094)
Household size	-0.002 (0.005)	-0.002 (0.005)	-0.001 (0.009)	-0.002 (0.005)	-0.001 (0.009)	-0.001 (0.009)	-0.001 (0.009)
Log family per capita income	0.006 (0.004)	0.007 (0.004)	0.012 (0.010)	0.007 (0.004)	0.012 (0.010)	0.012 (0.010)	0.012 (0.010)
<i>Occupation status</i>							
Manager or business owner	-0.067 (0.052)	-0.072 (0.052)	-0.004 (0.119)	-0.072 (0.052)	-0.002 (0.120)	-0.019 (0.116)	-0.017 (0.116)
Professional personnel	-0.126*** (0.048)	-0.129*** (0.049)	-0.052 (0.132)	-0.129*** (0.049)	-0.049 (0.132)	-0.064 (0.127)	-0.062 (0.127)
Staff in public sector	-0.038 (0.047)	-0.044 (0.047)	0.021 (0.115)	-0.045 (0.047)	0.027 (0.116)	0.016 (0.113)	0.022 (0.114)
Staff in service sector	-0.089** (0.044)	-0.093** (0.044)	0.007 (0.106)	-0.092** (0.044)	0.008 (0.107)	-0.005 (0.103)	-0.004 (0.104)
Agricultural practitioner	-0.097** (0.046)	-0.101** (0.045)	-0.046 (0.116)	-0.102** (0.046)	-0.044 (0.117)	-0.054 (0.113)	-0.052 (0.114)

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	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
<i>Panel A. First stage</i>							
	Dependent variable: life satisfaction						
Worker in manufacturing sector	-0.092** (0.046)	-0.095** (0.046)	-0.036 (0.113)	-0.096** (0.046)	-0.037 (0.113)	-0.037 (0.110)	-0.038 (0.110)
Unclear identity	-0.175*** (0.057)	-0.170*** (0.057)	0.005 (0.131)	-0.175*** (0.057)	-0.001 (0.131)	-0.002 (0.127)	-0.008 (0.127)
Unemployment	-0.268*** (0.061)	-0.270*** (0.061)	-0.313 (0.199)	-0.270*** (0.060)	-0.307 (0.200)	-0.328* (0.198)	-0.323 (0.198)
Exit labour market	-0.129*** (0.044)	-0.136*** (0.044)	-0.084 (0.111)	-0.136*** (0.044)	-0.081 (0.111)	-0.094 (0.108)	-0.091 (0.108)
Evaluation of medical services		0.085*** (0.007)		0.084*** (0.007)		0.101*** (0.016)	0.101*** (0.016)
F-statistic	21.43	23.31	33.89	18.90	20.42	17.65	13.14
Wave FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	77,891	77,891	19,083	77,891	19,083	19,083	19,083
Number of persons	26,107	26,107	8,221	26,107	8,221	8,221	8,221
<i>Panel B. Second stage</i>							
	Dependent variable: political trust						
Life Satisfaction	0.896** (0.457)	0.939* (0.515)	1.050*** (0.396)	0.875*** (0.347)	1.240*** (0.360)	0.921** (0.395)	1.144*** (0.364)
Log age	-1.639 (1.259)	-1.515 (1.238)	-3.428* (1.779)	-1.660* (0.996)	-2.868 (1.738)	-3.595** (1.730)	-2.978*** (0.501)
<i>Marital status</i>							
In marriage	-0.018 (0.104)	-0.024 (0.104)	0.205 (0.311)	-0.019 (0.100)	0.191 (0.315)	0.210 (0.310)	0.071 (0.112)
Divorced	0.066 (0.174)	0.087 (0.172)	0.117 (0.408)	0.080 (0.167)	0.139 (0.417)	0.110 (0.408)	-0.151 (0.171)
Widowed	0.252* (0.142)	0.247* (0.146)	0.691** (0.324)	0.250* (0.142)	0.685** (0.328)	0.693** (0.323)	0.032 (0.122)
<i>Education level</i>							
Primary school	0.130 (0.176)	0.131 (0.189)	-0.492 (0.307)	0.125 (0.179)	-0.477 (0.316)	-0.496 (0.304)	-0.059 (0.111)
Middle school	-0.013 (0.195)	-0.016 (0.208)	-0.169 (0.332)	-0.019 (0.200)	-0.155 (0.336)	-0.173 (0.330)	-0.065 (0.128)
High school	0.008 (0.210)	0.001 (0.226)	-0.096 (0.365)	-0.003 (0.216)	-0.078 (0.374)	-0.101 (0.363)	-0.090 (0.170)
Occupational school	0.304 (0.232)	0.294 (0.239)	-0.180 (0.409)	0.291 (0.235)	-0.166 (0.422)	-0.184 (0.406)	-0.047 (0.199)
University	0.515* (0.277)	0.509* (0.298)	0.052 (0.514)	0.499* (0.282)	0.099 (0.523)	0.038 (0.513)	-0.220 (0.221)
Hukou (rural=1)	0.122* (0.073)	0.115 (0.074)	0.035 (0.193)	0.115 (0.073)	0.028 (0.200)	0.038 (0.192)	0.037 (0.073)
Residence (urban=1)	-0.087 (0.071)	-0.085 (0.075)	-0.309** (0.127)	-0.082 (0.071)	-0.318** (0.129)	-0.306** (0.127)	0.053 (0.061)
CPC member	0.031 (0.121)	0.020 (0.111)	-0.356 (0.271)	0.026 (0.112)	-0.396 (0.283)	-0.345 (0.268)	0.182* (0.094)
Household size	-0.005 (0.014)	-0.004 (0.014)	-0.004 (0.023)	-0.004 (0.014)	-0.004 (0.024)	-0.004 (0.023)	-0.001 (0.009)
Log family per capita income	0.004 (0.013)	0.003 (0.013)	0.034 (0.030)	0.004 (0.013)	0.032 (0.031)	0.035 (0.029)	0.012 (0.010)

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	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
<i>Panel B. Second stage</i>							
	Dependent variable: political trust						
<i>Occupation status</i>							
Manager or business owner	-0.026	-0.032	0.549*	-0.037	0.549*	0.548*	-0.017
	(0.135)	(0.139)	(0.301)	(0.134)	(0.303)	(0.301)	(0.116)
Professional personnel	-0.079	-0.081	0.524*	-0.090	0.535*	0.521*	-0.062
	(0.145)	(0.158)	(0.302)	(0.142)	(0.304)	(0.301)	(0.127)
Staff in public sector	-0.153	-0.161	0.798**	-0.164	0.795**	0.799**	0.022
	(0.141)	(0.144)	(0.314)	(0.141)	(0.316)	(0.314)	(0.114)
Staff in service sector	-0.180	-0.183	0.478*	-0.189	0.477*	0.478*	-0.004
	(0.131)	(0.138)	(0.283)	(0.129)	(0.284)	(0.283)	(0.104)
Agricultural practitioner	-0.002	-0.007	0.517*	-0.014	0.526**	0.515*	-0.052
	(0.129)	(0.140)	(0.266)	(0.128)	(0.266)	(0.266)	(0.114)
Worker in manufacturing sector	-0.127	-0.127	0.273	-0.133	0.280	0.272	-0.038
	(0.137)	(0.145)	(0.257)	(0.135)	(0.258)	(0.257)	(0.110)
Unclear identity	0.001	0.008	0.463	-0.002	0.463	0.463	-0.008
	(0.149)	(0.159)	(0.327)	(0.141)	(0.331)	(0.326)	(0.127)
Unemployment	-0.110	-0.104	0.270	-0.121	0.329	0.252	-0.323
	(0.182)	(0.199)	(0.420)	(0.165)	(0.429)	(0.418)	(0.198)
Exit labour market	-0.014	-0.021	0.533**	-0.030	0.549**	0.529**	-0.091
	(0.131)	(0.145)	(0.262)	(0.128)	(0.262)	(0.262)	(0.108)
Evaluation of medical services		0.177***		0.182***		0.147***	0.101***
		(0.048)		(0.035)		(0.050)	(0.016)
Anderson-Rubin Wald F-statistic	4.37	3.44	7.56	3.72	6.29	3.17	3.88
(p-value)	(0.038)	(0.065)	(0.007)	(0.026)	(0.002)	(0.045)	(0.010)
Hansen J statistic				0.020	0.685	1.242	2.432
(p-value)				(0.888)	(0.408)	(0.265)	(0.296)
Wave FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	77,891	77,891	19,083	77,891	19,083	19,083	19,083
Number of persons	26,107	26,107	8,221	26,107	8,221	8,221	8,221

Note. Robust standard errors clustered at county level in parentheses. * p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01.

Table A4 Robustness check: controlling for respondents' patience with the CFPS interview

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
<i>Panel A. First stage</i>							
	Dependent variable: life satisfaction						
Physical attractiveness	0.028*** (0.006)			0.027*** (0.006)	0.023** (0.011)		0.022** (0.011)
Physical Discomfort		-0.057*** (0.012)		-0.056*** (0.011)		-0.022 (0.024)	-0.020 (0.024)
Parent-Child Relationship			0.104*** (0.018)		0.100*** (0.018)	0.099*** (0.018)	0.095*** (0.018)
Patience	0.004 (0.004)	0.006 (0.004)	0.008 (0.008)	0.004 (0.004)	0.006 (0.008)	0.007 (0.008)	0.005 (0.008)
F-statistic	20.16	24.07	33.50	18.48	20.12	16.55	12.98
Control variables	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wave FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	77,891	77,891	19,083	77,891	19,083	19,083	19,083
Number of persons	26,107	26,107	8,221	26,107	8,221	8,221	8,221
<i>Panel B. Second stage</i>							
	Dependent variable: political trust						
Life satisfaction	0.818* (0.477)	0.959* (0.508)	1.051*** (0.398)	0.838** (0.354)	1.241*** (0.363)	0.918*** (0.395)	1.143*** (0.366)
Patience	0.011 (0.009)	0.009 (0.009)	-0.003 (0.018)	0.010 (0.009)	-0.004 (0.018)	-0.003 (0.018)	-0.004 (0.018)
Anderson-Rubin Wald F-statistic	3.26	3.66	7.50	3.38	6.31	3.15	3.93
(p-value)	0.073	0.057	0.007	(0.036)	0.002	0.046	0.010
Hansen J statistic				0.076	0.725	1.275	2.610
(p-value)				0.783	0.3945	0.259	0.271
Control variables	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wave FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	77,891	77,891	19,083	77,891	19,083	19,083	19,083
Number of persons	26,107	26,107	8,221	26,107	8,221	8,221	8,221

Note. Individual control variables include age (log-linearised), marital status, education level, residence, Hukou, CPC membership, occupation status, family per capita income (log-linearised) and household size. In columns 2, 4, 6 and 7 where the IV of physical discomfort is used, we also control for individuals' evaluation of medical services. All control variables are described in Table A1. Robust standard errors clustered at county level in parentheses.

* p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01.

Table A5 Robustness check: controlling for an additional variable measured by Likert scale (Self-rated social status)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
<i>Panel A. First stage</i>							
	Dependent variable: life satisfaction						
Physical attractiveness	0.022*** (0.005)			0.021*** (0.005)	0.018* (0.010)		0.017* (0.010)
Physical discomfort		-0.053*** (0.011)		-0.053*** (0.011)		-0.029 (0.023)	-0.028 (0.022)
Parent-child relationship			0.095*** (0.017)		0.093*** (0.018)	0.091*** (0.017)	0.089*** (0.017)
Self-rated social status	0.220*** (0.006)	0.218*** (0.006)	0.219*** (0.012)	0.217*** (0.006)	0.218*** (0.012)	0.216*** (0.012)	0.215*** (0.012)
F-statistic	16.44	23.83	29.78	17.34	17.05	14.62	11.05
Control variables	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wave FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	77,499	77,499	77,499	77,499	18,906	18,906	18,906
Number of persons	26,011	26,011	26,011	26,011	8,155	8,155	8,155
<i>Panel B. Second stage</i>							
	Dependent variable: political trust						
Life satisfaction	0.874 (0.597)	0.928* (0.537)	1.023** (0.438)	0.864** (0.408)	1.196*** (0.406)	0.881** (0.421)	1.075*** (0.396)
Self-rated social status	0.056 (0.134)	0.038 (0.120)	0.034 (0.100)	0.052 (0.093)	-0.004 (0.092)	0.059 (0.094)	0.017 (0.088)
Anderson-Rubin Wald F-statistic	2.36	3.12	5.78	2.62	4.60	2.37	2.75
(p-value)	0.126	0.079	0.017	0.075	0.011	0.097	0.045
Hansen J statistic				0.021	0.665	0.658	1.714
(p-value)				0.885	0.415	0.417	0.424
Control variables	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wave FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	77,499	77,499	77,499	77,499	18,906	18,906	18,906
Number of persons	26,011	26,011	26,011	26,011	8,155	8,155	8,155

Note. Individual control variables include age (log-linearised), marital status, education level, residence, Hukou, CPC membership, occupation status, family per capita income (log-linearised) and household size. In columns 2, 4, 6 and 7 where the IV of physical discomfort is used, we also control for individuals' evaluation of medical services. All control variables are described in Table A1. Robust standard errors clustered at county level in parentheses.

* p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01.

Table A6 Heterogeneity analysis

	(1) Low income	(2) High income	(3) Male	(4) Female	(5) Rural area	(6) Urban area
<i>Panel A. First stage</i>						
	Dependent variable: life satisfaction					
Physical attractiveness	0.024*** (0.009)	0.028*** (0.007)	0.023*** (0.007)	0.032*** (0.007)	0.034*** (0.009)	0.020*** (0.006)
Physical discomfort	-0.064*** (0.020)	-0.064*** (0.013)	-0.055*** (0.016)	-0.055*** (0.015)	-0.053*** (0.017)	-0.061*** (0.014)
F-statistic	7.12	18.28	10.55	16.55	9.37	14.46
Control variables	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wave FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	32,887	32,663	37,135	40,756	40,510	35,534
Number of persons	12,659	12,366	12,490	13,617	13,712	12,184
<i>Panel B. Second stage</i>						
	Dependent variable: political trust					
Life satisfaction	1.413** (0.567)	0.582 (0.400)	1.352*** (0.514)	0.512 (0.349)	0.494 (0.443)	1.348** (0.540)
Anderson-Rubin Wald F-statistic (p-value)	4.15 (0.018)	1.16 (0.316)	4.23 (0.016)	1.33 (0.267)	1.17 (0.312)	3.67 (0.027)
Hansen J statistic (p-value)	0.472 (0.492)	0.084 (0.771)	0.056 (0.813)	0.172 (0.679)	0.563 (0.453)	0.421 (0.516)
Control variables	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wave FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	32,887	32,663	37,135	40,756	40,510	35,534
Number of persons	12,659	12,366	12,490	13,617	13,712	12,184
	(7) The old	(8) The young	(9) Less educated	(10) Educated		
<i>Panel A. First stage</i>						
	Dependent variable: life satisfaction					
Physical attractiveness	0.028*** (0.007)	0.027*** (0.007)	0.028*** (0.008)	0.025*** (0.006)		
Physical discomfort	-0.039** (0.015)	-0.079*** (0.017)	-0.038** (0.017)	-0.082*** (0.014)		
F-statistic	9.44	18.61	7.60	25.24		
Control variables	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Wave FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Individual FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Observations	41,150	36,741	40,146	36,852		
Number of persons	13,338	12,769	13,409	12,458		
<i>Panel B. Second stage</i>						
	Dependent variable: political trust					
Life satisfaction	0.962* (0.509)	0.876** (0.349)	0.962* (0.528)	0.831** (0.369)		
Anderson-Rubin Wald F-statistic (p-value)	2.20 (0.114)	3.76 (0.025)	2.03 (0.135)	3.38 (0.036)		
Hansen J statistic (p-value)	0.220 (0.639)	0.494 (0.482)	0.384 (0.535)	1.078 (0.299)		
Control variables	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Wave FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Individual FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Observations	41,150	36,741	40,146	36,852		
Number of persons	13,338	12,769	13,409	12,458		

Note. The results are estimated by FE-IV models with full controls, based on the IV set of physical attractiveness (PA) and physical discomfort (PD). Control variables include age (log-linearised), marital status, education level, residence, Hukou, CPC membership, occupation status, family per capita income (log-linearised), household size and evaluation of medical services. All control variables are described in Table A1. Robust standard errors clustered at county level in parentheses. * p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01.

Table A7 Robustness check: including sample with cross-counties migrations

(1)	
<i>Panel A. First stage</i>	
	Dependent variable: life satisfaction
Physical attractiveness	0.026*** (0.007)
Physical discomfort	-0.056*** (0.013)
F-statistic	14.42
Control variables	Yes
Wave FE	Yes
Individual FE	Yes
Observations	86,575
Number of persons	29,346
<i>Panel B. Second stage</i>	
	Dependent variable: political trust
Life satisfaction	0.721* (0.401)
Anderson-Rubin Wald F-statistic	1.73
(p-value)	(0.178)
Hansen J statistic	0.003
(p-value)	(0.954)
Control variables	Yes
Wave FE	Yes
Individual FE	Yes
Observations	86,575
Number of persons	29,346

Note. The results are estimated by FE-IV models with full controls, based on the IV set of physical attractiveness (PA) and physical discomfort (PD). Control variables include age (log-linearised), marital status, education level, residence, Hukou, CPC membership, occupation status, family per capita income (log-linearised), household size and evaluation of medical services. All control variables are described in Table A1. Robust standard errors clustered at county level in parentheses. * p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01.

Table A8 Robustness check: whether attrition causes selection bias

	(1)
<i>Panel A. First stage</i>	
	Dependent variable: life satisfaction
Physical attractiveness	0.022*** (0.006)
Physical discomfort	-0.056*** (0.016)
Attrition indicator	-0.021 (0.015)
F-statistic	13.36
Control variables	Yes
Wave FE	Yes
Individual FE	Yes
Observations	49,165
Number of persons	19,076
<i>Panel B. Second stage</i>	
	Dependent variable: political trust
Life satisfaction	1.113** (0.483)
Attrition indicator	-0.002 (0.046)
Anderson-Rubin Wald F-statistic	2.61
(p-value)	(0.077)
Hansen J statistic	0.021
(p-value)	(0.884)
Control variables	Yes
Wave FE	Yes
Individual FE	Yes
Observations	49,165
Number of persons	19,076

Note. The results are estimated by FE-IV models with full controls, based on the IV set of physical attractiveness (PA) and physical discomfort (PD). Control variables include age (log-linearised), marital status, education level, residence, Hukou, CPC membership, occupation status, family per capita income (log-linearised), household size and evaluation of medical services. All control variables are described in Table A1. Robust standard errors clustered at county level in parentheses. * p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01.

Table A9 Robustness check: alternative choices of standard errors

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Baseline	Heteroscedasticity				
	County	robust	CFPS interviewer	Individual	Family	County & CFPS interviewer
<i>Panel A. First stage</i>						
	Dependent variable: life satisfaction					
Physical attractiveness	0.028*** (0.006)	0.028*** (0.004)	0.028*** (0.006)	0.028*** (0.004)	0.028*** (0.005)	0.029*** (0.006)
Physical discomfort	-0.055*** (0.012)	-0.055*** (0.010)	-0.055*** (0.011)	-0.055*** (0.010)	-0.055*** (0.012)	-0.055*** (0.012)
F-statistic	18.90	43.80	21.26	44.96	27.88	17.94
Control variables	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wave FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	77,891	77,891	77,891	77,891	77,891	77,891
Number of persons	26,107	26,107	26,107	26,107	26,107	26,107
<i>Panel B. Second stage</i>						
	Dependent variable: political trust					
Life satisfaction	0.875** (0.347)	0.875*** (0.272)	0.875** (0.343)	0.875*** (0.269)	0.875** (0.343)	0.875** (0.347)
Anderson-Rubin Wald F-statistic	3.72	5.55	3.89	5.67	3.47	3.76
(p-value)	(0.026)	(0.004)	(0.021)	(0.004)	(0.031)	(0.025)
Hansen J statistic	0.020	0.047	0.032	0.032	0.030	0.019
(p-value)	(0.888)	(0.829)	(0.858)	(0.859)	(0.863)	(0.889)
Control variables	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wave FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	77,891	77,891	77,891	77,891	77,891	77,891
Number of persons	26,107	26,107	26,107	26,107	26,107	26,107

Note. The results are estimated by FE-IV models with full controls, based on the IV set of physical attractiveness (PA) and physical discomfort (PD). Control variables include age (log-linearised), marital status, education level, residence, Hukou, CPC membership, occupation status, family per capita income (log-linearised), household size and evaluation of medical services. All control variables are described in Table A1. * p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01.

Table A10 Robustness check: political trust or general trust?

	(1) Controlled for general trust
<i>Panel A. First stage</i>	
	Dependent variable: life satisfaction
Physical attractiveness	0.027*** (0.006)
Physical discomfort	-0.054*** (0.011)
F-statistic	17.93
Control variables	Yes
Wave FE	Yes
Individual FE	Yes
Observations	77,631
Number of persons	26,048
<i>Panel B. Second stage</i>	
	Dependent variable: political trust
Life satisfaction	0.805** (0.355)
Anderson-Rubin Wald F-statistic	2.91
(p-value)	(0.057)
Hansen J statistic	0.000
(p-value)	(0.984)
Control variables	Yes
Wave FE	Yes
Individual FE	Yes
Observations	77,631
Number of persons	26,048

Note. The results are estimated by FE-IV models with full controls, based on the IV set of physical attractiveness (PA) and physical discomfort (PD). Control variables include age (log-linearised), marital status, education level, residence, Hukou, CPC membership, occupation status, family per capita income (log-linearised), household size and evaluation of medical services. All control variables are described in Table A1. Robust standard errors clustered at county level in parentheses. * p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01.

Table A11 Alternative measure of subjective well-being: OLS estimation

	(1) Pooled OLS	(2) FE
Life satisfaction	0.259*** (0.008)	0.202*** (0.012)
Control variables	Yes	Yes
Wave FE	Yes	Yes
Individual FE	No	Yes
Observations	28,822	28,822
Number of persons	14,411	14,411

Note. Control variables include age (log-linearised), marital status, education level, residence, Hukou, CPC membership, occupation status, family per capita income (log-linearised), household size. All control variables are described in Table A1. Robust standard errors clustered at county level in parentheses.

* p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01.

Table A12 Alternative measure of subjective well-being: IV estimation

	(1)	(2)	(3)
<i>Panel A. First stage</i>			
	Dependent variable: happiness		
Physical attractiveness	0.057*** (0.018)	0.058*** (0.018)	
Physical discomfort	-0.052 (0.037)		-0.051 (0.037)
F-statistic	6.03	10.03	1.96
Control variables	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wave FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	28,822	28,822	28,822
Number of persons	14,411	14,411	14,411
<i>Panel B. Second stage</i>			
	Dependent variable: political trust		
Life satisfaction	0.710* (0.369)	0.717* (0.385)	0.866 (0.956)
Anderson-Rubin Wald F-statistic (p-value)	1.84 (0.162)	3.04 (0.083)	0.91 (0.342)
Hansen J statistic (p-value)	0.032 (0.857)		
Control variables	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wave FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Individual FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	28,822	28,822	28,822
Number of persons	14,411	14,411	14,411

Note. The results are estimated by FE-IV models with full controls, based on the IV set of physical attractiveness (PA) and physical discomfort (PD). Control variables include age (log-linearised), marital status, education level, residence, Hukou, CPC membership, occupation status, family per capita income (log-linearised), household size and evaluation of medical services. All control variables are described in Table A1. Robust standard errors clustered at county level in parentheses. * p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01.

Table A13 Political trust and regime stability

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Dependent variable: upheaval					
	Probit estimation				OLS estimation	
	Coefficients		Marginal effects			
Political trust	-0.065*** (0.005)	-0.041*** (0.001)	-0.018*** (0.001)	-0.009*** (0.001)	-0.018*** (0.001)	-0.009*** (0.001)
Control variables	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Province FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
County FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
(Pseudo) R-squared	0.014	0.208	-	-	0.014	0.208
Number of persons	28,298	28,298	28,298	28,298	28,298	28,298

Note. The marginal effects of the probit model are calculated at the means of political trust as well as all covariates. Individual control variables include age (log-linearised), marital status, education level, residence, Hukou, CPC membership, occupation status, family per capita income (log-linearised) and household size. In addition, the gender, province-fixed effect and county-fixed effect are also controlled for. All control variables are described in Table A1. Robust standard errors clustered at county levels in parentheses. * p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01.

Supplementary analyses A: Self-censorship in the measure of political trust?

In addition to previous analyses by Yao et al. (2022) we check if our results are sensitive to issues of self-censorship through two tests. First, we simply exclude the sample who always report a high score (≥ 8) of political trust across all waves of the CFPS survey.¹ The results in column 1 of below Table S1 show that the coefficient of life satisfaction is very similar to our main results and remains statistically significant. Our second approach is to consider which group of the sample is most likely to give a politically expedient answer. An intuitive candidate here is whether respondents are a member of the ruling party (CPC member). Reporting a low level of trust might have an adverse impact on one's career in the party as it could be seen as an act of political betrayal (Han and Li 2021). Hence we conduct a robustness check by excluding all CPC members from our sample. In column 2 of Table S1, we can see that the coefficient of life satisfaction is still very close to our main results and remains statistically significant. This would again suggest that our findings are unlikely to be biased by self-censorship when it comes to how individuals report their political trust.

¹ Note that our finding does not rely on the choice of the level “8”, as we can get similar results when using “7”, “9” or “10” as the sample selection standard.

Table S1 Robustness check: self-censorship in the measure of political trust?

	(1) Exclude extreme answers	(2) Exclude CPC member
<i>Panel A. First stage</i>		
	Dependent variable: life satisfaction	
Physical attractiveness	0.028*** (0.006)	0.026*** (0.006)
Physical discomfort	-0.059*** (0.012)	-0.055*** (0.012)
F-statistic	20.09	17.69
Control variables	Yes	Yes
Wave FE	Yes	Yes
Individual FE	Yes	Yes
Observations	75,478	69,899
Number of persons	25,241	23,489
<i>Panel B. Second stage</i>		
	Dependent variable: political trust	
Life satisfaction	0.836** (0.337)	0.820* (0.379)
Anderson-Rubin Wald F-statistic (p-value)	3.55 (0.031)	2.74 (0.067)
Hansen J statistic (p-value)	0.027 (0.869)	0.019 (0.891)
Control variables	Yes	Yes
Wave FE	Yes	Yes
Individual FE	Yes	Yes
Observations	75,478	69,899
Number of persons	25,241	23,489

Note. The results are estimated by FE-IV models with full controls, based on the IV set of physical attractiveness (PA) and physical discomfort (PD). Control variables include age (log-linearised), marital status, education level, residence, Hukou, CPC membership, occupation status, family per capita income (log-linearised), household size and evaluation of medical services. All control variables are described in Table A1. Robust standard errors clustered at county level in parentheses. * p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01.

Supplementary analyses B: Does the “beauty premium” influence our estimation?

Apart from economic returns, advantages in the marriage market are a frequently mentioned premium of physical attractiveness (Egebark et al. 2021). Although we have controlled for marital status in the model, this might not cover the “quality” of the spouse as result of the beauty premium.² Using spousal education attainment as a proxy, we control for the quality of spouse in our model.³ The CFPS records the spouse’s education level for around 80% of respondents and the results for this sub-group are presented in column 1 of below Table S2. Life satisfaction still has a significant effect on political trust. The coefficient size ($\beta = 0.990$, $p = 0.065$) is qualitatively indistinguishable from our previous FE-IV estimates (Table 1 above).

Although we have controlled for occupation type and family per capita income, one could argue that these variables may not be precise enough to reflect personal success or failure in the workplace resulting from differences in PA. There might, for instance, be non-monetary discrimination when it comes to work characteristics that are associated with PA. Whilst very unlikely, one could perhaps argue that such discrimination in the labour market may lead to general dissatisfaction with the societal system including the local government and hence deteriorate trust. We address this question by limiting our sample to those who are least likely to be affected by a beauty premium in job characteristics. Specifically, we focus on three types of respondents: students, farmers and people that are out of the labour force (typically retirees).⁴ The results presented in column 2 of Table S2 are fully in keeping with our main findings discussed before (see Table 1). We conclude that PA does not appear to violate the exclusion condition.

² We believe that the quality of a spouse is largely stable across years and is hence covered by the individual fixed effect. However, one may divorce and marry again, leading to variation in spousal quality within the same person.

³ This is based on the fact that intelligence is a key factor in mate selection (Fisman et al. 2006; Hitsch et al. 2010).

⁴ In our setting, we only focus on the samples who did not change their occupational status across waves during our sampling period. This means that, for example, a farmer is always a farmer when it is observed in our setting. This is also true for students and non-employed individuals. As farmers and retirees constitute the largest part of our sample, we can still obtain a large number of observations for this test. What is more, those who are out of the labour force in the CFPS are mainly retired (over 90%), others are, for instance, disabled.

Table S2 Robustness check: examination on beauty premium

	(1)	(2)
	Spouse quality	Limited sample
<i>Panel A. First stage</i>		
	Dependent variable: life satisfaction	
Physical attractiveness	0.027*** (0.007)	0.029*** (0.008)
F-statistic	16.99	14.58
Control variables	Yes	Yes
Wave FE	Yes	Yes
Individual FE	Yes	Yes
Observations	62,722	49,003
Number of persons	20,911	16,967
<i>Panel B. Second stage</i>		
	Dependent variable: political trust	
Life satisfaction	0.990* (0.533)	0.998* (0.582)
Anderson-Rubin Wald F-statistic (p-value)	4.40 (0.037)	3.65 (0.058)
Control variables	Yes	Yes
Wave FE	Yes	Yes
Individual FE	Yes	Yes
Observations	62,722	49,003
Number of persons	20,911	16,967

Note. The results are estimated by FE-IV models with full controls, based on the IV of physical attractiveness (PA). Individual control variables include age (log-linearised), marital status, education level, residence, Hukou, CPC membership, occupation status, family per capita income (log-linearised) and household size. All control variables are described in Table A1. Robust standard errors clustered at county level in parentheses.

* p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01.

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