

# Analysis on Imbalance of Family Intergenerational Exchange in China Rural Area

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**Abstract.** In China rural area, intergenerational exchange on supporting each other between parents and offspring is uneven. Parents pay much more than the return they'll get when they're old, which mainly relates to the utilities of children. In countryside, the utilities of children (especially sons) manifest in following aspects: continuing the family line, emotional comfort, laborer and supporting for old age. To some extent, these factors influence the rural intergenerational injustice respectively and together. From the prospective of trend of social and economic development, the caring of the retired will be taken by social insurance system; the intergeneration exchange on supporting each other between parents and offspring will no longer be a social issue, but in the vast rural areas, the influence of traditional culture family lineage is still powerful. The need of caring of the old becomes so weak that emotional effect becomes much more urgent. The weak status of the old generation bring the fathers' generation in a weak social status, which seriously affect the living conditions of the old generations. Therefore, when focusing the caring issue in the country, besides that we should ensure the old be cared materially, what matters most is keep the balance between the exchanging two sides

**Keywords.** China rural area; providing for the aged; intergenerational exchange

## 1 Introduction

Intergenerational injustice is an important social problem. In China's rural areas, the imbalance between intergenerational family exchanges is more obvious, parent-farmers pay far more than what they get in return. This is not only reflected in the parent phase tending the living standards of farmers, "crunch", but also in the non-feeding stage full pension children. Pension contract occurred after raising a child intergenerational exchange behavior. That is to say, initiatively, parent-farmers choose the act of childbearing, child-rearing behavior occurs then, after which appear pension contracts. These three are gradually progressive, without the former, the latter would not have happened. Therefore, in the intergenerational family pension analysis, it is necessary to first analyze the parent-farmers who choose to have children. And this is no different with the child's potency. Combined with western "child cost – utility" theory and practice in the countryside of China, the utility of children (especially sons) includes following main aspects: procreation, emotional comfort, labor-economy and elder support, etc.

## 2 Sub-generation utility analysis

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## 2.1 Procreation utility analysis

From the direct cause of his son's birth, the idea is to continue the family line genes. The main purpose of procreation includes gene descent, the continuation of life and inheriting from his father. As we know, Chinese traditional culture is male-dominated, surname and inheritance of property are both derived from this. So, whether it is the continuation of life, inherited his father or the traditional concept of the family line, all relate to in pursuit of a boy as the goal. Under the influence of traditional fertility culture, coupled with a growing number of strict birth control, fertility preferences of people appeared to strengthen the trend. Since the 1990s, China began rising sex ratio at birth, when the fifth national census in 2000 has reached 118, much higher than the normal value of the United Nations in 1955 made 102 to 107. The data also show that the impact of the baby born in the 1990s, mainly in the rural high sex ratio. In 2002, the State Family Planning Commission to promote co-operation with Beijing Horizon Education Department conducted a survey of urban and rural residents fertility desire. A survey from the perspective of rural reproductive purposes (see Table 1),

**Table 1.** Reason for having children in rural area

| Purpose of fertility | population | rate (%) |
|----------------------|------------|----------|
| Family line          | 3798       | 34.6     |
| economy              | 2912       | 26.6     |
| emotion              | 2021       | 18.4     |
| responsibility       | 998        | 9.1      |
| Natural trend        | 503        | 4.6      |
| others               | 19         | 0.2      |
| vague                | 713        | 6.5      |
| total                | 10964      | 100      |

Despite the variety of reproductive purposes, but the most important is nothing less than procreation, economic needs, emotional needs, these three reproductive purposes and has accounted for nearly 80% of all respondents. The purpose of fertility maximum number of procreation, there are 3798 people, accounting for 34.6 % of all respondents. This survey also showed in the group of willing to birth a child, partial male factor of 72.16%, partial female factor of 27.84%; willingness birth two children, no partial factor 94.79%, indicating that only birth a child under the premise of gender preference peasant boy behaved very prominent. In recent years, these cases are not a big change happen. Seeing from that, the current generation of traditional access in rural China is still the most important reproductive purposes. Chinese people's strong sense of clan, family-based culture profound impact on generations of Chinese people, effect belongs to the category of culture, a lot of people approved of this idea are trained from an early age, these are instinct, something without rational reflection. In procreation fertility motivation driven by the performance of certain reproductive behavior is bound to give birth, and the birth of a boy core. Therefore, in China's vast rural areas, fertility preferences boy will behave very obvious.

## 2.2 Emotional utility analysis

In the process of bringing up children, the emotional effect plays an important role. As can be seen from the survey (see Table 1), emotional needs accounting for 18.4%, and economic needs of the family line are followed just after. Farmers to parent their children's emotional effectiveness include the happiness of a family union, strengthen families, spiritual sustenance, feeling of achievement, responsibility and so on. In general, children's emotional effect can be divided into two categories, one for the children of nature itself has a utility, such as grandchildren, strengthen families, increase farmers' parent achievement, responsibility, etc.; while the other is needs children can bring positive growth effect. Such as the hope of the family, spiritual, parent peasants high hopes on their children, I hope they have success. In the process of bringing up children, the driving force behind the natural effect plays the role of children's positive growth externality effect is also seen as a way of life of parent-farmers responsibility, the common mission of the family, rather than on behalf of both inter-exchange behavior. This is because in the countryside, farmers in the parent process of bringing up children to be subjected to "sense of community" effect. In a relatively closed and relatively backward cultural communities, there are norms and adapt to this idea of some of the majority of people living in the community recognized behavior by the regional subcultures decision. In such a strong sense of community atmosphere, a philosophy of life for farmer-generations is formed. This farmer's view of life is that they live in the world must be responsible for the two sides: make account the continuation of "family line" for future generations of their ancestors; account that is left to future generations to make as much as possible successors possessions or helping children complete their education, so that future generations live a better life. This is the goal of their life, also constitute the farmers in the community competition content. Like farmers eager to get the respect of others, also want to live in their own communities and improve their social position, which determines the competitiveness of farmers in the community are related to this: he and his son are having a good career, life in family are becoming better and better, and so on. These results reflect the farmer "in the industry," Alone, that is when they are "life achievement". Thus, in the process of bringing up children, which plays a role in consciousness tenacious, make sacrifices to become strong parent support.

### **2.3 Economy & eldercare utility analysis**

Farmer's raising son's ultimate cause is older support. In this survey (see Table 1), the number of fertility due to economic need is 2912, accounting for 26.6% of the total. Economic needs including raising children for old age, increased labor, increase income. In economic needs, the need for pension nail in the coffin accounted for 97% of the total need. In other words, the economy needs are primarily pension needs. In China, because Social Security cannot cover everyone, especially in rural areas, old-age security is still blank, elderly people living mainly dependent child, the child is the best guarantee of elderly life. Of course, the child protection for the elderly living on more than just economic, but also security needs, spiritual comfort, life care in everyday, even what offspring do after parents' death. Parent pension expectations of farmers out of fear, in the reproductive purpose exhibited a very strong pension needs. And under the influence of traditional culture, social pension in providing comfort and spiritual aspects of life care deficiencies, farmers pension at the moment it is difficult to self-realization. Farmers raise their own children for old age is still the most realistic option. Therefore, people believe, not only to students, but also to a boy, this is a good old age security. But in reality, the parent pension needs of farmers but was weakening. Family pension contains three aspects including economic support, daily care and spiritual comfort. Three elements of three aspects of family pension, family pension is also three levels. Survey data show that at present China is still in the rural elderly to 'eat' the lower stage. Moreover, the rural family pension there is a danger of turning into a lack of maintenance support detachment. Pension issues concern the rural elderly, but too lenient, it is difficult to stick to their maintenance rights. Whether its essence is due to "sense of community" effect, or out of the "collective game" result, in practice, the subjective pension parent needs of farmers have been weakening trend.

## **3 Cause analysis of imbalance in intergenerational exchange**

In intergenerational support exchanges contract throughout the family, the parent has ever been at a disadvantage status. First, the contract deed initiates from the born of offspring. Under the influence of “family line” concept, people are choosing to give birth to a child, especially a boy, in any case. If not have a boy, then you will become “the most unethical one without offspring”. If the family has a boy, for a parent, it is the completion of a major role in life, no matter what the crime after the subject, they are willing to bear. The offspring to their natural condition as a bargaining chip, they return their parents’ cultural exchange. If the purpose of procreation is not to continue the family line, fertility gender preference will be weakened, their fertility accomplishment will restore in nature and thus be out of the shackles of cultural constraints. So in a way, “procreation”, the traditional concept of Intergenerational exchange becomes unbalanced native point. Tending stage is a period of up to intergenerational interaction is an important period of intergenerational relations training. In general, the quality level of intergenerational relations in this process will directly affect the future status of the elder support maintenance. From the current point of view, in the process of bringing up children, parent saddled with heavy family burden. Moreover, the parent does not own farmers pay regarded as future offspring pension exchange conditions, but a way of life as their own responsibility, the common mission of the family. This concept of the family makes parents see offspring’s achievement very important. In order to make the offspring succeed, they are often able to do everything. In the end, a unique life thought is formed during which a mental effect is much greater than the material. It is also a major cause of the pension needs of farmers parent subjective weakening. At this stage, the positive growth of their offspring to honor a parent’s household investment, thus completing the exchange of emotional utility. Therefore, the offspring, in the case of parent offspring still need support, the core family pension contract is the contract, and only at this time in order to fully return the offspring parent. But in reality, the pension needs of farmers for its parent passive and emerging trend is weakening. This situation occurs, has dimensional reasons. Changes in the social environment, coupled with low demand for the parent’s pension and the time difference between progeny performance that have made the parent’s pension objectively at a disadvantage; however, offspring’s decreased maintenance responsibility is undoubtedly the most important reason. In short, the current in China’s vast rural areas, traditional culture has a deep impact on the family line, the importance of old-age security weakening due to the fact, nor the emotional and offspring positive growth effect. At a disadvantage in the intergenerational exchange contracts, parents-farmer’s living conditions are really affected.

## 4 Conclusion

With the rapid increase in per capita GDP and rapidly advancing urbanization, rural old-age will be gradually incorporated into the unified social security system; intergenerational support exchange between parent and offspring is no longer a social problem in the long run. But this requires a fairly long process. Intergenerational exchange in the parent disadvantage farmers, their pension situation has thus been severely affected. Moreover, since the offspring of farmers benefit based on the occasion of the transfer of wealth-generation, so the family life cycle will eventually lead to a greater burden in future offspring of farmers. If we allow such a family pension in exchange intergenerational injustice continues, then it will not only solve the problem of rural pension unfavorable, the same will affect the stability and development of rural areas. Therefore, when care about rural family elder support, we should not only make sense of security, but also to balance the occasion on behalf of the two sides, so as to avoid solving the former one hindering the following development of the rural areas.

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