

A Systematic Review of Rural Elderly Care and Sustainable Development under the Background of Population Aging

Siqi Liu^{1,2,3,*}, Li Qi^{2,3,5}, Chen Wei^{4,5}

¹Shaanxi Provincial Land Engineering Construction Group Co., Ltd. Xi'an 710075, China

²Institute of Land Engineering and Technology, Shaanxi Provincial Land Engineering Construction Group Co., Ltd. Xi'an 710075, China

³Key Laboratory of Degraded and Unused Land Consolidation Engineering, the Ministry of Natural Resources. Xi'an 710075, China

⁴Shaanxi Provincial Land Consolidation Engineering Technology Research Center. Xi'an 710075, China

⁵Land Engineering Technology Innovation Center, Ministry of Natural Resources. Xi'an 710075, China

Abstract

With the development of urbanization, the contradiction between urban and rural areas is becoming increasingly prominent. Various resources from rural areas continue to flow into cities, leading to the loss of rural population and environmental degradation, ultimately forming an unsustainable pattern. The aging level of Chinese society is constantly intensifying, and the proportion of elderly people is increasing. Especially in rural areas, many families only have elderly people staying in the countryside. The elderly care and social security in rural areas are the key to rural revitalization and the key to maintaining social stability. This study analyzes the implementation paths of rural elderly care in the context of aging from different perspectives, and compares the main viewpoints of domestic and foreign scholars on the elderly care security model. Rural elderly care is a complex issue that requires the construction of a complete security system, including land, industry, policy support, and living environment.

Keywords

Population aging; elderly care; rural sustainability; social insurance.

1. Introduction

With China's reform and opening up to the present, more and more rural young adult have entered the city due to family and social difficulties. On the other hand, the dual system of urban and rural areas and China's long-term social injustice have made it impossible for farmers to enter the city together with the elderly, leading to the intensification of the empty nest phenomenon in rural areas. A considerable proportion of young migrant workers have become migrant workers and landless farmers. The slow development in the past reforms has made the issue of rural elderly care less prominent. Now that farmers lose land, it means unemployment and loss of retirement security. According to the results of the 7th National Population Census, the population aged 60 and above in 2020 was 264 million, accounting for 18.70% of the total population. As of 2021, the population aged 65 and above exceeded 200 million, accounting for 14.2% of the total population. Compared with 2010, the population aged 60 and above has increased by 48.67%, and the proportion of the population aged 65 and above has increased by 5.3 percentage points [1]. The above data explains that the elderly population in China is still further increasing, and the scale of the elderly population is still expanding. The population

census will provide a deeper understanding of the development level, structure, and scope of population aging, which is of great significance for improving the elderly care service and security system, and promoting healthy development. The intensification of aging phenomenon has seriously weakened the traditional family elderly care model. The transformation mechanism of the dual-sector model structure has not yet been formed, and the urban-rural divide and rule pattern still exists [2]. Due to the relatively weak internal incentive mechanism for rural development, the income gap between urban and rural areas shows a growing trend, and the rural population is "getting old before getting rich", and the pension is very low. Under the current situation of lack of existing pension institutions in rural areas, single pension service facilities, and backward pension concepts, the rural pension situation is not optimistic. Therefore, in this context, the issue of coordinated urban and rural development and elderly care must be addressed. Therefore, the author chose to investigate and study this issue and conducted a discussion on it.

2. Current Situation and Global Trend

Research on the trend and current situation of old-age security policies: in foreign research on rural old-age security policies, the three concepts of "welfare system", "non family" and "non commercialization" appeared in the book *Three Worlds of Welfare capitalism* represented by Danish sociologist Costa Anderson, who believed that the Welfare state was the product of the process of "non commercialization" of capitalism [3]. The author uses commercialization to explain the process of its emergence. He divides the Welfare state into three worlds, namely, three models, which are (1) the liberal model of Anglo-Saxon countries, (2) the social democracy model of Scandinavia, (3) and social cooperation in the European continent-a conservative model. Germany was the first country in the world to establish a modern social security system. In 1957, Germany formulated the Farmers' Elderly Assistance Law, which is a special elderly security system for independent agricultural business owners and their family members who are also engaged in agricultural production activities. The current rural pension insurance system in Germany covers all agricultural and forestry business owners and their spouses, as well as family members and their spouses of farmers engaged in joint agricultural labor.

Research on the pension system, the "three pillar" pension system constructed based on the three functions of redistribution, savings, and insurance was proposed by the World Bank in "Preventing the Aging Crisis" [4]. The first pillar is to solve the poverty problem among the elderly population and needs to be enforced through public administration; The second pillar refers to the addition of personal mandatory savings and personal pension insurance contributions; The third pillar refers to the voluntary savings of individuals or corporate annuities paid by enterprises for employees. The first pillar serves as the overall foundation for the second and third pillars, while the second and third pillars provide a strong first pillar of financial security. The three pillars safeguard each other and interact with each other.

Research on elderly care responsibility, the government plays a more important role in the process of elderly care in foreign countries. The school of state responsibility, represented by Rhonda, believes that this country is mainly responsible for providing elderly care and information for families [5]. Sussan Hillier believes that due to the limited economic conditions of a country, it is difficult to achieve a universal social pension system [6]. Therefore, special groups are taken care of through the pension system to ensure that farmers, especially the elderly in rural areas, enjoy basic pension security. Due to the existence of many recipients, the government's financial constraints can only provide a minimum level of security, and the main responsibility for elderly care lies with the family, "aiding" self-help individuals. Phonda J.V. Montgomery proposed countermeasures and suggestions for "the burden of long-term care for

countries and their families together" based on research from EU countries [7]. Pension insurance benefits and personal income, payment period, and farmers' responsibility for elderly care are personal first, followed by the responsibility of the country and society. However, the government has provided subsidies to a large extent. Research on Diversified Pension Security System: Social Pension has always been a concern of the World Bank. In 1994 and 1994, experts wrote two books: "Preventing Elderly Crisis - Policies to Protect the Elderly and Promote Economic Growth" and "Income Protection for the Elderly in the 21st Century: A Comparison from the Perspective of International Pension Insurance System Reform". The government provided suggestions for two models of multi pillar pension insurance systems, to enrich the content of the multi pillar model established by the World Bank [8].

3. Research Advance in China

Research on rural elderly care: Urban and rural development is a part of the "Five Coordinates" in the scientific development concept. It pays more attention to the development of rural areas. In cities, most people can enjoy the benefits of modern social security systems, with high coverage rates of medical insurance, pension insurance, and unemployment insurance. The minimum wage adjustment, the minimum living security system for residents, and the normal adjustment mechanism for basic pension funds for enterprise retirees have also been basically established. Compared to the construction of the rural elderly care security system, it is severely lagging behind, with small-scale, low-level safety and insufficient security capabilities being the basic characteristics of current rural social security. Against the backdrop of significant differences in social security between urban and rural areas, domestic scholars still focus more on the relatively mature modules of urban elderly care. The development of rural elderly care has not yet been completed, and there is relatively little research in the field. Most of its research content is distributed in the current population aging problem, elderly behavior activities, etc., but it ignores the skeleton and soul of rural elderly care: elderly care models, elderly insurance systems, and related solutions. However, scholars have also achieved fruitful results in their research on elderly care models, such as how to solve the problem of rural elderly care, how to form a good elderly care model, what kind of system and model should be implemented, and where pension funds come from. Some scholars have conducted in-depth discussions and debates on their own research and proposed some forward-looking and innovative viewpoints.

Chen Yuguang believes that China's current aging and Sub-replacement fertility under family planning have gradually turned "the elderly have a sense of security" into "the elderly have no place to live" [9]. In view of this phenomenon, we must have a strategic vision. According to international data, the proportion of elderly people willing to stay in elderly care institutions is about 5% of the elderly population, while the proportion of elderly people who choose to live at home for elderly care is between 90% and 95% of the elderly population. Of course, the changes in data vary depending on national conditions and personal economic conditions. In order to provide better support for the elderly in their later years, in addition to vigorously promoting filial piety and other good virtues, and fulfilling the law on the protection of the rights and interests of the elderly, we must speed up the improvement of the community elderly care service system, and take it as the social support for elderly family elderly care, which is a rational choice in response to the severe trend of aging population in China. Yang Fuxing believes that in the era of agriculture, family elderly care has always been a traditional way of providing for the elderly in China [10]. However, the accompanying industrialization and information age have made the function of family elderly care inadequate in today's aging society. Therefore, in response to the problems exposed by rural elderly care security, we must reform the model of China's rural elderly care security system from three aspects: political

system, economic strength, and cultural heritage. That is, focusing on family elderly care, establishing a vertical risk dispersion mechanism for family elderly care resources, forming a rural security system that relies on endogenous growth, and establishing a new rural elderly care security system, ultimately forming a Chinese characteristic elderly care security path that combines rural elderly care security with urban elderly care security. Liang Hong believes that it is very important to establish a theoretical analysis model to address the issue of rural elderly care security in China's current aging population [11]. He has conducted a systematic analysis of the factors that affect the supply and demand of rural elderly care security, and on this basis, discussed the principles for selecting the organizational system of rural elderly care security in China and several possible development directions for adapting supply and demand. In terms of empirical research, he divided farmers into four groups: purely reserved for professional farmers, urban floating population, farmers in township and village enterprises and landless farmers, and then compared and discussed the rural social pension security system adapted to different groups, and pointed out that this development model is facing severe challenges and difficulties. Finally, it proposes a new development model for the reform of China's rural elderly care security system - controlling institutional differences across regions, thereby forming a unified national social pension insurance plan jointly responsible by the central and provincial governments at the national level.

Currently, the development of urban and rural elderly care security is imbalanced, and the government needs to establish a basic system for reforming the social elderly care security system. In terms of family, China's "filial piety culture" has a history of over a hundred years and has been discussed or approved by society, so most families tend to choose family retirement. However, traditional family values have become weak in modern society, which to some extent hinders the progress of China's elderly care security construction. In this sense, the status of family elderly care needs to be repositioned. At present, intergenerational relationships in rural households in China are cold, and the majority of rural labor force enters cities. The issue of rural elderly care security is becoming increasingly prominent. In this diversified context, how to leverage the advantages of various resource endowments, fully utilize their resources, and establish a clear division of labor and rural elderly care security system has become a research project of the Safety Research Group of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in the "Study of Rural Social Security System". They proposed that overall, there are currently no conditions for the implementation of basic social pension insurance in rural areas of China. The main reason is that the development level of rural productivity in China is not high, and most farmers do not have the ability to participate in pension insurance, and their awareness of insurance participation is weak. In response to this inevitable situation, the issue of rural elderly care security in China must be addressed in a specific manner. Based on the different levels of productivity development in different regions and groups of elderly care methods, the level of elderly care security in different villages should be applied to establish a rural elderly care security system suitable for the region.

It is necessary to promote a universal coverage and urban-rural coordinated social pension security system. However, starting from the reality, this goal is difficult to achieve in the short term. Therefore, we should gradually move towards this goal, first establishing guarantees for those without guarantees to be included in the social pension security system, and then gradually reducing the different security levels for each group. The specific measures are: firstly, establish an elderly care security system for farmers without institutional arrangements; Secondly, we must accelerate the reform of the social pension security system. In today's aging society in China, the practical choice to solve the problem of rural elderly care is to implement rural social elderly care. Traditional elderly care methods are unstable, and land elderly care will eventually become unreliable due to land acquisition and personal labor capacity decline. Establishing a rural social elderly care insurance system is of great significance for promoting

the civilized progress of the rural social environment and guiding them to arrange their finances reasonably. Mu Guangzong proposed that there have been only three basic ways of providing for the elderly in human society throughout history involving family care, self care, and social care [12]. The criteria for dividing these three categories mainly depend on the sources of support for elderly care. If it comes from children, spouses, and other relatives, it is referred to as "family retirement". If the elderly care resources mainly rely on oneself, such as being able to take care of oneself in daily life, financially independent, and spiritually enriched, it is considered as "self elderly care". If the elderly care support mainly comes from village collectives, enterprises, governments, etc., such as financial support provided by the government, legal protection, collective care, etc., it is referred to as "social elderly care". He believes that China, as an underdeveloped country, faces far greater challenges in terms of aging than developed countries.

4. Conclusion

In general, governments, units, collectives, and organizations at all levels should establish regular contact systems, and then introduce supporting and comprehensive aging policies to reduce pressure and burden on aging China. It should be noted that the concept of "land for security", which can be roughly understood from two perspectives: firstly, rural elderly people can use requisitioned land to exchange for social security resettlement; secondly, farmers can use land contract management rights to exchange for social security benefits. In the policy environment of China's land acquisition system, the government should bear the corresponding responsibility in exploring rural social security by using land transfer to solve rural pension insurance, which has practical significance for establishing farmers' pension security.

Acknowledgments

This work is supported by Shaanxi Key laboratory of land consolidation (Grant No.300102352502), project of Shaanxi Province Land Engineering Construction Group (Program No. DJNY2022-29) and key projects for ecological space governance in Shaanxi (No.2022HZ1773).

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