

Research on the Social Assistance Countermeasures for Poor Elderly Population in China

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The Research Result of Hei Longjiang Province Philosophy and Social Science Fund Project: Research on the System of Social Assistance on the Type of Expenditure Poverty Population in Hei Longjiang Province"(15SHB02).

Key Words: Population aging, Poor population, Poor elderly population, Social assistance

Abstract: There is an amazing number of old people suffering from poverty in our country, and the frail nature determines that the poor old people are badly in need of the government and social power to survive and get rid of poverty. However, it has been a long time that the anti-poverty problems of aging population in our country no matter in theories or practice are very backward. Therefore, based on the sufficient prediction of the size of the poor old people, our country strives for improving the social assistance for old-age poverty from the level of material life, medical and psychological, which is of great significance in both theories and practice.

Population aging

Population aging is a common problem in the world. More and more countries are in the process of aging, and enter into the aging society quickly or slowly, China is also the case. (See figure 1). The social security policy of the elderly in China is relatively simple, and the radiation range of social assistance policy for the elderly is also limited. So it is very difficult for most of the elderly in the end of life to change their weak positions on economic income, and they are vulnerable to economic poverty, spiritual poverty and so on. Therefore, the old people become an indispensable part of the poverty which can not be ignored.

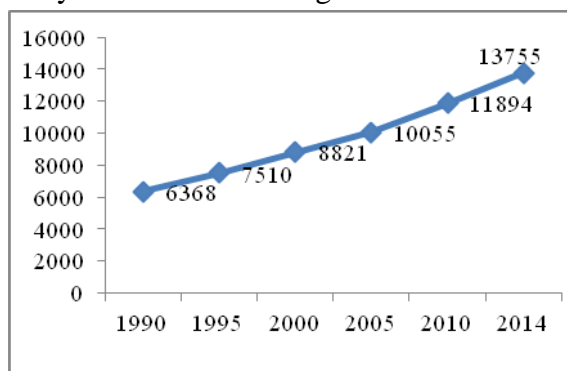


Figure 1:1990-2014 population changes over the age of 65 years

Data sources: National Statistical Yearbook 2015

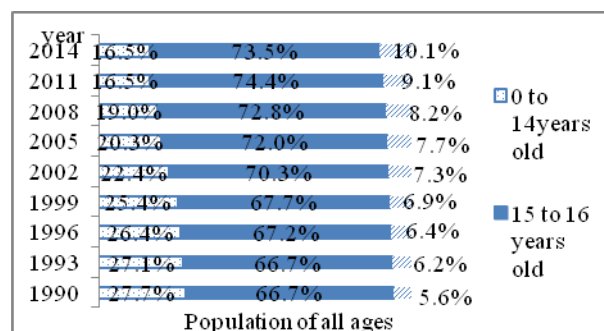


Figure 2:1990-2014 changes of population proportion in different age groups

Data sources: National Statistical Yearbook 2015

According to the international practice, it usually uses four indicators to analyze the degree of aging population, that is, coefficient of aging people, coefficient of young people, the ratio between old and young, and the age median. The social classification indicators of the United Nations' population age structure are shown in table 1.

table1: The social classification indicators of the United Nations' population age structure

The social type	Young society	Adult society	Old society
coefficient of aging people	Less than 4%	4%-7%	More than 7%
coefficient of young people	Less than 40%	30%-40%	Less than 30%
young and old ratio	Less than 15%	15%-30%	More than 30%
the median age	Under the age of 20	20-30 years of age	More than 30 years of age

The population aged 65 and above has gradually increased from 5.6% in 1990 to 10.1% in 2014, and the total number has increased from about 63.68 million in 1990 to about 130 million in 2014. In other words, the population of old people has increased by about 73.87 million in less than 30 years, which is astonishing and almost can be ranked the top ten in the world population rankings.

The declining proportion of young people aged 0 to 14 in the overall national population indicates that the tendency of China's population is in a coexistence situation where the young population is declining and the old population is increasing. It is also suggested that living security of the elderly population is bound to be an important part in the construction of a harmonious China.

Based on the International convention, it is generally thought that when a country's or a region's population aged 60 and above accounts for 10% of the total population, or the population aged 65 and above reached 7% of the total population, then it can be concluded that the country or the region has entered into an aging society. According to this standard, Chinese population aged 65 and above reached 7.0% of the total population in 2000, so it is natural that China can be included in the aging society. In the sixth nationwide population census of 2014, this proportion has reached 10.1%, which means that it has increased by 3.1% during the 14 years and it also suggests the accelerated aging process of our country. Moreover, in international custom, our country has been in old-age society according to the four indicators of population aging degree in that the coefficient of young people has dropped to below 30% in 1987, the coefficient of old people is above 7% in 2001, the ratio between old and young is above 30% in 2000, and the ratio between old and young has reached as high as 60.98% in 2014. (see table 2)

table 2: 1982-2014 index changes of population aging unit: %

Year	coefficient of young people	young and old ratio	coefficient of aging people
1990	27.69%	20.11%	5.57%
1992	27.60%	22.32%	6.16%
1994	27.00%	23.55%	6.36%
1996	26.40%	24.24%	6.40%
1998	25.70%	26.07%	6.70%
2000	22.89%	30.40%	6.96%
2002	22.40%	32.59%	7.30%
2004	21.50%	35.27%	7.58%
2006	19.75%	40.13%	7.93%
2008	18.95%	43.53%	8.25%
2010	16.60%	53.43%	8.87%
2012	16.46%	57.05%	9.39%
2014	16.49%	60.98%	10.06%

Date sources: According to the data of China Statistical Yearbook

The size of the poor elderly population

In order to predict the size of the poor elderly population, it is necessary to specify the total number of elderly population and elderly poverty rate. By the end of 2015, the population of the old people aged 60 and above reached 222 million, accounting for 16.1% of the total population, and the people aged 65 and above reached 143.86 million, accounting for 10.5% of the total population. The amount of human capital accumulated in young age also determines the probability of the occurrence of poverty in old age, and the education investment in youth or work qualifications also determines the elderly pension after retirement, which means that the old people who lack of human capital accumulation are more likely to suffer from poverty. However, there is still no uniform standard of the elderly poverty rates in academic circles, and different scholars has different opinions. For example, Dewen Wang thought the rate of elderly poverty was 7.1-9.0% with the average of about 8%. The urban elderly poverty rate was 4.2 to 5.5% and the rural elderly poverty rate was 8.6 to 10.8%.^[1] So it can be concluded that the poor population aged 60 and above is in the size of 12.613058 million to 15.988384 million and the poor population aged 65 and above is in the size of 8.437051 million to 10.694853 million.

While through the data analysis of urban and rural minimum living security, Lixiong Lang concluded that the number of the poor elderly population was about 18 million, then calculated the total poverty rate of Chinese old people was 10.77%, and emphasized that the results calculated by minimum living security was just the minimum size of the number of the poor population and the old poverty rate, in other words, the the real poor elderly population of China has been over 18 million.^[2] If combined with the data of the sixth census in our country, it can be seen that the size of the poor population aged 60 and above should be in 19.132766 million, and the size of the poor population aged 65 and above should be in 12.798175 million.

Generally, the population aged 60 and above referred to the aging population in our country, which shows that the size of the poor elderly population is more than 10 million and even close to 20 million. But with the deepening of China's aging population and the adjustment of poverty standard, there will be more low-income elderly population under the ranks of the poor population.

It has already been an urgent social problem that carrying on social assistance to such a large number of poor elderly population. However, both theories and practice are clearly indicated that China's social assistance for poor elderly needs to be improved.

Existing problems of the poor elderly population

There are various measurement criteria to define poor elderly population, such as Engel coefficient method, the poverty line method and so on. But there are unique characteristics in poor elderly population's physiological state, mental state, emotional state and living environment, all of which exert great impact on the poor elderly population.

With the increase of age, the physiological function of the elderly has gradually entered the recession period. As quitting their jobs, the old people's political discourse power and family discourse power are decreasing continuously, the process of which changes the old people's psychological state and gradually forms a kind of emotion with both self-esteem and self-accusation. In this situation, they are relatively sensitive to the external speeches or the behaviors of the people around them and easy to fall into mental poverty. In recent years, the crime rate of the elderly is constantly rising, which is in accordance with the view put forward by a previous scholar that the aging aggravates poverty, and poverty exacerbates criminalization. Due to the aging population and shortage of welfare, some "silver" offenders have an extreme idea of desperation, that is, the desire to get into prison. The elderly, who live alone with no money and family, are in a high rate of crime. It is reported that the suicide phenomena of old people are prominent day by day. Losing the job opportunities, facing the fast-paced life, without the company of grown-up offspring, the difficulties in economic, and loneliness and depression in psychological, all of which are the major causes of suicide in the elderly.

After retiring from the field of labor, the economic source of the elderly is mainly from the retirement pension or children's support, so their economic life is worse than before. With the declining physiological functions, the elderly become the high incidence of various diseases. At the end of 2015, the number of the elderly who enjoy old age allowance is 21.551 million, the number of the elderly who enjoy the nursing allowance is 0.265 million, and the number of the elderly who enjoy the pension service subsidies is 2.579 million. While all of these data are just the tip of the iceberg for the elderly population. Even with adequate funding and technology, the health conditions for some elderly are still declining constantly. So it can be inferred that the health conditions of those elderly who at the edge of the social security policy.

Now some retired people generation grandson at home or rest at home. The old people in the city can take a walk in the park and participate in community activities. The rural elderly are almost no entertainment, mostly to sleep at home or watching TV. Long-term in a state of non-movement, can induce a variety of physiological and psychological diseases. Some old people when they are younger not well educated, social experience is not rich in the elderly, after leaving the workplace is difficult to adapt to the information society, the need for the help of old age education.

The social assistance measures for poor elderly population

China's aid to the poor elderly as early as the existence of the Qin Dynasty, the Qin and Han Dynasties period has been the official relief agencies, the early Northern Song Dynasty set up East and West Futian homes and nursing homes, Wu Zhou do have "Sadie recuperate", Yuan and Ming dynasties Of the Yangji Hospital, the Qing Dynasty in addition to Yangji Hospital, as well as Pu Ji Tang and other scattered throughout the country. These institutions have the function of helping the

poor elderly, and rescue a variety of content.^[3] So today, how can we improve social assistance for the poor elderly? Consider the following:

An important aspect of alleviating poverty with the old man suffering to improve the poor old man's health. It is emphasized that, first, China's medical assistance fund is seriously inadequate, and the start of relief is often after the illness, so that the poor elderly assistance is very limited, so how to raise funds and more targeted in the rescue process is the elderly medical assistance to consider. Second, the medical treatment should be fully aware of the particularity that the poor old man of medical needs. To distinguish the poor old man and the other poor people and different age period the old man's medical needs. According to the requirements to provide the corresponding medical treatment, only in this way can be the escort for poor old man's health. Third, On-site medical care should be a routine form of medical assistance for poor elderly people. With the increase of age, the elderly physical and mental disorders increased, only to provide help in the hospital is not enough help, but also need to monitor some of the health of the elderly in critical condition in order to provide timely medical assistance at home.

Elderly poverty is in addition to the most common deprivation of material subsistence and medical care. The present is also manifested as the lack of happiness of the elderly, resigned, passive, complacent, lazy, conservative, obsolete, dependent, lazy laziness, which is the performance of spiritual poverty.^[4] China has formed a "light old and young" intergenerational relationship, family resources, power to the serious tilt of the children, the elderly in the family to obtain the means of subsistence and the right to speak is very limited. This situation gradually spread to social life, resulting in the elderly family life and social life of a comprehensive state of aphasia. Not only lack of respect, but also individual needs are often ignored. Therefore, the elderly feel lonely, lost. We emphasize that the poor need more emotional care, spiritual comfort, which highlights the importance of psychological assistance to alleviate poverty in old age. In particular, we can increase the communication and exchange with the elderly and create opportunities and atmosphere for the elderly to participate in social life, so that the spirit of the poor elderly gradually to their own lives and the community have a positive attitude towards optimism, to get rid of mental poverty.

Early through the old age education law, to provide legal protection for the elderly education. Establishing Educational Model for Poverty and Aged Education: firstly, establish a poor elderly interactive education model that headed by elderly university of provinces and based on community college with the community elderly action stations. We should regularly organize poor aged education or entertainment activities to promoting the elderly education mutual assistance. Secondly, play the role of higher vocational colleges. At present, the old-age education curriculum is mainly based on leisure education and cultivating sentimental education, to a certain extent, ignoring the rich social experience of the elderly and the value of human capital. The content of the social adaptation ability education of the elderly is generally inadequate, especially the content of education such as "hospice care, face death". Finally, build a distance education platform to expand the scope of education for the elderly. To a certain extent, it can solve the problem that lack of rural educational resources and a single form of education, urban and rural poverty education resources imbalance in the status of the elderly.

In conclusion, China has entered the aging society and as the aggravating trend of aging, a series of problems highlighted in the elderly poverty. Therefore, it is imperative and necessary for us to based on national conditions and constantly improve the elderly poverty relief, so as to achieve a good vision that sharing the social development achievements with the poor elderly.

Fund Project

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