

Strategies for Support of the Rural Elderly in China

A Research and Policy Agenda

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ISBN 962-441-703-2

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SUPPORT for the elderly has become a lively issue for policy discussion in China because of a concern about the rising percentage of the population that can be classified as elderly and might be expected to need assistance – both financial and social – beyond the capabilities of the family. As a result of the demographic transition (the process by which fertility and mortality rates decline) the number of people in China aged sixty and over amounted to 87 million in 1985, accounting for 8.25 percent of the total population (Wei 1987). Those sixty years old are commonly considered elderly. This is the retirement age in the urban areas and an age when the farmer has almost certainly experienced a marked decline in working ability. Some researchers use sixty-five years of age as the bench mark for the aged, so it is necessary to be careful in the use of data.

It is projected that the national aged dependency index – the ratio between the aged population and the number of people in the labor force – will alter by 2050, so that there may be a very high burden on the working population (Wu 1987). A married couple might expect to have to support a single child and two sets of grandparents. Circumstances such as these would demand much from the family, and consequently the government has become concerned about the provision of assistance programs for the needy aged. There is general agreement that planning for resolu-

tion of the matter is not to be delayed.

The population that will be at risk is already born and marching toward an uncertain old age. In many of China's urban centers, the percentage of aged is currently rising rapidly. In Shanghai it is readily apparent by walking down the street in a quasi-residential area that the percentage of aged is already high. The presence of the aged in the countryside is less apparent. Still, grandmothers sit in the doorways of houses and wives of forty-five to fifty years of age return home from factory work, shop and prepare meals, or labor in the family vegetable gardens.

What kind of assistance will these people need? Will help come from the state or collective or solely from the family? How will programs be financed? What governmental levels should assume responsibilities? These are questions that are now discussed in China. Models developed in one county or province are then adapted to different conditions – conferences have been held and alternate plans debated. In the summer of 1991, the Ministry of Civil Affairs sponsored a three-day conference on the topic of rural funding of welfare programs with participants from most of China's provinces in attendance.

An analysis of the strategies for assistance to the elderly is complicated because it involves a series of decisions with respect to the population to be covered by welfare programs, the means for financing assistance, and the nature and level of the financial support, as well as other benefits to be offered to the covered groups.

One should commence with the basic question, "Is there – and if so why – an apparent steep decline in the number of projected family members who may be able to support the elderly in the coming decades?" The answer is "yes" to the first part of the question. There is a decline in the birthrate. This can be attributed in part to the fact that modernization and economic development seem often to lead to a decline in the number of children that families seek to have. But the steepness of the decline is also attributable to the implementation of the strict family planning program adopted in the late 1970s, and commonly referred to as the "single child family policy."

Have the Chinese been unique in making such an effort to reduce their population? No. Perhaps one of the most striking

family planning success stories – now under review – is that of Singapore. The Singapore government initiated policies to encourage smaller families. Using carefully monitored positive incentives, it has been successful. Indeed so great has been its success that the government now seeks to reverse the trend and to encourage middle-class families to have more than one child. Whether such an effort will be successful over the next decade remains to be seen.

In China, the leadership – while affirming the necessity of their current program – also have said it is an interim measure which at some point in the twenty-first century would be relaxed or modified. In the Chinese case, faced with a population of 1.1 billion, the leadership adopted their stringent program to lower the population growth rate rapidly. A decline in the rate of population growth, it was thought, would in turn contribute to the solution of food supply, housing, employment, education, and ecological balance problems (Xinhua 1987). Manifestations of the outcome are now becoming apparent as some city's schools begin to close for want of pupils.

But the precise degree of success with respect to this policy and how forcefully the Chinese authorities have implemented it is somewhat unclear. In a 1988 speech to state family planning officials, Premier Li Peng reiterated the necessity of adherence to the state family planning policy in general and to the "one-child" policy in particular (Xinhua 1988a). On the other hand, there is no doubt that the authorities have recognized the need for exceptions to the draconian regulations. Such exceptions are implemented at the local level. Authorities now recognize that the wide-scale adoption of exceptions plus an increase in the number of couples of marriageable age will result in the population exceeding the 1.2 billion target level by the year 2000 (Xinhua 1988b). Whatever the final nationwide result, by restricting the number of children in a specific family the policy will weaken the capacity of the family support system to provide security for the aged. It is this fact that draws our attention to the Chinese policy decisions and efforts to provide for the aged.

Support for the elderly is still largely determined by where the individual lives. Although all may expect assistance from family, it is in the rural areas that the family role is exceedingly important.

In the cities – especially the larger ones – the government and state enterprises provide pensions for the retirees from state organizations and enterprises respectively. The size of the pension is determined primarily by the length of service and monthly wage. Although pensioner's living standards may decline due to inflation and they may want for assistance in handling the problems of daily life due to the lack of children – especially sons – many urban retirees have some financial resources to secure a modest living standard, and some idealistic youth may provide assistance for social needs (Chan 1990).

In the rural area circumstances are quite different. The state provides to the “three have-not's” (the widowed or single elderly people without children, without pensions, and without the ability to work) the so-called “five-guarantees” which include food, clothing, housing, medical care, and burial expenses (Yang 1987). The Ministry of Civil Affairs has much of the responsibility for supervision of these local rural programs, both for purposes of overseeing activities and for providing some funding. According to 1984 statistics, 2.96 million peasants qualified to receive the “five-guarantees” or themselves lived in an old folks' home (Zhu 1987). This is a relatively small number. For over 80 percent of the 70 million elderly living in rural China, children – particularly sons – are expected to provide for old-age support (Yuan 1988). This expectation is shared by the state and the aged parent.

As the population ages and the internal family resources available for support decline, alternative systems of old-age support become crucial for the individual's or the aged couple's “social security.” The likelihood of alternative support mechanism for the aged might be expected to contribute to acceptance of the current family planning policy or at least lessen opposition.

There has really been no doubt of the need for support, nor a rejection of some role for the government. The selection of appropriate mechanism or options for support for China's rural population has become a matter of national priority and controversy. In view of the wide range of alternative policies, local conditions, and differing living standards, it has been virtually impossible to choose among the local policies. For its part, the national government under the leadership of the Communist Party has been playing the central role of establishing some

parameters for policies and providing limited financial assistance for experimentation. Officials and commentators from the central government are called upon to assess experiences, raise difficult policy issues, and make an assessment of the value of specific models. It is to this experience that we now turn.

This paper draws upon findings from surveys of rural Chinese villages, together with the current research literature studies that consider the problem of welfare. It analyzes the current status of rural social security and addresses some problems in this regard. Since, however, the larger percentage of the readers are likely to be from developed countries, the presentation commences with a brief summary of the current state of research into which the Chinese experience and efforts must be placed.

The plan is as follows: There is a review of current literature sketching first the general themes of Western research on the problems of welfare, focussing on the last decades of publications from China, followed by an outline of some current work presently underway in Hong Kong. This section concludes with a general summary of remaining important areas for analysis.

The paper then sets forth and analyzes findings from a study conducted by the author with the assistance of the Ministry of Civil Affairs in June 1987 with respect to care of the aged in rural China. These data are supplemented with data from a similar study in 1989. Finally, some policy implications are explored.

Research on Social Security Needs and Options

Supporting the elderly has been of concern for Chinese society and government in the twentieth century. In the 1920s, both the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist Party adopted various welfare policies, although few were ever implemented. The long world war and the Chinese Civil War ensued, interrupting plans for their enactment. After 1949, other matters received higher priority than welfare issues in mainland China. Some leaders may have believed that the need for government assistance would vanish as industrial development raised the standard of living. Students of welfare in the Soviet Union often argued that with the progress toward socialism and eventual communism, the need for

welfare programs occasioned by failures of capitalism would decline and eventually vanish. Nonetheless, despite differing outlooks and limited access to documents, there has been some research on welfare needs and programs.

Western Scholarship

In Western scholarship it has been largely the sociologists who have included welfare programs in their assessments of life chances and opportunities, social protection in times of adversity and in overall judgments about life. The two volumes by Parish and Whyte (1978 and 1984) both provide some data on the programmatic opportunities available to individuals and families. They indicate the level of subsidies routinely a part of urban living and include judgments about care of the elderly in discussions of marriage and family relationships. Assessments of specific welfare programs for the workers were analyzed by Kallgren in the late 1960s (1968).

In the past ten years, it has been Yale University Professor Deborah Davis who has written about the elderly and also provided an appraisal of China's welfare outcomes (Davis 1989). Charlotte Ikels (1983) of Carnegie Mellon University addressed the problems of the elderly with examples from the United States, Hong Kong, and China. Anthropological village studies commonly observe the quality of social protection afforded the aged, the sick, and the young. Economists, at various times in the development history of China in the post-1949 period, have reported on the economic costs of welfare programs for industrial progress or noted welfare benefits were used as a possible attraction in the mass campaign to bring all of rural China into communes in the early 1950s efforts to unionize the work force. For the most part, though, with the exception of the Davis study of the elderly and an occasional village study, research on the topic of welfare in general and particularly in the countryside has largely been confined to data from Chinese newspapers and periodicals, interviews with refugees in Hong Kong, and occasionally from site visits. While the period of the "open door" has brought considerable increase in research data, the number of sociologist researchers in this field

has remained limited, and the number of social welfare researchers is even smaller. The demographers, though, have had occasion to contribute to our knowledge of population needs and likely development (Bauer 1990 and Goldstein 1990).

Chinese Research

Socialist societies have a mixed record with respect to programs that are commonly classified as "social welfare" by non-socialist countries. Since development and welfare were often conflated, the outcomes were mixed and often each factor influenced the other. In the PRC, social welfare programs targeted for specific sectors of the population, excluding workers, have been a relatively recent occurrence. This is primarily so in the rural sector – as much because of the costs that might be involved as because of the higher priority afforded to raising production levels. The circumstances have changed in the years since the "open door" policy was adopted and most especially as the so-called single child family policy began to have an effect in the countryside.

A Chinese social security system is expected to be established during the current "five-year" plan, but until recently the focus was on analyzing the differing experiences of Chinese units. In the late 1980s, emphasis was placed on establishing the level of need for "social security" in the rural area. Studies were conducted to pinpoint the social welfare levels of individuals, the demand for new programs, and alternative models for future welfare programs. The development of research efforts and the publication of results follows much of the commonly accepted outline for such work.

After a political decision had been made to implement programmatic study, then research organizations and governmental ministries commonly initiate trials to assess the degree of need for the specific program and compare the various different models that had been developed to solve the problem. This is certainly the case in the matter of social welfare programs. A multitude of individual experiments were initiated in the late 1970s, with many more in the 1980s.

Most of the published studies have been based on rich or above

average villages, with the poor areas being largely neglected. This choice of research sites has been linked with the style of “zhua dian xin,” that is, seeking models that other areas – particularly the poor ones – can adopt with suitable modifications. Moreover, it is not unexpected that only rich or above average communities are able to experiment with social security programs. These are the communities that have sufficient resources at their disposal to undertake the expensive efforts to fund welfare care for the aged.

Some aspects of the studies are described and summarized in this section. Further details of the various surveys included here are set forth in the volume from which the research report is drawn (Ministry of Civil Affairs *et al.* 1987). A summary chart is included along with the analysis (see Appendix 1). A central issue is what is meant by the term “rich” or “above average” with respect to rural units? Quite commonly the term is based upon a rough calculation of rural per capita income.

In the past ten years, per capita income has increased quite remarkably in many areas. Such changes are readily apparent to China visitors. The standard used here is based on one announced in the Rural Social Security meeting held in Hunan in May 1987. Those villages with an annual per capita income of 1,000 yuan and above were classified as rich. Those villages with an annual per capita income of 200 yuan or less were considered poor. Those villages where the income was 500-600 yuan were considered average. Those above 600 but below 1,000 were considered above average and those between 200 and 500 yuan were considered below average. These guidelines are obviously very gross in their measurement but do provide some sort of approximation.

Against this backdrop, the studies discussed in this section are representative of the state of current social welfare research in rural China in 1987. Three criteria have been used in selection of studies. First of all, the studies are based on actual surveys rather than personal perceptions, although some surveys were small. Second, the studies represent research in different localities of China. Third, the studies are considered appropriate by the Chinese authorities since they were either presented at social welfare conferences or extolled as models for future study.

It is not feasible to set forth the details of the individual studies, but a summary comparison of the cases is outlined at the end of

this paper (Appendix 1). The reader should look closely at that summary. Full details are found in the volume *Exploring Rural Social Security* (Ministry of Civil Affairs *et al.* 1987).

The studies and surveys reported here and many others conducted since 1986 were discussed and analyzed in a national conference on social security held in Hunan in the summer of 1987. The Conference established six models for rural social welfare development (Ministry of Civil Affairs *et al.* 1987:154). They are as follows:

- The Shanxi Lucheng Shiqu model centered on the village, the lowest level of rural government, which accumulated its funds from production revenue and allocated a portion for old-age support. The higher administrative-level Xiang (township) only provided funds to assist the poor. This model stressed local economic conditions and was highly decentralized.
- The Hunan Yiyang Jinhua model centered on the Xiang which devised a welfare program for the whole Xiang and peasants in different villages within the Xiang enjoyed the same benefits, regardless of differences in economic conditions. The Xiang was the unit that decided on any changes in levels of premiums and benefits.
- The Zhejiang Wenzhou Meitou model resembled a long-term savings account into which individuals put a portion of their earnings and from which they could get their retirement pensions. The collective also put aside funds to match the individual savings so that individuals not only gained all the principal plus interest but also funds from the collective.
- The Shijiazhuang Kuidi model centered on both the Xiang and Cun (villages). The Xiang guided the individuals who set up a social welfare committee, a social welfare fund, a home for the aged, and a welfare factory in each village according to village conditions. Centralized planning was complemented by decentralized management.
- The Nei Menggu Samaisugu model was a case in which production materials were used as insurance premiums. Sheep served as premiums for future retirement pensions. Since sheep multiplied, the pension funds would not suffer

from inflation and future pensions could be guaranteed.

- The Hunan Taoyuan Mingyue model was based on a mathematical formula equalizing current investment with future pension need. "The four parameters taken into account were the amounts of individual monthly investment, future pension levels, years of individual investment, and likely number of years for which pensions would be required" (Ministry of Civil Affairs *et al.* 1987:130-141).

These models illustrate various efforts to cope with a local problem as well as the format for published research in this field. The models themselves do not necessarily represent the future for China's rural social security. Even in 1991, authorities are still exploring alternatives suitable to local conditions, but there is apparently a general consensus that future programs will be largely locally determined and apparently locally financed.

Some generalizations about these studies can be made:

1. Except for a few studies which also used available data, most studies based their findings solely on empirical surveys. Typically, non-probability, purposive, or quota sampling methods were used. The researchers chose samples on the basis of their knowledge of the population, its elements, and the nature of study aims. They selected a proportional sample in terms of age categories, sex, or income groups.
2. Most studies have found that since the rural economic reform commenced, the rural economy has developed rapidly and steadily, and industry and sidelines have become important both for improving the income of families and also the income of administrative units. In some cases the chief source of welfare funding has been local production revenues and labor force participation.
3. As a result of the growth of local enterprise, per capita income has increased substantially, and in some cases it has surpassed that of the urban labor force. The improved financial condition of the peasants has made it possible for the peasant to set aside a portion of the income for old-age security without seriously affecting their current well-being or for the local authority to deposit sums for future pension payments without seriously compromising the income of enterprises or families.

4. On the other hand, the studies found that the percentage of the aged has increased and that increasing numbers appear to face some problems of managing their lives. Partly due to family planning policy which sharply restricts the number of births and partly due to the decline of the three-generation living arrangement, the aged will find it more difficult to meet their financial and service needs.
5. Current old-age support programs offered meager subsidies and are frequently insufficient to meet the financial needs of the elderly. Family support is still essential to old-age security in rural China.
6. For future programs of old-age support, the studies emphasized joint efforts and contributions from the state, collective, and individuals. The scope and level of the programs will depend on local economic and social conditions.
7. Since most studies were done in rich or above average rural settings, however, old-age support in poor regions has remained unexplored and the contradictions implicit in the development of provision unresolved. Future attention will of necessity have to focus upon programs applicable in poor areas.

The current Chinese literature provides the investigator with both a need and alternative options for meeting that need with respect to old-age support. For example, the new living arrangement of smaller families with fewer children – hence fewer sons – increases the likelihood that less care will be available for the elderly because sons move to the cities and towns to work and because the absolute number of sons declines in the wake of the stringent population policies (Goldstein 1990). Accordingly there will be a demand for alternative assistance of some sort.

Economic development will have to provide some options to replace the declining assistance from children. Some individuals have the capacity to pay for their own old-age support. In the Chinese studies cited above where programmatic recommendations are an important part of the research agenda, there are a number of cases where the formula for social support requires individual contributions, a policy that was quite rare in socialist societies.

Hong Kong Research

The most current full-scale and rounded research studies of social welfare are currently underway in Hong Kong universities. Both the Chinese University of Hong Kong through the work of Professor Peter N.S. Lee and the University of Hong Kong through the work of Professor Nelson Chow (1988) serve to point the direction for the full-scale analysis of the Chinese welfare policies and experience. It is not difficult to understand why the central leadership emerged from the Hong Kong scholarly community. Language capabilities permit easy access to materials. The University of Hong Kong faculty and School of Social Welfare are able to provide assistance and cooperative research opportunities to their Chinese colleagues in Guangdong as well as elsewhere in an efficient and effective manner.

Moreover, the emerging generation of young scholars in Hong Kong are entering into the work of developing welfare alternatives in China and are also providing the base for systematic research coverage of the Chinese experience. For example, study of the Ministry of Civil Affairs – a key unit in government programmatic development – is the topic of a dissertation being prepared for the London School of Economics by a lecturer at the Hong Kong Polytechnic. An initial analysis of funding alternatives has been published by Professor Nelson Chow and is now being followed by other more detailed and focussed studies. This research agenda has been influenced by the evolution of field placement for Hong Kong University social welfare students in China, as well as on site research (Chan 1990).

Field Research Summary

In sum, the lacunae in data – and hence analysis – that characterized the early 1980s is slowly being remedied. Contributions come from non-Chinese scholars who look to China as a potential model for the development of social security programs and also from a wide array of Ministry of Civil Affairs officials, cadres, and researchers responding to governmental plans to implement welfare programs – especially care for the aged in the twenty-first

century – coupled with the valuable contribution of Hong Kong scholars who combine a sympathy for and interest in Chinese developments with a professional training and experience in Hong Kong that facilitates effective site research and work.

Field Research

Much remains to be done, however, at least in part due to the diversity of conditions in China together with the apparent decision that programs are, for the interim, to be locally financed and developed.

The following section reports on a survey conducted in 1987 in several sites in China as the outgrowth of cooperative research between the author and Chinese Civil Affairs personnel. This social survey study is designed to alert the reader to some confirming data that can be used by social welfare planners. Based on some of the themes mentioned in the earlier portions of this paper, one can now try to operationalize some of the theories for program development included in the 1987 Social Welfare volume.

Kallgren-Minkler Survey: Procedures

In the summer of 1987, hosted by the China Ministry of Civil Affairs and by the Chinese Academy of Social Science's Institute of American Studies, Professors Kallgren and Minkler of the University of California conducted a survey in seven rural villages of four provinces. The places were Changyuan village in Hunan province, Tangxia and Meilin villages in Jiangxi province, Feizhuang and Xianguang villages in Zhejiang province, and Wuai and Hexi villages in Jiangsu province. No non-Chinese scholars had visited any of these villages and no surveys had been conducted prior to our work.

In all cases discussion were first held with the Provincial Civil Affairs leadership, then with authorities in the Xian (county), then with the Xiang leaders who accompanied us to the smaller Cun or occasionally Zu (group) where the interviews took place.

Changyuan village had a population of 1,514 living in 314 households. Among 579 laborers, 423 (or 73.06 percent) engaged

primarily in agricultural production and 156 (or 26.94 percent) work in village industry. With a per capita income of 1,150 yuan in 1986, the village was classified as a rich rural area in China. Since 8.39 percent of the village population was already over 60, local cadres drafted and instituted a social security system that relied on local production revenue contribution as well as an equal amount from the children. No contribution was required from the current income of the elderly. Moreover, the percentage of elderly meant that attention had to be paid to the matter now.

The two sites in Jiangxi may be characterized as average and above average areas. Tangxia village is located in Fengcheng county Jiangxi, where coal production is important. The current Xiang priority is to shift extra agricultural labor into industrial production. A mutual assistance fund has been established to assist the poor and support the elderly who had no relatives. In Tangxia, there were 51 households totaling 254 people. Per capita income had increased from 125 yuan in 1978 to 751 yuan in 1986. Fifty percent of the village income came from agriculture and 50 percent from industry.

In Meilin county Jiaixi, where Meilin village is situated, there were 4,664 households with 24,525 inhabitants. The 9,942 laborers were evenly divided among industry, commerce, and agriculture. Per capita income was 529 yuan in 1986.

In Zhejiang province Yuhong county the two sites were either rich or very much above average. The survey sites of Feizhuang and Xiangyang villages are both from Yuhong county. Within Feizhuang, there were 445 households with 1,739 inhabitants. Among a labor force of 1,096, 65.1 percent worked in Xiang and small village industrial enterprises, and the remaining worked on fields and sidelines. The average per capita income in 1986 was 841.63 yuan.

In Xiangyang village, there were 835 households with 3,000 inhabitants. The village industry included machinery, textile, silk, paper, plastic, fibre, and leather. Eighty-five percent of the labor force were employed in the village industry. Average per capita income was 1,003 yuan.

Wuai and Hexi are natural villages in Jiangsu province. Since the province is wealthy and industrial development far advanced, the term village really is a misnomer. The locations are in the

suburbs of Wuxi and Wuxi county. The total population of Wuai was 1,200 people within 425 households. Twenty-five percent (110) of the labor force worked in the fields and 75 percent (330) in six village-run factories and sidelines occupations. In 1986, per capita income was 1,300 yuan.

Hexi is a natural village within Huanzhuang township. The township had 44,000 inhabitants in 12,000 households. Among the 21,000 labor force, 10 percent were engaged in commerce, 75 percent in industry, and 15 percent in agriculture. Per capita income in 1986 is 966 yuan.

Description of Samples

A two-stage random sampling method was used to select our study samples commencing with four provinces from the 21 mainland provinces. Hunan, Jiangxi, Zhejiang, and Jiangsu, were our choices. They were agreed to by the Chinese hosts who assumed those places to be representative of the rural life in China. The four provinces include east and central south sites in China. Although they belong to the middle and high rank in terms of living standard in China, there are substantial differences among them: Jiangxi was the poorest, Hunan of average level, and Zhejiang and Jiangsu were in the upper-ranks. Moreover, in the past, the provinces have been used as experimental sites by the government to try out its rural policies before encouraging nation-wide implementation.

The hosts arranged site visits to seven villages in the four provinces. The sample included some villages less prosperous than others. The actual sites were selected by the hosts.

Upon arrival in China it was learned that interviews could be conducted with anyone in the selected villages. This fact caused a revision in procedures and the development of a very simple ad hoc method for selecting the families to be interviewed.

The procedure used to generate the study population was to assign a number to each family in the village based on the household list provided in each location. The families that were to be interviewed were selected in a drawing. They totaled of 176 households, about twenty five to thirty per village. Interviews were then conducted in Chinese with a member of the selected

household. The actual respondent depended on who was at home on the day and time when the interview was conducted. There were numerous complications caused by weather and distances within the villages.

Survey Findings

Table 1 summarizes and compares the age, sex, and marital status of the sampled respondents in the four provinces. Except for Zhejiang, where half of the respondents are male and half female, in all other places male respondents led female by a margin of about two to one. Most respondents were in their thirties (40.5 percent) and there are similar proportions of respondents in different age groups among the four places. The vast majority of the respondents were married. Only 8 percent of the respondents were single. In addition, there were four widows and one widower.

Table 2 summarizes some other basic variables of the study sample. The average age of the respondents was forty. In general, they had married in their early twenties and had a child immediately after marriage. On average, they have two or more children (2.6). In a typical family, there are five members (4.8) – the parents, two children and an elderly relative. There are three laborers per household (3.05). Using the standard deviation (S) measure, it can be seen that the age of respondent at marriage and when first child is born all have small standard deviations (2.8, 3.2), showing that most respondents married in their early twenties and had a child very soon after marriage. Interviews indicate that it remains customary to have a child immediately after marriage and that no contraceptives are generally used until after the birth of the first child.

The average number of household members ranged from 4.3 in Jiangsu to 5.3 in Jiangxi. Within each locale there was little variation. The number of household laborers ranged from 2.3 in Hunan to 3.5 in Zhejiang.

Table 1 Sex, Age and Marital Status of Chinese Interviewees*

	Total (176)	Hunan (38)	Jiangxi (40)	Zhejiang (58)	Jiangsu (40)
Sex					
Male	110	26	29	29	26
(%)	(62.5)	(68.4)	(72.5)	(50.0)	(65.0)
Female	66	12	11	29	14
(%)	(37.5)	(31.6)	(27.5)	(50.0)	(35.0)
Age					
20-29	35	8	8	11	8
(%)	(19.9)	(21.6)	(20.0)	(19.0)	(20.0)
30-39	67	15	16	23	13
(%)	(38.1)	(40.5)	(40.0)	(39.7)	(32.5)
40-49	36	7	7	12	10
(%)	(20.5)	(18.9)	(17.5)	(20.7)	(25.0)
50-59	21	6	6	5	4
(%)	(11.9)	(16.2)	(15.0)	(8.6)	(10.0)
60-69	17	1	4	7	5
(%)	(9.7)	(2.7)	(7.5)	(12.0)	(12.5)
Marital Status					
Married	157	38	37	46	36
(%)	(89.2)	(100.0)	(92.5)	(79.3)	(90.0)
Single	14	0	1	11	2
(%)	(8.0)	(0.0)	(2.5)	(19.0)	(5.0)
Widowed	5	0	2	1	2**
(%)	(2.8)	(0.0)	(5.0)	(1.7)	(5.0)

* Figures do not always add up to the survey total of 176. This is because either the questions were inappropriate or the answers were missing.

** One is a widower.

Table 2 Summary of Mean Differences among Four Provincial Samples

Variables	Mean \bar{X}	Std. Dev. S	Coeff. Var.* S/\bar{X}	Cases N**
1. Age				
Total	40.1	11.9	3.37	175
Hunan	38.2	11.0	3.47	37
Jiangxi	40.3	10.6	3.80	40
Zhejiang	40.2	12.8	3.14	58
Jiangsu	41.4	12.9	3.21	40
2. Age at Marriage				
Total	23.119	2.810	8.23	135
Hunan	22.103	2.193	10.08	29
Jiangxi	22.621	2.569	8.81	29
Zhejiang	22.761	2.758	8.25	46
Jiangsu	24.065	2.804	8.94	31
3. Age when First Child is Born				
Total	24.057	3.173	7.58	158
Hunan	23.618	3.134	7.54	34
Jiangxi	23.703	2.737	8.66	37
Zhejiang	23.926	3.628	6.59	54
Jiangsu	25.121	2.736	9.18	33
4. Number of Children Born				
Total	2.647	1.867	1.42	170
Hunan	3.342	2.430	1.38	38
Jiangxi	3.000	1.806	1.66	39
Zhejiang	2.071	1.399	1.48	56
Jiangsu	2.432	1.625	1.50	37
5. Household Members				
Total	4.8	1.4	3.43	174
Hunan	4.7	1.5	3.13	38
Jiangxi	5.3	1.8	2.94	39
Zhejiang	5.0	1.2	4.17	57
Jiangsu	4.3	1.2	3.58	40
6. Number of Laborers				
Total	3.046	1.355	2.25	174
Hunan	2.333	0.717	3.25	36
Jiangxi	3.100	1.905	1.63	40
Zhejiang	3.517	1.080	3.26	5
Jiangsu	2.950	1.239	2.38	40

* The coefficient of variation (S/\bar{X}) is a measure of dispersion around the mean. It takes into account both the mean and variance differences among different localities and hence can be used for comparison among those localities.

** Figures do not always add up to the survey total of 176. This is because either the questions were inappropriate or the answers were missing.

The Success of the Family Planning Policy

A strict family planning policy, the "one-child policy," was initiated in 1979. The interview analysis shows that since the implementation of the policy, significant differences have occurred with regard to family planning: the age of marriage is now significantly higher than pre-1979; there are more people using contraceptives today than before; and the fertility rate is much lower today than before.

The success of the family planning policy, however, has strong implications for old-age support. Understanding the implications of family planning for China requires a broad view of the historical background, especially the concept of family.

Since 1949 and, especially, since 1979, family institutions have been in transition. In the city, this transformation is nearly complete. Many activities once performed by the family have now been reduced to a narrow spectrum in which husband, wife, and children associate together in the functioning of larger institutions. The work group, the dining hall, and the nursery have taken over many but not all functions of economic coordination, housekeeping, and the rearing and education of children.

Traditional ideology, however, remains deeply rooted among the Chinese peasants. The traditional Chinese patrilineal family structure emphasized securing the continuance of the family name. When the daughter of a family married the son of another family, she was married into the man's family; she was no longer a member of her original family. A family without a son meant termination of the family line. In the 1980s in the rural areas, sons remained an asset to the family, even if traditional views were less important. As long as a son is able to work, he not only earns his own living but also supports the extended family, whereas a daughter usually works for a few years while living at home and then moves into her husband's family. A family with several sons is able to provide greater support to its elderly members. This factor has represented a strong form of social security in Chinese society. Therefore, to ensure the smooth implementation of the population policy, rural social security has to be enhanced. The urgency of some sort of rural social security is also reflected in other matters.

The Changing Living Arrangements

The traditional image of three-generation family living arrangement is rapidly changing. These days, more and more children start living separately from their parents once they get married and are able to find their own places. Table 3 shows that the three-generation family living arrangement now accounts for only 42.9 percent of the total. In most cases, children live separately from their parents after they have started their own family.

Table 3 shows this difference by contrasting the difference in living arrangements between those who married recently (after 1979) and those who married earlier. Those who married earlier are more likely to have a three-generation living arrangement than those who married after 1979. As expected, the difference is highly significant.

Table 3 Comparison between Two Groups: Living Arrangement*

Living Arrangement	Years of Marriage		Chi-square (χ^2)
	>9 (Group 1)	<10 (Group 2)	
	% (N)	% (N)	
One-generation	4.9 (6)	2.1 (1)	9.4
Two-generation	59.3 (73)	36.2 (17)	(p < .01)
Three-generation	35.8 (44)	61.7 (29)	

* Figures do not always add up to the survey total of 176. This is because either the questions were inappropriate or the answers were missing.

The fact that children live separately from their parents does not necessarily mean that the traditional support mechanism is jeopardized. The elderly are still supported financially by their children. However, it does mean that the elderly now face more problems in daily activities, such as shopping and housework, because there are fewer family members there to help them.

Current Old-Age Support

Table 4 compares the social welfare situation of the four provinces. The majority of the respondents (60.6 percent) are not eligible for pensions. An exception is Jiangsu where 83.3 percent of the respondents are eligible for pensions upon retirement. This is, of course among the most rapidly developing provinces and Wuxi is certainly in the vanguard of that process. The respondents' parents and parents-in-laws (the older generation) are less likely to be eligible for pensions (19 percent and 12.4 percent are eligible respectively). But more parents and in-laws in Jiangsu are eligible for pensions than those in any other places.

Because of the lack of pensions as well as a result of traditional philosophy, most respondents regard children as support for old age (83.2 percent). Since Jiangsu has a better pension plan for the elderly, less people there than any other places look upon children as support for old age. This observation is also supported by Table 4, which indicates those who regard children as support for old age and their pension eligibility.

From Table 4 we also find out that about 40 percent of the respondents give money to their parents, and over 30 percent give money to their in-laws. More people in Hunan and Jiangxi give money to their parents than those in Zhejiang and Jiangsu. Again, this would appear to be related to the better pension plans in the latter provinces as well as their higher standard of living.

The current pension systems in the places visited vary significantly, as Appendix 1 illustrated.

The Economic Conditions of the Respondents

Social security programs which require an individual contribution assume that the contributing individual has sufficient income to maintain a basic living. From the 1987 interviews and in 1989 as well we find that the economic conditions of the peasants have indeed improved significantly. This improvement is reflected in their income and spending patterns. In addition, the way they earn their money also reflects changing patterns of work and employment.

Table 4 Comparison among Four Provinces: Social Welfare*

	Total (176)	Hunan (38)	Jiangxi (40)	Zhejiang (58)	Jiangsu (40)
Respondents Eligible for Pension					
Yes	63	14	5	14	30
(%)	(39.4)	(36.8)	(12.8)	(29.8)	(83.3)
No	97	24	34	33	6
(%)	(60.6)	(63.2)	(87.2)	(70.2)	(16.7)
Respondents' Parents Eligible for Pension					
Yes	19	3	3	3	10
(%)	(19.0)	(12.0)	(15.8)	(8.6)	(47.6)
No	81	22	16	32	11
(%)	(81.0)	(88.0)	(84.2)	(91.4)	(52.4)
Respondents' Parents-in-laws Eligible for Pension					
Yes	11	1	1	2	7
(%)	(12.4)	(3.8)	(5.9)	(6.7)	(43.7)
No	78	25	16	28	9
(%)	(87.6)	(96.2)	(94.1)	(93.3)	(56.2)
Regard Children as Support for Old Age					
Yes	134	23	38	49	24
(%)	(83.2)	(71.9)	(97.4)	(89.1)	(68.6)
No	27	9	1	6	11
(%)	(16.8)	(28.1)	(2.6)	(10.9)	(31.4)
Respondents Give Money to Parents					
Yes	52	15	12	12	13
(%)	(39.7)	(57.7)	(48.0)	(26.1)	(38.2)
No	79	11	13	34	21
(%)	(60.3)	(42.3)	(52.0)	(73.9)	(61.8)
Respondents Give Money to Parents-in-laws					
Yes	40	8	7	13	12
(%)	(32.8)	(30.8)	(31.8)	(31.7)	(36.4)
No	82	18	15	28	21
(%)	(67.2)	(69.2)	(68.2)	(68.3)	(63.6)

* Figures do not always add up to the survey total of 176. This is because either the questions were inappropriate or the answers were missing.

Before the rural economic reform commenced, almost all rural production revenue came from agriculture. By 1987, however, things had changed markedly. Industry and sideline occupations were as important components of rural production as agriculture. Today, most of the peasants not only work in the fields or at the enterprises, they also have a second job to supplement their income. Table 5 compares the primary and secondary occupations of the respondents from the four provinces. In Hunan and Jiangxi, the primary occupation of the respondents is chiefly farming (76.3 percent and 72.5 percent). In Zhejiang and Jiangsu, the chief occupation of the respondents is village enterprises (62.1 percent and 67.5 percent) and their secondary occupation is farming (80 percent and 69.2 percent).

Table 5 Respondents' Occupations*

	Total (176)	Hunan (38)	Jiangxi (40)	Zhejiang (58)	Jiangsu (40)
Primary Job					
Field work	64	29	29	5	1
(%)	(36.4)	(76.3)	(72.5)	(8.6)	(2.5)
Village factory	68	3	2	36	27
(%)	(38.6)	(7.9)	(5.0)	(62.1)	(67.5)
Other	44	6	9	17	12
(%)	(25.0)	(15.8)	(22.5)	(29.3)	(30.0)
Secondary Job					
Field work	70	5	7	40	18
(%)	(51.9)	(21.7)	(19.4)	(80.0)	(69.2)
Village factory	2	0	0	2	0
(%)	(1.5)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(4.0)	(0.0)
Self-employed	47	12	26	5	4
(%)	(34.8)	(52.2)	(72.2)	(10.0)	(15.4)
Other	16	6	3	3	4
(%)	(11.8)	(26.1)	(8.4)	(6.0)	(15.4)

* Figures do not always add up to the survey total of 176. This is because either the questions were inappropriate or the answers were missing.

The following figures on income are very tentative and should be treated gingerly. There were many difficulties in compiling accurate data. The income of the respondents are recorded in Table 6. The average annual household income in the four places is 5,501 yuan (1,146 yuan per capita). Respondents from Hunan have the highest income (6,931 yuan per household or 1,475 yuan per capita) and those from Jiangxi have the lowest income (4,935 yuan per household or 931 yuan per capita). However, all places have per capita income of about 1,000 yuan (1,067 yuan in Zhejiang and 1,150 yuan in Jiangsu), showing that they are among the richest rural villages in the country.

Table 6 Mean Household Income Differences among Four Places*

	Mean \bar{X}	Std. Dev. S	Coeff. Var. S/\bar{X}	Cases N
Total	5501	2753	2.00	168
Hunan	6931	2292	3.02	36
Jiangxi	4935	3490	1.41	39
Zhejiang	5335	2215	2.41	57
Jiangsu	4948	2651	1.87	36

* Figures do not always add up to the survey total of 176. This is because either the questions were inappropriate or the answers were missing.

The Current Education Level of the Respondents

Peasants' education is crucial in the acceptance of new social security arrangement. The educational level of most respondents is based upon some primary school attendance, although not necessarily completion (see Table 7). In Zhejiang, however, a sizable number of the respondents have not received any education at all (32.1 percent). The majority of the respondents' spouses also have only primary education.

Table 7 Education of Respondents among Four Places*

	Total (176)	Hunan (38)	Jiangxi (40)	Zhejiang (58)	Jiangsu (40)
Respondents' Education					
None	35	8	5	18	4
(%)	(20.6)	(21.6)	(12.8)	(32.1)	(10.5)
Primary	66	13	15	30	8
(%)	(38.8)	(35.1)	(38.5)	(53.6)	(21.1)
Junior middle	55	11	15	7	22
(%)	(32.4)	(29.7)	(38.5)	(12.5)	(57.9)
Senior middle	9	5	1	1	2
(%)	(5.3)	(13.5)	(2.6)	(1.8)	(5.3)
College	5	0	3	0	2
(%)	(2.9)	(0.0)	(7.7)	(0.0)	(5.3)
Respondents' Spouse Education					
None	9	0	4	3	2
(%)	(15.3)	(0.0)	(28.6)	(14.3)	(11.1)
Primary	27	4	5	12	6
(%)	(45.8)	(66.7)	(35.7)	(57.1)	(33.3)
Junior middle	12	1	2	2	7
(%)	(20.3)	(16.7)	(14.3)	(9.5)	(38.9)
Senior middle	11	1	3	4	3
(%)	(18.6)	(16.7)	(21.4)	(19.0)	(16.7)

* Figures do not always add up to the survey total of 176. This is because either the questions were inappropriate or the answers were missing.

Comparing the younger with the older peasants, however, we find that the young have a significantly higher educational level than the old (Table 8). Both respondents and their spouses of the young group (married after 1979) have a significantly higher educational level than those in the old group (married before 1979) respectively. The majority of the young peasants (39.7 percent) have junior middle education while the majority of old peasants have only primary education (41.5 percent).

Table 8 Difference in Educational Level between the Old and the Young*

	Old Group	Young Group	Chi-square (χ^2)
	% (N)	% (N)	
1. Respondents' Education			30.03**
None	28.0 (33)	4.2 (2)	
Primary	41.5 (49)	31.3 (15)	
Junior middle	27.9 (33)	39.7 (21)	
Senior middle	0.8 (1)	16.7 (8)	
College	1.7 (2)	4.2 (2)	
2. Respondents' Spouse Education			11.84***
None	23.1 (9)	0.0 (0)	
Primary	48.7 (19)	35.3 (6)	
Junior middle	18.0 (7)	29.4 (5)	
Senior middle	7.7 (3)	35.3 (6)	
College	2.6 (1)	0.0 (0)	

* Figures do not always add up to the survey total of 176. This is because either the questions were inappropriate or the answers were missing.

** P<.001

*** P<.01

The chief findings of the survey can be summarized as follows:

1. Family planning policy has been successfully implemented in the places we surveyed with the result that fewer children are born now, more couples marry later, and there is more contraceptive use than before. However, the decline in numbers of children, especially sons, will pose a serious impediment for effective family support system in rural China.
2. The three-generation living arrangement, although still the preferred choice, appears to be declining. More children seem to leave their parents home after marriage and form their own households. This does not mean abandonment of a perceived obligation to provide care.
3. The community old-age support systems in the four provinces

are insufficient. Except for Changyuan in Hunan, villages only provide the elderly with meager allowances. The bulk of the financial needs of the elderly was met by their children or from their own efforts in the field.

4. Individual progress was intimately related to the improved economic conditions. Farming is no longer the sole occupation of the peasants. Local industry is increasingly important. Income has increased substantially over past levels. Spending is now more diversified and includes not only food and shelter but some expensive consumer durables.
5. The educational level of the peasants has also improved over the past. The majority of the young people have some junior high education – an improvement over the levels of the older peasants.

Policy Implications

Given the information mentioned above, how have Chinese authorities proceeded and what do they perceive to be the major obstacles to be overcome in both the short run and the longer term?

There is currently major consideration of a Chinese old-age support system in rural areas. The Chinese elderly in the villages have been relying on children, particularly sons, for old-age support. The traditional living arrangement, however, is becoming less common. Unless a stable social security system can soon be established in the countryside, the older peasants will face very uncertain living circumstances when they become weak or ill. They remain resentful and doubtful of the family planning policy, not only for cultural reasons but also because they objectively see a need for children to support them in old age.

Given the present level of China's economic development, there is no possibility of an adequate nationwide social security system in the countryside. Therefore, local and individual efforts are essential to rural old-age support system. Supplying such a system appears to depend upon enterprise and non-agricultural developments in the countryside.

Since the rural economic reform, local production has generally grown and per capita income much increased so that some

peasants can be expected to set aside a portion of their earnings for their future old-age support. The educational level of the peasants is also improving so they are perhaps more receptive to new ideas and new practices – particularly peasants working in enterprises rather than in the fields.

Since it appears the collective and individuals will have to be jointly responsible for old-age support, it is probably necessary to make a clear distinction of the rich, average, and poor areas. In locations where per capita income is around 1,000 yuan (such as the villages of this survey), it is reasonable to assume that individuals are capable of contributing a portion of their income for old-age support. In poor areas where peasants can barely make ends meet, however, it will not be possible to think of a social security system under present conditions. Development of production will remain the main priority. Until per capita income rises, the state and collective will be the chief supplier of any old-age support program, or – more likely – reliance will remain with the children.

Since 1987, there has been a vigorous effort within the provinces under the direction of the Ministry of Civil Affairs to both experiment with and then realistically assess the different welfare financing programs. The key problem is generally agreed to be monies for a program, not the cultural preference for family support.

In the summer of 1991, a nationwide conference was held in Zuo Yun county in Shanxi to address this problem. The papers of that conference, together with the informal discussion sessions, reinforce the evidence suggested in both the earlier research assessment and the survey details set forth in this article.

Local authorities are resourceful in developing Xian level schemes to fund programs. Often the developments are carried forward without any attention to the involvement of the local participants. Cadres reported funding programs in the bank without mentioning the matter to the workers/peasants in the agricultural enterprises. There remains some cynicism on the side of the local peasants. During the Cultural Revolution peasants were asked to save monies to assist accident victims, but when accidents occurred the money was often lacking. Such memories make long-time saving programs difficult to implement.

Administratively, the efforts are likely to encounter problems of long-range planning, the safety of investment in banks, and the fiscal sophistication of the local authorities charged with protecting the funds. The need to take account of inflation or to make accurate predictions of the needs of the elderly are not easily solved at the local levels. This fact, together with some difficulties in the success of agricultural enterprises, cannot help but engender anxiety in the planning of local programs.

Conference discussion in 1991 based upon both rich and quite poorer communities than were the site for the 1987 survey make clear that the decision to decentralize funding and administration cannot help but add to the regional differences in life chances – whether for the very young who will have better nutrition and better schools or for the young adults who will have better work opportunities and better old age protection when born in the seacoast provinces or the richly endowed areas.

Consequently whether in rich, average, or poor areas, in addition to any governmental support system, family support will still be needed. In the short run, it is impossible for the system to take care of the needs of the elderly. In the long run, even if financial needs of the elderly are largely met by the system, their functional and psychological needs will still be substantial and likely unmet. Though renewed emphasis on moral education may slow the erosion of the younger generation's tradition of parental support, urban developments elsewhere cannot make one too optimistic about retaining the values of an earlier generation.

To establish old-age support systems as well as pensions, gaining trust from the peasants is also crucial. How can peasants be certain that this time the money is truly set aside for their own use and not mysteriously allocated elsewhere? Problems of financial planning in the system are serious and difficult to resolve. Given these constraints and considerations, the following policy proposals need analysis:

1. In light of China's current economic condition and its huge rural population, a unified national social security system does seem premature. Instead, each rural sector will have to devise its own old-age support system based on local economic condition, popular demand and managerial capability. But what is

both feasible in monetary terms and appropriate in planning terms level of responsibility – the Xiang? the Xian?

Economic development is the key to rural old-age support systems. Collectives and individuals can set aside current earnings for future use only if they are sufficiently wealthy. Poor areas cannot copy the welfare model of rich areas but may have to await the development of production to make economic progress.

Popular acceptance of a system of old-age support is also crucial. The peasants will need to provide input into the scope and type of the system. Management is important – not only in making the decision for a system, but in making sure that the fund accumulated is well invested and adequate for old-age support. But local assistance and commitment is essential, or funds will be siphoned off into other areas thus undercutting the system.

2. The scope of coverage offered will need to be coordinated with the economic conditions of the area. In areas where the economy is healthy and growing or town enterprises well developed, a social security system similar to the labor insurance of the collective and state enterprises could be created. In villages with moderate levels of income, funds could be collected from the public welfare funds of the collective, old-age social insurance tax, and individual insurance payments. In poverty-stricken areas, besides government relief and subsidies from public welfare funds, family care will remain the primary form of support.
3. Need should be balanced with equity. The Chinese highly value social equity. All the villages visited for this survey made sure that the aged were given equal benefits and financial support regardless of their financial condition. Therefore, the elderly each got 400 yuan a year in Changyuan and 20 yuan a month in Wuai and Hexi. In the former, the burden to the village was considerable. In the latter, the money was not sufficient to sustain a basic living. Rather than giving out money equally, village cadres may have to focus more on those comparatively more needy. Those who have their own income or pensions from a work place may not be given additional

support as individual need becomes a part of the calculation.

4. The interdependency of policies cannot be underestimated. Although the family planning policy is important to reduce the rate of population growth as a prerequisite of the Chinese modernization drive, its adverse effects cannot be ignored. The family planning policy is now influencing the labor force of rural households, thus potentially reducing production. It will in time inevitably reduce family security in the countryside, where sons have been regarded as principal economic support for old age. The family planning policy, however, will need to become diversified. In areas which are poor and where the needy consider children as economic assets, a two-child policy with spacing is often sustained.

On the other hand, some policies run directly counter to the desired population goals. Only those who are married can be assigned housing and only those who have a child can receive benefits. Those who remain single get neither housing nor benefits.

In contemporary China, the imperatives of population planning should not obscure the long-range difficulties implicit in the success of current efforts to increase adherence to the “single child” family policy. As Chinese studies have noted and as interviews confirm, the current prosperity has provided increased expectations, higher levels of compliance with policy, but the deep-seated commitment to ongoing traditional values is also alive and well. As one Chinese aged mother said “I’ll rely on my son and the Communist party.” The order in which she listed the two is not accidental.

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Appendix 1 Summary of Rural Old-Age Support Surveys (1986)

	Shanghai Suburbs	Beijing Meilin	Tianjin Wugin	Dalian Jin
Population	5.16 mil.	3,075	73,900	62 villages
Sample	1,581	55 households	120 households	6 villages
Per Capita Income (yuan)	800+	1,150	635	1,000+
Production				
a. Agriculture	Minority	67.0%	61.7%	Minority
b. Industry & sidelines	Majority	33.0%	38.3%	Majority
Aged (% 60+)	11.2	10.44	7.4	About 10
Current Old-Age Support	Male 60+ Female 55+	Male 65+ Female 60+	Male 60+ Female 55+	Male 60+ Female 55+
a. Coverage	76.68%	1/3 villages	13/741 villages	53/62 villages
b. Amount	10-20 yuan monthly	100-150 yuan annually	10-20 yuan monthly	20-70 yuan monthly
c. Individual contribution	None	None	None	Yes
Future Old-Age Support	Family support for the current aged; pension plan for the rest population	Set aside partial earnings as retirement pension; management by Xiang	Individual contribution required for those whose income is 700+	Continuation and improvement of current system
Other Remarks	Neglect of farming by the young	Average household size 3.4	Breakfast subsidy for elderly 70+	Industrial revenues account for 90% of total

Source: From papers published in Ministry of Civil Affairs, *Shehui Baozhang Bao* and Rural Social Security Research Group, eds. *Exploring Rural Social Security*. Beijing: Hunan University Publishing House, 1987.

	Wuhan Guanshan	Nanchang Hufang	Jiangsu Changyuan	Pingxiang Ren	Wenzhou Meitou	Hunan Mingyue
	1,800	23,804	717,000	3,013	23,052	1,752
	available data	8 villages	2,592 households	available data	501 households	400+
	1,385 (1985)	809	800	500-600	604	800 (1985)
	Equally developed	Minority	30.0%	50.2%	30.04%	33.0%
		Majority	70.0%	49.8%	69.96%	70.0%
	N.A.	13.5	10+	6.97	6.38	9.19
	Male 60+ Female 55+	Male 60+ Female 55+	Male 60+ Female 55+	Male 70+ Female 70+	Male 60+ Female 55+	Male 60+ Female 55+
	All	12/18 villages	95.7%	2.0%	Partial	All
	18-30 yuan monthly	29.32 yuan monthly	5 yuan monthly	10 yuan monthly	10 yuan monthly	190 yuan annually
	None	None	Yes	None	Yes	Yes
	Improved pension-as- welfare system without individual contributions	Continuation and improvement of current system	Cooperative securities with contributions from state, collective and individuals	Old-age subsidy for the elderly; pensions for the retired cadres	Social security pension with contributions from state, collective and individuals	People aged 20-60 participate in pension plan with state, collective and individual contributions
	Pensions funded chiefly from production	Decreasing trend of 3-generation living arrangement	Over 25% 3-generation living arrangement	No felt urgency and need of old- age security	The urgency of social security program is keenly felt	Over 25% 3-generation living arrangement

Acknowledgement

I wish to acknowledge the support of the University of California Systemwide Pacific Rim Program, the Center for Chinese Studies, and the Committee on Research (Davis Campus) as well as the close cooperation of the Ministry of Civil Affairs. I received help and encouragement from the staff of the Center for Chinese Studies Library and am pleased to acknowledge their contributions. Professor Shi Leiyu (University of South Carolina – Columbia), who was an advanced graduate student in the University of California School of Public Health when the 1987 social survey was undertaken, made invaluable contributions to this paper and developed the first draft of charts upon which this is based. Dr. Donald Minkler of the Berkeley School of Public Health, now emeritus, was my coworker. He participated in some data collection in 1987 for this study but is not responsible for any interpretations set forth here.