

Study on “Shidu” Family

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Abstract

The accidental death of only child , caused heavy physical and psychological trauma to the child's parents, but also makes them face many risks of pension and health care, Seriously threaten the sustainable of livelihoods. The construction of social security system about “Shidu” is an effective way to reduce the risks. This paper analyses current situation and change trend that family facing problems, in view of the current social security policy, gives views and suggestions for the family which lost their only child.

Key Words: The one-child family; “Shidu” family; Social security

1. Introduction

The aging problem existed in China is different from other countries, It’s Chinese unique serious problem: in the increasingly large group of white haired old man, there is a more special group -- they have lost their only child and would dead helpless and lonely.

“Shidu” family refers that when Chinese parents forced to have one child and eventually lose the one-child. Most people in this group has experienced economic difficulties in 50s, "Cultural Revolution" in 60s, working in the countryside or mountain areas in 70s, The one-child limit in the 80s, and laid-off in 90s. Since 1980, the Central Committee of the Communist Party advocating each couple have only one child, "one-child policy" began to spread across the country. More than 30 years, China has produced millions of one-child families, in the city area, one-child families have been very common, in rural areas, one-child families are increasing.

Nowadays, a batch of the earliest only child has been thirty years old, and the parents who positively response to “one-child policy” has been over fifty. "One-child policy" has eased the country's population pressure and provides a good population environment, but unexpected one-child’s death, offspring died before its eldership for the parent is difficult to face, they lost their spiritual pillar, their life is already left behind from the mainstream , become helpless in their afterlife , “Shidu” parents have been their proper noun, who should pay for them?

2. The Background and Significance of the Research

In the background of "one-child policy", the proportion of one-child families has an exploded increasing in the past 30 years, while the risk reduction of countries’ development will raise the risk to the development of family as the cost. University of Wisconsin professor Yi Fujian in his book <"empty nest" country>, referred to damages form the one-child policy of China : parents will lose hope, wait until they are old, nobody can take care of them. Because only one child is at risk for fatal, the one-child family is walking a tightrope at high altitude. In recent years, problems of “Shidu” are frequently appeared in the news reports, the “Shidu” family began to extensive emerge. However, in China, the social security system is full of loopholes for this group, the family do not receive economic compensation and other supports, and even some families are questioning to the one-child policy, this generation made a sacrifice for national development, One-child policy has brought economic prosperity, why make up their losses are so little?

This is inconsistent with the principle of fairness China insisted, and against the will of the construction of harmonious society.

In short, for the problems of only child accident death, although the quantity is not very large. But the social psychological influence is great, it may arise complaints and questions about the one-child policy and social fairness. It can be said that “Shidu” group is a completely vulnerable group, it is necessary to give them necessary policy support.

3. The Current Situation of “Shidu” Family

According to the estimate of the “2010 China Statistical Yearbook” issued by the Ministry of Health, at present , there are about one million “Shidu” family in China, the number that grows by about 76000 each year. With the enforcing of the one-child policy, the number of “Shidu” group is increasingly and becoming a social problem, they need more attention from society.

The children are parents’ hope and security, in China, nothing is more important than children. However, the accidental death of the only child , and the inadequate aid policy. At present, “Shidu” parents are experiencing multiple difficulties such as economic, spirit, pension, medical treatment of a serious illness and difficulties to maintain family.

3.1 Economic, Pension and Medical Difficulties

In China, support parents is traditional, the aged parents need to depend on their children to living. “Shidu” family did not have living expenses given by their child, but also facing problems of the costs of the disease, not to mention the pension costs, the economy is their biggest problem. For the family, when they when they can't take care of themselves, and live alone at home, maybe no one would know, if they dead in the house for a long time, nursing home is the best choice, even though they are very rich, but no child sign the admission formalities, nursing homes will refuse to their admission.

For the “Shidu” parents, death could not be painful, it can be said to be a relief, the more difficult is ill and medical expenses is expensive that they can't afford. When they are sick, for the elders, registration, payment and dispensary from upstairs to downstairs tortured their sick body, when see others’ children take care of their parents carefully, they could only leave sad tears. When signing operation list, only his wife can sign the operation list, when his wife is dead, who can sign his final death notice!

3.2 The Rebirth and Adoption Difficulties

A lot of the family tried to save themselves, but the women over 49, the probability of give birth another child is very small. Even if they can pregnant through the test tube babies , but the chance is too small, ordinary people can't afford high cost.

But not to the exclusion of probability: My neighbors were “Shidu” parents, they live in the countryside, in order to let their only child receive better education, they tried their best and got the urban registered permanent residence, but when they were 41 years old, their only child, 15 years old, left them forever in an accident , they choose to give birth another child to make up for their wounds, two years later, the coming of another child brought out great joys for the family, the boy is now in elementary school, at the moment they are 52 years old, the nearing retirement age, what’ worse , they don't have a pension, although they live in the countryside, because of the registered permanent residence, they can't enjoy rural territory subsidies and new type of rural endowment insurance system. The rebirth parents are getting older, they can't bring up their child, and unable to afford the education and life expenses of child.

Some permanent “Shidu” parents trying to adopt a child to alleviate the pain of lost only child, but Chinese adoption policy is strictly, because of complex procedures, “Shidu” parents can't find the right adopt object. Adopting a child is not too much in “Shidu” group, it doesn't matter with love, parents always compare the adopted child with their dead child, which increased their mental burden.

3.3 The Fight Against the Spirit

In the traditional concept of China, Have a child to carry on his family name as unalterable principles, children are accounted for the absolute dominance, even if how hard it is, see the child from healthy growth to marry and settle down, is their greatest happiness. The only child died, so that once the happy family will fall into the abyss, downhearted has been unable to describe their feelings now.

On holidays, It is usually the family reunion, but in “Shidu” parents’ eyes, the festival is a "disaster". A 64 - year - old “Shidu” mother, in the eve of Chinese new year, ran to her daughter's graveyard and had stay there for two days and nights, crying and touching the cold tombstone again and again, until her hands were too cold and have no consciousness. They refused to contact with friends and relatives, and afraid to see others’ children and grandchildren, after lost their only child, the inferiority and pain biting their broken hearts by day and night .

3.4 Difficult to Maintain Family

One-child family is like a triangle structure, it is well known that the triangle is the most stable structure, and one-child's death is like lost a corner of the triangle stability of structure, the whole family will fall apart.

The anguish of the one-child accident died, the deeply miss and hopeless for the future seriously destroyed the “Shidu” parents’ health, because of one-child’s death , everything have changed, because of excessive grief, some parents have died; because of the one-child have died, couples were blaming with each other, eventually divorced; Also some fathers abandoned the sad mothers who can no longer pregnant; Some surfer from serious illness, they lost only child and their wife or husband, and live alone in the world to face the arrival of death... Some “Shidu” parents choose to commit suicide, So that they can with their child together, but the family is ruined!

4. Data

The China aging development report (2013) shows that China has at least 1 million “Shidu” families in 2012, 2 million “Shidu” parents, they are or will soon be faced with the huge spirit, health care, pension difficulties. Because there is no detail investigating on the one-child in China, It is difficult to calculate the number of one-child directly, then the number of “Shidu” family is more difficult to calculate, according to the different algorithms, the Chinese scholars has estimated the size of “Shidu” family as follows table 1:

Table 1: Data of the Size of “Shidu” Family

Author	Deadline	Data Extent	Estimated number (ten thousand)	Total estimated number (ten thousand)
Wang Guangzhou (2013)	2010	0-30	17.29	100.3
Xie Yingcai (2013)	2010	0-34	12.26	/
Wang Guixin (2012)	2010	15-30	7.6	100
Zhou Wei (2013)	2010	0-30	/	241.26

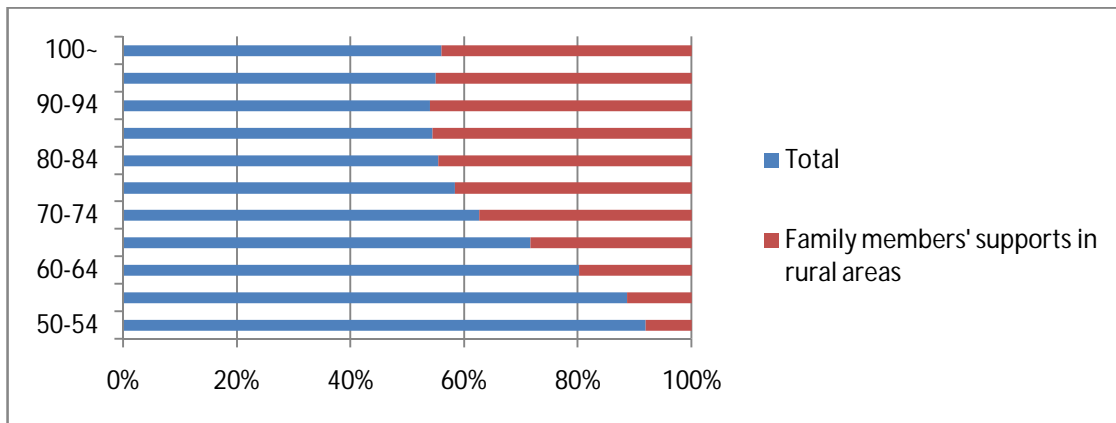
According to the sixth census data of China, I chose the age from 15 to 34 as the research object and estimated the size of “Shidu” family during the period from 2009 to 2010. Table 2 shows that the number of one-child’s death is more than 46 thousand, Since the one-child policy came into force for 30 years, there will be at least 1.38 million “Shidu” family, and the number is growing.

Table 2: Data of Different Ages

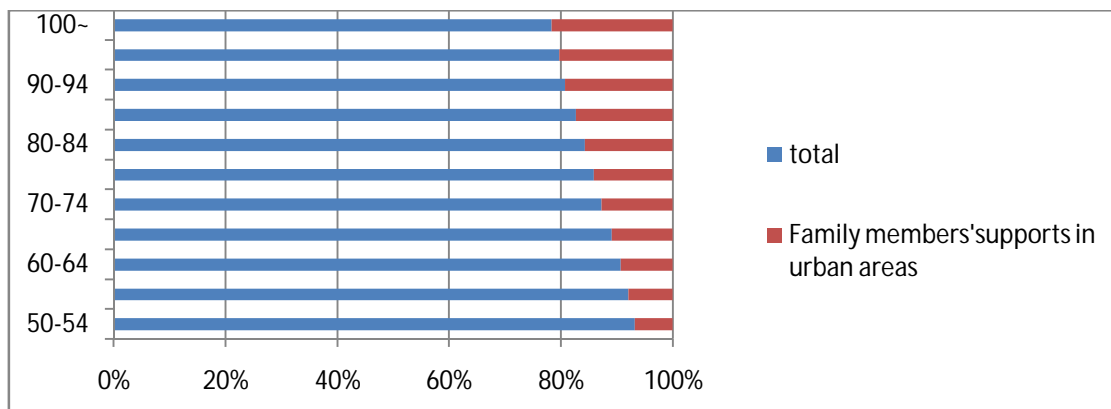
Age	Total number	Number of One-child	One-child rate (%)	Total number of death	Mortality rate (%)	Number of one-child death
15-19	99889114	30504558	30.54	40469	0.040513924	12358.59353
20-24	127412518	22374927	17.56	62552	0.049094077	10984.76394
25-29	101013852	15091191	14.94	60661	0.06005216	90625.86161
30-34	97138203	12828546	13.21	79960	0.082315708	10559.90853
Total	425453687	80799222	76.25	243642	0.057266398	46270.80373

These pictures show that With the growth of age, the proportion of family support is increasing, even more than 70%. Compare picture.1 with picture.2, we can see that people in rural areas are more dependent on family members’ supports than those in urban areas. Because the average income of one-child family in rural areas is lower than the towns, and few of them have pensions, “Shidu” parents are facing more pressure of life, therefore, this article suggested to unified the support standard for “Shidu” family at the national level .

Picture1. Proportion of Family Support in Rural Areas



Pictuer 2. Proportion of Family Support in Urban Areas



5. Social Security Measures about “Shidu” Family

5.1 Policy Support

Since 2014, the Ministry of Finance and the Population and Family Planning Commission decided to increase the support standard for all woman over 49 years old in “Shidu” family couples: the town 270 RMB a month per person , 340 RMB, the rural 150 RMB per person per month, 170 RMB, and it has greatly improved than the current 135 RMB per person on average for “Shidu” parents . the support standard in various provinces and cities also has certain increase: since 2008, the subsidy is 200 a month per person in Beijing, in addition, the woman over 55 years old, and male over 60 can get 5000 RMB to 10000 RMB onetime; In Zhengzhou, “Shidu” family can receive 780 RMB a month per person as living subsidy, In Shenzhen ,the rural 800RMB a month per person, the town 1000 RMB a month per person. It can alleviate the economic difficulties of “Shidu” group in a certain extent, and guarantee their basic living.

As you can see, there are different support policies in different cities, compared with the national subsidy standard, local government’s subsidy is much higher, and has carried on the segmentation and increased the one-time subsidies, there are great different subsidies between urban and rural areas.

5.2 The Disadvantages of Policy

But according to the statistics from the National Institutes of Health and Family Planning Commission, in 2013, there were only 407000 people take the subsidies, It’s different from the previously estimated 1000000 people. The survey found that many “Shidu” family did not know this policy, also not enjoy the subsidies. The procedure is complex, and the one-child’s death proof is essential, but the “Shidu” parents can’t accept to take the children’s death certificate to exchange subsidies. Moreover, the staff in agency where issued “Shidu” family with subsidy, just according to the rules, they are indifference. Their heart is already broken, and the outside world is chilling, the system is not human nature, the indifference of staff , which all undoubtedly salt on the wound.

In the process of providing the subsidies, the inadequate regulation, from the aspect of law, it should be given severe punishment, strictly protect the legitimate rights and interests of “Shidu” group shall be inviolable.

What’s more, the government should take the initiative to help the “Shidu” family to apply for, rather than waiting for them to apply, to help them as much as possible, rather than a second damage. In addition, social welfare can fund appropriate group of funds, the local government should buy comprehensive insurance for the “Shidu” group such as health care, pension, life, and even women's well-being, to guarantee sickness have medical support.

5.3 The Law System is not Perfect

The disabled is guaranteed by the Disabled Security Ordinance, left-behind children and empty nest old man also has a policy to take care of, but the attention to “Shidu” group is not enough, the Population and Family Planning Law issued at the end of 2010, is the only law involve the “Shidu” group, but it is only referred to give "the necessary help" to the “Shidu” group, but what is the necessity is not clearly defined.

Lack of effective medical security system, according to the relevant survey found that “Shidu” parents can’t afford the medical expenses of serious illness. In terms of adoption, the adoption laws and regulations in children's welfare homes also go against for “Shidu” group. Nursing homes also close the doors on “Shidu” groups. There are no laws and regulations for “Shidu” groups to get a bed in Nursing homes, also have no the relevant policy support.

5.4 The Spiritual Care

The official attitude towards “Shidu” problem is still not clear. They now focus on control of birth, instead of caring for life. Although the government has given some economy support, but spiritual comfort is the most important for the family, as the saying goes, "there is nothing worse than a dead heart", they desire to heal psychic trauma. Zhang Chun, director of the center for psychological crisis intervention in Nanjing thought that time can dilute everything, but as time goes on, memories of painful will be more and deeper, and timely psychological guidance may make them better. But at present, the spiritual assistance of the family is almost blank.

It should be funded by the government, according to the family, set up psychological counseling agencies, community, government and other joint participation mental relief mechanism. Encourage non-governmental organizations and public institutions to help the family, college students volunteer organizations, military officers and soldiers to condole the “Shidu” family, doing housework and chatting with “Shidu” parents, which can effectively alleviate their suffering mind.

6. Suggestion

With the increasing of “Shidu” family, the social management dilemmas continue to increase, combined with the multiple factors, such as life distress, pension difficulties, mental vacancy, we believe that only government, society and personal co-operate fully with each other, can carry more effective system for the protection and spiritual support, then social care would shine to every unhappy “Shidu” family.

6.1 Government

The government should improve the system of the existing policy, offer the guarantee on the material and the legal system.

Appropriately raise the “Shidu” subsidy amount, to establish integrative social security system of urban and rural, since the founding of new China, the state had taken the unbalanced development strategy which sacrifice the interests of the peasants, then it caused the duality economic development between urban and rural areas, so that formed the duality social security between urban and rural areas, the city's social security treatment is much higher than the countryside, in today's pursuit of social equity, harmony and stability, In dealing with the “Shidu” problem, it should be equally and enjoy the same treatment, particularly for the difficult family in economy, the government should further improve the subsidy standard to guarantee their basic life. On February 7, 2014, for example, the Premier of the state council chaired a state council executive meeting decided to merge the new type of rural social endowment insurance and urban residents and the endowment insurance, to establish the national unified system of basic endowment insurance for urban and rural residents.

To establish perfect social insurance system, in which the supplementary care insurance in the medical insurance, to provide nursing care for “Shidu” groups, because of old age and illness, who cannot provide for oneself in daily life by private care services or social care facilities; Set specific endowment insurance system for the “Shidu” group, and establish special endowment institutions for the “Shidu” group and open an endowment green channel; Cooperate with the insurance company for the one-child family to buy one-child accident insurance and other insurance. Such as in 2012, Beijing decided to spend 2800 RMB to buy some comprehensive insurance which coverage health care, pension, life, even female angler insurance in each year in the next three years for every member of the “Shidu” family.

Encourage the suitable family to have a child, and their medical costs can be made of reimbursement by medical insurance , considering the parents are older, they may not be able to afford various costs in the process of children’s growing up, and provide some subsidy for those children's education and living allowance expenses in the future; For those families who want to adopt children, the government should broaden the adoption conditions to facilitate adoption procedures; the government should appropriately modify the one-child policy, for example, it has now adopted a policy which both of couples are the one-child can they have two children, and it is planning to implement a policy which only one of the couples is one-child can they give birth two children .

In order to prevent the phenomenon which there are policies that there is nobody know for message block, it should actively play the characteristics of small and exquisite of a grassroots community, Co-ordinate the strength from all walks to provide services and support for the “Shidu” family, concerned about their daily life, understand their needs and build a warm and sweet community, to let them out of their homes and participate in community activities, thus further step out of the haze for the lost their only child .

6.2 Society

Social assistance is the important supplement of the social security system. Social organization joint professional counseling agencies, should open free psychological counseling service, and offer the “Shidu” group psychological guidance and care; Social welfare fund and social enterprise jointly set up public welfare funds for “Shidu” group, the money can be used to develop a high level of care and psychological counseling team, and organize various public welfare activities which benefit the “Shidu’ group, so that they can have a rich and colorful life in their later years; Encourage college student volunteers and social workers entered the “Shidu” family to help them do some housework and chat with them, then form The one-to-one model support daily care. In addition, the social organization should fight for rights of “Shidu” group, calling for the government and social concern about “Shidu” family, to build a relatively perfect social support network.

6.3 Themselves

The “Shidu” family should be actively save themselves, they should not live in the shadow of the past, and should not refuse to communicate with the outside world, they should try to step out of the door, and regain the confidence of life. Build QQ group and “Shidu” parents Mutual aid organization, for example, all members in the QQ group are “Shidu” parents, only in front of the person who have the same fate, can they speak out their sadness and anguish, they talk to each other, help each other and treat each other as the solace of mind, from a certain , ease the pain of lost their only child. The “Shidu” family can get together regularly, they can dance, play chess, play ball games or take up a backpack to trip. Through these activities, they exercises the body, and open their mind. At the same time, the “Shidu” group should not to refuse the help from the outside as far as possible, in the face of the problem which they couldn't solve, they can seek help from the society. They may take part in some charity activities for them, and relax in the sad mood, perhaps, they may accidentally find that open themselves is not as painful and difficult as what they have imaged.

7. Conclusion

Perhaps, there is no perfect system in the world, the implementation of any system will produce negative effects. In China's rapid economic and social development, countries and people in the process of gradually rich, how to look at and support the “Shidu” groups, how to solve the problem of “Shidu” group, it is really related to the stability and harmony of the society, also really examine and weigh the responsibility and civilization of a country.

We sincerely look forward to the whole society will give the group more attention and more aid, after went through great pain, let them know the society did not forget them, and feel warm. In addition, life did not press the stop button, bless them, they will soon come out of the haze, and feel the new life.

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