

The Impact of Family Relations on the Fertility Desires of College Students

Ruiyin Chen^{1, a}

¹South China University of Technology, Guangzhou, China

^a969936075@qq.com

Abstract

This paper intends to find out the impact of family relations on the fertility desires of college students. For this purpose, the paper is combined with both qualitative and quantitative techniques. In particular, the research used questionnaires to collect the answers from 787 participants. Also, 2 participants have been interviewed. So far, there are few studies investigate fertility desires of college students from the impact of family relationship. Therefore, this study will focus on the influence of family relationship to fertility desires of college students. It has been found that College students' fertility desire is influenced by a variety of reasons, including family relationship.

Keywords

Family relationship; College students; Fertility desires.

1. Introduction

With the aging of Chinese society, the demographic dividend of the country is gradually disappearing. The "Post-70s" and "post-80s" women of childbearing age gradually withdraw from the vigorous period of childbearing, the reduction of "post-90s" women of childbearing age can be predicted, and China's new-born population will continue to decrease in the next few years or even more than a decade. Therefore, it is particularly urgent for the realization of the national population strategy to stimulate the fertility will of college students in the new era and implement the second child birth. This is because the new era of college students have three significant characteristics: first, a large number. In 2018, the gross enrollment rate of higher education in China will reach 48.1%, and the total number of all kinds of higher education in China will reach 38.33 million. [1] Second, the concept of fertility has strong plasticity. In the new era, college students' world outlook, outlook on life and values have not yet been finalized. As long as they are reasonable, emotional and scientifically guided, they can get rid of the inertia of birth control and establish a scientific outlook on fertility. Third, it coincides with the vigorous growth period. Women aged 20-29 are women of childbearing age. In the new era, female college students will be in the period of vigorous childbearing for a long time, with strong fertility and high fertility quality. [2] Therefore, people have been taking measures to solve this problem in recent years, for example, in 2015, the two-child policy was implemented. College students are the main fertility group in the future society. They have been well-educated, which means that their children will be smarter and also be brought up better. As a result, their fertility desires are not only related to their own happiness and development, but also have an important impact on the country's future economic and social development. At present, there are few studies investigate fertility desires of college students from the impact of family relationship.

Many researchers have studied the influencing factors of college students' fertility desires. Many researchers have studied the influencing factors of college students' fertility desires. The first is the education they receive. If they have the experiences of studying in college, they will

be less willing to have children. The second is the number of their family members. If they have more than three family members, they tend to have over two children. The third is family income. If they are rich, they will be willing to have more children. The fourth is their residence. Those who have rural household registration are more likely to have two children. Finally is their religious belief. Believers are more willing to have two children than non-believers. [3] From the conclusion, we can see that as an important part of college students' social relations, family relationship is ignored when it comes to the study of college students' fertility desires.

Family relationship mainly refers to the blood relationship between parents and their children. It also refers to how parents educate or treat their children and how children treat their parents. Family relationship is everyone's first interpersonal relationship in the world. Also, it is a basic and the most important interpersonal relationship of a person. [4] [5] After entering university, most students would leave their parents, but their physical and mental development is still closely related to their family relationship. Firstly, the deep attachment, belonging and security of themselves are from their early interaction with their parents and children. Secondly, their self-consciousness is becoming stronger and stronger when they are getting order, and their lifestyle is also changing. For example, they have more social activities. However, their emotional expression, attitude towards life and interpersonal communication will often be similar with their early childhood. These will have a profound impact on the values and psychology of college students, including their fertility desires.

With a self-designed questionnaire, this study focuses on the relationship between college students and their family members to explore the influence of family relationship on college students' fertility desires through ANOVA and regression analysis.

2. Research Methodology

2.1. Respondents

Two colleges and four colleges were randomly selected in colleges in Guangdong by stratified random sampling method. Among them, 200 students were randomly selected from each school, and 800 college students were investigated by questionnaire. There were 777 valid questionnaires, with an effective rate of 98.38%. Among those people, the number of boys were 362, accounting for 46.60%, girls were 415, accounting for 53.41%. The age of the subjects ranged from 17 to 28 years, with an average age of 23.

2.2. Methodology

The questionnaire consists of two parts

- a. Basic information: including gender, age, whether they have brothers or sisters, etc.
- b. Family relationship and fertility concept: including the relationship with parents, the relationship with brothers and sisters, the ideal family model, etc.

There were 9 single choice questions and 2 multiple choice questions. The survey was done through online questionnaire.

2.3. Statistical Analysis

R software was used for statistical analysis, and Chi-Square test of independence was used to test the correlation between the two variables. The original hypothesis is that the two variables are independent of each other, and there is no correlation, and the significance level is $\alpha = 0.1$. If the p value of the statistical test results is lower than α , the original hypothesis is rejected.

3. Results of the Survey

3.1. General Situation

There were 189 students chose DINKS as their ideal family pattern, accounting for 24.32%. There were 433 students chose single child family as their ideal family pattern, accounting for 55.73%. As for those who chose two children family as their ideal family pattern, there were 130, accounting for 16.73%. Finally, there were 25 students chose multiplex family, accounting for 3.22%.

3.2. The Characteristics of College Students' Fertility Desires

Firstly, the fertility desires of college students presents gender characteristics. There was a significant difference in fertility desires between different genders ($P = 0.0008214$), girls are more likely to have two children than boys (Table 1). Secondly, the fertility desires of college students is affected by family structure. There are significant differences in family relations among students with different family structures ($P = 2.2e-16$). Among them, the only child is more likely to have a child or not (Table 2). Third, the relationship between college students and siblings had an impact on their fertility desires ($P_1 = 0.06382$, $P_2 = 0.01933$), among which the college students with better relationship with siblings were more willing to have children (Table 3). Finally, the relationship between college students and their parents has an impact on their fertility desires ($P = 7.541e-11$). Among them, college students with better relationship with their parents are more willing to have children (Table 4).

Table 1. Gender's influence on college students' fertility desires

	DINK S	Single child	Two children	Multiplex	χ^2	p
Gender					16.682	0.0008214
Male	87	218	49	8		
Female	102	215	81	17		

Table 2. Sibling's influence on college students' fertility desires

Only-child or not					174.93	2.2e-16
Yes	120	271	36	18		
No	68	163	94	17		

Table 3. Relationships with sibling's influence on college students' fertility desires

Relationship with siblings						
Good	36	99	68	9		
Average	24	55	23	7	7.2682(Compare with a good relationship)	0.06382(Compare with a good relationship)
Bad	9	9	3	1	9.9122(Compare with a good relationship)	0.01933(Compare with a good relationship)

Table 4. Relationships with parents' influence on college students' fertility desires

Relationship with parents						
Good	32	75	28	7		
Average	24	49	61	9	50.118(Compare with a good relationship)	7.541e-11(Compare with a good relationship)
Bad	13	39	5	1	7.1167(Compare with a good relationship)	0.06827(Compare with a good relationship)

4. Analysis

4.1. Findings

Chen Rong and Gu Baochang hold the view that the fertility desires are the direct embodiment of people's birth view. [6] They divide fertility desires into number (ideal number of children), gender (gender preference), the ideal age to give birth to children and other factors. In this survey, we mainly focus on the ideal number of children of college students. The results show that most college students want to have only one child, with some students want to have two children, have more than two children or be DINKS. Also, this study found that family relationship has a certain impact on college students' fertility desires, that is, students with good family relationship have stronger desire to have children, while students with poor family relationship are less willing to have children in the future. These findings show us that family relationship plays an important role in promoting college students' fertility desires, which is of great significance for building a harmonious family relationship, thus promoting future fertility in the whole country and increasing its population.

Some studies have pointed out that the communication of family members, the marriage relationship and marital status of parents, the parenting way of parents to their children have important influence on the concept of marriage and love. [7] Family function can directly affect the demand tendency and avoidance tendency of sexual attitude through the mediation of marriage concept. [8] On one hand, when the family can't realize its basic function, it can't meet the physiological, psychological or social needs of family members. On the other hand, if the family function is relatively sound, its members' views on marriage tend to be correct and rational, which may contribute to the avoidance of sex. Family is the most initial and basic educational environment, which plays an important role in a person's psychological development. As one of the main environments of individual life, it provides important psychological and emotional support and affects the development of individual psychology and behavior. Family intimacy has a strong predictive effect on College Students' mental health factors, adaptation and anxiety. The higher the family intimacy is, the more college students have the personality factors of mental health, and the more smoothly they adapt to life. [9] In this research, we divide family relationship into the relationship between brothers and parents. According to the above survey and analysis, we know that the relationship between college students and their parents' brothers and sisters will have an impact on their ideal number of children. The results show that college students who have a good relationship with siblings are more willing to have two or more children. Also, those who get along well with their parents are more willing to have children.

In the discussion of family related factors, this study also draws more specific conclusions. The first is the policy influence. The two-child policy has been implemented in China for five years. In these five years, college students' desire to have children is also changing. Dai Jinmei's research in 2018 pointed out that for two-child families, more than half of college students are still in a wait-and-see state. [9] However, according to our survey data, which was collected in 2020, college students gradually begin to accept and set the twin female family as their ideal family model. In our interview, the college students interviewed think that this policy is correct and timely, which meets the needs of both the country and the family. On the other hand, there are a certain number of college students who want to have no children. Their attitude shows that childbearing is a choice rather than a necessary behavior of contemporary families. The view of respecting individual reproductive choice and reproductive freedom has become the mainstream among post-90s College students, which promotes social inclusion of DINKS.

The second is gender. Girls began to pay attention to their own improvement and development, tend to have fewer or no children, or do not want to have a second child in a short time. Studies have shown that male college students' fertility desires are more easily affected by national

policies. The motivation of college students' desires to have a second child comes from "they like children", but boys are more vulnerable to family ethics than girls.

From some newspapers and magazines, the narratives of people around us, movies and TV works, we always think that those families who have several children will lead to some family disputes, that is, the conflict between children and parents, for example, from the distribution of family property, the attention of parents, the change of the investment of family funds to children, we always think that children will face these changes. With the arrival of the second child, the whole family turns their attention to the second child. The eldest child is naturally left out in the cold. If the eldest child can't adapt in a short time, he will "compete for favor" in various extreme ways to attract the attention of his parents. [10] Psychological imbalance and discomfort lead to family disputes, and the concept of child-bearing will change accordingly. However, this is only the general situation, and there are some differences for different individuals. One interviewee said that the arrival of his younger brother made his life more interesting because he could feel that he had one more relative and that someone loved him as much as his parents. Another interviewee said that after the birth of his younger brother, he felt the hardship of his parents in the process of taking care of his younger brother, and he may not have two children in the future, because it is too hard to take care of children. Therefore, we can see that although college students' desire to have children is affected by family relations, it still tends to be rational. They have different views on the same issue according to their own experiences.

4.2. Enlightenment

This study found the influence of college students' family relationship on their fertility intention. The results provide reference basis and strategies for improving college students' family relationship in order to improve their fertility intention.

Parents should improve the quality of parent-child communication and pay attention to parent-child communication and family communication. Also, they should timely solve the confusion and problems in the process of getting along with family members, let the children feel the warmth of the family, so that they have the will to form their own small family.

The government can organize some activities to help the families build up their relationship. For example, they can arrange some garden party for parents and their children.

5. Conclusion

(1) Family relations have impact on college students' fertility desires. A good family relationship, including the relationship between the student and his parents or siblings will let him be more willing to have children.

(2) There are gender differences in fertility intention. Girls began to pay attention to their own improvement and development, tend to have fewer or no children, or do not want to have a second child in a short time.

(3) In modern families, the relationship between parents and children is more open and transparent, so that children can face the change of family relationship with a more inclusive attitude, which lays a foundation for the implementation of the two-child policy in College students. From the interviews, we can see that parents are willing to share important family decisions with their children, which is a good example of this.

6. Limitations

(1) China's population situation is complex. There are differences between rural college students and urban college students. This study focuses on urban college students.

References

- [1] Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China. The 2018 National Educational Development Statistical Bulletin [EB/OL]. [2019-07-24]. http://www.gov.cn/zl-zl/rkr/content_677920.htm.
- [2] Zhu Hongcui, Liu Bing. Research on fertility outlook of college students in the new era [J]. Heilongjiang Higher Education Research, 2020, 38(04): 33-39.
- [3] Fang Dachun, Pei Mengdi. A Study on the Influencing Factors of Residents' Second Childbirth Desire——An Empirical Study Based on CGSS2015 Data [J]. Survey the world, 2018 (9): 9.
- [4] Xu Guangxing. School Psychology: Psychological Counseling and Counseling [M]. Shanghai: East China Normal University Press, 2000: 270-287.
- [5] Liu Dengpan. Research on the parent-child relationship and personality characteristics of college students [D]. Xi'an: Shaanxi Normal University, 2006.
- [6] Chen Rong, Gu Baochang. Historical turning point or short-term fluctuation: An investigation of the natural change of Shanghai's household registration population from negative to positive[J]. Exploration and Controversy, 2018 (04): 109-115+143.
- [7] Ma Li & Chen Pujing. (2016). The characteristics of college students' family relations and their influence on their learning status. Journal of Capital University of Economics and Business (05), 123-128. doi:10.13504/j.cnki.issn1008-2700.2016.05.015.
- [8] Zhao Ke, Zhang Haiqing, Yang Lihong. The relationship between family function view of marriage and love and sexual attitude of college students[J]. Chinese School Health, 2012, 33(08): 916-919.
- [9] Li Bingkuan, Liu Qihui. The relationship between college students' personality characteristics and family intimacy and adaptability [J]. China Special Education, 2012(01): 81-84.
- [10] Chen Binbin, Wang Yan, Liang Ji, et al. Progression of the second child: the physiological and psychological changes and influencing factors of the first child's transition to sibling relationship [J]. Advances in Psychological Science, 2016(24): 863 -873.
- [11] Dai Jinmei, Fang Liying, Jiang Jianping. Investigation and analysis of college students' willingness to bear children[J]. Journal of Fujian Normal University (Natural Science Edition), 2018, 34(06): 104-110.