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From the Life History Theory, the Attitude of the Post-00s Toward "Raising Children for Old Age": To Explore the Influence of Parenting Mode on Children's Fertility Intention and its Causes

Wanying Li*

Department of Social Work, Southwest Minzu University, Chengdu, Sichuan, 610041, China
*Corresponding author's e-mail: summerli0314@163.com

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to explore the post-00s group's attitude towards the concept of "raising children for old age" from the perspective of life history theory, and to study the influence of parental rearing mode on children's fertility intention. Through online questionnaire collection and SPSS analysis, this study will reveal the influence mechanism of different parenting modes (authoritative, permissive, authoritarian and neglectant) on children's reproductive intention. The results of the questionnaire show that different parenting modes have certain effects on children's adult fertility attitudes and behavioral tendencies, which can explain the psychological and social reasons behind the low fertility willingness of some post-00s to some extent.

KEYWORDS

Life History Theory; The Post-00s Group Parenting Mode; Fertility Intention.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Research Background and Significance

In recent years, China's fertility rate continues to decline. By 2023, the birth rate is only 6.39%, a record low. The continued decline in the fertility rate will not only bring challenges to the balanced and sustainable development of China's population structure, but also affect the level of economic and social development. Since the Third Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee, the CPC Central Committee has proposed and implemented the policies of "two children alone", "two children across the board" and "three children". However, as the population reproduction process is affected by many complicated factors, the implementation of the series of policies has not brought the population development level to the expected development. Wang Weiguo [1]etal. believe that behind the low fertility rate is the change of residents' fertility intention, and Xu Jin [2]etal. further point out that the development of science and technology such as the Internet has diluted people's traditional fertility concepts such as "raising children for old age". Due to the limit of the optimal childbearing age, the post-00s group is gradually becoming the main force of childbearing. The change of this generation's attitude towards traditional childbearing concepts such as "raising children for old age" will have a profound impact on their childbearing behavior. According to the life history theory, an individual's reproductive behavior and decision making are profoundly affected by his or her early life environment and experience, so it is of great significance to study the influence of childhood parenting patterns on children's reproductive tendencies. This not only helps to understand

the causes of the current decline in fertility, but also provides an empirical basis for the formulation of policies to promote fertility.

1.2. Research Objectives and Questions

The purpose of this study is to answer the following two main questions: What is the attitude of the post-00s towards the concept of "raising children for old age"? How do parents' parenting patterns affect the post-00s' desire to have children?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Definition of Concepts

The definition of "fertility intention" is elaborated. Tan Kejian [3]shows that fertility intention refers to an individual's desire and requirements for having children. Parents will have expectations for the gender and quality of their children, among which quantity is the most important. Chen Rong and Gu Baochang [4]believe that fertility intention is people's attitude and views on reproductive behavior, including three dimensions such as the number of children they are willing to have, the gender they are willing to have and the time they are willing to have children. Yao Unli and Wu Fan [5]also believe that fertility intention is the attitude and view about fertility behavior. In addition to the three aspects mentioned above, the fourth dimension should be the motivation, namely the purpose of fertility. Considering the interpretation of fertility intention in demography and other fields, as well as the fact that most young people of the post-00s group have not entered the marriage life and have no specific experience in raising children, the measurement of fertility intention in this paper will focus on whether they want to have children, how many children they want to have and the purpose of having children.

2.2. Analysis of Existing Researches in Related Fields

Existing studies have shown that family background has a significant impact on an individual's reproductive intention. For example, Nie Yanfei [3] analyzed the fertility intention of urban population and its influencing factors through CGSS data, and found that fertility intention is positively correlated with family economic level, and negatively correlated with education level when there is little difference in economic level. Xu Jiaying [4] pointed out that in general, the reproductive intention of non-only children is higher than that of only children, and the reproductive intention may continue to decrease in the process of transforming into reproductive behavior. Currently, the reproductive intention and reproductive behavior of young people show a "double low" trend.

2.3. The Gaps and Deficiencies of Existing Research

In the situation of declining fertility rate, although many studies have focused on fertility intention, most of them focus on macroeconomic and sociocultural aspects, and few in-depth discussions are conducted from the perspective of psychology and family upbringing. In addition, there are relatively few studies on this particular group of post-00s, and there is no systematic analysis of the specific impact of childhood parenting style on their adult reproductive intention.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Hypothesis

Based on the study of the life history theory, Belsky etal [5][6] proposed a new life development model, pointing out that the early family environment has a shaping effect on the individual's

psychological and behavioral development model, and thus determines the individual's different selection preferences for reproduction tasks. At the same time, the theoretical logic of the life history theory is as follows: early social experience provides clues to the living environment for individuals, and individuals form and adjust their strategies of resource allocation according to it, so as to adapt to the environment more effectively. For the reproductive stage in the life history, individuals who grew up in a poor environment, or fast strategy, tend to reach sexual maturity earlier, have more children, and have less parental investment. Slow strategy individuals who grew up in a favorable environment tended to have sex later in life, focus on intimate relationship investment and child development, that is, value personal quality of life and child rearing quality more than the number of children raised[7][8].

On this basis, the following hypotheses are proposed in this paper:

Hypothesis 1: Different parenting patterns have different effects on children's fertility intention.

Life history theory emphasizes the influence of an individual's early life environment on their reproductive behavior and decision-making. As an important part of the early life environment, the parenting pattern directly affects the individual's reproductive intention by shaping the individual's psychological and behavioral development pattern. In conclusion, authoritative parenting, which provides a stable and supportive family environment, can enhance an individual's sense of security and self-efficacy, and these psychological characteristics are associated with higher reproductive intention. On the contrary, permissive and neglectful parenting patterns may lead to a lack of security and self-efficacy, which in turn reduces an individual's reproductive intention.

Hypothesis 2: Fertility pressure has a significant negative effect on children's fertility intention.

The concepts of "fast strategy" and "slow strategy" in life history theory explain how individuals adjust their resource allocation strategies in the face of different environmental pressures. High fertility stress can be viewed as a type of environmental stress that forces individuals to make trade-offs between fertility and resource allocation. Individuals growing up in high-stress environments tend to adopt "fast strategies" and enter the reproductive stage earlier, but due to limited resources, they may choose to have fewer children to safeguard their own survival and the quality of rearing of the children they already have. Therefore, it is reasonable to infer that high fertility pressure will significantly reduce individuals' fertility willingness.

Hypothesis 3: The concept of raising children for old age has a significant positive effect on children's fertility intention.

The life history theory also concerns that individuals' reproductive decisions are guided by sociocultural concepts. In traditional society and culture, the concept of "raising children for old age" is an important reproductive motivation. Social cognition and cultural concepts formed early in an individual's life will affect their reproductive decisions later in life. By strengthening the functional role of children in the family, the traditional concept of "raising children for old age" enhances the motivation of individuals to have children and urges them to regard having children as part of their life security in old age. Therefore, individuals who hold the concept of "raising children for old age" are more likely to have higher fertility intention.

Hypothesis 4: Social fertility support has a positive effect on children's fertility intention.

Life history theory emphasizes the adaptability of individual reproductive strategies, which are influenced not only by the family environment but also by social support systems. Adequate social resources and support can enhance individuals' confidence in the future environment and make them more willing to give birth in an environment with more abundant resources. Social fertility support, such as childcare subsidies, maternity leave policies and childcare services, can reduce the financial and time pressure on individuals in the process of childbearing and parenting, thereby increasing their willingness to have children.

3.2. Research Methods

This study adopts quantitative research method, selects the post-00s groups in different regions of the country, and obtains extensive data support through questionnaire survey. Data were collected through online distribution and retrieval of questionnaires, including respondents' gender, education background, family economic background, fertility intention, parental rearing style, attitude towards the concept of "raising children for old age", etc. In terms of data processing and analysis, the questionnaire data were classified and filtered, and visual charts were made to display the survey results. SPSS was used for statistical analysis, including descriptive statistical analysis of the questionnaire results, chi-square test for hypothesis 1, binary logistic regression analysis for hypothesis 2, 3 and 4, and variable fitting table was used to evaluate the overall fit of the model.

4. RESEARCH RESULTS

4.1. Data Analysis

A total of 374 questionnaires were collected in this study, of which 373 were valid.

4.1.1. Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Table 1. Statistical table of frequency analysis

Name	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	female	252	67.74
	male	120	32.26
Education	Junior high school and below	1	0.27
	High school	21	5.65
	Junior College	22	5.91
	Undergrad	280	75.27
	Master's and above	48	12.90
Place of Residence	city	268	72.04
	Rural	104	27.96
Relationship and Marriage status	Single	195	52.42
	In a Relationship	125	33.60
	Have been in relationships but are currently single	49	13.17
	Engaged or married	3	0.81
Annual household income range	Less than 100,000 yuan	155	41.67
	100,000-200,000 yuan	139	37.37
	200,000-400,000 yuan	54	14.52
	400,000-800,000 yuan	16	4.30
	More than 800,000 yuan	8	2.15
Whether you are an only child	is	142	38.17
	no	230	61.83
Home Education Environment	Strict management, requiring children to absolutely obey their own, undemocratic	28	7.53
	Strict management, at the same time will listen to the children's views reasonably, more democratic	212	56.99
	Management is not strict, and education focuses on providing material security rather than spiritual support	100	26.88
	Management is not strict, and few or never shows requirements or expectations for children	32	8.60

As can be seen from the above table, 67.74% of the total 373 valid samples are female and 32.26% are male. From the educational distribution, the proportion of bachelor's degree is 75.27%. From the type of residence, the proportion of people living in cities is higher, accounting for 72.04%. In terms of marriage and love status, 52.42 percent of them are currently single, and 33.60 percent are in love. From the range of household annual income distribution, the proportion of family annual income is less than 100,000 yuan, 41.67%. The proportion of households with an annual income of 100,000-200,000 yuan is 37.37%. In terms of whether they are the only child, more than 60 percent of the sample are not the only child, and 38.17 percent are the only child. In terms of family upbringing, more than 50 percent had an authoritative family environment.

4.1.2. Chi-square Test

Hypothesis 1: There are differences in the effects of different parenting patterns on children's fertility intention.

Table 2. Chi-square analysis results

Variables	Options	Parenting Mode (%)				Total	χ2	P
		Dictatorial type	Authoritative	Indulgent type	Ignoring type			
Child fertility willingness	Unwillingness	A 16 (57.14)	A 127 (59.91)	A 77 (77.00)	A 21 (65.63)	241 (64.78)	9.479	0.024 *
	Willing	A 12 (42.86)	85 b (40.09)	23 b (23.00)	11 (34.38)	131 (35.22)		
Total		28	212	100	32	372		
* p<0.05 ** p<0.01								

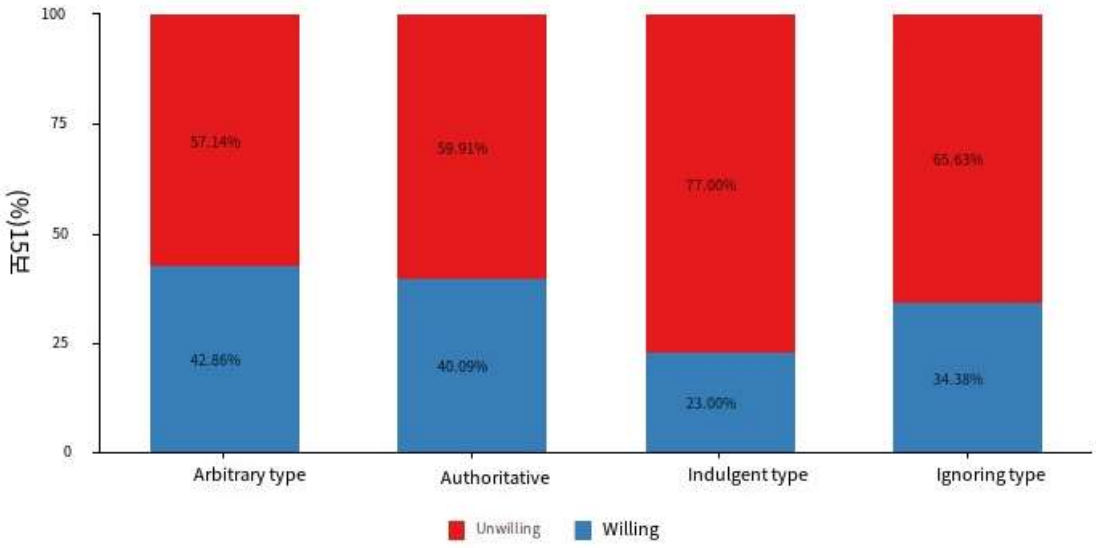

Figure 1. Cross plot of family rearing pattern and children's fertility intention

As can be seen from the table and graph above: Family rearing mode showed a significant level of 0.05 on children's fertility intention (2χ=9.479,p=0.024<0.05), indicating that different family rearing modes had different effects on children's fertility intention. According to the comparison difference of percentages, the proportion of indulgent type who did not want to have children was 77.00%. Was significantly higher than the average level of 64.78%. The proportion of arbitrary choice willing to bear children is 40.09%, which is significantly higher than the average 35.22%. Authoritative and

permissive parenting patterns, which were significantly different, were associated with a lower willingness to have children.

4.1.3. Binary Logistic Regression Analysis

Fertility pressure, social fertility support, the degree of child-rearing concept as independent variables, gender _ female, family annual income, residence _ city as control variables, and children's fertility intention as dependent variables for binary Logit regression analysis, the results are as follows:

Table 3. Omnibus test of model coefficients

		Chi-square	Degree of freedom	Salience
Step 1	Steps	344.523	6	000.
	block	344.523	6	000.
	Model	344.523	6	000.

Table 4. Model abstract

procedure	-2 logarithmic likelihood	Cox-snell R square	Negorko R Square
1	171.179a	604.	805.
a. The estimate terminates on the 7th iteration because the change in the parameter estimate is not enough.001.			

The table above is about testing the fit of the model. Here, Cox&Snell R square and Negelkerke R square are used. The closer the value of these two terms is to 1, the better the fit degree is. After testing, they are 0.604 and 0.805 respectively, indicating that the fit degree of the model is better.

Table 5. Hosmer-lemeshaw test

Steps	Card Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Salience
1	6.427	8	600.

The above table is Hosmer-Lemeshaw test table, P=0.600 > 0.05, that is, the original hypothesis is valid, the fitting value of the model is consistent with the observed value, and it is considered that the model can fit the data well.

Table 6. Classification Table

			Predictions		
			Child fertility intention		
	Measured		Not willing	Willing	Correct percentage
Step 1	Child fertility intention	Unwillingness	226	15	93.8
		Willing	26	105	80.2
	Overall percentage				89.0
a. The cut-off value is.500					

The table above is a contingency table of the predicted results of the final model. The predictions were made in 373 cases with a total accuracy of 89%. It can be seen that the model has a good effect on the prediction of children's fertility intention.

Table 7. Variables in the equation

		B	Standard error	Wald	Degrees of Freedom	Salience	Exp(B)
Step 1	Fertility Stress	2.418	264.	83.883	1	000.	089.
	Social birth support	644.	183.	12.446	1	000.	1.905
	Degree of concept of raising children for old age	726.	221.	10.846	1	001.	2.067
	Gender _ Female	075.	444.	028.	1	867.	1.077
	Annual household income	612.	204.	8.999	1	003.	1.844
	Place of residence _ City	715.	470.	2.316	1	128.	2.045
a. Enter the variables in Step 1: fertility pressure, social fertility support, degree of child-rearing concept, gender, household annual income range, where you live.							

The above table is a variable fitting table, column "B" is the partial regression coefficient, "S.E." is the standard error, and Wald is the Wald statistic. "EXP(B)" is the OR value (also known as odds ratio, odds ratio) of the corresponding variable, which means the change rate of the occurrence ratio of events when the independent variable changes by 1 unit under the condition that other conditions remain unchanged.

As can be seen from the above table, the formula of the model is: ln(p/1-p)=-2.418* fertility pressure +0.644* social fertility support +0.726* degree of idea of raising children for old age +0.075* Gender _ female +0.612* annual family income +0.715* residence _ city (where p represents the probability that the child's fertility intention is 1, 1-p represents the probability that the child's childbearing intention is 0).

Specific analysis: The regression coefficient value of fertility pressure is -2.418, and shows a significance of 0.01 level p=0.000<0.01, which means that fertility pressure will have a significant negative impact on children's fertility willingness.

The regression coefficient value of social reproductive support was 0.644, and p=0.000<0.01 was significant, which meant that social reproductive support would have a positive impact on children's reproductive intention.

The regression coefficient value of the concept of raising children for old age is 0.726, and the significance of 0.01 is p=0.001<0.01, which means that the concept of raising children for old age will have a positive impact on children's fertility intention.

There is no significant relationship between gender and city of residence, and the p values are all greater than 0.05, which means that gender and city of residence do not have a significant impact on children's fertility intention.

The regression coefficient value of family annual income was 0.612, and showed a significance of 0.01 level p=0.003<0.01, which meant that family annual income would have a positive impact on children's fertility intention.

4.2. Conclusion and Deficiency

4.2.1. Conclusion

The test results show that different family rearing patterns, fertility pressure, child-rearing concepts and social fertility support all significantly affect the fertility intention of the post-00s group. Among them, the proportion of those who are unwilling to have children under the permissive parenting mode is significantly higher than the average level, while the proportion who are willing to have children under the arbitrary parenting mode is significantly higher than the average level. The fertility pressure is negatively correlated with the fertility intention, while the understanding and recognition of the concept of raising children for old age is positively correlated with the fertility intention; On this basis, the higher the degree of sufficiency and perfection of social fertility support, the more young people's fertility will be enhanced.

These results can not only help us to further comprehensively understand the reasons for the low fertility intention of the post-00s group, but also reveal the important influence of family rearing style on children's happiness, family concept and fertility intention during the whole life course. Policy makers and society can improve the fertility willingness of the younger generation by improving the family upbringing environment, reducing fertility pressure, strengthening the traditional concept of raising children for old age, and increasing social fertility support.

4.2.2. Deficiencies

There are some limitations in this study. As the post-00s are still young and influenced by many aspects such as family, school and society, their minds are not fully mature and their ideas are easy to change. As a result, the data collected are not stable in the long run. If conditions permit, relevant fields may choose to try to conduct follow-up studies, and use longitudinal studies to observe the changes in their fertility intention during their life cycle and the long-term impact of family rearing patterns on them, so as to obtain more accurate and comprehensive conclusions.

At the same time, the representativeness of the subjects in this study still needs to be improved. Although some data were collected through online questionnaires, the diversity and coverage of the sample still need to be further expanded to ensure that the results are representative of the general situation of the entire post-00s group. Future studies should consider more samples from different backgrounds and regions to improve the universality and credibility of the results.

5. CONCLUSION

By analyzing the influence of family rearing mode on the post-00 group's fertility intention, this study preliminarily reveals the influence of family rearing mode and the concept of "raising children for old age" behind the low fertility intention. Although there are some limitations in this study, the conclusion is of certain significance for understanding and coping with the changes in the fertility concept of the new generation, and it is expected to provide some reference for understanding the fertility concept of the contemporary post-00s childbearing groups. In the future, further research should be carried out to overcome the existing shortcomings, in order to provide a more scientific and systematic basis for promoting the fertility intention of the young generation.

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