

A Study of Employment Options and Survival Strategies of Senior Migrant Workers from a Life Course Perspective

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Abstract: Life course theory focuses on the close and subtle connection between individual life and social change, and the emergence and evolution of this theoretical system provides a unique perspective for analysing the formation of individual life trajectories. In the context of the urban-rural dichotomy, why do senior rural migrant workers make the choice of employment from "keeping house" to "venturing out", and what is the generative logic behind it? What is the policy direction for senior migrant workers travelling between urban and rural areas? All these questions need to be further explored. Starting from the life course theory, this paper explains the motivation of senior migrant workers' decision-making to work in urban areas based on five basic paradigms: the principle of lifelong development, the principle of mobility, the principle of spatial and temporal space, the principle of timing, and the principle of life relevance. It is found that the factors contributing to the employment choices of senior migrant workers are the shaping of a specific historical time and space, the connection with important family members, the opening of a window of opportunity to work, and the driving force of individual initiative and the goal of lifelong development. These factors interact with each other to shape the employment choices and life course of senior migrant workers. To improve the quality of life of senior migrant workers, it is necessary to work together at the policy formulation and implementation levels to improve the protection and management systems for this group, create an equal and harmonious social environment, and also to stimulate and utilise their subjective strengths to help them realise their self-growth and actively integrate into the urban society.

1. Introduction

In the twilight of one's life, one is supposed to choose a place to live in peace, and children are happy to enjoy the life. However, many people choose to go out to work again in their twilight years, forming a special group between urban and rural areas called "senior migrant workers". Senior migrant workers, mainly refers to the group of migrant workers who are over 50 years old and leave the countryside to work in cities. As of 2022, the Migrant Worker Monitoring Survey

Report released by China's National Bureau of Statistics shows that the total number of migrant workers in China has reached 295.62 million. Among them, the proportion of migrant workers over 50 years old was 29.2 per cent, up 1.9 percentage points from the previous year. According to some studies, the elderly migrant workers generally have a low level of education and lack of skills, and most of them can only engage in cleaning, janitorial and other occupations, or rely on odd jobs to make ends meet, and their living conditions are not optimistic. Whether to return to their hometowns to work in agriculture or to stick to the city to continue to fight, has become a difficult problem in front of the senior migrant workers. Many migrant workers choose the latter. Against the backdrop of the difficulty of acceptance of migrant workers in urban society, what motivates them to continue to make the choice of upward mobility in their old age? And what are the forces that support them in making this idea a reality? Existing studies have actively explored the factors contributing to the upward mobility of migrant workers, and found that the factors that promote upward mobility of migrant workers include the accumulation of work experience, the expansion of social networks, the enhancement of human capital, the accompanying of family members, and the subjective initiative to pursue upward mobility as well as the nature of the industry in which they work, among other factors. However, not many studies have been conducted on the group of senior migrant workers. Most senior rural migrant workers are in the sub-labour market which is relatively low-skilled, highly substitutable and dominated by manual labour, and increasing age will directly lead to their disadvantageous position in the labour market. Senior migrant workers are often in a particularly difficult situation due to their age disadvantage and weak human capital. However, under this circumstance, senior migrant workers still have a strong will to move upwards, and their behavioural choices are driven by economic rationality, developmental rationality and emotional rationality. Therefore, even though the policy arrangement of over-age retirement, imperfect social security and increasingly solidified identity discrimination hinder the urban integration of senior migrant workers^[1], senior migrant workers still choose to take the initiative to seek job opportunities and rely on informal groups such as hometowns and colleagues to obtain information about work and find a way out of life.

Existing studies have enriched our understanding of the occupational mobility of senior migrant workers and laid the foundation for this study. However, most of these studies focus only on the factors affecting the employment choices of senior migrant workers in a particular time situation, relatively ignoring the influence of the longitudinal life course and individual subjectivity of this special group. Moreover, existing studies have analysed the various influencing factors in a relatively fragmented manner, ignoring the possible organic links between the influencing factors. In view of this, this study takes the life course theory as the basic perspective to analyse and clarify the life course of senior migrant workers, explore the promotion mechanism and development law of senior migrant workers' employment choices, so as to provide empirical support for the optimization of policy design and social services for this special group.

2. Theoretical foundations

The life course is the trajectory of life that is outlined by the interweaving of different events, and "life" in the life course has three levels of connotation, namely, life time, social time and historical time. According to biology, the life time of an individual refers to the length of the individual's existence from birth to a certain time scale, which is the different stages of the life cycle. Social time is the standard time to play a specific social role, in line with the expectations of the social environment and social culture. Historical time represents an individual's place in history, emphasising the impact of specific historical situations on the individual. In summary, the core of life course theory can be condensed into three elements: "trajectory", "turning point" and "timing".

The concept of "trajectory" relates to the dynamics of an individual's life course and refers to the fact that changes in an individual's life roles and social status are influenced by major events that occur in life, such as going to school, getting a job, getting married, and giving birth to a child, etc. These changes will shape the individual's subsequent life. These changes shape the individual's subsequent experiences and life trajectory. An individual's life status at a given point in time can be seen as the result of a combination of events experienced during the previous life course. Thus, the fate of individuals is often shaped by the realities of social change, historical development and cultural alternation, and the role of state behaviour and individual decision-making cannot be ignored. The term "transition" refers to the transformation of various important roles in the course of life. A "transition" can occur either passively as a result of external social events or as a result of an individual's own initiative to make a change. "Timing" refers to the fact that events in the life course occur in a certain chronological order, and different events occur in different chronological positions, resulting in different direct consequences, and the subsequent impact is also different. For example, a recession is more likely to have a negative psychological effect on younger children, putting them at greater risk.^[2]

Based on the three theoretical cores mentioned above, life course research establishes a five-level basic paradigm, namely, the principle of lifelong development, the principle of dynamism, the principle of spatial-temporal development, the principle of timing, and the principle of life relevance. The principle of lifelong development refers to the fact that an individual's development is not confined to the pre-adolescent stage, but is a long-lasting process throughout life. Changes at the spatial, psychological, and social levels may be the catalyst for developmental change. The principle of agency refers to the individual's ability to make choices and take action to construct a new life course within a specific socio-historical context of opportunities and constraints. The spatio-temporal principle emphasises that the life course is embedded in and shaped by the historical time and space experienced by the individual. The principle of timing emphasises that the chronology of events and role transitions has a significant impact on the individual's life course. The principle of life relevance refers to the fact that human beings, as social animals, often have individual behavioural choices that are not free from the network of relationships in which they are embedded. The establishment of new relationships affects the continuation or change of individual role behaviours, and the resulting transitions shape subsequent lives.

Taken together, the "trajectory" of the life course can be recognised as the result of the interplay between social mechanisms and individual characteristics. According to the life course theory, people usually construct a personal biography that meets the social expectations based on the life course system.^[3] Migrant workers at different ages are able to connect themselves to society through their age expectations, age norms and the perception of their age status, so that their life course can be institutionalised.^[4] From the perspective of life course theory, how can we understand why senior migrant workers decide to start the "de-institutionalisation" option of "living" in a foreign country? What kind of existential dilemmas do these special groups face in the current spatial and temporal context? How do they find a suitable survival strategy? It is worth exploring further.

3. Perspectives of the senior migrant workers group from a life course perspective

3.1. Response in historical time: compromise or resistance?

The development path of an individual or a specific group is the node where the social context and human subjectivity are linked in the perspective of the life course. Peer groups experience common historical time, social changes, and major events, and form their own role positions and life time sequences as time and space change.^[5] Senior migrant workers, usually refers to those over 50 years old. From the perspective of time dimension, most of this group of people were born

before 1973, and they may have suffered serious natural disasters in their childhood, faced extremely difficult survival difficulties, and suffered serious trauma on the psychological level. 1978, the household contract responsibility system formed a strong impetus for the transfer of surplus rural labour, and at the same time, the reform and opening up accelerated the economic development and the transformation of the social structure, and the demand for labour in the cities continued to increase, creating a strong demand for rural migrant workers to move to the cities. At the same time, the reform and opening up accelerated economic development and social structure transformation, and the demand for labour in the cities continued to increase, providing a strong pull for rural migrant workers to work in the cities. As a result, they may choose to enter the cities to seek opportunities for survival and development, and are forced to enter the cheap labour market. 2000 saw the rise of the Internet boom, and as they were approaching middle age, they were insulated from the opportunities of technological development due to their limited education, and were only passively accepted as a group of learners. 2000 saw the beginning of China's efforts to address the issue of balanced development between urban and rural areas, and the transfer of rural labour became the major part of population mobility. Since 2000, China has begun to focus on solving the problem of balanced urban-rural development, with the transfer of rural labour becoming the mainstay of population mobility, and with further positive changes in related policies. [6]Unreasonable restrictions on the movement of rural labourers to the cities have gradually been lifted, and since 2003 a series of policies have been introduced to facilitate the urban integration of rural migrant workers, such as the marketisation of urban real estate, the abolition of the "internment and deportation system", the standardisation of migrant workers' wages, the opening up of social security to migrant workers, and the emphasis on the education of their children, all of which have provided a new framework for their integration into the cities. These policies have provided a suitable policy environment for the integration of migrant workers into cities. However, it is undeniable that the hidden institutional factors behind the history cannot be ignored. The urban-rural dual household registration system, which continues to this day, structurally reinforces the inherent perception of social stratification and creates significant barriers between urban and rural areas. Rural migrant workers have fewer opportunities for development and are subject to more social restrictions. Considering the historical logic, this group of people has two choices at this critical stage of their lives: either to go out to work and earn a living, or to rely on farming for their survival. Either way of life, in terms of the current quality of life, the capital stock brought about by the improvement is minimal, this group of people until middle-aged and old age is still facing a more serious life difficulties. In 2020, the new crown epidemic will make it even more difficult for senior migrant workers to find work, and their lives will be in crisis again. 2022 will see the introduction of policies to regulate the age of employment in many places, restricting or forbidding over-age migrant workers from engaging in construction work, and the number of employment opportunities will plummet, adding to the woes of the lives of senior migrant workers. [7]From a spatial perspective, most senior migrant workers come from poor and backward rural areas, where material resources are scarce and economic development prospects are not optimistic. Regional differences and urban-rural disparities are the driving force behind migrant labour.

Most of today's senior migrant workers originate from the generation of young and middle-aged farmers who left their hometowns earlier after the reform and opening up. At that time, they were mainly in their 18s and 40s, but now most of them are 55 to 70 years old. They have experienced low wages, low security, difficult to protect their rights, and difficult or even poor living conditions, which have shaped their habit of "not afraid of suffering", and even in their twilight years, they are still able to adapt to the "bitter, tiring and poor" urban labour life. Even in their twilight years, they are still able to adapt to the "bitter, tired and poor" urban labour life. Most of them left their hometowns when they were young and poor, and working in the city has become a fixed pattern of

life for many years and an important turning point in their life course. However, the failure to follow up on the mandatory policy initiative of over-age retirement and the provision of labour rights and benefits has directly led to the lack of a place for them to live in their twilight years. Many senior migrant workers are unable to enjoy retirement benefits because their contribution period is less than 15 years, and some are unable to make a one-time contribution to the basic pension insurance for the full 15 years. Some enterprises even force migrant workers to leave their jobs by such means as transferring them to posts in remote areas when they are approaching retirement age, thereby evading their due obligations. Looking back at the life cycle of senior migrant workers, the fact that senior migrant workers still make the behavioural choice of going out to work in their "senior age" can be seen to a certain extent as an individual's choice based on the current life situation, which is not only a habitual continuation of the previous life pattern, but also a self-response in the face of the temporal and spatial shaping.

3.2. Interconnected lives: all for the family

"Interconnected lives" means that individuals are connected to others through social networks. The needs, expectations and behavioural choices of network members have an impact on the individual. Family members and close peers are the most connected members of an individual's network, and they are also important external factors that contribute to the decision-making process of older migrant workers.

The realisation of the value of life of senior migrant workers emphasises family-centredness, and their choice of work is closely linked to their family and family responsibilities. Heavy family responsibilities are the first driving force. Migrant workers consider different issues at different ages. When they first enter the city, most of them are not married and consider more about how to earn money. After getting married and having children in the process of working, the role of the family played by the individual changes, and they need to take up the heavy responsibility of raising or supporting their children or the elderly in the family, and carrying family responsibilities becomes the centre of gravity in their lives. The first and foremost prerequisite for fulfilling these responsibilities is to "earn as much money as possible". Compared to farming for a living, working for a higher income becomes their choice for a better life. With the passage of time, when their children start their own families, the centre of gravity in the lives of senior migrant workers shifts again, and their family responsibilities change accordingly, and they go out to work mainly to earn money for their old age and to supplement their family's income, so as to improve the overall standard of living of the family.

By combining family strategies with life-cycle theory, family economic conditions are an important factor in the life course of an individual, and this factor will continue to have an impact on the individual's life course. "Save some more money to go home" is a common sentiment among senior migrant workers. The fact that senior migrant workers do not rest in old age is largely due to the fact that they, as the older generation, hope to help their children achieve class mobility and leapfrog through intergenerational support.^[8] At a time of increasing urbanisation, fathers are often tied into their children's families and participate in the basic reproduction of the family through the exercise of their own labour power. Through the "interconnection" with family members, the life course of migrant workers is also moving forward, and they hope that through the lifestyle of labour, they can earn their own living and at the same time provide their families with a certain amount of financial support, so as to gradually accumulate the family's economic capital, and do their best to provide their children with better opportunities for development and living conditions, so as to better practice their own life cycle. In addition, they can better fulfil their family roles and promote the integration of their families into the city as a whole. In addition, the emotional support and care

from family members, especially the growth of their offspring, will give them hope for the future and make them realise the value and significance of their own struggles.

Secondly, peer motivation and support are important contributors. Most senior migrant workers go out to work because they are encouraged and driven by their peers or later groups in the village. Most of them are latecomers who learn from and imitate those who have gone before them. Information on labour migration is disseminated and shared through peer-constructed networks, which provide opportunities for senior migrant workers to find jobs. The accessibility and reliability of labour information is also a substantial boost for senior migrant workers.

3.3. The temporality of life: the opening of a window of opportunity for work

The "temporal principle of life" refers to the social time in which changes occur in the life course, and emphasises the coordinated development of the life course between individuals. From the viewpoint of the temporal principle of life, the occurrence of life events that have the significance of life nodes will lead to changes in the life expectations of migrant workers. With the arrival of family responsibilities at different stages, they constantly adjust their psychological expectations and future plans, and eventually decide whether to settle in the city or return to the countryside.^[9] To a certain extent, the timing of mobility may be a turning point in the lives of senior migrant workers, and the onset and cessation of labour migration is usually accompanied by a change in the social roles of the individuals themselves or of the individuals with whom they are closely associated, and the onset of labour migration usually coincides with major events such as their children's advancement to higher education, their marriage and the birth of their children.

Firstly, senior rural migrant workers generally migrate to cities when their children are not yet living independently or when their offspring have strong care needs. In terms of spatial migration, senior rural migrant workers generally leave their place of domicile and move to cities with a high demand for labour or where their children are living in cities with a high degree of economic development. Similarly, the spatial span and timing of senior migrant workers' mobility will also shape their life course to a certain extent, affecting the development of individuals and their families.

Second, the significance of timing lies not only in the view of space and time implicit in it, but also in the chronological order in which important events occur. The temporal principle of life suggests that the timing of a life event is even more significant than the event itself.^[10] The "standard timetable" of an individual's life generally includes schooling, employment, marriage, childbearing, retirement, and so on, with each type of life event occurring at a specific time and corresponding to a certain period of duration. If the duration of a life event is too short, or if a subjective or objective factor causes a direct leap from one life event to the next, i.e., if the development of the life course deviates from the proper social timing, it may cause serious negative impacts. Analysing the past life course of senior rural migrant workers, most of them have faced the difficulties of poverty and embarrassment in the past and present, experienced natural disasters and social turmoil in their early years, suffered serious setbacks and psychological trauma, and were forced to enter the labour market too early due to resource constraints in the social time when they were supposed to receive education, which brought great negative impacts to their personal life course and also did not have a significant negative impact on the development of the life course. Such experiences have had a significant negative impact on their personal life course, and have inadvertently strengthened their motivation for upward mobility, causing them to place their accumulated self-expectations on the next generation, and to make the choice to work in order to improve the lives of the next generation. The generation of such expectations does not come from nowhere, but is the result of the excessive life course risks encountered by senior migrant workers in their personal life course, and is a dynamic process of interaction between the social structure and the individual's motivation.

3.4. Individual initiative: Positive and optimistic approach to life

Individual agency is one of the key determinants of how the life course unfolds. The choices that people make in society are not only influenced by social situations, but also related to personal experiences and character traits. Looking at the past of the older generation of migrant workers, they have been at the bottom of society for a long time, and have suffered from social prejudice and ups and downs in their lives. However, in the face of the pressure of life and social prejudice, senior migrant workers have shown great adaptability and a positive attitude towards life. Instead of being trapped by difficulties, they take the initiative to seek changes and improve their own and their family's economic situation by going to the city to work, which is in itself a manifestation of their subjective consciousness and initiative. The unique life experiences of this social group have shaped their qualities of "hard-working, positive and optimistic".

Compared with farming at home, working around the world is tiring and hard work, but it brings higher financial returns and can better improve the lives of themselves and their families. For senior migrant workers, going to the city to work is the best option for them to make a living. Going out to work is not only the rational choice of senior migrant workers based on their own conditions under the existing social situation, but also the result of the strengthening of the subject's consciousness in practice. In the process of migrant labour, senior migrant workers are constantly reshaping and changing themselves, learning new skills, accumulating work experience and expanding their social networks, which all contribute to the enhancement of their personal abilities and the broadening of their horizons. This continuous learning and growth not only enhances their ability to survive, but also provides them with more opportunities for development. In addition, under the stimulation of the subjective consciousness, they actively exert their subjective initiative, establish a wide network of interpersonal relationships through their labour experience, strive to construct links with external social resources, grasp limited development opportunities, break through the shackles of urban and rural areas and age, and endeavour to change the original trajectory of their lives, construct their own life course, and strive for more well-being for themselves and their families. The subjective initiative of senior migrant workers has not only changed their own destiny, but also brought a positive impact on the society, demonstrating the strong motivation of human beings to survive and develop in the face of adversity. Their story is not only a portrait of personal struggle, but also an inspiration to those who come after them. By conveying the positive energy of positivity and courage to change, they encourage more people not to retreat in the face of difficulties and bravely pursue their dreams.

3.5. Lifelong development: upward trajectory in later life

As Elder emphasises in the paradigm of life course theory, development is a lifelong process and the trajectory of the life course is constantly changing. From a role perspective, migrant labour has enabled some senior migrant workers to break away from their traditional status as peasants and make a paradigm shift from "peasant" to "citizen" employment. In addition, the establishment and improvement of infrastructure has made urban-rural exchanges more convenient. Most senior rural migrant workers "work when there is work to be done and return home when there is no work to be done", and although they are not exempt from travelling between urban and rural areas, they work in a more flexible manner, so that they can take care of their family members around them and better fulfil the social roles conferred on them by the roles of "parents" or "children". Although they do not have to travel between urban and rural areas, they can work more flexibly to take care of their families and better fulfil their responsibilities and obligations as "parents" or "children", thus helping to maintain the livelihood and stability of their families and eliminating the risk of family disintegration. The increase in economic income also contributes to the lifelong development of the

family as a whole. The behavioural choice to work outside the home frees these groups from being tied to the land, from the constraints of farming or working in the countryside, and gives them the opportunity to play a wider range of social roles while fulfilling some of their role expectations at the same time.

From the environmental point of view, cities provide much better opportunities and environments for development than rural areas, and the social environment in cities is more favourable to their achievements in life. The rich and diversified social environment impacts and shapes senior migrant workers' perception of life, giving them a different life experience and improving their ability to adapt to changes in the environment. Moreover, in the process of labour migration, senior migrant workers have formed relationship networks of different sizes on the basis of blood ties, industrial ties and interesting ties. The expansion of the social network enables these groups to have access to more resources and to live a richer and more colourful life in their old age. The act of going out to work enables senior migrant workers to break away from their original life track, which is a kind of upward self-development on the material and spiritual levels, and realises the role change from "surplus people" to "free people"^[11], which contributes to the upward trajectory of their life in their later years.

From a comprehensive perspective, the movement of senior rural migrant workers to the cities is a developmental trajectory of social integration from rural to urban areas. In this process, they take the initiative to construct their own life course in their later years in the light of the current spatial and temporal context, the timing of their lives and their interdependent family roles, continuously accumulating funds, upgrading their skills and abilities, building and expanding various types of social capital, and endeavouring to move upward and leapfrog, so as to be able to integrate into the urban society more quickly.

4. Conclusions and discussion

Life course theory not only establishes a link between history and the present, but also builds a theoretical bridge between individual actors and the social environment. Analysed from the perspective of the life course, the transition of senior migrant workers from "keeping house" to "venturing out" is often a process of mutual construction between the individual, the family and the society. The life course trajectory of senior migrant workers in the current context is not only driven by historical and spatial shaping, personal initiative and development concepts, but also closely related to the family and social networks in which they live. For this reason, the optimisation of future policies for senior migrant workers requires a combination of policy formulation and policy implementation.

At the level of policy formulation, the creation of a system for senior rural migrant workers should, on the one hand, reflect relevance and universality. The State should legislate or introduce policies to unify the national pension system for rural migrant workers, and make greater efforts to coordinate and standardise the solution to the social pension insurance, medical insurance, welfare and other basic protection for senior rural migrant workers, and make sure to achieve full coverage, and ensure that all the guarantees are put into practice, so as to eliminate, as far as possible, the worries of the senior rural migrant workers about their old-age pensions. At the same time, we should also pay attention to the integration of the system to overcome the "fragmentation" of the system. Policy construction for this special group of senior migrant workers has a certain degree of complexity, often involving a variety of political systems, such as household registration system, housing security system, employment system. Among them, the household registration system is a basic state administrative system in China. However, judging from the current situation of social development, the dual urban-rural household registration system has become an institutional barrier

for the agricultural transfer population to enter the cities. The urban-rural split household registration system and other differentiated systems associated with it will directly lead to the exclusion of senior migrant workers from the coverage of the urban social welfare system.^[12]Therefore, it is necessary to increase the reform of the household registration system to bring the senior migrant workers who are outside the scope of protection into the scope of protection. In the process of promoting the development of new urbanisation, policies in multiple fields, such as housing, employment, household registration and education, should be coordinated to construct a more complete policy system for the senior migrant worker group. On the other hand, the construction of the system should incorporate more considerations at the family level. Prioritising family responsibilities is a habitual choice of activity for the elderly, and their activity trajectory changes with the family life cycle, mainly in terms of caring for family members and coordinating family relations. Therefore, policy design can be more family-based, for example, by improving policies to support caregivers in the family and reducing the pressure of caring for older persons. The design of pension policies should focus on the integration of family security and social security, and the design of education policies should take into account the issue of schooling for the children of migrant workers. In addition, the initiative of senior migrant workers should be brought into full play, such as by supporting their lifelong learning and increasing investment in their basic education and training, so as to promote their "active ageing" and achieve upward social mobility and urban integration.

At the level of policy implementation, local governments should not adopt a "one-size-fits-all" approach, but should seek a flexible balance between rigid governance and humanistic care, and implement policies based on individual health conditions, so as to make appropriate arrangements. To effectively safeguard the employment rights and interests of elderly migrant workers, policy implementation should take into account not only the needs of employers, but also the wishes of the workers themselves, so that elderly migrant workers can have a benign exit mechanism, so that they can "retire" in peace and age with dignity.

In addition, with the rapid pace of urbanisation, county towns, as bridges connecting urban and rural areas, are becoming more and more prominent in promoting coordinated regional development and in addressing the employment and living needs of migrant workers, especially senior migrant workers. At the present stage, more and more senior rural migrant workers have shifted their focus of work and life to county towns based on family development strategies. County towns have the convenience of life that rural areas do not have, good educational resources, and relatively low pressure of life, and senior migrant workers have strong cultural and psychological adaptability to the county towns.^[13]Therefore, it is particularly important to take the county as the balance point for the policy construction of senior migrant workers. Specific measures include the following: first, improve the infrastructure and public services in county cities. Upgrading the level of public services such as education, medical care and pension in county cities is the key to attracting and retaining senior migrant workers. This not only meets their basic living needs, but also enhances their sense of belonging and identity to the county town. Second, promote industrial upgrading and employment diversification. The government should encourage and support the development of enterprises in the county, especially labour-intensive and service-oriented industries, to provide senior migrant workers with more jobs that suit their physical strength and skills. At the same time, modern agriculture, rural tourism, family handicrafts and other special industries are being explored to broaden employment channels. Third, government agencies should implement targeted policy support for the group of senior migrant workers. The state and local governments should introduce more social security policies for senior migrant workers, such as flexible pension insurance systems, vocational training subsidies and health services, to help them better adapt to life in the county and improve their quality of life. Fourth, strengthen community building and cultural integration.

Promote exchanges and integration between senior migrant workers and local residents, and enhance cultural identity and social cohesion through community activities and cultural festivals, so as to alleviate their psychological barriers and obstacles to integration. Fifth, optimise integrated urban and rural development planning. The government can integrate the development of the county into the urban and rural integrated planning, to ensure the rational allocation of resources, to avoid the spread of "urban disease" to the county, and at the same time to play the role of the county's radiation to the surrounding rural areas, to form a good pattern of urban and rural complementary and coordinated development. Through the above comprehensive measures, it is possible to effectively bring into play the advantages of county towns as the interface between urban and rural development, not only easing the population pressure on large cities, but also promoting stable employment and quality of life for groups of elderly rural migrant workers, and facilitating the building of a harmonious society and the sustainable development of urbanisation.

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