

INTERGENERATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS, FARM SUCCESSION, AND LIFE SATISFACTION OF RETURN MIGRATION AMONG RURAL YOUTH

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Innovation in Aging, Volume 2, Issue suppl_1, 1 November 2018, Pages 467–468,
<https://doi.org/10.1093/geroni/igy023.1749>

Published:11 November 2018

Abstract

Population aging and outflow are observed in rural areas, causing continuous aging in the agricultural population in Taiwan. This situation results in a lack of labor. Family farms are the predominant form of agriculture. Intra-family farm succession has profound implications for the future structure of the agricultural industry and the procurement of agricultural human resources. This study has two goals: first, we use latent class analysis (LCA) to examine the underlying patterns of motivations for returning migration to inherit family farm among rural youth. Second, the hierarchical regression was performed for analyzing how young adult's motivations for returning, and intergenerational relations with aging parents influence their life satisfaction. A survey of 18-to-45-year-old family farm successors in Taiwan (n = 315) are analyzed. Four categories of young successor's motivations for returning were found: "expectations from family (48.25%)", "career plans and preference for rural lifestyle (19.68%)," "both family and personal concerns (9.21%)", and "low motivation (22.86%)." Responsibility in maintaining the intergenerational legacy and taking care of aging parents were important in influencing young adults' decision to move back to their rural home town. However, economic factor also plays an important role. Intergenerational relationships have a significant effect on the well-being of young successors. The young successor closely collaborated with aging parents on the farm were most satisfied with life. In Taiwan, work and family are inseparable on family farms. Intergenerational relationships are crucial to the operations and development of family farms.