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EMPIRICAL STUDY ON VILLAGE WELFARE CAPACITY AND ELDERLY LIFE SECURITY THROUGH VILLAGE COLLECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF RURAL RESOURCES IN CHINA

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In the pursuit of research aimed at "improving farmers' lives," and driven by the academic mission to find solutions to the universal issue of aging, it is necessary to adopt a global comparative perspective when considering measures for aging in rural areas.

In China, there is a disparity in the pension system between urban and rural areas, making the economic power for farmers' post-retirement life a significant challenge. This study uses cases from Guangdong Province to examine whether it is possible to reconstruct the collective management capacity of village collectives and maintain sufficient village welfare capacity through collective management.

The research focuses particularly on poverty-stricken areas while considering a comparison with economically developed regions. The aim is to empirically

investigate the possibility of "mutual assistance" (kyojo) in villages that are prone to poverty due to a lack of rural resources. Continuing to explore mutual assistance to overcome the limits of "public assistance" (kojo) and "self-help" (jijo) for old-age support is considered deeply significant.

The on-site investigation, conducted using a case study approach, revealed glimpses of village welfare capacity through collective management—in other words, the potential for mutual assistance—in certain regions of Guangdong Province. Conversely, in poverty-stricken areas where the collective management capacity of the village collective is weak and rural resources like farmlands and forests are scarce, the reliance on young people's migrant labor and son's households for old-age life, which represents family self-help consciousness, was clearly evident. Furthermore, while the pension system for rural residents is being developed, resident satisfaction remains extremely low.

Moving forward, the necessity of further strengthening the power of public assistance is being questioned.

Palavras-chave: aging in rural areas; livelihood security in old age; village-level welfare capacity; collective management; establishment of public pension systems in rural areas.