

One-child policy Mystery

Why can't Xiao Ming find a girlfriend?



This is a mystery about Xiao Ming, a young man in China. China is an LEDC (Less economically developed country).

This mystery investigates how China's strategies for coping with a large and growing population affects the people.

Tasks.

1. Identify the main reasons why Xiao Ming can't find a girlfriend?
2. Identify some of the effects of situations like Xiao Ming's

Xiao Ming has no brothers or sisters.

Xiao Ming is 24 years old

Xiao Ming still lives with his parents on a small farm in rural Hainan island

Hainan island has the highest boy-to-girl ratio in the whole of China, with 135 boys born for every 100 girls.

Xiao Ming is thinking of migrating to Beijing.

Baby girls are often aborted to give parents another chance at having a boy. It is illegal, but that does not make any difference.

Mortality rates for female infants are much higher in Hainan island.

No family would approve of a daughter marrying a man too poor to afford a dowry and a decent future.

Chinese officials have warned that this gender imbalance could lead to an increase in prostitution, sex crimes and wife-buying.

Some officials in China suggest that vast numbers of men without strong family ties are potential sources of gang activity and violent crime.

Chinese statistics indicate that as many as two million extra boys are born every year nationwide in China.

According to official figures, about 117 boys are born for every 100 girls.

Chinese society's strong cultural preference for sons has not changed.

In rural areas, female infanticide has increased dramatically since the 1980s.

Xiao Ling longs for a girlfriend.

The one-child policy is often overlooked in Chinese rural areas where tradition is strong, and so is the desire for sons who can do heavy labour.

Urban areas with the highest crime rates have the highest proportion of single men.

Xiao Ling's parents are old and cannot work the family farm any longer.

In many places outside urban areas in China, not having a wife is a source to men of personal shame and anger.

China's legal marriage age - 22 years for men, 20 for women

In recent decades, ready access to ultrasound technology has enabled parents to learn the sex of their unborn children and has led to widespread female-specific abortion.

Many farmers believe that raising a girl baby is a waste because she will marry into another family.

Xiao Ling had to leave school at the age of 14 to work on his parents' farm.

Chinese official statistics are predicting as many as 40million single men by 2020.

Couples in China cannot get married under the age of 25 years.

Children in China, especially sons, are expected to look after elderly parents because pensions are low.

It is thought that once girls get married, they belong to someone else. They're not part of your family any more.

China has 37,000,000 more men than women.

In 2003, the Chinese government introduced a 'Care for girls' policy, which provided incentives - such as tax breaks and exemptions from school and health fees - for families raising girls.

Unemployed unmarried men dominate China's 150-million migrant workers (who have moved from rural to urban areas) and most of them have no prospect of obtaining an education or long-term job.

The death rate for girl babies and children is significantly higher in rural areas as families give more medical treatment to sons.

Chinese official figures show that police freed more than 42,000 kidnapped women and children in 2001 and 2002. Many of the victims are believed to have been sold into marriage or prostitution.

“Surplus males” increasingly congregate in certain areas of cities – train and bus stations are favourites – and have begun to form gangs.

In large cities like Beijing and Shanghai, middle-class educated parents are tending to choose husbands for their daughters with a higher education background.