

# Gender Inequality Study——High Bride Price

Wenlu Shi

Henan Provincial Industrial School, Imaging and Film Technology, Zhengzhou 450011, China.

**Abstract:** Given the bride price is a traditional Chinese custom. But with the continuous progress of society and gradually changed the taste, rural "high price bride price" comparison concept so that the bride price continues to increase, the marriage has become a material transaction with a variety of interests in the form of a vulgar concept of love, worsened the social atmosphere, and promote unethical, not only to the many rural families psychological and economic caused a great burden, but also affect the young people's willingness to get married. great burden on many rural families, but also affects young people's willingness to get married, making rural revitalisation a long way off. In order to promote the normalisation of the problem, we should play a constructive role in the special treatment of these issues.

**Keywords:** Traditional Customs; High-Priced Bride Price; Marriage Transactions; Bad Customs; Special Treatment

## Introduction

In accordance with the requirements of the Central Document No. 1, the "Programme for Carrying out Special Governance of Outstanding Problems in Key Areas of Rural Transformation of Customs such as High-price Bride Price and Big Manipulations" was issued, deploying special governance of high-price bride price and other bad habits nationwide from 2022 to 2023 and listing specific forms of manifestations such as "promoting vulgar concepts of marriage and love, asking for and displaying high-price bride price, and matchmaking and marriage mediation encouraging to raise the amount of bride price, which is generally too high", and proposing targeted measures. The marriage broker encourages the bride price to be raised, and the amount of the bride price is generally too high," and put forward targeted measures. Various regions have put the work of shifting customs in rural areas on an important agenda, strengthened coordination and implementation of the main responsibilities, and taken measures tailored to local conditions, so that the practice of high bride-price dowries has been effectively curbed in some areas.<sup>[3]</sup>

### 1. Traditional customs

The bride price has been one of the ancient Chinese wedding customs since ancient times. From the ancient book "Li Ji. The meaning of the wedding is to form a good relationship between the two sexes, to the upper to the temple, to the lower to inherit the future generations, so the gentlemen attach great importance to it. In the five steps of the wedding of Natsai, Asking for Name, Najib, and Nazheng, whenever the man's messenger arrives, the woman lays a feast in the temple, and then worships the messenger outside the door. Entering the temple gate, the guest and host let the stairs ascend to the hall, and listened to the messenger convey the opinions of the man's parents on the temple hall. The reason for this is to express the deference and solemnity of the wedding. "From the "Book of Rites" can be seen that since ancient and modern times, we have attached great importance to the bride price for the marriage of the two, the wedding is a ceremony for the husband and wife to get together for a hundred years, this ceremony is very cumbersome, and its cumbersome degree is enough to prove that the ancients attached great importance to marriage, it is also a continuation of the traditional incense, but with the rapid development of society, the form of the bride price has not changed, and the essence has changed materially.

|                         |                                     |                    |           |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------|
| Content of petitions    |                                     |                    |           |
| Letter situation        |                                     |                    |           |
| Title of the letter     | The issue of high price bride price |                    |           |
| Letter recipient        | Liu Moumou                          | Date of the letter | 2023.6.15 |
| The letter index number | 2002300057                          |                    |           |

|                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Letter content | <p>Dear County Governor,</p> <p>Hello, thank you for reading this letter in your busy schedule.</p> <p>I am a college student, when I first entered college, I met a girl from Shiyang Administrative Village, Linjing Town, Guixian County, and became a couple, we have known each other for a year, we like each other very much, so I told my parents the letters of the two of us talking to.</p> <p>However, the sky is not satisfactory, when my girlfriend's parents knew about this matter, her parents told my girlfriend that the minimum bride price in your county was 288,000, not to mention that there was no car and house, and our county bride price was only more than 120,000, because the two liked each other very much, I dare not say that my family could not pay so much bride price, after all, I was still studying.</p> <p>There is a saying that the poorer the area, the higher the bride price. Guixian has developed rapidly in recent years, and this year it has been named and rewarded by the province, and economic development is often accompanied by a series of problems such as the emancipation of the mind, but the bride price problem in Guixian still needs to be rectified.</p> <p>Today, I wrote this message to the county magistrate (the parent official of the people), and I ask your county to use a strong posture to rectify the high-priced bride price, so that how many families and couples like us can benefit.</p> |
|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Table 1 Petitions

## 2. High bride price

Recently, a school student through the official website of the People's Government of Zhenyuan County, Qingyang, Gansu Province, the leadership of the mailbox, to the county mayor raised a concern - I hope to rectify the phenomenon of the local high price of the bride price. The student said in the letter that he and his girlfriend have known each other for a year and love each other deeply. However, after mentioning the marriage to his girlfriend's parents, the other family demanded a minimum bride price of 288,000 yuan, while his own family could not afford such a high cost. He sincerely hopes that the governor will resolve this issue with a firm attitude for the benefit of more families and couples like them.<sup>[6]</sup>

In addition to the high bride price in some rural areas, there are also high matchmaking fees. Matchmakers less words, adult beauty, since ancient times, said into a marriage, some places are invited to the matchmaker dinner, to the matchmaker to figure a big red envelope, but times have changed, the taste has changed. Some matchmakers even take a portion of the bride price from the man to give, from which the fisherman to benefit, to the burden of the bride price added a big fire, like this rural marriage is really too difficult.

The dowry also involves multiple interests, and sometimes people are motivated to raise the dowry for the sake of some of those interests. For the bride price has been given, generally speaking, the man is not at the disposal of, basically by the woman or the woman's family to hold the disposal, then the high price of the bride price is also a result of the competition for the right to dominate. If the bride price is controlled by the woman, the woman will have more money at her disposal. If the bride price is controlled by the woman's parents, the woman's family and unmarried men, and may even keep the money as a bride price for the woman's men to marry, this phenomenon is especially common in rural families with many children. Sometimes matchmaking introducer will also inflate the bride price, matchmaking is still very important to the marriage of an activity, in some places if two people get married is the introduction of the person set up, but also need to be based on the amount of the bride price to give a considerable amount of money to the introduction of the fee, and even up to several tens of thousands of yuan, which makes some of the usual abhorrence of high-priced bride price of the people are eager to have the opportunity to set up a few pairs of young men and women.

### **3. Family burdens**

First, the high bride price will bring a heavy economic burden to the man and his family, in rural areas families need to save more than ten years to save enough or even a lifetime of savings to come up with a high bride price to get married, not only affected the quality of life, but also affected the willingness to get married. Secondly, the high price of the bride price may lead to marital instability, girls demand bride price ignoring the economic situation of the boy's family, especially in rural areas where the family is not in good condition, it is even more to add to their family's economy.<sup>[8]</sup>

The existence of a high bride price is beyond the economic capacity of many families, in order to come up with a high bride price, the normal life of many families have been seriously affected, all of which will ultimately be borne by the newlyweds such a state of affairs, will bring a heavy burden to the couple's life after marriage. Make their life after marriage face very big difficulties, so the existence of high bride price for both sides is extremely unfavourable phenomenon, therefore should take measures to eliminate this wrong practice.<sup>[1]</sup>

### **4. Climbing concepts**

Fujian Putian high-priced bride price According to a survey by China Women's Daily, one of the reasons for the formation of this social phenomenon is due to the Putian people have a tradition of wandering the world, Zhongmen, Dongzhuang and other towns of the villagers have been "outside the gold rush", and created a huge wealth, depending on the face is extremely important. After the reform and opening up, Putian bride price amount began to rise, in recent years is a sharp rise to hundreds of thousands or even millions. In the family's solid male, out of the higher the bride price, can reflect its more rich, outside the fight the better. In the female, the bride price represents the daughter's value, the higher the bride price of the daughter, that the daughter is more decent, the mother's family also has more face. Therefore, it is common for women's families to ask for a high bride price from men. This leads to a competition in which people compete with each other and raise prices maliciously in order to save face, thus contributing to the crazy rise in the bride price in this area.<sup>[7]</sup>

### **5. Marriage Transactions**

In Chinese jurist Chen Guyuan's book *A History of Marriage in China*, it is defined as "treating a woman as if she were a commodity and exchanging other possessions for her as a concubine". Buy-sell marriage is a phenomenon inherited from thousands of years of feudal society, and mainly refers to the combination of "buying a wife with goods", "trade marriage" and "labour marriage". "Paid marriages" are marriages arranged and forced by parents and other third parties for the purpose of soliciting property in violation of the principle of the autonomy of marriage. The exchange of marriage, transfer of marriage, and purchase of marriage are all different manifestations of sale and purchase of marriage. Kiss exchange refers to the marriage of a daughter to a son of a certain family and the taking back of a daughter-in-law from a certain family; this form of marriage involving several families is called transferring relatives; buying relatives refers to the use of the marriage of daughters to ask for a high dowry. The past and present are already in two tenses, and it can be seen that love is based on material things, not on love.

True love has been replaced by wealth, and the exorbitant bride price has shifted the focus of marriage from love and commitment to money and materialism. The emotional bond between couples is gradually being replaced by the marriage transaction, which has led to the fragility and instability of the marriage relationship. Young people are beginning to question the true meaning of marriage, making it a transaction rather than an emotional union.

### **6. Big manipulation**

The problem of "humane comparison" refers to the many names and high amounts of humane gifts, and even the holding of "no matter wine" for the purpose of enrichment, and the heavy burden of "humane debt" on the peasant masses; the problem of "thick burials and thin rearing" refers to the failure to fulfil the obligation of filial piety, and the excessively long time spent on funerals, and the propagation of feudal and superstitious ideas and vulgar activities in funerals, and the problems of "living tombs" and luxurious tombs. The problems of excessive burials and low maintenance refer to the failure to fulfil filial obligations, the excessive length of funerals, the promotion of feudal superstitions and vulgar activities in funeral ceremonies, and the problems of "tombs for the living" and luxury tombs; and the problems of wastefulness refer to the holding of weddings and funerals that are excessively long and large in scale, and blindly climbing up the ladder in the pursuit of class, which results in serious wastage.<sup>[2]</sup>

## 7. Shift the Winds and Ease the Customs

Inner Mongolia Tongliao City People's Congress Standing Committee issued a public announcement that the "Regulations" Article 10 proposed: the implementation of new wedding ceremony. Advocating do not bride price, do not dowry and create their own family business new concept of marriage; advocate pre-marital medical examination; advocate collective wedding, public welfare wedding, travelling weddings and other new forms of wedding ceremonies from the simple, wedding feasts from the frugal, engaged not to do. Oppose the promotion of vulgar concepts of marriage and love; oppose large-scale organisation and comparison of gifts; and oppose vulgar marriages. It is prohibited to arrange, buy or sell marriages and to interfere with the freedom of marriage; and it is prohibited to use marriage as a means of soliciting property.<sup>[5]</sup>

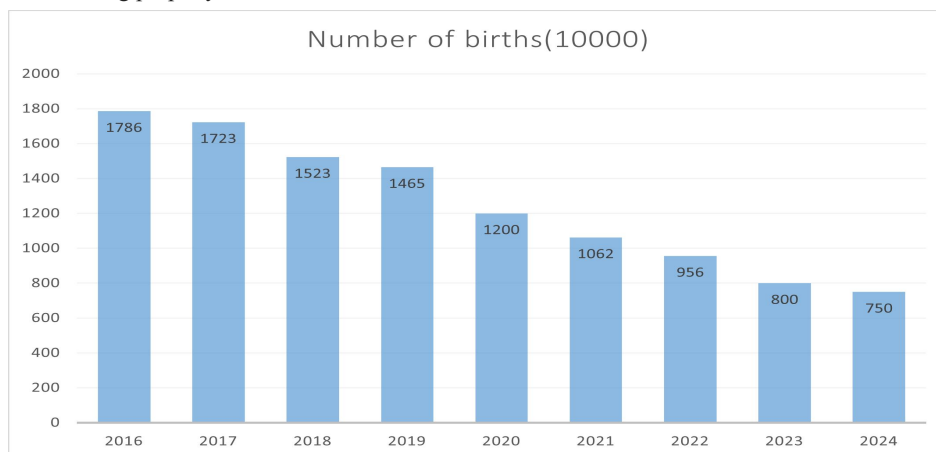


Figure 1 Number of births(10000)

At present, China's work on the governance of changing customs in rural areas has achieved certain results. Regions have taken a series of targeted measures in the light of local realities, such as formulating village rules and regulations, promoting civilised etiquette, and carrying out appraisals of precedence and excellence, and have achieved certain results. At the same time, some regions have also actively promoted the institutionalisation of the shifting of customs, and have facilitated the in-depth development of the governance of shifting customs in rural areas through the formulation of village rules and regulations, the standardisation of red and white wedding ceremonies, and the promotion of funeral reform.

However, there are still a number of problems with the current governance of rural customs. The most prominent of these is the persistence of some bad customs and stereotypes, such as wastefulness, blind comparison and feudal superstition. These problems arise for historical and cultural reasons, as well as for practical and social reasons. Historical and cultural reasons include factors such as long-standing traditional customs and cultural inheritance in rural areas, while practical and social reasons include factors such as the low level of economic development and the imperfection of the social security system.

## 8. Population decline

Considering the liberalisation of the epidemic in December last year, and the large number of positives in the month or so thereafter, the number of women preparing for pregnancy, as well as the number of pregnancies, may have declined dramatically in December last year, and in January and February this year because of the large number of positives. It's well over 13 per cent. It's all reflected in the births from September to November.

Last year, the average number of births was 800,000 a month, and in the first eight months of this year, it may have averaged 700,000 births a month, reaching about 5.6 million. And the last four months, the data is difficult to estimate, certainly significantly lower than the average monthly 700,000, may be an average of 600,000, or an average of 500,000. In the last four months, the number of births was estimated at 2.4 million, and for the whole year there were only 8 million births.

In 2023, it is very difficult to exceed 8 million births. Of course, because we can only see the following stars and dots of local data, national data exports in the hands of the Bureau of Statistics. Births data would have been very easy to obtain as well as statistics, foreign countries can be published every month, we have to the next year after a few months and then published. You know what this means. If the data is obviously lower than 8 million, the final statistics bureau data probability to embellish a little. So in 2023, the most appropriate births, 8 million, probably single-digit plus a zero to reflect the seriousness of the Bureau of Statistics data.<sup>[4]</sup>

## 9. Specialised Governance

The momentum of the continued spread of stereotypes such as high-priced bride price, comparison of favours, thick burials and thin rearing, and extravagance and wastefulness has been well curbed in some areas; the burden of expenditure on favours, banquets and bride price on weddings and funerals on the part of the peasant masses has been reduced markedly; the standards for advocating wedding and funeral etiquette and customs have achieved full coverage in the administrative villages; the system of work for the promotion of the shifting of customs and traditions in the counties, villages and townships is basically perfected; and the ideological meanings of the peasant masses and their conscious practice have basically taken shape. The long-term mechanism of shifting customs has basically been formed, the excellent traditional Chinese virtues have been well carried forward and inherited, the civilised fashion of new weddings, simple funerals, filial piety and love of family, diligence and thrift is more dazzling, and the countryside is glowing with a beautiful image.

## 10. Summary

This thesis is based on the media and other related reports, citing the Golden Dawn literature found that: rural areas exist in the rural high-priced bride price inequality, bride price climbing, big manipulation, buying and selling marriages and other problems. This leads to economic difficulties for rural families, difficulty in getting married, fewer marriages, low fertility, and population decline. The promotion of shifting customs and new ways of celebrating happy occasions, and the promotion of new marriage concepts of no bride price, no dowry and creating one's own family business have been basically perfected, and a new air has been given to them. It is hoped that the rural bride price problem that has been solved will be better in the future.

## References

- [1] The surging news commented [R]89,000 matchmaking fee: marriage is not a sale, the matchmaker is certainly not an intermediary2003.2.
- [2] People's Daily Commentary [R] Control the high price of bride price to create good governance in the countryside People's Sharp View 2023.2.
- [3] National Rural Revitalisation Administration [S] to carry out a work programme for the special treatment of outstanding problems in the key areas of rural migration, such as high-priced bride price and big ceremonies 2022.8.
- [4] Investment sink touzin [R] 2023 births have been probed to fall by more than 1.5 million 2023.5.
- [5] Inner Mongolia Tongliao Municipal People's Congress Standing Committee [S] No bride price, no dowry 2023.8.
- [6] Gansu Qingyang Zhenyuan County People's Government Official Website [S] The Problem of the Bride Price 2023.6.
- [7] Surfing News [R]Inner Mongolia Tongliao City will implement regulations on shifting customs 2023.8.
- [8] Gender Studies Community [R] Rural High Price of Bride Price: Where does it come from? How to cure it? 2023.3.