Providing More but Receiving Less: Daughters in Intergenerational Exchange in Mainland China

This study investigates the gender pattern of both downstream and upstream transfers between older parents and their children in China. Based on theories about the generation gap in the understandings of family norm and the heterogeneous effects of the social forces that encourage women to contribute more in elder care by generation, the author proposes a gender asymmetrical pattern in which the patrilineal norm governs parents’ decisions of downstream transfers but exerts little effect on children’s upstream support for parents. Capitalizing on a survey of the population older than 60 years, the author fitted several simultaneous equation models. Empirical results suggest that, all being equal, daughters provide more monetary and housework assistance to older parents than do sons, but daughters are comparatively disadvantaged in the probability of receiving either type of transfer from their parents. The pattern of “providing more but receiving less” for female caregivers affirms the gender asymmetrical pattern.

One defining feature of the traditional Chinese family is that it is patrilineal (e.g., Lee & Xiao, 1998; Thornton & Lin, 1994; Whyte & Xu, 2003; Yang, 1996). This feature highlights the dominant role of the male line in family life: Sons are bearers of the ethical obligation of filial piety to be the primary caregivers for older parents (e.g., Whyte, 2004). They also receive comparatively more support from parents and even monopolize the right of inheritance (Davies & Zhang, 1995). Thus, for both upstream and downstream transfers, daughters, especially those who are married, occupy a marginal position in the dynastic era of China.

Despite the prevalence of the son-biased intergenerational exchange in the past, recent studies document that daughters play an increasingly important role in elder care, suggesting that the traditional gender divide, at least in terms of the upstream transfers from children to parents, has been declining in modern China (Whyte, 2005; Xie & Zhu, 2009). This school of research directs scholars’ attention to the following theoretical question: Has the traditional patrilineal norm of intergenerational exchange died out in contemporary China?

This question has no simple answer. The patrilineal norm, in nature, concerns a reciprocal relation involving the pattern of gender divide not only in the assistance provided by children to parents but also in the support parents offer to children (Mangen, Bengtson, & Landry, 1988; Nauck, 2010; Wang, 2011). The extant literature to date focuses much attention on the former but surprisingly little attention on the latter. Hence, to fully understand how much the patrilineal norm has changed in contemporary China, a more comprehensive approach, I argue, should be adopted to investigating the two-way transfers between parents and children. Only when the male-dominated norm has been dismantled in both directions can one conclude that a real decline has taken place.
in the patrilineal norm of intergenerational exchange.

Investigating upstream and downstream transfers simultaneously has the merit of introducing a dynamic analytical perspective, enabling us to study the extent of gender imbalance in the way children support their parents conditional on that in the way they are supported by their parents and vice versa. This type of joint analysis sheds new light on the extant literature. If, for instance, daughters take more responsibility in elder care than sons but receive fewer beneficial transfers from parents, a pattern of “providing more but receiving less” would be witnessed, likely resulting in unstable elder care from daughters as a result of the perceived unfairness (e.g., Ngan & Wong, 1996; Tang, Ma, & Shi, 2009). Also, a “providing more but receiving less” pattern on the part of daughters could give rise to the discrepancy between older parents’ expectations and what they actually receive, leading to a concern for the older parents’ morale and health (e.g., Cong & Silverstein, 2008).

This study proposes a gender asymmetrical pattern for the patrilineal norm of intergenerational exchange in contemporary China, arguing that both monetary and time transfers from parents to children are still subject to the son-biased norm that favors sons over daughters despite the fact that daughters provide a similar or even a higher level of financial and time assistance to their parents relative to that of sons. This gender asymmetrical pattern has its foundation on the differential understandings of family norm by generation as well as the uneven consequences of the social forces that encourage a greater contribution of daughters to elder care on different generations. Capitalizing on a recently collected nationwide survey on people aged older than 60 years in Mainland China, I provide preliminary but affirmative evidence for the “providing more but receiving less” pattern, lending support to the idea of intergenerational gender asymmetry.

The rest of this article proceeds with a theoretical background about the patrilineal norm of intergenerational exchange in China, followed by a literature review that points to the increasingly important role played by daughters in caring for parents, along with some underlying causes. Subsequently, I explicate the idea of the gender asymmetrical pattern. After introducing the data, methodology, and measures, I present the empirical results and concluding remarks.

Theoretical Framework

The Patrilineal Norm of Intergenerational Exchange

Influenced by Confucian ethics, the family life of traditional China has been characterized by the dominance of males in the two-way transfers between parents and adult children (Freedman, 1966; Greenhalgh, 1985; Hsu, 1971; Ikels, 2004; Thornton & Lin, 1994). On one hand, older people rely on their adult sons as primary care providers, believing that they have to have sons to guard against old age, and the more sons they have, the more prosperous they will be as they age. It is thus not surprising that the Confucian ethic of filial piety—“the obligations to defer to parental wishes, tend to parental needs, and provide attentive support in old age” (Whyte, 2004, p. 106)—is mainly fulfilled by sons. On the other hand, older people’s expectations for future elder care from sons determines that parents invest comparatively more in their male children’s well-being than in their female children’s well-being (Croll & Croll, 1981; Zuo, Wu, & Li, 2011). For example, it is not uncommon for parents to deplete their resources to pay for their sons’ weddings and houses. Also, older parents are inclined to bequeath their assets to male heirs—that is, a common practice is to transfer their property to their sons as each one gets married, a pattern of “serial division of the families” (Cong & Silverstein, 2012, p. 427).

In this patrilineal family system, daughters, not surprisingly, have a marginal role (Freedman, 1961–1962; Lee, 1953). Generally speaking, a daughter is viewed in traditional China as a transitory family member who will one day leave her natal family and join her husband’s family (e.g., transferring her name to her husband’s genealogy). In this regard, married daughters do not have the burden of caring for their own parents, and at the same time, they are not entitled to claim property from their natal parents (Baker, 1979; Freedman, 1966; Hsu, 1971; Yang, Thornton, & Fricke, 1999). Usually, the only type of monetary support they receive from parents is a dowry at marriage (Lee, 1953). (There are nevertheless some emotional bonds between married-out daughters and their natal families; e.g., Judd, 1989.) Hence, the ties of married daughters to their natal family are rather weak. Once married, a woman immediately assumes the obligation of taking care of her parents-in-law rather than her natal parents,
an ethic entailed by the fact that she has joined her husband’s family. (Note that the life of a married woman in traditional China is also precarious. For instance, she may be repudiated simply because of her infertility [Lee, 1953]. Also, the type of support for parents-in-law in traditional China is usually labor-based household chores because women were not financially independent.) It is thus not surprising that married daughters are often metaphorically called the “spilt water.”

It is worth mentioning that this marginal position of daughters even applies to those who have never married or whose husbands have died. Single women in traditional China are expected to assist their natal families with some minor household chores, and they may receive some family support to meet their basic day-to-day needs, but they are usually neither participants in major kinship activities nor heirs of family property (e.g., Bernhardt, 2002; Lee, 1953). As for a widow, she is socially expected to continue to serve her deceased husband’s family instead of going back to her natal family. Those who are able to do so are often called “chaste widows.” By contrast, widows who remarry confront huge pressures or even denouncement (Jordan, 2016).

In summary, the traditional norm of intergenerational exchange between parents and adult children is patrilineal in the sense that it is sons who should be the primary caregivers for older parents and the major beneficiaries of transfers from parents. Relatively speaking, the role of daughters is by no means salient. One thing that readers should note is that the patrilineal principle mainly concerns the difference between daughters and sons in terms of the role in perpetuating the family line, which, by definition, differs from the patriarchal principle where adult males (e.g., fathers) hold primary authority over women and children. This difference should be kept in mind when understanding the rising role of women in elder care, as discussed later.

Despite the prevalence of the patrilineal practices, the peripheral role of female children has been observed as changing in contemporary China, at least in terms of the upstream type of transfers.

**The Rise of Daughters in Elder Care**

Demographic and family studies have accumulated ample evidence that daughters in contemporary China are taking on more responsibility for supporting their parents than before. For example, based on a 1994 survey in Baoding, Whyte and Xu (2003) found no significant gender difference in caring for parents. This finding corresponds to that of Zhan and Montgomery (2003), who, after interviewing more than 100 familial caregivers, concluded that sons’ and daughters’ assistance for parents was comparable. Xie and Zhu (2009) showed that married daughters, especially those living with parents, provided more financial support for parents than did married sons in urban China. In rural areas, the extent of gendered transfers from children to parents has also been weakened. The field evidence in Li, Feldman, and Jin (2004) indicated that sons and daughters played basically the same role in providing old-age support for their noncoresiding parents. Zhang (2009) argued that the comprehensive social reform and the one-child policy has enhanced the daughter–parent ties in rural China, a conclusion that was affirmed by the ethnographic research of Shi (2009) in northeastern China, where daughters were found to be more filial than sons. Lei (2013), who used Chinese General Social Survey data, quantitatively verified a higher level of monetary and emotional support for parents from daughters than from sons in urban areas, and Lei found no significant gender difference in rural areas. The increasingly active involvement of daughters in elder care applies to both monetary and time transfers (e.g., Xie & Zhu, 2009; Zhan & Montgomery, 2003). (Hence, the increasingly salient role of daughters in elder care should not be viewed as being the consequence of the trade-off between different types of transfers, i.e., the time–money exchange or the trade-off between frequency and intensity.) Meanwhile, daughters’ contribution to upstream transfers is neither occasional nor minor. On the contrary, it is usually daughters who take on both the frequent and intense obligations of elder care (e.g., Zhan, 2005). Such an elder care burden can be so overwhelming that it has been cited to understand women’s recent declining rate of labor force participation (Cook & Dong, 2011; Liu, Dong, & Zheng, 2010).

Several explanations have been proposed for the rise of daughters’ participation in elder care. One direct and widely acknowledged factor is the improvement of the social and economic status of women since the founding of the People’s Republic of China in 1949. For instance, gender inequality in education has been dramatically
As a result, the patrilineal kinship moralities have targeted the Confucian tradition, viewing it as the ideological foundation for the feudalistic and ethical values. Since the early 20th century, the efforts of catching up with Western societies and practices confront considerable challenges, thus promoting a general gender balance in family life. 

Besides the empowerment of women, modern transitions of family life have also served to weaken the patrilineal ideology (Cherlin, 2012; Goode, 1963). Since the 1950s, for example, arranged marriage has been taken over by love marriage (Whyte & Parish, 1984). (An early survey conducted in Chengdu indicates that the percentage of parent-dominated marriages declined from around 70% in the pre-1949 period to less than 10% in the 1990s; Xu & Whyte, 1990.) There is also a trend toward shrinkage in household size (Zeng & Wang, 2003). According to the 2015 Report of Family Development (National Health and Family Planning Commission of the People’s Republic of China, 2015), the average household size has declined from 5.3 in the 1950s to 3.96 in 1990, and then to 3.10 in 2010. In this process, the percentage of one-person and two-person households went up from 25% or so in 2000 to 40% in 2010. Another trend in family transition is the rising divorce rate, which went up from 0.9 per thousand in 1985 to 2.67 per thousand in 2014 (The Ministry of Civil Affairs, 2015). These demographic transitions suggest that many traditional son-biased ideas and practices confront considerable challenges, thus promoting a general gender balance in family life.

A third explanation attributes women’s activity in elder care to the general decline of Confucian ethics in China. Since the early 20th century, the efforts of catching up with Western societies have targeted the Confucian tradition, viewing it as the ideological foundation for the feudalistic era. As a result, the patrilineal kinship moralities and ethics were harshly criticized (Chow, 1960; Schwarcz, 1990). This hostile attitude toward the Confucian patrilineal tradition was intensified in the communist era after 1949, when the revolutionary communist ideology and the radical modernization agenda stigmatized Confucian teachings to be the remnants of the reactionary past. For instance, patrilineal rituals and activities were labeled “the old customs” during the Cultural Revolution (Andreas, 2009). Despite a certain revival of the craving for traditional Chinese culture as China moves into the market-oriented society (Fan, 2011; Yuan, 2010), the extent of popularity of Confucian patrilineal values is not comparable to that of the imperial era. The decline in the Confucian patrilineal family norm partly accounts for the salient role of daughters in elder care provision.

Last, the increasing importance of daughters in parent support, ironically, is partly propelled by the resurgence of the patriarchal tradition in the more recent period of the postreform China (Ji, 2015). As a reaction to the obscured gender difference in the socialist era, recent gender discourse has gravitated toward the celebration and naturalization of the gender difference, a process that has been noted as restoring the patriarchal gendered division of labor by refocusing women toward domestic affairs, including taking care of older parents (Sun & Chen, 2015; Tang et al., 2009). Such a reprivatization of womanhood is further legitimized by the market logic that is premised with market efficiency (Wu, 2010). Driven by this reviving patriarchal culture, it is daughters instead of sons who are more expected by senior parents to provide support (Tang et al., 2009). In this case, married women assume the double burdens to support both natal parents and parents-in-law (e.g., Liu et al., 2010). This explanation adopts a gendered perspective and highlights the passive aspect of women’s role in family life, constituting a contrast to the active role depicted by the empowerment explanation provided earlier.

In short, in light of the reduction of gender economic inequality, modern family transition, the decline in the influence of the Confucian teachings, and the resurgence of the patriarchal division of labor, married daughters are no longer relegated to a peripheral role relative to sons in the provision of support for parents. This transition has undermined their traditional positioning in family life regulated by the patrilineal paradigm and has
encouraged scholars to conclude that contemporary China no longer subscribes to the patrilineal norm in intergenerational transfers (e.g., Xie & Zhu, 2009).

However, the growing significance of female caregivers so far applies mainly to upstream transfers. A question whose answer is still elusive is the following: Can we draw a similar conclusion if we shift attention to parents’ gender preference in their downward transfers to children? The answer might be negative, as discussed in the following section.

**Gender Asymmetrical Pattern of Intergenerational Exchange**

The normative way intergenerational exchange operates, by definition, stands for a type of cultural norm, which, as defined by Rossi and Rossi (1990, pp. 155–156), refers to “culturally defined rights and duties that specify the ways in which any pair of kin-related persons is expected to behave toward each other.” Cultural factors, relative to institutional settings, often reveal a slower pace of change (Alesina & Giuliano, 2013; DiMaggio, 1997), in part a result of the rigidity of traditional ideas, worldviews, and beliefs in the aged population relative to the younger counterpart (e.g., Alwin & McCammon, 2003; Elder, 1994; Ryder, 1965). The idea of the generation gap in cultural norms is enlightening for this study because it implies that downstream transfers, as determined by parents’ preference and motive, are likely to preserve the traditional son-biased norm, even though the extent of gender divide from the other way around has changed. Specifically, the generation gap can be attributed to two mechanisms.

One mechanism lies in the differential generational experiences that cultivate distinct understandings of the meaning of intergenerational relations. According to life course theory, people establish their fundamental worldview during their formative stage, and this type of “habitus” lasts to the end of life (Elder, Johnson, & Crosnoe, 2003). The older generation, at their formative stage, faced a different sociopolitical order relative to that of their children, which gives rise to a cross-generational distinction in the attitudes toward intergenerational ties (Alwin, 1990; Friedenberg, 1969; Traub & Dodder, 1988). (In this study, “the older generation” refers to those born before 1952 [those who were older than 60 years in 2012].) In a sense, this is especially the case in China, where rapid social transition and reform in the modern era has been witnessed (Wang, 2004). Therefore, people born in different time periods are likely to face highly different or even contrasting social environments, and older people, because of the prevalence of traditional ideas and practices in their formative stage, may be inclined to stick to traditional ideas, norms, and ethics, which is why a patrilineal gender preference governs their decisions about downward transfers.

The other mechanism underpinning the intergenerational gender asymmetry in the norm of transfers refers to the heterogeneous consequences of the social forces that encourage women to be more active in elder care on people of different generations. Despite the many social changes that have weakened the traditional patrilineal norm as discussed earlier, these changes do not affect people of different generations in the same way. For instance, people born before 1949 rarely benefited from the state-driven expansion of education. Similarly, Western culture emphasizing love marriage and conjugal family structure is reasonably expected to exert a stronger effect on younger people (i.e., the postreform generation).

Taken together, the older population in a society is more likely to attach themselves to traditional norms, and such attachment is rigid and lags behind institutional changes. This asynchrony constitutes what Riley, Kahn, and Foner (1994) called “the structural lag.” In China, this structural lag has been noted by many studies. For instance, the field study of Yan (2003) provided detailed descriptions of the generation gap regarding the idea of intergenerational relationship, where older parents (aged 60 and older) viewed the repayment from their children to be endless and limitless, whereas their children treated the repayment to be part of an equal exchange. Yan’s (2003) field research has received affirmation from quantitative studies. For example, parents who are 60 or older prefer sons as caregivers instead of daughters (Cong & Silverstein, 2014; Guo, Chi, & Silverstein, 2013). Also, parents’ bequests are often in favor of sons (Jiang, Li, & Feldman, 2015). As for the younger generations, a survey on urban and rural adolescents in the 10th and 12th grades indicated that they valued personal autonomy and often held an attitude that leaned toward intergenerational and gender equality (Fuligni & Zhang, 2004).
Altogether, these studies suggest that if we interrogate the transition in the norms of intergenerational exchange from both upward and downward directions, a gender asymmetrical pattern might emerge. In this case, downward transfers follow the patrilineal principle and upward transfers have already become gender neutral or even shifted onto the shoulders of daughters. This is the main hypothesis of this study.

Regarding this hypothesis, two possible caveats are worth mentioning. One caveat concerns the traditional caring role of daughters-in-law, where it is tempting to assume that the transfers from parents to sons include some compensation for their supporting daughters-in-law. This, however, is not very likely in practice (e.g., Cong & Silverstein, 2008; Gallin, 1994; Yan, 2006) because "more and more married daughters have begun to look after their own parents more frequently and regularly, while neglecting their previously ascribed duties as a daughter-in-law" (Yan, 2003, p. 181). I look into this issue empirically in the following analysis. Another possible caveat is driven by the pattern of coresidence. As noted in many studies, older parents in China today, on average, still prefer to live with a son rather than a daughter (e.g., Ren & Treiman, 2015). Because people living together as a result of altruism, reciprocity, or both (Zhang, Gu, & Luo, 2014) are more likely to provide each other assistance, the preference of coresidence with a son might conceal the gender asymmetry pattern, and daughters’ greater contribution to elder care relative to that of sons should be more salient when the factor of coresidence is fixed. (There could be some trade-off between different types of transfers for the coresiding parents. For example, the aging of parents determines that they may gradually have limited capacity to provide labor and time support to their children, so monetary support becomes increasingly more prevalent. As shown later, however, our respondents were not that old, and most of them were still active in time and labor transfers to children, so this type of trade-off, although well acknowledged, cannot be revealed by this article.)

Method

Sample

This article is based on an analysis of the 2012 pilot survey of the China Longitudinal Aging Social Survey (p-class henceforth, http://class.ruc.edu.cn/). The p-class survey adopted a multistage, multilevel sampling scheme, with the primary sampling units as county-level administrative units and the secondary sampling units as neighborhood committees and village committees. Within each neighborhood or village committee, the households were randomly sampled. The p-class survey covers 17 provincial-level administrative units, so it is representative of most of the older population in China. Respondents are all older than 60 years. For each surveyed respondent, a battery of questions was asked to characterize the respondent’s relationship with each of his or her children, with regard to both the monetary and time transfers between them. The original sample size of the older respondents was 1,126. To facilitate the analysis, each child was matched with his or her parent, then I reformatted the data into parent–children records. With this reformation, the unit of analysis was shifted from the surveyed older parents to their children, with a total number of observations at 2,916 (each surveyed older person has multiple children).

To illustrate the pattern of the gender asymmetry, the analytical cases were restricted to those who had multiple children (excluding respondents with no children or only one child) and those whose children included both son(s) and daughter(s). This sample restriction only slightly reduced the sample size from 1,126 to 1,110, which is understandable because the respondents of interest in the p-class survey were the older people who were not subject to the one-child policy that was launched in the 1980s (Greenhalgh & Winckler, 2005). In light of the trivial sample loss, the sample representativeness is not hurt.

The life course stage of the sampled older people can be reflected by the distribution of their ages, ranging from 60 to 94, which has a mean of 69.87 and a median of 69.00. Of these respondents, 42.83% were older than 70 years, and 8.71% were older than 80 years. Generally speaking, many people at this stage of life in China have certain practical needs in their everyday lives. However, this does not mean that the intergenerational exchange is unilaterally upward. On the contrary, 37.38% of the respondents in the p-class survey rated their health status as good or very good, and 39.71% were taking care of family members that were younger
than 18 years when the survey was implemented in 2012. Hence, downward transfers from parents to children in our sample are practical.

The p-class survey serves our research interests, but there is still room for improvement. For instance, this survey sets its focus on the interaction between parents and their children, but no nuanced distinction is made between children and in-laws. Only a limited number of items carry information pertaining to in-laws. Another limitation is that the information about children is reported by one of the parents. Hence, reporting heterogeneity (e.g., the difference in reporting patterns between senior men and senior women) and social desirability bias (e.g., being reluctant to report an unfilial son) could be a practical concern, which should be kept in mind when interpreting the analytical results.

**Measures**

Both upstream and downstream transfers were examined in this study. Regarding the upstream transfers, parent-reported financial and time-consuming housework support provided by each child was studied. Specifically, financial support was measured by the following question: “In the past 12 months, did this child support you or your coresiding spouse with money, food, or gift?” Housework support was gauged by the following question: “In the past year, did this child provide you with assistance in household chores?” Although the original question did not specify the type of household chore, similar questions in the p-class survey referred to household chores as the time-consuming labor of “cooking, cleaning, etc.” These two questions were repeatedly asked of each child, and a positive answer was coded to be unity, and zero otherwise.

The downstream transfers were measured by several questions, concerning both monetary and time-consuming types of elder care. The financial type of transfers involved the following questions: (a) “Did you provide financial support when this child purchased or decorated his or her house/apartment?” (b) “In the past 12 months, did you or your coresiding spouse support this child with money, food, or gifts?” and (c) “Do you plan to make a bequest to this child?” Regarding housework transfers, I used the following question: “In the past year, did you provide this child assistance with household chores?” Again, the options to these questions are binary. It is necessary to mention that the parents’ plans to give a bequest is different from the other measures of monetary support because it is not yet realized, but this plan is still relevant because premortem property division plans such as this have been a relevant factor considered by both parents and children in their provision of mutual support (Jiang et al., 2015; Li, Xie, & Lin, 1993).

Because I am interested in the gender pattern of intergenerational exchange, the key predictor is children’s gender, which is coded as 1 = female and 0 = male.

To reveal the net effect of gender, it is always necessary to control for the attributes of both parents and children. The data structure of parent–children records allows us to fix parental features with a fixed effect term. That is, the unit of analysis on the level of each child was set and controlled for a dummy variable of each parent’s identity. This fixed-effect dummy variable is preferred relative to controlling for multiple parental covariates because it captures the part of parental features that is not measured in the survey (Allison, 2009). As to children’s covariates, I took into consideration their age and household registration status (1 = urban; 0 = rural) in all of the multivariate statistical models. In addition to this, many other covariates were fixed and divided into four groups.

First, the relative resources of family members determined their power in negotiating the division of labor in elder care (Bookman & Kimbrel, 2011; Ross, 1987), so the first group of covariates refers to the socioeconomic status (SES) of the children, including educational attainment (1 = “illiterate or semi-illiterate,” 2 = “preliminary school,” 3 = “junior high school,” 4 = “senior high school,” 5 = “vocational school,” and 6 = “associate degree or above”), economics status (1 = “well off,” 2 = “basically well off,” 3 = “financially balanced,” 4 = “experiencing some economic hardship,” 5 = “experiencing severe economic hardship”), occupational status (1 = “full-time employed,” 0 = “otherwise”), and occupation (1 = “professional,” 2 = “administrative,” 3 = “business or service industry,” 4 = “agricultural and fisheries industry,” 5 = “workers,” 6 = “entrepreneurs,” 7 = “military services,” 8 = “never had a job,” 9 = “other”).

Second, the extent of parental support has been noted as being influenced by the caregiver’s time availability insofar as constraints...
from other time commitments and responsibilities reduce one’s filial devotion (Shelton & John, 1996). Two major time-competing commitments are marriage and child care, so this second group of control variables (DEMO henceforth) includes caregivers’ marital status (1 = “being married and living together with the spouse,” 2 = “divorced or separated,” 3 = “married but living separately with the spouse,” 4 = “widowed,” and 5 = “single”) and the number of children. (This is the number of children of the caregiver, i.e., the number of grandchildren of the older parents.)

Third, living arrangement and proximity, such as coresidence, is strongly related to the likelihood of mutual support (Logan & Bian, 1999; Logan, Bian, & Bian, 1998; Zimmer & Korinek, 2010). In China, it is not uncommon for older people (i.e., grandparents) to live with their children to offer them child care (Chen, 2005; Chen, Liu, & Mair, 2011; Chen, Short, & Entwisle, 2000; Cong & Silverstein, 2012; Ko & Hank, 2014), so coresidence with children or grandchildren should be considered. This group of control variables concerning living arrangement (LIV henceforth) thus includes whether the older parents are living with a particular child (1 = “yes,” 0 = “no”) and whether they are living with grandchildren (1 = “yes,” 0 = “no”).

Last, the hierarchical compensation theory suggests that the availability of family members to provide elder care might be assigned in a series order (Johnson, 1983; Shanas, 1979; Silverstein & Giarusso, 2010). In China, this principle is embodied by the fact that the eldest child, usually regardless of gender, takes on more responsibility than the younger children in family affairs, so in the fourth group of control covariates, I considered whether a particular child was the eldest (1 = “yes,” 0 = “no”). The total number and the gender composition of children both matter (e.g., Gerstel & Gallagher, 2001), so I controlled for the percentage of females among all children and the total number of children. These three variables constitute the fourth group of covariates (SIB henceforth).

**Empirical Strategies**

The reciprocity nature of intergenerational exchange suggests that transfers from parents are influenced by those from children and vice versa (Silverstein, Conroy, Wang, Giarusso, & Bengtson, 2002). This type of mutually affecting relation directs us to adopt the simultaneous equation modeling to examine the gender divide in one direction of transfer conditional on the other (Wooldridge, 2010). Specifically, denote downstream transfer for individual $i$ to be $D_i$ and upstream transfers to be $U_i$; the simultaneous equation modeling estimates the following equation system:

$$
\begin{align*}
D_i &= \beta_0 + \beta_1 U_i + \beta_2 X_{control} + \beta_3 \text{Gender}_i + \epsilon_{i1} \\
U_i &= \gamma_0 + \gamma_1 D_i + \gamma_2 X_{control} + \gamma_3 \text{Gender}_i + \epsilon_{i2}
\end{align*}
$$

(1)

In the first model of Equation 1, $\beta_0$ is the intercept and $\beta_1$ stands for the effect of upward transfer $U_i$ on downward transfer $D_i$. $\beta_{X_{control}}$ is the dot product of control covariates $X_{control}$ and the transposed vector of their coefficients $\beta$. What I am interested in is $\beta_2$, which gives the gender divide in the extent of receiving transfers from parents, net of their own support sent to parents. Last, $\epsilon_{i1}$ is the random error. The second model of Equation 1 can be interpreted in a similar fashion.

The simultaneous equation modeling is featured by its nonrecursiveness, that is, $D_i$ and $U_i$ mutually influence each other so that $\epsilon_{i1}$ and $\epsilon_{i2}$ are correlated. This violates the ordinary least squares assumption, and in this study I use the two-stage least squares (TSLS) procedure to estimate model coefficients. Also, to identify Equation 1, the exclusion condition should be met, where $X_{control}$ has at least one covariate that is not in $X_{control}$ and vice versa. In this study, the extra covariate in $X_{control}$ is the frequency of the elders to feel that a particular child provides insufficient care for them (1 = “never,” 2 = “occasionally,” 3 = “sometimes,” 4 = “always”); the extra covariate in $X_{control}$ is the frequency of children to feel that their surveyed parent is demanding (1 = “never,” 2 = “occasionally,” 3 = “sometimes,” 4 = “always”). With this setup, the TSLS could separate the effect of $U$ on $D$ from that of $D$ on $U$. (Specifically, the predicted value of $D$ in the first model of Equation 1, $\hat{D}$, is used as the instrumental variable for $D$ in the second model and vice versa. In this way, the mutual relations between $D$ and $U$ can be identified. It is worth mentioning that using different identifying covariates and fitting the models in Equation 1 separately would always return similar substantive conclusions.
of “providing more but receiving less.”) Also, the TSLS has the merit of improving statistical efficiency (e.g., smaller standard errors) relative to the ordinary least squares because of the accommodation of random error correlation in Equation 1. More information in the nonrecursive modeling can be found in Paxton, Hipp, and Marquart-Pyatt (2011). (The binary dependent variable is treated as a continuous one, so the two models in Equation 1 are both linear probability models; Wooldridge, 2010. This is necessary for cross-model coefficient comparison because the coefficients of the routine generalized linear models for binary responses, such as the logistic regression model, cannot be directly compared across models; Mood, 2010.)

Results

Descriptive Patterns

I first examined the descriptive patterns of the gender divide in intergenerational exchange. More descriptive information about the variables used in this article can be found in the Supporting Information Appendix. As shown in Figure 1, 73.03% of sons reported that they provided monetary support during the past 12 months, but the percentage for daughters reached as high as 83.13%. The gender difference was significant at the .001 level, which meant that it was daughters rather than sons who were more engaged in providing financial help for their parents. In contrast to this gender bias, helping parents with household chores revealed no significant difference between sons (62.54%) and daughters (63.87%).

The descriptive pattern of downstream transfers is presented in Figure 2. The pattern shows a remarkable bias toward sons. Specifically, older parents were more likely to leave a bequest to a son (39.99% for sons vs. 29.64% for daughters), to provide monetary support to a son when he purchased or decorated a house or an apartment (29.71% for sons vs. 15.86% for daughters), to help a son with household chores (41.50% for sons vs. 26.21% for daughters), and to financially assist a son (30.10% for sons vs. 27.66% for daughters). Hence, with regard to both the financial and time aids delivered by parents, sons were significantly advantaged when compared with daughters. This asymmetric pattern indicated that when making decisions about downstream transfers, older parents seemed to subscribe to the traditional son-biased patrilineal norm even though they received more support from daughters than sons.

In summary, the descriptive results provided some evidence for the pattern of “providing more but receiving less” on the part of daughters: They were more active and engaged in supporting parents than were sons, but they suffered from significant disadvantages in the probability of receiving either monetary or housework assistance from their parents.

Results of the Multivariate Analyses

This subsection presents the findings from the multivariate analyses. I first look into the dynamic between parents’ bequest preferences and children’s upward monetary and household-chore support (Table 1). As discussed earlier, the bequest plan was examined because it represented a type of premortem property division that was relevant to the interaction between parents and children. In total, I fitted six models. Besides the baseline model (Model 1) and the full model (Model 6), I consecutively controlled for the four groups of covariates mentioned earlier (as shown by Model 2 through Model 5). For each row, there were two groups of models. Model I refers to the mutual effect between parents’ bequest preference and children’s financial support, and Model II presents the dynamic between parents’ bequest preference and children’s household support.

We first see the series of models under Model I. Model 1 is the baseline model with only basic demographic covariates to be controlled for. Consistent with the descriptive
Figure 2. Descriptive Pattern of Being Supported by Parents.

Note: Bequest preference, supported by parents (house/apartment), supported by parents (housework) are statistically significant at the .001 level. Supported by parents (financial) is statistically significant at the .1 level.

Table 1. Results of the Simultaneous Equation Models: Bequest Preference and Caring for Parents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model I</th>
<th>Model II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bequest preference</td>
<td>Caring for parents (financial)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) Baseline model</td>
<td>$-0.16 (0.02)$***</td>
<td>$0.09 (0.02)$***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi square</td>
<td>283.15***</td>
<td>106.70***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Controlling for SES</td>
<td>$-0.14 (0.02)$***</td>
<td>$0.09 (0.02)$***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi square</td>
<td>310.97***</td>
<td>226.03***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Controlling for DEMO</td>
<td>$-0.16 (0.02)$***</td>
<td>$0.08 (0.02)$***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi square</td>
<td>312.17***</td>
<td>127.39***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Controlling for LIV</td>
<td>$-0.13 (0.02)$***</td>
<td>$0.07 (0.02)$***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi square</td>
<td>305.49***</td>
<td>102.30***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Controlling for SIB</td>
<td>$-0.16 (0.02)$***</td>
<td>$0.06 (0.02)$***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi square</td>
<td>376.53***</td>
<td>111.89***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Full model</td>
<td>$-0.12 (0.02)$***</td>
<td>$0.05 (0.02)$*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi square</td>
<td>338.92***</td>
<td>223.48***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Unstandardized coefficients with standard errors are in parentheses. All six models control for age, household registration status, and a dummy variable for parental identity. SES (social-economic status) includes educational attainment, economic status, occupational status, and occupation. DEMO (demographic characteristics) includes marital status and the number of children. LIV (living arrangement) includes whether to live with the surveyed parent and whether the respondent’s children live with the surveyed grandparent. SIB (sibling characteristics) includes whether to be the eldest child, the percentage of females among all children, and the total number of children. The frequency of the elders to feel that a particular child provides insufficient care for them is controlled for in the models predicting downstream transfers, and the frequency of children to feel that their surveyed parent is fastidious is controlled for in the models predicting upstream transfers.

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

results, daughters were significantly disadvantaged when parents considered making a bequest (coefficient = −0.16), but daughters assisted their parents more than did sons in terms of monetary transfers (coefficient = 0.09). (Note that in the simultaneous equation modeling, the binary variable was treated as a continuous one. In this case, the results were based on the linear probability model; Wooldridge, 2015. In light of this, the coefficients informed us of the direction...
Table 2. Results of the Simultaneous Equation Models: Supported by Parent in House/Apartment Purchase and Decoration and Caring for Parents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Supported by parent (house)</th>
<th>Caring for parents (financial)</th>
<th>Supported by parent (house)</th>
<th>Caring for parents (housework)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseline model</td>
<td>-0.15 (0.02)**</td>
<td>0.08 (0.02)**</td>
<td>-0.14 (0.02)**</td>
<td>0.02 (0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi Square</td>
<td>110.68***</td>
<td>77.95***</td>
<td>155.69***</td>
<td>85.64***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlling for SES</td>
<td>-0.13 (0.02)**</td>
<td>0.08 (0.02)**</td>
<td>-0.12 (0.02)**</td>
<td>&lt;0.01 (0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi square</td>
<td>142.06***</td>
<td>206.53***</td>
<td>158.90***</td>
<td>142.81***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlling for DEMO</td>
<td>-0.15 (0.02)**</td>
<td>0.07 (0.02)**</td>
<td>-0.15 (0.02)**</td>
<td>0.02 (0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi square</td>
<td>121.27***</td>
<td>59.65***</td>
<td>177.68***</td>
<td>91.57***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlling for LIV</td>
<td>-0.16 (0.02)**</td>
<td>0.07 (0.02)**</td>
<td>-0.16 (0.02)**</td>
<td>0.08 (0.02)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi square</td>
<td>112.21***</td>
<td>53.76***</td>
<td>156.51***</td>
<td>140.04***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlling for SIB</td>
<td>-0.13 (0.02)**</td>
<td>0.05 (0.02)**</td>
<td>-0.13 (0.02)**</td>
<td>0.01 (0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi square</td>
<td>138.39***</td>
<td>115.78***</td>
<td>189.55***</td>
<td>85.85***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full model</td>
<td>-0.13 (0.02)**</td>
<td>0.05 (0.02)**</td>
<td>-0.13 (0.02)**</td>
<td>0.05 (0.03)†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi square</td>
<td>154.81***</td>
<td>193.83***</td>
<td>175.04***</td>
<td>198.23***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Unstandardized coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. All six models control for age, household registration status, and a dummy variable for parental identity. SES includes educational attainment, economic status, occupational status, and occupation. DEMO includes marital status and the number of children. LIV includes whether the intergenerational living pattern was taken into account. This noteworthy finding, as discussed earlier, could be partly driven by the son-biased coresidence model in China. Further analysis showed that 37% of the older respondents coresided with a son, with only 14% coresiding with a daughter. Unfortunately, one cannot further distinguish sons from daughters-in-law in household chore support using the available data. It was also likely that the older respondents were inclined to overstate the support from sons if they coresided with them. This reporting bias could be another reason for the seeming gender balance in household chore support when the pattern of coresidence was not controlled for. (My substantive conclusions were rather strengthened because the gender imbalance was restored after this factor was considered.) It is worth mentioning that daughters who lived elsewhere still supported parents who coresided with a son. Focusing on the subsample of older people who lived with a son,
I found that daughters were marginally more supportive than sons: The coefficient was 0.09 for housework support (p = .097) and 0.10 for financial support (p = .058).

The analytical results regarding the relationship between monetary support from parents in house/apartment purchase or decoration and children’s different types of caring for parents can be found in Table 2. According to Model I, daughters were less likely to benefit from this type of downstream financial support in all six models. Daughters were found to be active in providing monetary support to parents, however. This disadvantage of daughters was affirmed in Model II. Again, daughters did not show a significantly higher level of household chore assistance unless living arrangement was controlled for.

The time transfers from parents to children, that is, housework support, also exhibited a significant favoring of sons, as reported in Table 3. This pattern did not change after controlling for children’s socioeconomic status, demographic features, living arrangement, and sibling characteristics of children. One result that was noteworthy was the significant reduction in the strength of the gender divide when the living arrangement was fixed. As discussed earlier, this finding implied that older parents’ stronger housework transfer to sons was partly because of their coresidence with sons. With regard to the exchange from children to parents, daughters always contributed more than sons, irrespective of what covariates were included in the model.

Last, I investigated how parents’ financial support for children may mutually affect children’s upstream transfers (Table 4). Daughters’ marginal role was confirmed again, with all coefficients across all models being significantly negative, but daughters still engaged in financial support for parents to a stronger extent than did sons. As in the pattern shown earlier, the gender divide in household chores assistance was not significant, except for the case when living proximity was fixed, meaning that the observed gender equality might be attributed to the coresidence of older parents with sons.

In summary, the results of the multivariate analyses suggests that, with regard to both monetary and time downward transfers, daughters...
Table 4. Result of the Simultaneous Equation Models: Financially Supported by Parent and Caring for Parents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model I</th>
<th>Model II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supported by parent (financial)</td>
<td>Supported by parent (financial)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caring for parents (financial)</td>
<td>Caring for parents (housework)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) Baseline model</td>
<td>$-0.05 (0.02)^{**}$</td>
<td>$0.08 (0.02)^{***}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi square</td>
<td>189.31^{***}</td>
<td>201.17^{***}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Controlling for SES</td>
<td>$-0.04 (0.02)^{†}$</td>
<td>$0.07 (0.02)^{***}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi square</td>
<td>239.01^{***}</td>
<td>352.01^{***}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Controlling for DEMO</td>
<td>$-0.05 (0.02)^†$</td>
<td>$0.07 (0.02)^{***}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi square</td>
<td>214.68^{***}</td>
<td>226.92^{***}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Controlling for LIV</td>
<td>$-0.03 (0.02)^{**}$</td>
<td>$0.06 (0.02)^{**}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi square</td>
<td>191.50^{***}</td>
<td>186.85^{***}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Controlling for SIB</td>
<td>$-0.04 (0.02)^†$</td>
<td>$0.05 (0.02)^{**}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi square</td>
<td>227.34^{***}</td>
<td>215.52^{***}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Full model</td>
<td>$-0.01 (0.02)^{**}$</td>
<td>$0.04 (0.02)^{**}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi square</td>
<td>233.88^{***}</td>
<td>308.29^{***}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Unstandardized coefficients with standard errors are in parentheses. All six models control for age, household registration status, and a dummy variable for parental identity. SES includes educational attainment, economic status, occupational status, and occupation. DEMO includes marital status and the number of children. LIV includes whether to live with the surveyed parent and whether the respondent’s children live with the surveyed grandparent. SIB includes whether to be the eldest child, the percentage of females among all children, and the total number of children. The frequency of the elders to feel that a particular child provides insufficient care for them is controlled for in the models predicting downstream transfers, and the frequency of children to feel that their surveyed parent is fastidious is controlled for in the models predicting upstream transfers.

$^†p < .1. * p < .05. ** p < .01. *** p < .001.$

were always disadvantaged. For upward transfers, daughters provided more financial support, and when parents’ preference for coresiding with a son was fixed, daughters were also more active in providing time-consuming housework assistance. These results lend support to the gender asymmetrical pattern where daughters were “providing more but receiving less.” (Note that parents provided more monetary and time transfers to sons, no matter whether the living arrangement was fixed. In this light, no trade-off between time and monetary transfers on the part of the coresiding older parents was detected.)

Preliminary Results on the In-Laws

As noted earlier, I could not identify the nuanced intergenerational exchange between the older parents and their children-in-law because of data limitation, but the p-class survey provided two questions to perform some preliminary explorations: One question asked who coresided with the older parents and the other question asked who helped the older parents if they were in need of assistance with housework and daily living. In examining these two questions, two preliminary conclusions were drawn.

First, in contrast to the traditional pattern, the older parents did not receive more support from their daughters-in-law relative to their sons. Specifically, 74% of the older parents coresiding with a son also lived with the daughter-in-law, and 98% of the older parents who did not coreside with a son reported living apart from the daughter-in-law. In terms of housework support, if sons were reported to provide some aids, 79% of daughters-in-law were also reported to do so, but for the cases who received no support from sons, 83% of the daughters-in-law provided no transfers to the parents-in-law. In short, the support from daughters-in-law seemed to go along with the support from sons. If sons did not support their own parents, it was unlikely for the older parents to receive transfers from their daughters-in-law, but supporting sons were likely—but not always—to
be accompanied by supporting daughters-in-law. This pattern implied that daughters-in-law, in relation to sons, did not assume a greater role in providing assistance to parents-in-law in contemporary China. (In light of this, a higher level of downward transfers to sons in relation to daughters seemed unlikely to be attributable to the compensation for daughters-in-law.) In this regard, the traditional image of arduous daughters-in-law seemed to be not sustained in modern China. This pattern was understandable in light of the decline in the virilocal marriage, where women, now an indispensable and independent member of a nuclear family, determine their extent of supporting parents-in-law in accordance with that of their husbands.

Second, daughters-in-law supported older parents more than did sons-in-law. Only 56% of the older parents who lived with a daughter at the same time coresided with a son-in-law. If a parent did not stay with a daughter, most of them would not live with the son-in-law (98%). For housework support, again, only 55% of the husbands of supporting daughters were also engaged in caring for parents-in-law, but if no transfers were sent from daughters, 97% of the sons-in-law would show no support. This was also true for daily living assistance, where less than half of sons-in-law looked after their parents-in-law (47%) even though their wives were supporting them. In cases where their wives provided no such assistance, none of the sons-in-law did so.

Altogether, if a daughter provided support for her parents, the likelihood of her husband being engaged was fairly low. This constituted a contrast to the pattern of the other way around, in which when a son provided elder care to their own parents, his wife was likely to be supportive for the parents-in-law (although she would not provide more care than did the husband). In this regard, the connection between men and their parents-in-law seemed to be weak, which was somewhat consistent with the traditional pattern, whereas women were no longer the carrier of their husbands’ elder care obligations, which was not traditional.

**Discussion**

It is well known that the Confucian teachings in traditional China put forward a family ideology that is characterized to be patrilineal, where daughters are expected to be peripheral in the two-way transfers with parents, relative to sons. Daughters do not bear the ethical obligation of filial piety in delivering elder care, and their natal parents, at the same time, do not have to support them to the same extent as they do sons. This marginal situation can be briefly summarized with “providing less and receiving less.” The comprehensive social transition and reform in Chinese society during the past decades, nevertheless, has considerably altered the gender divide in caring for parents, with a strand of research documenting an increasingly significant role played by daughters in delivering various types of aids to parents. With the gradual narrowing of the gap between daughters and sons in elder care, it is acknowledged that the patrilineal norm in upstream transfers is no longer observed in contemporary China.

Against this background, this study extends the prior literature by considering the gender pattern for both directions of intergenerational exchange. Based on theories about the generational distinction in the understanding of family norms, as well as the heterogeneous effects of the social forces that drive women to offer more elder care services on people of different generations, I propose a gender asymmetrical pattern where the patrilineal norm governs older parents’ downward transfers to children, but not necessarily the upward transfers from children. Using a pilot nationwide survey of the population older than 60 years, I fitted several simultaneous equation models. Empirical results confirm the pattern of “providing more but receiving less” for female caregivers and support the gender asymmetry argument.

This study, in a sense, draws the attention of demographers and family scientists to one important and well-established proposition in the social scientific research: Cultural norms are intrinsically associated with people of different generations, and for a given historical period, the generation gap in cultural commitment is real and influential (Bengtson, 1970; Mead, 1970). In this regard, it is too hasty to conclude that the traditional patrilineal culture has died out without taking a closer look at the potential generational differences. As shown in this study, the “structural lag” of the older population usually contributes to the rigidity and persistence of traditional ideas, norms, worldview, and values (Riley et al., 1994).

What I am arguing here, however, is not the perpetuation of the male-dominant patrilineal
culture in China, nor am I suggesting that cultural norms are immune to institutional transitions. On the contrary, I am fully aware of the influences of a changing sociopolitical order on cultural meanings, and I agree with Riley et al. (1994) in that the structural lag cannot last forever. What I am arguing in this study is that, because of the generation gap in the gender divide in intergenerational transfers, the patrilocal norm is not immediately eliminated by factors such as the empowerment of women, family structural change, economic modernization, decline in Confucian teachings, and diffusion of Western conjugal culture. Hence, the unilateral tendency of the rise of women in upstream transfers per se is not sufficient to ascertain a global decline in the patrilineal norm in China.

Readers should note that this gender asymmetry applies to the comparison between daughters and sons, and I do not rule out the possibility that women benefit in transfers from the spouse’s side as a daughter-in-law. In light of this, a “providing more but receiving less” pattern should not be interpreted to be evidence for an absolute disadvantage of women in general. Also, this study assumes that upstream and downstream transfers, for a particular individual, are governed by the same kind of family norm. That is, if a person subscribes to a patrilocal filial norm, he or she is also likely to embrace a patrilocal parental norm. This assumption is persuasive because previous theories have suggested that it is the two-way instead of one-way direction of family relationships that is governed by a particular type of family norm (Rossi & Rossi, 1990; Wang, 2011). Also, empirical studies conducted in China have affirmed the consistency in filial and parental norms in practice (e.g., Yan, 2003, 2011). (For this study, an ideal situation, as suggested by a reviewer, would be to compare different generations in terms of the same type of transfers. The empirical data fall short of measures about the older generation’s elder care practices and the younger generation’s child care activities, however. Further studies should be conducted to find information on caregivers’ downward transfers.)

Looking into the future, this study implies that when the older population analyzed in this article is replaced by its children’s generation, the gender-biased preference in downstream transfers may gradually lose its influence. That is to say, when it is the turn of the children’s generation to make decisions about downward support, they may be less son biased. This is a reasonable speculation in light of the extant studies. For instance, Yu, Yu, and Mansfield (1990), in their interview of university staff members, showed that the younger generation’s project for preference in old age has shifted toward greater gender equality. Hence, future China is likely to witness a move away from the patrilineal norm.

Some limitations of this study need to be acknowledged. This study is based on an analysis of a cross-sectional survey, which is insufficient to reveal a strict time order (Guo, Chi, & Silverstein, 2016). In addition, emotional support is not examined because of the data limitation. Notwithstanding these drawbacks, in this article I affirm, using empirical evidence, the pattern of “providing more but receiving less” for daughters. I bring to the fore the gender pattern in the two-way intergenerational exchange process, and I direct scholarship to the gender asymmetry in the intergenerational exchange in contemporary China. In this regard, I would like to view this study as being explorative and suggestive and as leading to more nuanced research on this theme in the future.

Note
An earlier version of this article was presented at the Gender and Family Workshop, which was organized by the School of Sociology and Political Science at Shanghai University, Shanghai, China. The author thanks Dr. Yingchun Ji, Dr. Feinian Chen, Dr. Xiaogang Wu, and many other workshop participants for their insightful comments and suggestions. This study was supported by the National Social Sciences Foundation (15CSH030), the Outstanding Scholar (zhuoxue) Grant of Fudan University, the School of Social Development and Public Policy, and the National Natural Science Foundation (71490733).

Supporting Information
Additional supporting information may be found in the online version of this article:
Table A1: Descriptive Results

References


