

# Research on the Psychological Adaptation of Hainan Farmers under the Background of Free Trade Port Construction

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**Abstract:** The construction of a free trade port has brought various opportunities and challenges to Hainan Island, including social issues related to social cognition and psychological adaptation. As an important force in the construction of the Hainan Free Trade Port, the psychological well-being of farmers should be actively addressed by the government. This study conducted research on the farmer population in Hainan Province under the background of the free trade port through literature review, questionnaire surveys, and interviews. The results revealed that there are correlations among various dimensions of social cognition and psychological adaptation of Hainan farmers under the free trade port background, with social trust, social integration, and quality of life having a positive predictive effect on adaptation. Based on the analysis of existing problems, effective paths to enhance the psychological adaptation level of Hainan farmers were explored.

**Keywords:** Hainan Free Trade Port Construction; Farmers; Psychological Adaptation

With the continuous acceleration of the development of the Hainan Free Trade Port, it has driven positive developments in various areas such as the economy, culture, and people's livelihood in Hainan Province. According to the results of the 2020 seventh national census, 60.27% of the population in Hainan Province resides in urban areas, while 39.73% resides in rural areas, indicating that a considerable portion of the population in Hainan relies on farming for their livelihoods. Thus, the farmer population is an indispensable part of the Hainan Free Trade Port. The steady development of the Hainan Free Trade Port has not only promoted various aspects of development in Hainan Province but also brought significant changes to the social environment. How farmers perceive and adapt to the new social environment has become an important factor that affects their ability to engage in productive activities and actively participate in the construction of the free trade port. Therefore, exploring and understanding the social cognition and psychological adaptation of farmers in the process of constructing the Hainan Free Trade Port can promote its healthy development and have positive practical significance for the social harmony of Hainan Province.

## 1. Problem Statement

### 1.1 Research Purpose

Under the construction of the Free Trade Port in Hainan Island, the social structure and economic framework are gradually changing. As an important component of the population in Hainan Island, the farmer population's level of social cognition and psychological adaptation has become a critical factor in the smooth progress of building the Hainan Free Trade Port. Psychological adaptation mainly refers to the division of labor, coordination, and adaptive responses among different personality traits, enabling individuals to adapt to their surroundings. How quickly a person can adapt to a new environment and cope with complex, significant, or critical situations is directly related to their level of psychological adaptation<sup>[1]</sup>. Jia Xiaobo believes that psychological adaptation generally refers to the active response made by individuals to changes in the external environment through self-regulatory systems, making their psychological activities and behavior more adapted to environmental changes and self-development needs, and achieving a new balance between the individual and the surrounding environment<sup>[2]</sup>. This study aims to explore the social cognition and psychological adaptation of the farmer population under the background of the Hainan Free Trade Port construction, analyze potential issues within the farmer population, and explore strategies to enhance their psychological adaptation

level.

### 1.2 Research Design

The research will utilize a combination of questionnaire surveys and in-depth interviews for on-site investigations to understand the psychological adaptation level and influencing factors among the farmer population in Hainan. A self-developed interview outline and the "Hainan Social Cognition and Psychological Adaptation Survey Questionnaire" will be used for the on-site investigation, primarily conducted offline with online support. A sample of Hainan farmers will be selected, and a total of 30 questionnaires will be collected for exploratory factor analysis and reliability and validity analysis. After removing 4 questions, the final questionnaire will consist of 20 questions, covering four dimensions: adaptability, social trust, social integration, and quality of life. Each dimension will have 5 measurement questions, using a five-point rating scale, with scores ranging from 1 to 5, representing "very inconsistent" to "very consistent." The final questionnaire will be officially administered, and a total of 211 valid data will be collected. Reliability and validity tests will be performed on the data, and the results are shown in Table 1. The questionnaire exhibits good reliability and validity based on the test standards.

Table 1: Letter and validity indicators of the social cognition and psychological adaptation questionnaire in Hainan

Number of terms	Cronbach's Alpha	KMO	P
20	0.883	0.894	<0.001

## 2. Current Status of Psychological Adaptation Among Hainan Farmer Population

The statistical analysis of the dimensions' scores from the Hainan Social Cognition and Psychological Adaptation Survey Questionnaire using SPSS revealed that the adaptability dimension of the farmer population in the process of Hainan Free Trade Port construction is  $3.596 \pm 0.791$ , which indicates a moderately above-average level of adaptation. This suggests that the farmer population has adapted relatively well to the social changes and economic development brought about by the Free Trade Port construction. The social trust dimension of the farmer population is  $3.535 \pm 0.752$ , indicating a moderately above-average level. This shows that, to some extent, the government has ensured social fairness in the process of Free Trade Port construction, and people have a good sense of trust in the government and society. The social integration dimension of the farmer population is  $3.375 \pm 0.889$ , indicating a moderate level. This suggests that the participation of local farmers in Hainan in the process of Free Trade Port construction is average, and the implementation of the Free Trade Port has not brought significant practical benefits to most of the Hainan farmer population. The quality of life dimension of the farmer population is  $3.615 \pm 0.693$ , indicating a moderately above-average level. This suggests that the daily mental state and quality of life of local farmers in Hainan are good during the construction of the Free Trade Port.

At the same time, the data obtained from the questionnaire were subjected to differential tests based on demographic variables such as gender, age, educational level, marital status, and monthly income, to gain insights into some information regarding the social cognition and psychological adaptation of Hainan farmers. There are many factors influencing social cognition and psychological adaptation of the farmer population, and demographic variables are one of the important influencing factors. Gender affects the perspectives of individuals in thinking about issues, different ages indicate different past experiences, educational levels largely determine individuals' cognitive levels, and marital status and monthly income are important reference indicators for individuals' social adaptation level. Each person is an independent individual in society; therefore, the basic situations of different individuals vary. By studying the differences in various dimensions among demographic variables, we can identify the problems in the social cognition and psychological adaptation of Hainan farmers under the background of the Free Trade Port.

Table 2: Correlation analysis of social cognition and psychological adaptation (N=211)

Element	Adaptability	Social trust	Social integration	Quality of life
Adaptability	1			
Social trust	0.674**	1		
Social integration	0.572**	0.613**	1	
Quality of life	0.656**	0.582**	0.562**	1

Note: \*\* at Level 0.01 (double tail) with significant correlation.

To further understand the correlations between the four dimensions of social cognition and psychological adaptation, Pearson correlation analysis was conducted on the dimensions of social cognition and psychological adaptation, and the results are shown in Table 2. The analysis revealed significant correlations among the four dimensions of social cognition and psychological adaptation.

According to the correlation analysis of each dimension of social cognition and psychological adaptation, the adaptive dimension is taken as the dependent variable, and the dimension of social trust, the social integration dimension and the life quality dimension are taken as the independent variables, so that the regression equation of the adaptive dimension is gradually established. As shown in Table 3.

*Table 3: Regression analysis of social trust, social integration, and quality of life on adaptability (N=211)*

Dependent variable	Independent variable	Beta	t	R <sup>2</sup>	VIF
Adaptability	Social trust	0.383	6.175***	0.57	1.846
	Social integration	0.137	2.255*		1.783
	Quality of life	0.356	6.011***		1.684

Note: \* indicates significant at the 0.05 level and \*\*\* indicates significant at the 0.001 level

Through further analysis, it was found that adaptability is significantly correlated with social trust, social integration, and quality of life. To explore the impact of social trust, social integration, and quality of life on adaptability, a regression analysis was conducted with adaptability as the dependent variable and social trust, social integration, and quality of life as independent variables. The results showed that social trust, social integration, and quality of life all have a positive predictive effect on adaptability. The coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup>) was 0.57, indicating that these three variables explain 57% of the variance in adaptability, which is a high explanatory level. Thus, the impact of social trust, social integration, and quality of life on adaptability is considered significant. Additionally, all the independent variables had Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values less than 5 (1.864, 1.783, 1.684 < 5), indicating no multicollinearity among the three variables (social trust, social integration, and quality of life) in establishing this regression equation. The residuals of this regression model also follow a normal distribution. Therefore, the adaptability regression equation is:  $\text{Adaptability} = 0.293 + 0.402 * \text{Social Trust} + 0.137 * \text{Social Integration} + 0.356 * \text{Quality of Life}$ .

From the final established adaptability regression equation, it can be observed that social trust and quality of life have a greater impact on adaptability, while social integration has a relatively smaller effect. In an environment with high social trust, people are more willing to trust the government and those around them, resulting in stronger social cohesion. In the face of economic and social changes, a robust social structure can help individuals alleviate stress and adapt to the environment to some extent. In this study, quality of life comprises three main indicators: economic status, emotional well-being, and interpersonal relationships. Good emotional regulation implies that individuals can promptly adjust their negative emotions in response to emergencies and handle them calmly, providing a positive coping mentality for individual adaptation to the environment. Money is a basic need for individual survival, and when individuals' basic needs and expectations from society are met, they can face emergencies calmly, exhibiting stronger social adaptability. Interpersonal relationships are also fundamental to individual survival, and when an individual's interpersonal relationships are satisfied, it means they can receive sufficient social support, which is crucial for individual adaptation to society. In this study, social integration indicates whether Hainan farmers are aware of the policies related to the Free Trade Port and whether they have a high correlation between input and output in these policies. With the growing scale of the Free Trade Port construction, the socio-economic and Free Trade Port economy of Hainan Island have become increasingly interconnected. Therefore, understanding and integrating into the policies of the Free Trade Port are helpful for the local farmer population to adapt to Hainan's economic and social changes.

### 3. Existing Issues

Since the Chinese central government decided to fully support the construction of the Hainan Free Trade Port in early 2018, the scale of the project has continuously expanded, and regulations and facilities have been constantly improved. It has achieved impressive results and become a strong driving force for national investment and people's participation. The "Overall Plan for the Construction of Hainan Free Trade Port," issued by the government, mentions various policies such as reducing personal income tax for talents, allowing overseas professionals to independently establish educational institutions in Hainan, establishing regional medical centers, optimizing administrative approval

processes, optimizing shipping routes, establishing duty-free cities, and exempting certain goods from import tariffs. These policies have attracted a large number of high-end talents to Hainan, solved some livelihood problems, and promoted the development of various industries in Hainan, including agriculture, transportation, services, import-export trade, and many others. With strong support from the government, Hainan's society has rapidly developed, its economy has steadily improved, and a large number of high-end talents have settled in, demonstrating unprecedented vitality. However, it is not enough to focus only on the advantages of Free Trade Port construction; we must adopt a dialectical perspective to address the issues. As an essential force in Hainan's socio-economic development, the psychological adaptation of Hainan farmers faces certain challenges. After exploring the internal reasons, the following main problems have been identified: ① Farmers aged 61 and above with low income find it challenging to cope with high prices and expensive medical care. They struggle to keep up with the pace of social development. ② Farmers aged 31-40 face significant parenting pressures, difficulties in overcoming the economic impact of the pandemic, and a lack of targeted government assistance policies in some agricultural sectors. ③ Farmers with low levels of education may not fully comprehend the Free Trade Port construction. ④ Divorced farmers have lower levels of happiness, leading to low participation in Free Trade Port policies. ⑤ The government's credibility needs improvement, and more efforts are required to assist socially vulnerable groups and allocate basic resources fairly.

#### **4. Strategies to Enhance the Psychological Adaptation of Hainan Farmers under the Background of Free Trade Port Construction**

##### ***4.1 Strengthen Policy Propaganda and Enhance Government Credibility***

Farmers with low education levels and older farmers are less receptive to new information due to factors such as cultural level, age, language, and writing. They primarily obtain information through mobile phones, television, and chatting. Therefore, it is recommended that the local government in Hainan put more effort into short videos on popular platforms like TikTok and Kuaishou, disseminating content related to the Free Trade Port in the form of skits, slogans, and rhymes to reach a large number of farmers. Additionally, banners can be posted in villages, and knowledge lectures can be held, and support groups for Free Trade Port policies can be established to use more straightforward and direct language to promote relevant policies to farmers with lower education levels and older age groups.

While promoting Free Trade Port policies, the Hainan provincial government should also enhance its credibility. Provincial government agencies should increase their jurisdiction over municipal-level agencies, and similarly, municipal-level agencies should strengthen their jurisdiction over villages and towns. A clear responsibility mechanism should be established, and administrative tasks should be carried out in accordance with the law. Work related to government affairs should be open and transparent, actively reporting to the people. Additionally, service-oriented village committees can be established in each village, which are responsible for the people and subject to their supervision, thereby improving the efficiency of full-time staff and achieving fast, accurate, and stable service for the people.

##### ***4.2 Reduce Parenting Pressure and Improve Marital Quality***

Farmers aged 30 to 40 are the main force participating in Free Trade Port construction in Hainan. Therefore, the government should help ease their family pressure. In addition to the "little illness costs little money, and big illness costs less money" policy mentioned earlier for the older population, the government should provide certain assistance funds for families with multiple children, ensuring that children in these families have enough food, education, and medical care.

For divorced farmers, the local government can start by reducing the divorce rate and actively provide marriage and family counseling during the cooling-off period after divorce. Family and marital dispute mediation can be carried out, mainly conducted by professionals such as psychological counselors and social workers. To increase the marriage rate, efforts can be made to encourage the establishment of Hainan marriage and dating platforms, hold youth dating activities and public welfare lectures on love psychology from time to time. By addressing the basic needs of farmers, the government aims to improve their trust in its actions and initiatives, thereby laying the groundwork for the successful construction of the Free Trade Port.

#### **4.3 Aid Economic Recovery and Implement Targeted Policies**

To address the economic challenges caused by the pandemic, the government can appropriately adjust the tax burden for Hainan farmers and readjust it when the economy rebounds. The central government can invest in establishing social housing projects, rural livelihood projects, improving basic living facilities, and setting up agricultural and industrial factories to increase employment opportunities. The central government should strictly control the direction of economic macro-regulation and help Hainan Free Trade Port farmers to recover economically rapidly.

Since the introduction of Free Trade Port policies, the effects of national investment and support in the Hainan region have been significant. The policies, such as providing funds for Free Trade Port construction, reducing the burden of personal income tax for talents, introducing advanced agricultural techniques and technologies, reducing the costs of raw material imports and finished goods exports, have helped Hainan farmers increase their income and achieve prosperity. However, according to the author's investigation, the impact of these policies on individual farmers is minimal when focusing on individual villages, households, and even individual plots of land. The reason for this phenomenon can be understood: the construction of the Free Trade Port has been short, and the population of Hainan farmers is large, making it challenging to implement policies at the household level in such a.

#### **4.4 Balancing the allocation of resources and improving people's livelihood**

People's livelihood construction mainly includes education and medical care. Firstly, in view of the unbalanced distribution of educational resources, we encourage excellent teachers to go into the countryside, and develop a series of incentive mechanisms to solve the basic living needs of volunteer teachers, vigorously rectify the phenomenon of arbitrary charges in the education industry, formulate unified industry standards, and set up educational funds for children in poor mountainous areas. Second for medical resource allocation imbalance, Hainan elderly group is mainly divided into two parts, part is the provinces to endowment for the winter migratory birds group, the other part is the Hainan local elderly group, in the local elderly group, the elderly farmers accounted for the majority, their income is not optimistic, difficult to cope with the high prices, high medical in Hainan. Therefore, corresponding assistance policies can be introduced for some elderly farmers in Hainan Province who have medical difficulties, to moderately reduce the application of medical insurance and social security, and improve the coverage of medical insurance and social security. Funds for helping major diseases should be set up in the village to update the basic facilities of medical stations in the village. The objective is to establish a complete and convenient medical treatment system in various locations, enabling patients to enjoy more accessible and efficient medical services. Only by solving the basic survival needs of income, medical care and education for the farmers in Hainan, can they actively participate in the construction of the free trade port without any worries.

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