

Research on the Subjective Well-being of Urban and Rural Residents under the Perspective of New Urbanization

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Abstract. Currently, China's new urbanization pays special attention to the happiness of residents, and due to that, the study surveyed 1,000 urban and rural residents with "Brief Version of the Subjective well-being Scale for Chinese Residents", and the outcome indicated that factors like gender, education as well as household registration affect residents' subjective well-being. Additionally, it was also noted that there are apparent differences between urban and rural residents in the area of contentment, social confidence, self-worth, and physical health.

Keywords: New urbanization; Subjective well-being; Urban and rural residents.

1. Introduction

Urbanization is the process in which the population continues to accumulate in cities and the decades of reform and opening up; old urbanization process was simple as well as rough and related policies could not accommodate the urbanization process hence resulting to decrease in people's satisfaction.

With the intensifying of national leaders' understanding of the scientific concept of development, the connotation of people-oriented is constantly enriching and resident subjective well-being index, a measure of residents' experience of the degree of life satisfaction, is given adequate attention by our leaders. In April 2004, President Hu Jintao raised concern for human subjective well-being as one of the "six concerns" that adhere to people-oriented in his speech for the first time at Yale University. In November 2012, General Secretary Xi Jinping elaborated on the connotation of residents' subjective well-being in details and also pushed its value to a higher position. A report released by United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network(SDSN) (2017), indicates that in the past 40 years, Chinese people have significantly improved on their material level, quality of life and life expectancy. However, as far as subjective well-being is concerned, Chinese people' happiness today cannot compare to the past 25 years ago.

Emphasis on "subjective well-being" of urban and rural residents in the construction process of the Western economic zone is one of the entry points for Sichuan people's livelihood matters that are highly paid attention to at the moment. Dazhou City, the central city in the northeastern part of Sichuan Province, has always been an agricultural area as well as a city with a large population. According to the main data Bulletin of the sixth national census in 2010 in Dazhou, urban residents summed up to 32.7% of the city's permanent population while rural population aggregated to 67.3%. It is evident that the new urbanization process is extremely rapid in Dazhou City and hence it is essential to study the subjective well-being of residents of this City.

Happiness is subjective and therefore subjective well-being is noted to have been influenced by lots of factors. Domestic and foreign researchers classified possible factors that affect subjective well-being into two categories which include external and internal factors. Internal factors comprise of life events, economic conditions, social support, and cultural differences while on the other hand, external factors constitute of achievement goals, personality factors, social adaptation, and cognitive patterns.

For instance, Musick and Wilson believe that subjective well-being decreases with age, but more studies have made an opposite conclusion. Blanchflower and Oswald's study suggested that subjective well-being decreases with age and then increases with time displaying a U-type relationship [1]. Domestic scholar Xingzhanjun's research found that there are huge differences in the well-being of participants at different ages which has a greater relationship with age characteristics of individual's psychological development and the unique experiences of participants.

There are lots of studies that prove academic qualifications and subjective well-being are a positive correlation [2] and also the majority of researchers believe that there is no positive correlation between academic qualifications and subjective well-being arguing that highly educated people do not necessarily experience advanced subjective well-being. A New Zealand study found that there is a strong positive correlation between academic qualifications and subjective, physiological well-being, but this relationship works through cultural skills, and it was also noted that psychological well-being is not related to academic qualifications [3]. This clearly suggests that the relationship between subjective well-being and education is worth thinking about.

For adult individuals, marriage is essential and studies indicate that for women, married women experience greater subjective well-being than unmarried women while on the other hand, married men have lower subjective well-being than unmarried men [4]. However, the role of marriage in subjective well-being often depends on the quality of marriage, and a study of young female doctors in Zhouhongwei found that the quality of marriage directly affects subjective well-being.

The idea that more money makes one happier has always been popular, and Xingzhanjun enormously supported this view. Through a survey of six provincial cities and seven consecutive years of urban residents in Shandong Province, he found that high-income groups experienced significantly higher subjective well-being than low-income groups [5]. Liyaru and Wangweilu also found that individuals with a monthly income of 6,000 yuan experienced exceedingly higher subjective well-being than individuals with a monthly income of ¥2,000 [6]. However, their study also revealed that subjective well-being does not only increase with income alone. Zhang Wei's research revealed that when income increases to a certain extent, subjective well-being may neither increase nor decline [7], and thus, income growth does not correspond with the growth of subjective well-being.

Most of the above discussions are positive and are from a theoretical point of view and universality of individuals. Qualitative and quantitative research on specific economic construction stages (such as Western development) in a specific region of the country is still rare which provides a great opportunity for this study.

This research aims at determining the difference in subjective well-being between urban and rural residents and to establish and compare factors that affect subjective well-being of the two groups. It provides a valuable reference for the study of the difference between the psychological status of urban and rural residents which enriches the field of subjective well-being research. According to analysis results, corresponding suggestions are put forward to provide a reference for improving subjective well-being of urban and rural residents in the new urbanization process.

2. Methods

2.1 Participants

Rural residents and Urban residents

Rural residents defined in this study are a concept of community ownership and household registration. Specifically, residents' household registration is located in the rural area and is permanently resident in the specified area. Taking into account income, marriage and other matters covered by the questionnaire, it is only limited to villagers who have attained the age of 18.

Urban residents refer to the non-agricultural population registered in urban communities as well as long-term local residents.

Participants in this research were urban and rural residents in the city of Dazhou. A total of 898 individuals consented to participate in the study (1000 questionnaires were sent out, 57.3% male, 43.7% female was included).

2.2 Measures

It was measured by Chinese resident's subjective well-being scale (SWBS-CC20) compiled by Xingzhanjun which was a revised version of "Chinese Urban Subjective well-being Scale" compiled in 2002. The scale has 20 items with the following 10 dimensions; abundance, mental health

experience, social confidence experience, growth and progress experience, goal value experience, self-acceptance experience, physical health experience, mental balance experience, interpersonal adaptation experience and finally family atmosphere experience. Six points methods are used, that is, 1 to 6 points from "very different, disagree, somewhat disagree, somewhat agree, agree, and very agreeable." Among the 20 items, 4th, 5th, 6th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 13th, 15th, 17th, 18th, and 20th are the reverse score. Xingzhanjun reported that reliability of the scale was 0.848 and the validity was 0.972 which indicated that the scale had good reliability as well as validity. Each item in the subjective well-being scale used in this study is rated on a scale of 6. According to Xingzhanjun's point of view, the median value of 3.5 points is taken as the reference value and the higher the score, the happier it is, of which 4.5 points or more is a high level while 2.5 points or less is a low level. The confidence of the internal consistency coefficient Cronbach a coefficient is used to evaluate the questionnaire and after analysis, Cronbach a coefficient is 0.77. This scale, therefore, indicates that it has good reliability.

2.3 Procedure

Random questionnaires were distributed through cycling from urban to rural residents in each administrative district of Dazhou city. The entire questionnaires consisted of 29 questions and had two parts. The first part mainly focused on personal information of participants and had 9 questions while the second part was a short version of subjective well-being scale with 20-item compiled by Xingzhanjun. After the survey, small gifts were issued to each and every participant.

After recovery, first, make a description of the Sample Statistics then shift to the sample T-test and ANOVA to determine the urban and rural residents of two different groups of subjective well-being of the subjective differences and to identify and compare effects of these two groups of subjective factors of subjective well-being.

3. Results

An independent sample t-test (table 1 in appendix part) indicated that there was no significant gender difference in overall happiness which is consistent with Xingzhanjun's study. Women scored significantly higher than men in the abundant experience, suggesting that women were more likely to be satisfied than men. In mental health experience, men scored higher than women, indicating that men have greater psychological resilience than women. Women scored significantly higher than men $t_{(898)}=2.04$, $p<0.05$ which exhibits that women are more optimistic about the future than men. In physical health experience, men scored higher than women $t_{(898)}=2.09$, $p<0.05$ which reveals that men are more optimistic about their health, and in dimensions of growth and progress experience, goal value experience, self-acceptance experience, mental balance experience, interpersonal adaptation experience, and family atmosphere experience, the difference between men's score and women's score was not notable.

ANOVA analysis of subjective well-being among residents with different degrees of education (Table 2 in appendix part) found that there were significant differences in the summation of subjective well-being $F_{(4,893)}=7.07$, $P<0.01$. The average summation subjective well-being of residents with different degrees of education indicated that the higher the educational background, the higher the summation subjective well-being. Simultaneously, there are significant differences between residents with different degrees of education in the four components of mental health experience, self-acceptance experience, physical health experience, and mental balance experience $F_{\text{mental health experience}(4,893)}=7.56$, $p<0.01$; $F_{\text{self-acceptance experience}(4,893)}=7.2$, $p<0.01$; $F_{\text{physical health experience}(4,893)}=3.27$, $p<0.01$; $F_{\text{mental balance experience}(4,893)}=4.29$, $p<0.01$. Score of residents with different degrees on these weightings is like the summation of subjective well-being, and it is noted that subjective well-being increases with academic attainment.

An independent t-test of residents with different household registrations (Table 3 in the appendix part) shows that there is no significant difference between urban and rural residents in terms of overall subjective well-being. However, in the experience of abundance, social confidence, and self-worth,

rural residents scored significantly lower than urban residents while on the other hand, in the physical health experience, rural residents scored significantly higher than urban residents. On other scales of subjective well-being, the difference between rural and urban residents is not significant.

Table 1. Relationship between income and subjective well-being

Subjective well-being	Income	<i>N</i>	<i>M±SD</i>	<i>t</i>
Subjective well-being	Lower than ¥ 2,000	428	7.42±0.11	0.16
	Higher than ¥ 6,000	470	7.74±0.10	

Residents with different incomes are grouped in categories of residents with incomes above 6,000 yuan while residents with incomes below 2,000 yuan are classified of low-income individuals. The results (Table 1) display that the summation subjective well-being of the high-income and low-income groups was the same.

4. Discussion

After the above analysis, it can be found that during the new urbanization process, the well-being of residents in Dazhou City displayed shows the following characteristics:

(1) There was no significant difference in overall well-being between the high-income and low-income groups which is. This result is not consistent with the results of Xingzhanjun, Liyaru, and Wangweilu. And Residents' to life, medical care, environment, and other factors are extremely high which shows that the impact of the economy on the well-being of the city residents is becoming less and less and therefore people are moving from the focus of economic growth to the focus of improving quality of life.

(2) there are no significant differences in summation subjective well-being between urban and rural residents. Results showed no significant difference in summation subjective well-being, neither in residents living in different places nor household registration.

In the course of the survey, we found that only 27.7% of the population had knowledge of the new urbanization and 36.2% never had even a slight idea of it. This suggests that the government should increase its propaganda on the new urbanization. In the survey, we also found that although income levels have little impact on summation subjective well-being. Income levels are still the most important matters to the people in the new urbanization. Out of the 898 participants, 614 considered income to be essential, aggregating to 68% of the total. This was followed by housing, which accounted for 66%, and health and environment, which accounted for 57% and 50% respectively. This suggested that if the new type of urbanization was to achieve a high degree of satisfaction. It has an obligation to, increasing people's income as well as improving residents' living conditions and medical conditions.

5. Summary

Based on the above analysis, we can conclude that factors such as gender, education, and household registration affect residents' subjective well-being and that there are obvious differences between urban and rural residents in the area of contentment, social confidence, self-worth, and physical health.

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