

# An Evaluation Study on Urban and Rural Residents' Sense of Gain in Southwest China

Based on Surveys in Chengdu, Kunming and Guiyang

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**Abstract**—In the vision of social governance in China, cultivating and enhancing people's sense of gain is a governance path in the ascendant. The sense of gain is understood as a kind of subjective psychological experience of human beings based on the objective material basis in the study. It evaluates the situation of urban residents' subjective sense of gain from the perspective of social perception. At the same time, material factors that trigger people's sense of gaining are understood as objective acquisitions in the study; that is to say, "actual acquisition" of the residents of the area involved, to mainly examine income and SES (socioeconomic status) of people. The study of this topic will help us to understand the status and characteristics of Urban and Rural Residents' sense of gain in Southwest China, and to discover and reveal the current status and problems of residents' sense of gain.

**Keywords**—sense of gain; objective acquisition; subjective sense of gain

## I. INTRODUCTION

On October 18, 2017, the "Nineteenth National Congress" of the Communist Party of China pointed out: "Intensifying poverty alleviation to ensure that all people have more senses of gain in the development of joint construction and sharing." As a result, the word "sense of gain" has become a common concern for people's livelihood of all circles of the society. The research involving it transcended the boundary of "social governance" and dissolved "reform, anti-corruption, people's livelihood, social stratum, ethnic group, and culture" in a furnace, showing the eager desire and common pursuit of China's reform achievements by different social classes. In present China, sense of gain is closer to public opinions, more aligned with the people's livelihood and more considerate towards public opinion. Adhering to the government taking the lead, and the significance of measuring and evaluating the urban residents' sense of gain in southwest China lies in: First, helping people "gain more" means seeking an opportunity to stimulate market vitality and cultivate new consumption growth points; Second, Measuring and evaluating residents' sense of gain enable relevant departments and academics to grasp and understand the current status, characteristics and nature of the current sense of gain from the roots, and it contributes to social

governance, improve people's livelihood, and transform "sense of gain" into "happiness"; Third, it contributes to discover and reveal the "passivation" problem and reasons of residents' sense of gain, and seek ways and means to increase their sense of gain by researching; Finally, sense of gain itself implies a dialectical relationship of "giving and gaining," which can transform some officials' utilitarian mentality of "simply giving" or "having favors repaid eagerly", help them understand national conditions as well as public opinions and conduct work in an orderly manner, with a view to play a role in "governing the state" at the empirical level.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW OF SENSE OF GAIN

The study on sense of gain has not yet formed clear fields of discussion in the Western academic circles, but scholars have sought to trace the roots of "how humans perceive the society". It is called "subjective quality of life" in Galbraith (1958); in Schutz (1972) it is called "meaning of perceiving the social world"; it is called "rational action" in Coleman (1990); it is called "communication rationality" in Habermas (1972); in Bourdieu (1992). ) it is called "individual sense of position" (Bourdieu, 1992); in Giddens (1991) it is called "ontological sense of security" and in James Scott (2001) it is called "survival ethics". In the recent literature, it was written "substantive freedom" (Amartya Sen, 2012).

The sense of gain is an emerging localization concept. Compared with foreign countries, domestic researches in China can touch the essence of the sense of gain more. Recently, the following four views are mainly formed: First, discussion on the connotation and value of the sense of gain. Zhang Pin (2016) discussed the connotation of the sense of gain from the perspective of reform bonus period and the superiority of socialism, and pointed out the dialectical relationship between "giving" and "gaining"; Zheng Fengtian (2017) thought that the sense of gain is the best measuring standard of social development, and it is different from happiness; Ding Yuanzhu (2016) advocates that the sense of gain should take into full account both the subjective acquisition and objective acquisition at the same time; Qin Guowen (2016) emphasizes the sustainability of the sense of gain; Jiang Yongmu and Zhang Xiaolei (2016) put forward that being aware of the negative impact of

“sense of relative deprivation” on the “sense of gain”, and paying attention to the political gain apart from material gain. Second, sense of gain and the concept of shareable development. Wang Jin (2016) outlined the problems of income gaps and regional gap of development in China's social transformation period, and believed that shareable development can promote the real “internalization” of sense of gain; Ye Kenan (2016) emphasized that the essential requirement of Chinese socialism was making all people have more sense of gain in the process of co-constructing and sharing. Third, discussion on the influencing factors of sense of gain. Yang Rongwei and Zhang Fangyu (2016) pointed out the widespread “satiation effect”; that is to say, diminishing marginal effect of human beings and proposed pursuing an “alienated” happiness to achieve sense of gain; Looking from the perspective of “cultural gap” and need hierarchy, Xin Xieqin (2016) stressed that improving people's sense of gain needs to overcome the “passivation” effect. Qi Weiping (2017) explored the internal unity of ruling state and dealing with politics as well as improving the sense of gain of the public. Sun Yuntai (2015) discussed the influence of social status on the sense of gain; Tang Youcai and Fu Ping (2017) analyzed the relationship between the expression of migrant workers' rights and their sense of gain as well as political trust; Huang Yanmin, Zhang Wenjuan, and Zhao Juanxia (2017) pointed out the impact of objective gain and fair cognition on residents' sense of gain through statistical models. Fourth, the implementation path of sense of gain. Cao Xianqiang (2017)'s research proposed that it was necessary to promote sense of gain by promoting inclusive development, innovating supply models of public service, and smoothing participation channels; Shao Yali (2017) discussed “One Core and Two Wings” to achieve sense of gain: Taking the leadership of the communist party of China as the core, and taking “practicing the mass line and solving direct interest issues” as two wings. Wang Laixi (2017) advocated that enhancing farmers' sense of gains by increasing the income growth of farmers, adjusting the “three subsidy” policies for agriculture, and strengthening the building of village civilization.

Through combing, it is found that domestic research basically builds the research foundation of the sense of gain and points out the future for following researches; foreign related researches can construct a new theoretical perspective from the perspective of “social perception”. However, there are still two problems in the researches on sense of gain: First, the studies are few, especially the empirical studies are seriously insufficient; Second, and there are too few countermeasure researches on how to improve residents' sense of gain. This is exactly the direction that the subject is working on.

### III. DATA SOURCES AND VARIABLE OPERATIONS

A sample survey was used to collect data from households. The survey was conducted from November 23,

2017 to March 15, 2018, and the respondents were residents of Chengdu, Kunming, and Guiyang. The survey content involved a series of questions such as gender, age, education, income, public satisfaction, and life satisfaction of urban and rural residents. The survey covered 1807 households, received a total of 1,236 questionnaires, of which 925 were valid. The effective rate of the questionnaire is 74.84%. The following will give a further explanation of the research variable selection.

**Sense of gain.** The sense of gain is the subjective psychological experience that human beings produce on account of the objective material basis. Therefore, sense of gain should cover the aspects of both objective and subjective. At the same time, according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, human demand is arranged in a hierarchical order. It is necessary to meet the low demand before they have the motivation to pursue high-level requirements. Only giving priority to constructing the “acquisition” of survival and safety, can people pursue the “identity” of belonging and love. Therefore, sense of gain should contain the psychological experience of acquiring and identifying; in addition, under the governance discourse framework of Chinese society, it should also fully consider the various indicators contributing to people's livelihood, including social security, income, living quality, occupation, education, Living and medical treatment.

From an objective perspective, actual income and socio-economic status (Overall, in the society, what do you think is your current class? There are five measurement dimensions), a total of two, will be included in the study. From the perspective of subjective acquisition, the study put 8 items in the interpretation framework of subjective acquisition, including sense of social security (are you satisfied with the security of your city?), happiness in life (are you happy with your current life?), income satisfaction (are you satisfied with your current income?), occupational satisfaction (are you satisfied with your current vocational status?), education satisfaction (are you satisfied with your current education?), residential satisfaction (are you satisfied with your current living conditions?) and medical satisfaction (are you satisfied with the current medical conditions in your city?). At the same time, in consideration of sense of gain also involving social identity, the degree of trust in the government (Do you trust the current party and government?) also was included in the survey, the above variable measurement for subjective sense of gain all are using a five-point measuring rule, with an assigned value ranging from 1 to 5. The higher the score is, the stronger the sense of gain.

**Variables of Personal characteristics.** It includes gender, age, marital status (unmarried, married), residence status (villages, towns), and years of education, in which the male assignment in the gender variable is 1, the married assignment in the marital status is 1, and the town assignment of residence status is 1. The distribution of major variables is shown in “Table I”.

**TABLE I. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF MAJOR VARIABLES**

variable	mean value	Deviation coefficient (%)	minimum value	maximum value
income	17998	0.326	0	3280000
SES (socioeconomic status)	2.703	3.654	1	5
Sense of social security	3.262	2.605	1	5
life happiness	2.431	2.017	1	5
degree of income satisfaction	2.953	2.441	1	5
degree of occupation satisfaction	3.217	3.012	1	5
degree of education satisfaction	3.124	2.897	1	5
degree of residence satisfaction	3.415	2.623	1	5
satisfaction of medical treatment	2.843	2.312	1	5
degree of Government trust	3.875	1.564	1	5
gender	0.518	1.127	0	1
age	48.134	3.146	16	87
education years	5.863	1.662	0	23
marital status	0.864	2.443	0	1
Residence status	0.538	1.265	0	1

With regard to the distribution of effective samples, the subjective acquirements of urban and rural residents are unevenly distributed. The three items with higher sense of gain are government trust, residential satisfaction, and occupation satisfaction. The sense of social security and education satisfaction are at the intermediate level, while the life happiness and medical satisfaction, which have strong interpretation of sense of gain, are at a low level. The overall subjective sense of gain is also not high, only 3.14, and with 3 as the standard, it is only on the level of “basic acquisition”.

#### IV. ANALYSIS ON FACTOR STRUCTURE AND REGRESSION MODEL OF SUBJECTIVE SENSE OF GAIN

Through exploratory factor analysis on the eight items of subjective sense of gain through SPSS 17.0, it can be found that the indicators are more suitable as structural indicators of subjective sense of gain. The PCA (principal component analysis) was used to carry out exploratory factor analysis for each index, and the method of maximized variance on factor load was used to make orthogonal rotation. It can be found that a total of 3 factors combinations whose eigenvalues were over 1, specific to the social identity factor, livelihood acquisition factor, and factor of safe and happiness. The studies are represented by G1, G2, and G3, respectively (seeing Table II). From Table II, it can be seen that all common factor variance reached above 0.5 and all the dependent variable indicators are included. The contribution percentage of cumulative all factor variances is 62.59%. Using the KMO test, a test value of 0.854 was obtained and the test value was less than 1. Using the “Bartlett sphere test”, the test data reached 5435.15 ( $P < 0.001$ ). The above statistical significance test and analysis of variance showed that all of the 8 indicators above are

suitable for factor analysis. Detailed analysis of the three factor combinations are as follows, seeing “Table II”:

**TABLE II. PRINCIPAL COMPONENT ANALYSIS OF SUBJECTIVE SENSE OF GAIN**

	G1	G2	G3	intercommunity
	social identity	people's livelihood	safety and happiness	
sense of social security	0.025	0.134	0.897	0.835
sense of life happiness	0.073	0.094	0.869	0.829
degree of income satisfaction	0.82	0.251	0.105	0.76
degree of occupation satisfaction	0.686	0.202	0.095	0.562
degree of education satisfaction	0.221	0.74	0.019	0.629
degree of residence satisfaction	0.176	0.803	0.073	0.71
satisfaction of medical treatment	0.05	0.685	0.199	0.526
degree of government trust	0.78	0.251	0.105	0.76
eigenvalue	2.871	3.160	2.362	
differences of explaining variable (%)	35.63	17.191	9.764	
accumulation of explaining variable (%)	35.63	52.821	62.585	

In the G1, the factor load values of the three indicators: “Income Satisfaction,” “occupational Satisfaction,” and “Government Confidence” exceeded 50%, reaching 0.82, 0.686, and 0.78, respectively, which represented G1 better. Judging from the content involved in the indicators, the satisfaction degree with income, occupation, and sense of identity of the government belongs to social identity. Therefore, we named G1 as a “social identity” factor.

G2 is mainly represented by three indicators of “education satisfaction”, “medical satisfaction” and “residential satisfaction”, and the factor load values are 0.74, 0.803, and 0.685, respectively. The three indicators are closely related to the people's livelihood issues, and the content basically covers the field of social security. Therefore, we named this factor as the factor of “people's livelihood acquisition”.

In G3, the factor load values of “sense of social security” and “life happiness” both reached 0.835 and 0.829, respectively, which better represented G3. These two indicators mainly concern people's views on social security and living quality. Therefore, we named G3 as the factor of “safety and happiness”.

In order to further explore the specific factors affecting the urban and rural residents' sense of gain in Southwest China, we introduced nine variables of gender, age, marital status, education years, residence status, annual income, SES (socioeconomic status), occupation type, and housing type to

the equation of linear regression of subjective sense of gain and its various fusion factors, seeing "Table III".

TABLE III. REGRESSION MODEL OF URBAN AND RURAL RESIDENTS' SUBJECTIVE SENSE OF GAIN IN SOUTHWEST CHINA (NON-STANDARDIZED COEFFICIENT B VALUE)

variable	overall sense of gain	social identity	livelihood acquisition	safety and happiness
individual factors				
gender	-0.558	1.717	-0.227	-3.44**
age	-.128***	-0.350***	-.113**	0.015
marriage	-1.03	0.339***	0.498	1.419
residence status	-0.504	-0.511	1.639*	0.152
education years	-0.212	-0.532	-0.226	0.156
objective acquisition				
annual income	-0.297	-0.538	-0.181	1.202**
SES (socioeconomic status)	0.245	1.432*	-0.291	-0.621
occupation type				
technician	-1.518	-0.639	-1.862	-2.194
expertise	0.306	1.772	-1.049	0.672
staff	-0.079	2.539	-0.251	-0.884
manager	0.779	3.745	-2.281	2.516
administration	-0.051	1.512	-1.45	0.479
type of housing				
villa	1.948	4.515	3.16	1.467
building	0.489	2.315	0.241	-0.994
test value of F	8.234***	7.593***	3.306***	1.888**
constant term	33.753	43.973	37.19	36.184
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.168	0.163	0.054	0.021

<sup>a</sup>. Note: \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001, reference group for occupation type is farmer, and reference group for housing type is bungalow.

As can be seen from Table III, the explanatory power of the independent variable on the overall sense of gain was the strongest, matching the goodness of R<sup>2</sup>=0.168 and the explanatory power reached a significant level (P<.001). Judging from the influence of overall subjective sense of gain and combinations of various factors, the impact of gender on the safety and happiness factors reached a significant level, indicating that women's psychological experience in life happiness and social security was significantly higher than men.

The regression coefficient for the overall sense of gain about age was -.128 (P < .001), indicating that under the control of other independent variables, the urban residents' overall sense of gain will decrease by 0.12 points for age increasing by 1 year. In terms of specific factors, the regression coefficients of age for social identity factors and people's livelihood gain factors are -0.350 and -0.113, respectively (and they are statistically significant). In general,

as the ages increase, the residents of the southwestern region decrease their recognition of society and their satisfaction with education, health care, and housing.

The social identity factor for the marital status is 0.339, which means that compared with unmarried persons, the married people have higher degree of social recognition; regression coefficient of the residence status on social security factors is significant and the regression coefficient is positive (1.639). It shows that urban residents are more satisfied with education, health care and housing; annual income is only statistically significant for the factors of safety and happiness, and the regression coefficient is 1.202, indicating that as incomes rise, people's happiness for life and sense of social safety are rising; socio-economic status has a significant impact on social identity factors, with a regression coefficient of 1.432, indicating that social and economic upgrading will help improve residents' social identity.

Education years, occupation, and type of housing do not have statistical significance for the overall sense of gain and its various factors.

## V. CONCLUSION

Through the evaluation of urban and rural residents' sense of gain in the southwest region, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- Age is an important factor that influences the residents' subjective sense of gain in the Southwest. Age is an important factor affecting the residents' subjective sense of gain in the southwest region. Age has a significant impact on the factors of urban and rural residents' overall sense of gain, social identity and social security. Urban and rural residents' overall sense of gain and people's livelihood are declining with age. The trend shows that on the one hand, the pressure of people on income, education, medical care and housing gradually with age increasing; on the other hand, since China's reform and opening up, social structural changes have also caused risks for human life. Socialization and "reform disease" have a significant influence on people. The lack of sense of gain is a result of individual growth that has come with the growth of Chinese society.
- Income is another important factor affecting the urban and rural residents' sense of gain. Income has a significant impact on the urban and rural residents' sense of safety and happiness. The higher the income is, the higher the residents' sense of happiness and social security. The two indicators of happiness and social security are closer to the nature of sense of gain. It can be concluded that raising income can help enhance people's sense of gain.
- Marital status and gender are also important factors that affect urban residents' sense of gain. The study found that married people have a stronger social identity than the unmarried; women have a higher sense of security and happiness than men. This shows



that happy families tend to be positive for the subjective psychological experience of the society, and women feel better than men.

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