

# Wellbeing in China

Zhiming Cheng<sup>1</sup> · Vinod Mishra<sup>2</sup> · Ingrid Nielsen<sup>3</sup> ·  
Russell Smyth<sup>2</sup> · Ben Zhe Wang<sup>4</sup>

Accepted: 7 June 2016 / Published online: 10 June 2016  
© Springer Science+Business Media Dordrecht 2016

## 1 Introduction and Overview

The concepts of wellbeing and happiness are core to several disciplines including economics (see e.g. MacKerron 2012), management (see e.g. Erdogan et al. 2012) and psychology (see e.g. Diener 2000). The popularity of wellbeing as a research topic in psychology and economics is reflected in the fact that computer searches in April 2016 for the terms ‘happiness’ or ‘wellbeing’ returned 20762 articles on PsychINFO and 3141 articles on EconLit.

China represents an ideal natural laboratory in which to study wellbeing. Many relatively unique socioeconomic and behavioural phenomena exist in China. Studying these phenomena not only deepens our understanding of the Chinese economy and Chinese society, but also provides new insights about how China, and her residents, are shaped by, adapt to and transform social and economic forces. The different socioeconomic and

---

✉ Zhiming Cheng  
zhiming.cheng@mq.edu.au

Vinod Mishra  
vinod.mishra@monash.edu

Ingrid Nielsen  
ingrid.nielsen@deakin.edu.au

Russell Smyth  
russell.smyth@monash.edu

Ben Zhe Wang  
ben.wang@mq.edu.au

<sup>1</sup> Centre for the Health Economy, Macquarie University, Sydney, NSW, Australia

<sup>2</sup> Department of Economics, Monash University, Melbourne, VIC, Australia

<sup>3</sup> Faculty of Business and Law, Deakin University, Melbourne, VIC, Australia

<sup>4</sup> Department of Economics, Macquarie University, Sydney, NSW, Australia

institutional context of China vis-à-vis that of the West provides opportunities for evaluating, extending, and creating theories of wellbeing.

Interest in wellbeing in China also reflects the growing importance of China on the world stage. As of April 2016, the best United Nations estimates put China's population at 1.39 billion people. This figure constitutes just under one fifth of the world's population and makes China the most populous country in the world (Worldometers 2016). Depending on how one measures the size of the economy, China either has the largest economy in the world, based on purchasing power parity, or the second largest economy in the world after the United States, based on market exchange rates (Carter 2014). While economic growth in China has started to slow in recent times, the annual nominal increase in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2014 was as still as big as an entire G20 sized economy (Yang and Mitchell 2016).

Reflecting its institutional diversity and importance given the sheer size of its population, interest in studying wellbeing in China is reflected, for example, in recent publications on the topic in leading interdisciplinary general interest journals (see e.g. Easterlin et al. 2012). Studies have examined various aspects of the wellbeing of the urban populace (Appleton and Song 2008; Cheng et al. 2014c; Frey and Song 1997; Gao et al. 2014; Smyth et al. 2010; Wu and Tam 2015); rural populace (Davey et al. 2009; Knight et al. 2009; Liang et al. 2014b) and rural–urban migrants (Gao and Smyth 2011; Knight and Gunatilaka 2010; Nielsen et al. 2010).

China has been one of the fastest growing economies in the world since the late 1970s (Chow 2015). Another series of studies has examined whether rising income has translated into higher wellbeing (Brockmann et al. 2009; Knight and Gunatilaka 2011; Tang 2014). While China has exhibited high economic growth, it has also experienced rising income inequality (Xie and Zhou 2014). Yet another set of studies have examined the effect of rising income inequality in China on wellbeing (Jiang et al. 2012; Smyth and Qian 2008; Wang et al. 2015).

Rapid economic growth in China has been accompanied by high levels of pollution and environmental degradation (Rozelle et al. 1997). Other studies have focused on the implications of environmental change in China for wellbeing (Li et al. 2014; Shi 2015; Smyth et al. 2008). One of the features of China's growth experience has been the household registration (*hukou*) system, which has restricted the rights of rural–urban migrants in Chinese cities. Several studies have examined various aspects of *hukou* status for the wellbeing of rural–urban migrants (Afridi et al. 2015; Cheng et al. 2014a; Jiang et al. 2012; Zhang and Treiman 2013).

When we were thinking about putting together a Special Issue related to wellbeing in China, *Social Indicators Research* seemed a natural fit. It has been at the forefront of publishing studies on wellbeing in China. As of April 2016, a search for 'China' on the *Social Indicators Research* search engine returned 675 articles.<sup>1</sup> *Social Indicators Research* has published articles relating to wellbeing in the aftermath of major events in China such as the Three Gorges Dam resettlement (Xi and Hwang 2011; Hwang et al. 2011) and Sichuan earthquake (Liang 2016; Liang et al. 2014a). It has also been at the forefront in publishing studies on the implications for wellbeing of state-owned enterprise reform (Cheng 2014); rural–urban migration (Cao and Liu 2015; Chu and Hail 2014; Liang and Guo 2015; Liang et al. 2014c) and China's one child policy (Jiang et al. 2016). *Social Indicators Research* has also published several psychometric studies, establishing the

<sup>1</sup> This figure includes articles on greater China (Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan), the overseas Chinese and studies comparing wellbeing in China with other countries.

validity of wellbeing instruments with Mainland Chinese samples (see e.g. Chen 2010; Chen and Davey 2009; Smyth et al. 2010; Yao and Wu 2009; Ye et al. 2014).

With this Special Issue we seek to build on the extant literature and expand our knowledge of wellbeing in China. We initially asked that submissions address the broad area of wellbeing through adopting a methodological approach grounded in economics or an allied discipline. In the call for submissions we indicated that we were particularly welcoming of submissions that were interdisciplinary in that they drew on behavioural insights from economics and other disciplines or adopt approaches that inform economics using insights from other disciplines. Those who responded to our call for submissions interpreted the economics of wellbeing broadly, as it was intended to be. The result is that we have compiled a Special Issue that has morphed into a series of studies that fall under the broad rubric of 'wellbeing in China', with contributions from economists, psychologists and sociologists, as well as management and social policy scholars. In the spirit of past papers in *Social Indicators Research*, we were very keen to receive submissions using a variety of methodological approaches—quantitative, qualitative and experimental—and the Special Issue contains contributions across each of these approaches.

Most of the studies use survey data, although the contributions by Kai Liu and Xianghong Wang as well as Qianping Ren and Maoliang Ye use experimental data, while the contribution by Yeqing Huang and Fei Guo uses a qualitative approach. Carrying on the tradition of *Social Indicators Research* in publishing psychometric studies for China, the Special Issue contains a psychometric study by Kitty Chan, Verplanken Bas and Suzanne Skevington. One of the advantages of doing social science research on China is the recent mushrooming in the number of household-level datasets (see Gustafsson et al. 2014, for an overview). Many of these household-level datasets have questions relating to wellbeing. Several of the contributors take advantage of these datasets. Between them, the studies use the AsiaBarometer Survey (ABS), China Family Panel Studies (CFPS), China Health and Retirement Longitudinal Survey (CHARLS), China Labor-force Dynamics Survey (CLDS), Chinese General Social Survey (CGSS), Chinese Household Income Project (CHIP), Rural–Urban Migration in China (RUMiC), Spiritual Life Study of Chinese Residents (SLSC), Subjective Survey for Chinese Livelihood Index (SSCLI) and World Values Survey (WVS). The ABS, CFPS, CGSS and RUMiC are used in multiple studies.

## 2 Summary of Papers in the Special Issue

A growing number of papers examine the determinants of general life satisfaction in China. Zheng Fang goes beyond simple pooled regression in using fixed effect quantile regression to examine the heterogeneous effects of a range of explanatory factors on the distribution of subjective wellbeing in urban China. This approach uncovers relationships not evident from simple pooled regression. In particular, she finds that individuals with different levels of happiness are not equally affected by key determinants of happiness, such as income and unemployment. This finding is consistent with previous research that suggests there is heterogeneity in the income-happiness relationship across baseline happiness levels (see Schurer and Yong 2016).

Regional inequality is of growing significance in China with large disparities between the less developed central and western region and more developed provinces on the coastal seaboard (Kanbur and Zhang 2005). Shaojie Zhou and Xiaohua Yu examine to what extent regional characteristics can explain subjective wellbeing. The series of regional

characteristics adopted in a multilevel hierarchical ordered logit analysis only explain approximately 3.7 % of the total variance in individual subjective wellbeing. Their findings imply that the Chinese government should focus on implementing policy at the individual level to improve subjective wellbeing.

We have four papers that focus on the wellbeing of rural to urban migrants. Massimiliano Tani quantifies the cost of holding a rural *hukou* by utilising the exogenous change from rural to urban *hukou* due to land expropriation. He finds that receiving an urban *hukou* substantially improves subjective wellbeing within households, especially for males. He confirms *hukou* status as a source of inequality and calls for a more flexible approach to residency in order to enhance subjective wellbeing and address the distortions imposed by the *hukou* system.

From a social exclusion perspective, Yeqing Huang and Fei Guo analyse qualitative data on the participation of rural–urban migrants in welfare programs. They argue that trends in welfare marketization and decentralization have led the welfare provision system to be more selective than universal. This welfare selectivity helps rural migrants with higher economic status become integrated into urban society and enjoy a sense of belonging in cities, while also creating a dual exclusion for rural migrant workers who are disadvantaged in the urban labour market.

Roland Cheo uses original survey data to examine the relationships between the choices migrant workers make and their characteristics and their experience with workplace bullying. He finds that changing *hukou* is correlated with the intensity of workplace bullying experienced. He also finds that migrant workers who are more familiar with the labour law experience less workplace bullying. This finding is consistent with earlier research suggesting that familiarity with the labour law reduces the prevalence of labour rights violations and nurtures better workplace relations in favour of migrant workers in China (see e.g. Cheng et al. 2014b).

There has been little research on the relationship between physical appearance and wellbeing in the context of changing social norms in China. In their novel study, Wang-Sheng Lee and Zhong Zhao examine the link between weight, height and wellbeing using three distinct samples; namely, rural, urban and migrant workers. For rural and migrant samples, heavier and taller individuals have a higher level of wellbeing because they are better off in terms of labour intensive work which is the norm for these two groups. They also find that for the urban sample, in particular urban males, being obese does not penalize wellbeing, which differs from previous results using western samples. As they note, it is likely that their results for urban males reflects the heavy emphasis that is placed on banqueting as an important component of building networks in the workplace in Chinese culture.

In addition to Roland Cheo's study on workplace bullying, we have three other papers that examine different aspects of (future) employee wellbeing in China. Zhou Jiang, Xiaowen Hu, Zhongmin Wang and Xuan Jiang conduct a study on the relationship between career decision self-efficacy and life satisfaction in the China. Using original survey data collected from university students, they find that career decision self-efficacy is positively correlated with life satisfaction. They also further explore the mediation mechanism underlying this relationship from the internal functioning process of career decision self-efficacy. Their findings imply that boosting career decision self-efficacy among university students can improve their life satisfaction by maintaining their confidence in making career-related decisions.

Matthew J. Monnot finds a curvilinear relationship between income and satisfaction (both with one's job and one's income), consistent with diminishing marginal utility. He

also finds that those who state that income is important to them were less satisfied with income itself. More generally, Monnott finds that individuals who value extrinsic motives, such as, having fame, high income and possessions, exhibit lower levels of job satisfaction, life satisfaction, and feelings of accomplishment. He also finds that there is a significant multilevel effect such that between-city levels of health have a significant positive relationship with life satisfaction. This result is consistent with the general findings in the paper by Zhao and Yu, introduced earlier.

Wei Li, Jianxun Chen and Hans Hendrischke evaluate the relationship between institutional environment and work wellbeing. They use firm-level data to examine how exogenous institutions; namely, state ownership and individual traditionality, interact with firm-level institutions; namely, strategic human resource management and person-organisation fit. Their findings suggest that not only do institutions matter, but also that the interactions of institutions matters in affecting work wellbeing.

Three papers look at the relationship between health status and wellbeing or examine different aspects of health as a marker of wellbeing. Hongwei Xu and Yu Xie study self-rated health gradients by three sets of socioeconomic status; namely, human capital, material conditions and political capital. Their study addresses a long-standing research question concerning the true association between socioeconomic status and self-rated health in contemporary China—a topic on which quality data are still limited and the social context differs from Western countries. To correct for reporting heterogeneity, which can bias estimates of socioeconomic gradients in self-rated health as much as 40 %, they apply vignette adjustment and find that education, family income, wealth and political capital are positively correlated with health.

Zhongliang Zhou and colleagues investigate both income-related health inequality and horizontal inequity in urban and rural China. They find that economic and education attainment are the two key contributors to pro-rich inequity and suggest that policies to reduce economic and educational inequalities should be prioritised.

Asadul Islam, Paul Raschky and Russell Smyth examine the long-term health effects of mass political violence by using the Cultural Revolution as a natural experiment. They find that exposure to political violence in the Cultural Revolution reduced lung capacity for those who were in utero and ability to engage in activities of daily living for those who were adolescents. They also find heterogeneous effects among females and males who were adolescents in the Cultural Revolution.

While the majority of Chinese people are atheist, spiritual beliefs are not irrelevant in shaping the mindset and thus play a role in influencing subjective wellbeing. Using data from the 2007 Spiritual Life Study of Chinese Residents, Jun Lu and Qin Gao investigate the association between religious faith and happiness in China. They employ a multidimensional measure of religious faith that encompasses religious identity, religious beliefs and religious practice. In general, they find that religious identity is not related to happiness, but some religious beliefs and practices are negatively related to happiness. This is particularly true for Christians and Daoists. While, identifying as a Buddhist was found to increase happiness, Buddhist beliefs and practices are found to be unrelated to happiness.

Kitty Chan, Bas Verplanken and Suzanne Skevington evaluate the validity of the World Health Organization's quality of life assessment (WHOQOL) in spiritual, religious and personal beliefs (SRPB) as a measure of spiritual quality of life in the traditional spiritual Chinese community. They conclude that the WHOQOL-SRPB is reliable and valid for Chinese people with both Christian and traditional Chinese spiritual beliefs. The SRPB domain is found to be independent from other domains and contributed significantly to the overall evaluations of quality of life.

Trust as a form of social capital is important in determining subjective wellbeing. Sefa Awaworyi Churchill and Vinod Mishra examine the association among trust, social networks and subjective wellbeing in China using data from the WVS. The existing literature has found that the impact of trust and social networks is stronger than income. This study, however, finds that this is not the case for China after accounting for the potential endogeneity of trust and social networks. They find that generalized trust (i.e. agreeing that people can generally be trusted) and social networks are irrelevant in determining subjective wellbeing in China. However, having trust in families and neighbours can strongly enhance subjective wellbeing.

Trust in government can also be important in determining subjective wellbeing in the Chinese population. This form of trust may arise from favourable government policies, especially in times of economic downturn or high uncertainty. Using data from the AsianBarometer Survey, Bingqin Li and Guy Mayraz evaluate the impact of the Chinese government stimulus package on public trust following the 2008 global financial crisis. They find that the stimulus package significantly increased public trust in local governments when the spending was socially beneficial and reached the disadvantaged population. They also find that corruption is strongly negatively correlated with trust and that perceptions of increased corruption substantially impeded the extent to which trust in government improved.

Governments can influence people's behaviour and subjective wellbeing by convincing the public that they are making an effort to address certain economic and social issues. In terms of environmental pollution, Ben Zhe Wang and Zhiming Cheng use the 2010 and 2013 Chinese GSS to examine the relationship between perceived severity of environmental issues, perceived government effort, individual happiness and pro-environmental actions. They find that the perceived severity of environmental problems has little correlation with subjective wellbeing, but perceptions of central and provincial government effort to mitigate environmental problems are positively correlated with happiness, willingness to pay for environment-friendly products and pro-environmental actions. They suggest that governments should improve communication in order to help citizens better understand government effort.

Government can improve people's happiness and wellbeing through implementing social and public policies. Longjin Chen, Jian Huang and Jianjun Li find that fiscal decentralization significantly improves individuals' satisfaction with social services for the sick, elderly and the poor in China. However, rural residents and rural-urban migrants benefit substantially less from decentralized delivery of social services, compared with the benefits accruing to urban local residents.

Previous studies have examined the relationship between income and consumption on the one hand, and subjective wellbeing on the other. Papers in this special issue extend this literature in several important directions. Instead of examining the level of income, Kai Liu and Xianghong Wang conduct an experiment to examine the impact of relative income on income satisfaction in China. They find that giving information to participants about their relative income increases the satisfaction of the high-income group and reduces the satisfaction of the low-income group.

Poverty is a major concern for developing economies such as China. Jing Yang and Pundarik Mukhopadhyaya use the dual cut-offs approach to measure multidimensional poverty in China. They find that rural poverty is three to nine times larger than urban poverty. Social insurance, access to toilets and cooking fuel are the major indicators contributing to poverty. The paper also identifies the provinces that contribute most to national poverty levels and finds the sources of poverty in those provinces.

The government may help the poor by providing a Minimum Livelihood Guarantee (*dibao*). One may expect that *dibao* would increase happiness as it is spent on necessities that substantially improve the quality of life of the recipient. However, Qin Gao and Fuhua Zhai find *dibao* recipients tend to be less happy and optimistic about their economic prospects compared to non-recipient peers of similar socio-demographic characteristics. Lower levels of happiness for such individuals was mediated by the projected lack of income increase in the next 5 years and not by their views on societal income distribution and inequality.

Growing water scarcity is one of the most pressing issues currently facing China, given its burgeoning industry and huge population. Ane Pan, Darrell Bosch and Huimin Ma construct a Water Poverty Index and apply it to assess water poverty in China. They find that aquatic environmental pollution is the vital driver of water poverty. Water resources endowment, weak physical water access and low efficiency of water use are also important in driving regional water poverty.

The majority of the existing literature has focused on the income and consumption of the poor, while the rich are largely ignored. It is particularly important to address this gap as China gets more middle-income earners and the government promotes consumption-led growth. Moreover, the number of millionaires and high net-worth of individuals is growing. China is predicted to have 2.3 million \$US millionaires by 2020 (up from 1.3 million in 2015), which will place it among the top 10 countries in the world on this metric (SCMP 2015). An important question that has remained unanswered is what is the mechanism through which growing materialism translates into luxury consumption in China? Jie Li and colleagues answer this, examining the mediators between materialism and luxury consumption. They find three types of consumer perceived values; namely social, emotional and quality values mediate the relationship between materialism and luxury purchase intentions.

There has been rapid increase in the use of the internet in China. In 2016, 52.4 % of the Chinese population had internet access, which compares favourably with countries such as India (34.8 %) (Internet Live Statistics 2016). The Chinese government has announced that its objective is to connect 98 % of those living in rural areas to the internet by 2020 (KMPG 2015). Yet, at the same time, the Chinese government has been accused of censorship with restrictions on the use of Google, YouTube and Facebook (Carson and Giang 2015). Peng Nie, Alfonso Sousa-Poza and Galit Nimrod investigate the association between internet use and subjective wellbeing in China. They find intensive internet use is associated with lower levels of subjective wellbeing, but there is hardly any association between subjective wellbeing and specific online activities. However, they also find that the effect on subjective wellbeing depends largely on the reasons for using the internet and the extent to which individuals feel that their internet use is displacing other activities.

Finally, using data from the 2010 wave of the CFPS, Qianping Ren and Maoliang Ye investigate the link between happiness and donations for general purposes and for the victims of the Wenchuan earthquake. This research builds on previous studies in this journal that have examined wellbeing following construction of the Three Gorges Dam resettlement (Xi and Hwang 2011; Hwang et al. 2011) and in the aftermath of the Sichuan earthquake (Liang 2016; Liang et al. 2014a).

**Acknowledgments** As all those with experience undertaking an editorial role for a scholarly journal can attest, there are many more contributors to the process than appear in the editorial author list on the introductory paper. Hence, in closing, we acknowledge and sincerely thank all those people who have played a critical role in bringing this issue to fruition. First, we thank the large group of reviewers who have

provided detailed and thoughtful review and critique of all papers submitted to the issue and on whose guidance the quality and coherence of the final set of accepted papers largely rests. Our job was made much easier by the close and careful consideration given to each and every paper by our global review team and their valued input has undoubtedly strengthened all of the papers selected for publication. Second, we acknowledge the editorial staff at Springer, and especially our Handling Editor, Mahalakshmi Mariappan, for their professionalism and continued communication with us throughout this process. The many hours of editorial expertise devoted to this project has greatly assisted us to assemble this edition of *Social Indicators Research*. Third, we give sincere thanks to the *Social Indicators Research* Editor-in-Chief, Filomena Maggino, for so generously supporting our original proposal for the Special Issue, and more generally for her tireless work overseeing the continued development of this outlet. *Social Indicators Research* is a critically important outlet for the advancement of wellbeing studies and hence it is vital it be in safe hands. Finally, we thank all those who submitted to this issue—not just those whose papers ultimately appear in the pages to follow, but also those whose work was not deemed to fit our purpose. We encourage all those, successful or not on this occasion, to continue to build our understanding of wellbeing in China and we look forward to reading these continued contributions.

## References

- Afridi, F., Li, S. X., & Ren, Y. (2015). Social identity and inequality: The impact of China's *hukou* system. *Journal of Public Economics*, *123*, 17–29.
- Appleton, S., & Song, L. (2008). Life satisfaction in urban China: Components and determinants. *World Development*, *36*(11), 2325–2340.
- Brockmann, H., Delhey, J., Welzel, C., & Yuan, H. (2009). The China puzzle: Falling happiness in a rising economy. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, *10*(4), 387–405.
- Cao, Y., & Liu, Z. (2015). Poverty and health: Children of rural-to-urban migrant workers in Beijing. *China. Social Indicators Research*, *123*(2), 459–477.
- Carson, B. & Giang, V. (2015). Nine incredibly popular websites that are still blocked in China, Business Insider, July 24. <http://www.businessinsider.com.au/websites-blocked-in-china-2015-7?r=US&IR=T#/#google-including-gmail-1>. Last Accessed May 23, 2016.
- Carter, B. (2014). Is China's economy really the largest in the world? BBC News December 16. <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-30483762>. Last Accessed April 3, 2016.
- Chen, G. H. (2010). Validating the Orientations to Happiness Scale in a Chinese sample of university students. *Social Indicators Research*, *99*(3), 431–442.
- Chen, Z., & Davey, G. (2009). Subjective quality of life in Zhuhai City, South China: A public survey using the International Wellbeing Index. *Social Indicators Research*, *91*(2), 243–258.
- Cheng, Z. (2014). Layoffs and urban poverty in the state-owned enterprise communities in Shaanxi Province, China. *Social Indicators Research*, *116*(1), 199–233.
- Cheng, Z., Smyth, R., & Sun, G. (2014a). Participation and expenditure of migrants in the illegal lottery in China's Pearl River Delta. *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, *55*(4), 333–361.
- Cheng, Z., Wang, H., & Chen, Y. (2014b). Labour contract, trade union membership, and workplace relations: A study of migrant workers in Guangdong province, China. In Z. Hao & S. Chen (Eds.), *Social issues in China: Gender, ethnicity, labor, and the environment* (pp. 188–206). New York: Springer.
- Cheng, Z., Wang, H., & Smyth, R. (2014c). Happiness and job satisfaction in urban China: A comparative study of two generations of migrants and urban locals. *Urban Studies*, *51*(10), 2160–2184.
- Chow, G. (2015). *China's economic transformation*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Chu, R., & Hail, H. C. (2014). Winding road toward the Chinese dream: The U-shaped relationship between income and life satisfaction among Chinese migrant workers. *Social Indicators Research*, *118*(1), 235–246.
- Davey, G., Chen, Z., & Lau, A. (2009). 'Peace in a thatched hut—that is happiness': Subjective wellbeing among peasants in rural China. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, *10*(2), 239–252.
- Diener, E. (2000). Subjective well-being: The science of happiness and a proposal for a national index. *American Psychologist*, *55*(1), 34–43.
- Easterlin, R. A., Morgan, R., Switek, M., & Wang, F. (2012). China's life satisfaction, 1990–2010. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *109*(25), 9775–9780.
- Erdogan, B., Bauer, T. N., Truxillo, D. M., & Mansfield, L. R. (2012). Whistle while you work: A review of the life satisfaction literature. *Journal of Management*, *38*(4), 1038–1083.



- Frey, R. S., & Song, F. (1997). Human well-being in Chinese cities. *Social Indicators Research*, 42(1), 77–101.
- Gao, S., Meng, X., & Zhang, L. (2014). Fiscal decentralization and life satisfaction: Evidence from urban China. *Social Indicators Research*, 119(3), 1177–1194.
- Gao, W., & Smyth, R. (2011). What keeps China's migrant workers going? Expectations and happiness among China's floating population. *Journal of the Asia Pacific Economy*, 16(2), 163–182.
- Gustafsson, B., Shi, L., & Sato, H. (2014). Data for studying earnings, the distribution of household income and poverty in China. *China Economic Review*, 30, 419–431.
- Hwang, S. S., Cao, Y., & Xi, J. (2011). The short-term impact of involuntary migration in China's Three Gorges: A prospective study. *Social Indicators Research*, 101(1), 73–92.
- Internet Live Statistics. (2016). Internet Users by Country 2016. <http://www.internetlivestats.com/internet-users-by-country>. Last Accessed May 23, 2016.
- Jiang, Q., Li, Y., & Sánchez-Barricarte, J. J. (2016). Fertility intention, son preference, and second child-birth: Survey findings from Shaanxi Province of China. *Social Indicators Research*, 125(3), 935–953.
- Jiang, S., Lu, M., & Sato, H. (2012). Identity, inequality, and happiness: Evidence from urban China. *World Development*, 40(6), 1190–1200.
- Kanbur, R., & Zhang, X. (2005). Fifty years of regional inequality in China: A journey through central planning, reform, and openness. *Review of Development Economics*, 9(1), 87–106.
- KMPG. (2015). Harvesting China's rural consumers. *Consumer Currents*, 20, 18–19. <https://home.kpmg.com/xx/en/home/insights/2015/12/harvesting-china-rural-consumers.html>. Last Accessed May 23, 2016.
- Knight, J., & Gunatilaka, R. (2010). Great expectations? The subjective well-being of rural–urban migrants in China. *World Development*, 38(1), 113–124.
- Knight, J., & Gunatilaka, R. (2011). Does economic growth raise happiness in China? *Oxford Development Studies*, 39(1), 1–24.
- Knight, J., Song, L., & Gunatilaka, R. (2009). Subjective well-being and its determinants in rural China. *China Economic Review*, 20(4), 635–649.
- Li, Z., Folmer, H., & Xue, J. (2014). To what extent does air pollution affect happiness? The case of the Jinchuan mining area, China. *Ecological Economics*, 99, 88–99.
- Liang, Y. (2016). Trust in Chinese Government and quality of life (QOL) of Sichuan earthquake survivors: Does trust in government help to promote QOL? *Social Indicators Research*, 127(2), 541–564.
- Liang, Y., Chu, P., & Wang, X. (2014a). Health-related quality of life of Chinese earthquake survivors: A case study of five hard-hit disaster counties in Sichuan. *Social Indicators Research*, 119(2), 943–966.
- Liang, Y., & Guo, M. (2015). Utilization of health services and health-related quality of life research of rural-to-urban migrants in China: A cross-sectional analysis. *Social Indicators Research*, 120(1), 277–295.
- Liang, H., Tang, Y., & Huo, X. (2014b). *Liushou* women's happiness and its influencing factors in Rural China. *Social Indicators Research*, 117(3), 907–918.
- Liang, Y., Yi, Y., & Sun, Q. (2014c). The impact of migration on fertility under China's underlying restrictions: A comparative study between permanent and temporary migrants. *Social Indicators Research*, 116(1), 307–326.
- MacKerron, G. (2012). Happiness economics from 35,000 feet. *Journal of Economic Surveys*, 26(4), 705–735.
- Nielsen, I., Smyth, R., & Zhai, Q. (2010). Subjective well-being of China's off-farm migrants. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 11(3), 315–333.
- Rozelle, S., Huang, J., & Zhang, L. (1997). Poverty, population and environmental degradation in China. *Food Policy*, 22(3), 229–251.
- Schurer, S., & Yong, J. (2016). Happiness, income and heterogeneity. *Singapore Economic Review*, 61(3), 1–23.
- SCMP. (2015). Millions of millionaires: China will be a top 10 nation for uber-rich by 2020. South China Morning Post, October 13. <http://www.scmp.com/news/china/money-wealth/article/1867321/china-be-top-ten-nation-us-dollar-millionaires-2020>. Last Accessed May 23, 2016.
- Shi, X. (2015). Factors influencing the environmental satisfaction of local residents in the coal mining area, China. *Social Indicators Research*, 120(1), 67–77.
- Smyth, R., Mishra, V., & Qian, X. (2008). The environment and well-being in urban China. *Ecological Economics*, 68(1), 547–555.
- Smyth, R., Nielsen, I., & Zhai, Q. (2010). Personal well-being in urban China. *Social Indicators Research*, 95(2), 231–251.
- Smyth, R., & Qian, X. (2008). Inequality and happiness in urban China. *Economics Bulletin*, 4(23), 1–10.

- Tang, Z. (2014). They are richer but are they happier? Subjective well-being of Chinese citizens across the reform era. *Social Indicators Research*, *117*(1), 145–164.
- Wang, P., Pan, J., & Luo, Z. (2015). The impact of income inequality on individual happiness: Evidence from China. *Social Indicators Research*, *121*(2), 413–435.
- Worldometers. (2016). China's population, 2016. <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/china-population/>. Last Accessed April 3, 2016.
- Wu, H. F., & Tam, T. (2015). Economic development and socioeconomic inequality of well-being: A cross-sectional time-series analysis of urban China, 2003–2011. *Social Indicators Research*, *124*(2), 401–425.
- Xi, J., & Hwang, S. S. (2011). Relocation stress, coping, and sense of control among resettlers resulting from China's Three Gorges Dam Project. *Social Indicators Research*, *104*(3), 507–522.
- Xie, Y., & Zhou, X. (2014). Income inequality in today's China. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *111*(19), 6928–6933.
- Yang, Y. & Mitchell, T. (2016). China adds G20-sized economy every year. Financial Times (London) January 19. <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/2/e97ae186-be65-11e5-846f-79b0e3d20eaf.html#axzz44oIQ0xOF>. Last Accessed April 3, 2016.
- Yao, G., & Wu, C. H. (2009). Similarities and differences among the Taiwan, China, and Hong-Kong versions of the WHOQOL questionnaire. *Social Indicators Research*, *91*(1), 79–98.
- Ye, M., Li, L., Li, Y., Shen, R., Wen, S., & Zhang, J. (2014). Life satisfaction of adolescents in Hunan, China: Reliability and validity of Chinese Brief Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale (BMSLSS). *Social Indicators Research*, *118*(2), 515–522.
- Zhang, Z., & Treiman, D. J. (2013). Social origins, hukou conversion, and the wellbeing of urban residents in contemporary China. *Social Science Research*, *42*(1), 71–89.