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Master's Thesis

**A Comparative Study of
Subjective Happiness in China and Japan**

February 2017

**Seoul National University
Graduate School of International Studies
International Area Studies Major
Jin Chunyuan**

A Comparative Study of Subjective Happiness in China and Japan

A thesis presented

by

Jin Chunyuan

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in China and Japan**

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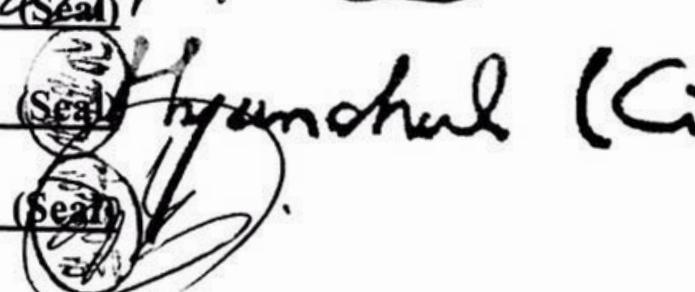
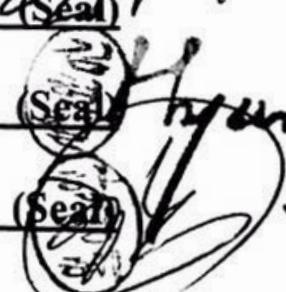
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Abstract

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Based on CGSS2012 and JGSS2012 datasets, the author of this paper conducts a comparative analysis of Chinese and Japanese people's subjective happiness. And the determinants are roughly divided into two groups, including socioeconomic factors and social capital factors. The findings are as follows: Social capital factors proved to have strong influence on both Chinese and Japanese society. Our model testified that these selected social capital factors are crucial in determining individuals' happiness. However, social capital factors affect happiness in different way. When comparing male and female in each country, males' happiness is more related to social capital than female in Japan. On the contrary, there is no big difference by gender in China.

Key words: China, Japan, subjective happiness, socio-economical factors, social capital, gender difference

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Chapter 1. Introduction

Easterlin, a University of Southern California economist, became famous after his 1974 paper — “Does Economic Growth Improve the Human Life? Some Empirical Evidence” — found that money makes people happier, but only to a point, named the Easterlin paradox. Once certain essential needs were met, life satisfaction came at a diminishing return on income investment. In short, money cannot buy happiness. Easterlin paradox made the topic of happiness a big hit afterwards.

Then someone might ask, “ What is happiness? How to define happiness? ” Regarding the definition of happiness, there is no clear consensus on what “happiness” means and many debates regarding the causes of happiness and factors correlate with happiness. Therefore, instead of trying to define happiness from an outside perspective, economists try to capture it through other means. According to Frey and Stutzer (2002) there are two extreme concepts of happiness (subjective and objective happiness) and ways to capture them and one in the middle—experience sampling measures.

In many studies, one of the most widely used conceptualizations of happiness has been subjective well-being which refers to “a broad category of phenomena that includes people’s emotional responses, domain satisfactions, and global judgments of life satisfaction” (Diener et al. 1999, p. 277). Although there are some scholars insist that there are differences between

happiness and subjective well-being (McGillivray and Clarke, 2006, p. 4), which emphasizes that subjective well-being, as a wider conception, involves a multidimensional evaluation of life including happiness. Despite of such differences, economists have used the terms “happiness” and “life satisfaction” interchangeably as measures of subjective wellbeing (Easterlin 2004).

Subjective happiness asks people how happy they feel themselves to be. They result from surveys where people are asked to self-report about how happy they feel, all things considered. Richard Easterlin, Bruno Frey, and others pioneered the economic analysis of happiness data. Today there are several surveys that evaluate happiness. One type of question asks “Taken all together, Are you happy?” with responses ranged in 5 or 7 strata (For example, the General Social Surveys, 1:Happy- 5:Unhappy). The second type of question asks people to rate their life satisfaction, on a scale from 0 to 10 (for example, the World Values Survey—WVS).- Both type of questions are evaluated by self-report inventory, which is testified as a scientific and effective way to collect information from respondents, and the data collected and be used in cross-national comparative studies(Easterlin 2003).

Obviously, happiness is a big hit topic. But why people care about happiness so much? Aristotle answered this question by saying that “ Happiness is the meaning and the purpose of life, the whole aim and end of human existence.” Since the 1960s, happiness research has been conducted in a wide variety of

scientific disciplines. Although happiness has been perceived as one of the most important and valued goals throughout history (Kesebir and Diener 2008), the field of happiness studies has expanded drastically only in the last two decades in terms of scientific publications, and causes of happiness, and on factors that correlate with happiness. And there is no validated method has been found to substantially improve long-term happiness in a meaningful way for most people.

However, among these researches, the most widely accepted way is the Easterlin's measurement . And Easterlin proved that happiness is significantly influenced by economy. Afterwards, many scholars proved that other socio-economic factors and demographic factors, including age, marital status, employment, number of children, size of current residence, relative household income, health, gender and education, also determine happiness in a significant way. However, these factors can only explain happiness to a certain point.

In recent years, happiness scholars proved that besides demographic and socio-economic factors, social capital factors are also related to individuals' happiness in many Western countries. However, the study of relationship between social capital and happiness is still at its initial stage in East Asia. In China and Japan, there are numerous studies conducted regarding happiness issues, including some comparative studies. However, mostly remained in economical aspects (Easterlin 2004). Compared to Western countries, there

are few cross-national comparative researches conducted in East Asia regarding the relationship between causes of happiness, factors correlates with happiness and happiness in a general angle of view. Thus, in this paper, we aim to testify the relationship between happiness in China and Japan. Meanwhile, we compare two countries to see how social differences are reflected in happiness. What's more, as we all know, there is a very clear social division of labor in Japan. Most women are housewives after getting married. On the contrary, most Chinese women continue their career life after getting married. Thus, in this paper, we also aim to see gender differences in each country.

Chapter 2. Data and Method

Data: The data source for China is the 2005, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2012 Chinese General Social Survey (CGSS), and for the Japan the 2005, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012 Japanese General Social Survey. In both countries, data were collected from adults (aged 18+ for China and aged 20+ for Japan) selected for a multistage national random sample. Using such datasets, I compared tendency of change of happiness size in China and Japan and the relationship between various variables and subjective happiness in later chapters. The reasons why I choose datasets in 2012 from two countries are listed as follows. First, China, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan jointly conducted a social survey named East Asian Social Surveys (EASS), of which many contents are included in the 2012CGSS and the 2012JGSS so that there are many comparable data. Secondly, in the 2012CGSS and 2012JGSS many questions are related to social capital factors, which is one part of the main topic of this paper.

Table 2.1 and 2.2 are descriptive information and statistics of variables analyzed in this paper.

Table 2.1 descriptive information and statistics of socio-economic variables

	China		Japan	
	N (%)/Average (SD)		N (%)/Average (SD)	
Age	48.62(16.2)	11764(99.9 9)	53.41(16.93)	4667(100)
Age group				
18-29	1614(13.72)		430(9.21)	
30-39	1917(16.3)		751(16.09)	
40-49	2689(22.86)	11764 (99.99)	783(16.78)	
50-59	2190(18.62)		774(16.58)	
60-69	1806(15.35)		989(21.19)	
70-79	1007(8.56)		705(15.11)	
80-	541(4.6)		235(5.04)	
Gender				
Female	5745(48.84)	11764(99.9 9)	2519(53.97)	
Male	6019(51.16)		2148(46.03)	4,667(100)
Education				
Middle school and	7,654(65.09)		710(15.28)	
Under middle school				
High School	2,227(18.94)	11760 (99.96)	2158(46.45)	
College	955(8.12)		693(14.92)	
University or higher education	924(7.86)		1085(23.35)	4646(99.55%)
Annual Household Income				
0-25%	2672(22.71)		1170(33.82)	
25%-50%	2524(21.46)	11764(99.9 9)	865(25.00)	
50%-75%	2932(24.92)		634(18.32)	
75%-100%	3636(30.91)		791(22.86)	3460(74.14)
Employment status				
Unemployed	4209(47.75)	8815(74.93	1695(36.96)	
Employed	4606(52.25))	2891(63.04)	4586(98.26)
Marital status				
Currently-married	9388(79.8)		3311(70.94)	
Cohabiting	1347(11.45)	11764 (99.99)	635(13.61)	
Divorced			721(15.45)	
Separated				
Never-married				
Number of children	1.78(1.35)	11758(99.9 5)	1.67(1.13)	4662(99.89)
Health				
Poor	426(3.62)		56(2.41)	
Somewhat poor	1808(15.37)		296(12.71)	
Neither	2879(24.48)	11760(99.9 6)	690(29.64)	
Somewhat good	4258(36.21)		622(26.72)	
Good	2389(20.31)		664(28.52)	2328(49.88)
Hometown size				
1.City	4102(34.95)		1. A big city 204(4.38)	
2.The suburbs or outskirts of a city	2946(25.1)		2. Suburbs or outskirts of a big city 730(15.67)	
3.country village	4688(39.95)	11736(99.7 5)	3. A town or a small city 2038(43.74)	
			4. A country village 1494(32.07)	
			5. A farm or home in the country 193(4.14)	4659(99.83)

Table 2.2 Descriptive Information and Statistics of Social Capital

Descriptive Statistics of Social Capital	China	Total	Japan	
	N (%)/ Average (SD)		N (%)/ Average (SD)	Total
Structural Social Capital				
People living together	3.056 (1.41)	11764 (99.99)	3.14 (1.51)	4665 (99.96)
Frequency of meeting friends				
Never	2499 (21.26)	11754 (99.91)	583 (12.59)	4630 (99.21)
Once or several times a year	4713 (40.1)		1830 (39.52)	
Several times a month	3022(25.71)		1921 (41.49)	
Several times a week	1212(10.31)		261 (5.64)	
Everyday	308(2.62)		35 (0.76)	
Association member				
No	4441 (76.53)	5803 (49.33)	1162 (50.32)	2309 (49.48)
Yes	1362 (23.47)		1147 (49.68)	
Volunteer				
No	4579 (78.73)	5816 (49.44)	1277 (56.01)	2280 (48.85)
Yes	1237 (21.27)		1003 (43.99)	
Cognitive Social Capital				
Position in the society in 10 levels	4.17 (1.06)	11711 (99.54)	5.21 (1.68)	4631 (99.23)
Neighborhood Environment				
Mutually concerned for each other				
Disagree	68 (1.17)	5813 (49.41)	73 (3.16)	2311 (49.52)
Somewhat disagree	89 (1.53)		250 (10.82)	
Neither	251 (4.32)		839 (36.30)	
Somewhat agree	995 (17.12)		903 (39.07)	
Agree	4410 (75.86)		246 (10.64)	
Willingness to provide assistant				
Disagree	115 (1.98)	5807 (49.36)	114 (4.94)	2307 (49.43)
Somewhat disagree	150 (2.58)		275 (11.92)	
Neither	391 (6.73)		937 (40.62)	
Somewhat agree	1139 (19.61)		787 (34.11)	
Agree	4012 (69.09)		194 (8.41)	
View on community cooperation at natural disaster				
Disagree	124 (2.14)	5805 (49.35)	178 (3.83)	4644 (99.51)
Somewhat disagree	157 (2.70)		231 (4.97)	
Neither	413 (7.11)		1083 (23.32)	
Somewhat agree	1052 (18.12)		1585 (34.13)	
Agree	4059 (69.92)		1567 (33.74)	
Willingness to make contributions towards society				
Disagree	186 (3.21)	5791 (49.22)	80 (3.46)	2311 (49.52)
Somewhat disagree	144 (2.49)		228 (9.87)	
Neither	993 (17.15)		930 (40.24)	
Somewhat agree	1370 (23.66)		851 (36.82)	
Agree	3098 (53.50)		222 (9.61)	
Estimation of human nature in 7 strata	5.45 (1.20)	5802 (49.32)	4.55 (1.32)	4579 (98.11)
Trust in society	2.97 (0.61)	5804 (49.33)	2.53 (0.68)	4609 (98.76)

Religion category				
No religion	10036 (85.33)		3098 (69.14)	
Buddhism	663 (5.64)		394 (8.79)	
Christianity	266 (2.26)	11761 (99.97)	51 (1.14)	4481 (96.01)
Others	2 (0.02)		38 (0.85)	
Taoism & Folk Beliefs	474 (4.03)			
Islamism	320 (2.72)			
New Religions			900 (20.08)	

Methods: We use various explanatory variables and subjective happiness as dependent variable to conduct descriptive analyses and ordered logistic regressions to explain their relationship with subjective happiness. Here, we use Stata14 to make all statistical analyses.

Measures: In this paper, happiness is the dependent variable, which is measured with a single-item question. In China, respondents were asked: “How happy are you?” Responses ranged from 1(Very happy) to 5(Very unhappy). In Japan, respondents were asked: “Are you happy?” (あなたは、現在幸せですか。)Responses ranged from 1 (Happy) to 5 (Unhappy). What is noteworthy is that in both CGSS and JGSS, the question “Are you happy” are asked twice and the responses ranged differently between two times. The secondly asked “Are you happy” is ranged from 1 “Very happy” to “Very unhappy”. Since Japanese people have the tendency to refuse extreme answers, in this paper, I chose the question asked at first of which the responses are ranged in 5 strata.

Chapter 3. Trend of Happiness in China and Japan

3.1 Annual Trend of Happiness in China and Japan

On average, richer nations are likely to be happier than poorer nations, but this effect seems to diminish with wealth (Frey, Bruno S.; Alois Stutzer, 2001). China is a crucial case for empirical research on this topic because it counts a large share of the world population, and because if there is a country where economic growth should have played a relevant role for people's well-being, it is China (Bartolini S, Sarracino F. 2015). China has rapidly developed in terms of its GDP size and individual income since the implementation of its Open and Reform Policy. Even after being attacked by financial crisis in 1998 and 2008, China still remained its rapid economic growth speed above 7% every year. Compared to China, Japan entered an era of low economic growth from 1990s to 2010s, which is called “ the lost 20 years ”. In the second season of 2009, China exceeded Japan in terms of nominal GDP and became the second largest economical entity in the world. However, Chinese people did not feel happier than Japanese.

<Table 1> and <Table 2> is showing the average and maximum of happiness level in China and Japan from 2005 to 2012 in a 100-point-scale. And Figure 1 shows the trends of average happiness from 2005 to 2012 in both country, comparatively (1.2005;2.2006;3.2008;4.2010;5.2012). From <Table 1> and

<Table 2>, we can see that the maximum level of happiness in China is higher than in Japan. However, <Figure 1> tells us that although China is catching up with Japan in its happiness level, Japanese people are still happier than Chinese people even after its GDP surpassed over Japan. This result, which continues up to now, is in accordance with what is revealed in World Happiness Report. But why?

<Table 1> Annual Happiness Level
in China

Year	Average	Maximum
2005	68.2	84.6
2006	68.6	85.2
2008	74.2	80.6
2010	75.4	82.4
2011	78	82.6
2012	76.2	83.2

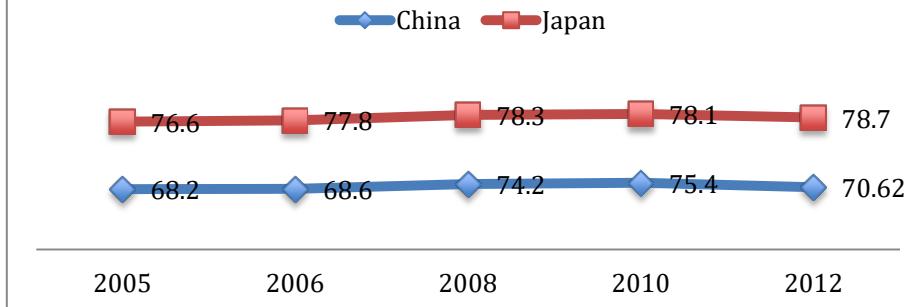
Source: CGSS2005-2012

<Table2>Annual Happiness Level
in Japan

Year	Average	Maximum
2005	76.5	81.3
2006	77.9	81.3
2008	78.3	81.0
2010	78.1	81.3
2012	78.7	80.8

Source: JGSS2005-2012

<Figure 1> Annual Happiness Level in China and Japan



Source: CGSS2005-2012, JGSS2005-2012

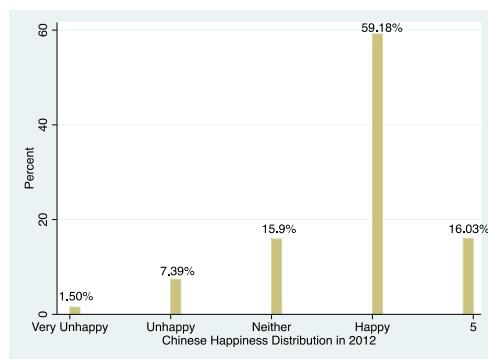
There must be some factors that affected happiness in China and Japan other than GDP. According to Easterlin paradox, economic growth does have a positive impact on happiness, however, only to a certain level. When economy reaches to a certain point, the positive influence of economic growth to happiness will be weakened if not to be replaced by other factors. We will examine those factors in later chapters.

3.2 Trend of Happiness in 2012

Before entering in chapter 3, we'd love to introduce how happiness is distributed in 2012 in China and Japan in general because we will focus on the research conducted in 2012 in later chapters.

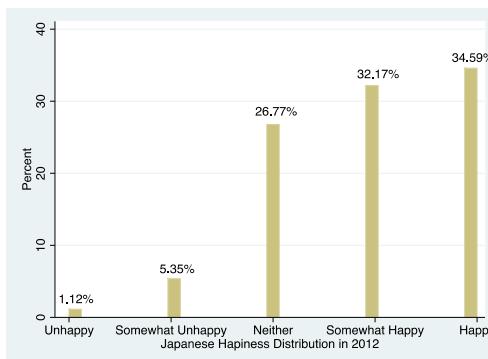
The distribution of happiness in two countries in 2012 are shown in <Figure 2> and <Figure 3>. From these two figures, we can see that around 60% of people reported themselves as happy and 16% of people reported as very happy, thus 76% of Chinese people tend to feel happy in total. However, surprisingly, in Japan (7.87) with higher level of happiness, compared to China (7.62), there are only 66.6% of people who tends to feel happy. What makes Japanese happier than Chinese in total is that there are less people in Japan who tends to feel neither happy nor unhappy and who tends to feel unhappy than those in China.

<Figure 2> Chinese Happiness Distribution
in 2012



Source: CGSS 2012

<Figure 3> Japanese Happiness Distribution
in 2012



Source: JGSS 2012

Chapter 4. Demographic and Socioeconomic Factors

4.1 Explanation of Variables

We mentioned in the first chapter that our aim is to testify the relationship between social capital and happiness. However, to make the relationship more clear, we want to see the relationship between demographic, socio-economic factors and happiness. Then, in the later chapter, we will use the model in this chapter as the base model to control full model.

As we discussed earlier in the first chapter, there are various researches conducted by previous researchers from different disciplines to examine factors that correlate with happiness. One of the most developed aspects regarding happiness studies is the relationship between socioeconomic factors and happiness by renowned economists such as Easterlin and Diene. In this paper, we put more focus on the comparison between two countries rather than simply making analyses of relationship between variables and happiness in each country. Thus we selected variables that are included both in 2012CGSS and 2012JGSS. Those variables are age, gender, educational background, marital status, employment status, annual household income, health, number of children and size of hometown.

4.2 Literature Review

<Age>

There are still some debates regarding the relationship between age and happiness. Traditional surveys of the field, such as Argyle, 2001 and Diener et al., 1999 and Myers (1992), assert that happiness is either flat or slightly increasing in age. However, Inglehart (1990)'s findings shows that the relationship between age and happiness varied widely in different countries. In accordance with the argument of Inglehart(1990), there are some evidence showing different relationship between age and happiness in China and in Japan. Blanchflower and Oswald (2008) argue that, in China, happiness is approximately U-shaped through the life-course; mental distress tends to reach a maximum in middle age (Blanchflower and Oswald, 2008). According to Blanchflower and Oswald (2008), happiness declines from 20s to the age of 40s to 50s and rises after the middle age crisis. However, this U-shaped pattern of happiness through life-course is not universal. Some scholars, such as Inglehart (1990) argued that some nations showed decreases in happiness among older cohorts (e.g., France, Japan).

<Gender>

Gender has been added in most happiness studies as an independent variable since man and woman have very different social division of labor. However, according to most previous studies (Ryff C D., 1989; Inglehart, 1990; White,

1992), there is no significant relationship between gender difference and happiness. However, when controlled by other factors, such as marriage (Radloff, 1975; Bradburn, 1969; Campbell, 1981; Gurin et al., 1960) and employment status , it shows that gender does have influence on happiness through some channels. Thus gender is included as one independent variable in this paper.

<Health>

Aristotle pointed out that when we are ill, health seems most important; when we are broke, wealth seems most important. Obviously, health is related to happiness. Some empirical studies have reported that healthier individuals tend to feel happier (Perneger, Hudelson, & Bovier, 2004; Easterlin, 2003; Dolan et al.; 2008 Diener, 2011). Such a result also has been verified in China and Japan (Steel & Lynch, 2013; Bian et al., 2014; Easterlin, 2003).

<Education>

Educational philosopher Brighouse (2006) contends that schools facilitate individual autonomy, which “plays an important role in enabling people to live flourishing lives” (p. 16). Although we cannot equate human flourishing with happiness, what makes people flourish is closely related to what makes people happy (p. 47). Michalos (2008) possesses a similar view, he articulates that education and learning enhance happiness by enabling people to enjoy

not only material goods but also goods of the mind, goods of the body, good quality of interpersonal relations, and community. However, there are some empirical evidence show us that education has very little influence on happiness, when happiness is measured by standardized single-item or multi-item indexes of happiness or life satisfaction (Michalos A C., 2008). Especially, the relationship between education and happiness seems to be fuzzier in developed countries (Hartog and Oosterbeek, 1998). Frey and Stutzer (2000) argued that how education and happiness is related defers from country to country. Research confirms that education year is positively related to happiness in China (Chen W., 2012). And according to Tsou and Liu(2001) , in China, education is found to be positively related to happiness. Shin and Inoguchi (2009) found the same result in Japan.

<Relative household income>

Although research confirms that absolute income plays a role in one's happiness (Ball and Chernova 2008; Ferrer-i-Carbonell 2005), it has been argued that relative income is more crucial for greater happiness (Easterlin 1974). Easterlin(1995) articulated that absolute changes of income did not show an important role in affecting people's happiness in Japan because people get used to the increase of absolute income and the positive function of increase of absolute income reduces. Knight and Song's (2006) found that relative income is at least twice as important for individual happiness as actual income, even in poor regions (in their case rural China). Thus, we transformed

the absolute household income into relative income groups in this paper.

<Employment Status>

According to previous research, employment status plays very important role in influencing individuals happiness, especially for some certain groups (Argyle M., 2003). The unemployed are much unhappier than the employed (Di Tella et al., Otake, 2004).

<Marital Status>

There is no need to say that one's happiness is highly related to marital status. Self-report studies of happiness indicate that the married are happier than the unmarried (Bradburn, 1969; Brad-burn & Caplovitz, 1965; Campbell, 1981; Glenn, 1975; Gurin, Veroff, & Feld, 1960; Schmoldt, Pope, & Hibbard, 1989). Men are found to be able to get more benefits from marriage than women in general (Gove, 1972a, 1972b). However, in Takashi, Kayo and Miki (2010)'s married people are happiest in Japan.

<Children>

Much of the world is pervaded by strong cultural beliefs that children increase the well-being of parents, especially for women (Margolis R, Myrskylä M.,2011). However, the findings of numerous studies suggest that the

presence of children on average lowers the marriage or satisfaction of parents in North America and European society (Lemasters 1957; Campbell, 1981). However, in the global research of fertility and happiness relationship by confirmed that in general compared to respondents with no children, those with one, two, or three children have significantly higher (Margolis R, Myrskylä M., 2011). A comparative research regarding this issue carried in China and Japan articulated that a larger number of children add to happiness only in China , but not in Japan (Oshio T, Nozaki K, Kobayashi M.,2010)

<Size of current living place>

Veenhoven (1994) had reviewed the limited literature on the topic and concluded that in less-developed countries happiness was greater in urban places but that this urban-rural differential tended to disappear with economic development (Veenhoven, 1994). However, on the contrary, after comparing 81 countries using World Values Survey (WVS), Berry B J L, Okulicz-Kozaryn A (2011) confirmed that there is no significant rural-urban differences in individual's happiness. It is well known that China has a sharp rural-urban divide in household income. Knight and Song (1999) described the disparities in favor of urban-dwellers in the quantity and quality of services including education, healthcare and housing. These differences also create a rural-urban divide in happiness. However, the rapid economic development in rural area and the severe pollution in urban area make it difficult to predict the relationship between hometown size and happiness.

Japan is now facing a rural-urban disparity following the “bubble economy” happened in 1990s. However, the correlation between hometown size and happiness is still a blank space.

4.3 Comparative Analysis

Table 4.3.1 and Table 4.3.2 are the regression results of 8 socio-economic variables selected in this paper and happiness. In model1, age is regarded as a continuous variable, and we divided age to ten groups in model2. Based on previous studies, we made a model to compare gender differences of determinants of happiness.

Table 4.3.1 Ordered Logistic Regression of Socio-Economic Variables
(China)

Variables	Model1	Model2	Male	Female
Observations	8574	8746	4362	4212
Age	0.943***		0.922***	0.956***
Age2	1.001***		1.001***	1.001***
Age group (Reference: 50-59)				
18-29		1.307**		
30-39		0.987		
40-49		0.966		
60-69		1.642***		
70-79		1.821***		
80-		1.630***		
Gender (Reference: Male)	1.154**	1.135**		
Education (Reference: Middle school and under middle school)				
High School	1.114	1.136*	1.044	1.190*
College	1.142	1.154	1.091	1.222
University or higher education	1.397***	1.408***	1.405**	1.415**
Relative household income (Reference: 0-25%) ¹				
25%-50%	1.388***	1.412***	1.403**	1.329**
50%-75%	1.754***	1.743***	1.833***	1.640***
75%-100%	1.671***	1.678***	1.722***	1.589***
Employment status (Reference: Unemployed)	0.946	0.956	1.085	0.821**
Marital status (Reference: Currently-married Cohabiting)				
Divorced Widowed Separated	0.549***	0.603***	0.546***	0.533***
Never-married	0.601***	0.635***	0.520***	0.698**
Hometown size (Reference: country village)				
City	0.971	0.975	0.936	1.008
The suburbs or outskirts of a city	0.836**	0.830**	0.813*	0.86
Children	1.113***	1.147***	1.181***	1.047
Health (Reference: Neither)				
Poor	0.419***	0.432***	0.364***	0.475***
Somewhat poor	0.733***	0.727***	0.687***	0.770*
Somewhat good	1.445***	1.450***	1.502***	1.390***
Good	2.601***	2.614***	2.742***	2.417***
Adjusted R-squared	0.028	0.031	0.042	0.026

*p<0.05 **p<0.01 ***p<0.001

¹ In both CGSS2012 and JGSS2012, annual household income was included as absolute income. To make comparison, we changed it into relative household income, using stata14.

Table 4.3.2 Ordered Logistic Regression of Socio-Economic Variables (Japan)

Variables	Model1	Model2	Male	Female
Observations	1654	1654	802	852
Age	0.887***		0.857***	0.927*
Age^2	1.001***		1.001***	1.001*
Age group (Reference: 50-59)				
20-29		2.182***		
30-39		1.773***		
40-49		1.174		
60-69		1.316		
70-79		2.058***		
80-89		2.582***		
Gender (Reference: Male)	1.431***	1.454***		
Education				
(Reference: middle school and under middle school)				
High school	0.9	0.9	0.84	0.87
2year college	1.067	1.084	0.772	1.192
University or higher education	0.963	0.973	0.897	0.974
Relative Household income				
(Reference:0-25%)				
25%-50%	1.224	1.235	1.112	1.489*
50%-75%	1.456*	1.492**	1.09	2.243***
75%-100%	1.598**	1.681***	1.396	1.929**
Employment status				
(Reference: Unemployed)				
Marital Status				
(Reference: Currently married Cohabiting)				
Divorced Widowed Separated	0.446***	0.463***	0.261***	0.703
Never-married	0.247***	0.267***	0.130***	0.536*
Hometown size				
(Reference: A town or a small city)				
A big city	1.749*	1.697*	2.549*	1.33
The suburbs or outskirts of a big city	1.235	1.234	1.417	1.138
A country village	0.938	0.942	1.318	0.685*
A farm or home in the country	1.108	1.111	1.604	0.865
Children	1.161**	1.147*	1.134	1.189*
Health (Reference: Neither)				
Poor	0.335**	0.345**	0.248*	0.622
Somewhat poor	0.635**	0.645**	0.695	0.647
Somewhat good	2.261***	2.270***	2.524***	2.095***
Good	5.746***	5.771***	7.303***	5.058***
Adjusted R-squared	0.096	0.096	0.103	0.082

*p<.05 **p<.001 ***p<.0001

From Table 3.3.1 and Table 3.3.2 we can get similar correlation in terms of age in China and Japan. We found out that people tend to be less happy with age increasing both in China and Japan. However, in China, people in their 30s to 50s tends to be less happy while Japanese people's happiness decrease from their 40s to 60s, in other words 10 years later than Chinese people.

When comparing on the basis of gender, women are happier than men both in China and Japan. However, Chinese women are slightly happier than Chinese men, while Japanese women are half time happier than Japanese men.

Educational background shows big difference between two countries. We got significant result from Table 3.2.2 which indicates that who had attended university or had a higher educational experience are much happier than those whose educational background equals to or is lower than compulsory education (middle school). However, data from Table 3.2.3 shows no significant relationship between education and happiness in Japan.

In China, people with higher relative income are happier in general. However, the richest are not the happiest. Those whose income belongs to the 3rd group (50%-75%) possess the highest chance to be happy. Compared to China, there is a similar result shows in Table 3.2.3 for Japan. However, in Japan, the richest are the happiest. And those whose relative household income is lower than the average seem to be the unhappiest people.

Employment status does not have a significant correlation in either China or

Japan.

Marital status has a significant impact on happiness in both China and Japan.

In China, compared to the currently married, cohabiting people, the divorced, widowed and separated have only half of the chance to be happy, and the never-married Chinese people only have 60% of the chance to be happy. The impact of unhappy marriage seems to be stronger in Japan than in China. The divorced, widowed or separated people only show a 40% of chance to be happy compared to those who are currently married or cohabiting. The never-married people are the unhappiest group in Japan with less than 25% of chance to be happy compared to those who are currently married or cohabiting. In both China and Japan, marriage is an important determinant of happiness.

Compared to those who live in country village, people who live in the suburbs and outskirts of a city are significantly unhappy in China. In Japan, people who live in the big city are significantly happier than those who live a small town or a small city.

In terms of self-estimated health condition, there is a similar result from two countries. Both in China and Japan, health is verified to play an important role in happiness. The healthier you feel, the happier you are. However, this phenomenon seems to be stronger in Japan.

When comparing men and women, there are some interesting results. In China, employment status shows a significant correlation with happiness only for women. Unemployment makes Chinese women unhappier than career women. Chinese men tend to be happier with more children. However, this is not for Chinese women. In Japan, relative household income is only a matter for women. Japanese women tend to be happier with higher relative household income, however, relative household income does not have a significant influence on Japanese men. Contrary to China, women tend to be happier with more children while number of children does not have a significant impact on Japanese men. Another interesting finding is that divorce, widowhood, and separation do not have a significant influence on Japanese women. In Japan, only men found to be significantly influenced by living in a big city and poor health condition.

4.4 Results and Discussions

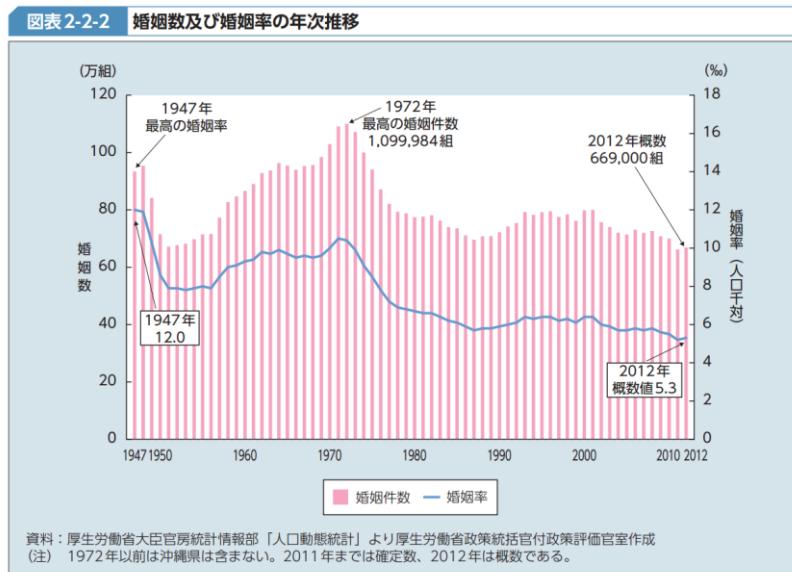
In conclusion, there are mainly 7 common points between China and Japan. First, in terms of age, the results of both countries are consistent with the theory of U-shaped life course. Second, people with higher relative household income are happier than those whose relative household income is lower than the average, which testified that relative household income does have a significant impact on individuals' happiness (Easeterlin, 1974). Third, both in China and Japan, people who are currently married or cohabiting are the happiest , which is in accordance with previous researches that married people are, in general, happier than unmarried people. Fourth, people are generally happier when they feel healthy. Fifth, employment status does not play a significant role in influencing happiness in China and Japan, which is quite different with what was observed by previous studies. However, we can see that when controlled by gender, employment status found to be a significant determinant of Chinese women's happiness. Sixth, in both China and Japan, women are happier than men, which is different with what was observed in Western countries that gender difference does not have significant influence on happiness. Seventh, in general, people with more children are happier, which is also a different phenomenon with Western countries.

Next, let's talk about differences between China and Japan. There are 5 major differences between two countries. First, in terms of relative household income, obviously, both Chinese men and women desire higher household income compared to others in the society. However, in Japan, it only

significantly influenced women.

Second, Chinese men and women have a similar pattern of happiness in terms of marital status. However, in Japan, women who are divorced, widowed and separated are not significantly being influenced in terms of happiness. Ono Yumiko (2015) articulated that Japanese women are negatively influenced by marriage due to their high-intensity of housework, childcare, unfortunately, which are rarely being helped by their husbands. What's more, Japanese women have difficulty to pursuit career goal after getting married and bearing children. Thus, the negative influence of marriage offset the positive influence of marriage for Japanese women. In addition, the never-married women's happiness is much less affected by their lack of marital experience than Japanese men, which might indicate that women have less intention to get married in Japan. The figure below shows us that marriage rate in Japan is getting lower and lower. According to Masako Mori, "Japan's minister of state for measures for declining birthrate and gender equality, Japan's population is declining mainly because there are fewer marriages and people are tying the knot later in life. It is crucial to improve marriage rate to Japanese economy." According to our research, it is important to improve women's marriage quality to stimulate women's intention to get married. This might be a new point of attack other than holding matchmaking events and financial awards.

<Figure4>



Third, regression results tell us that in China people who have an educational experience of university or higher degree are significantly happier than the less educated people. However, in Japan, education does not have significant impact on individuals' happiness. This result testified the previous finding that the correlation between education and happiness become fuzzier in developed countries.

Fourth, according to the regression tables, Chinese men are happy to have more children while women are not significantly affected by how many children they have. In China, most women need to play roles as a breadwinner and a mother in the same time. Having more children means more burden for Chinese women, since women spend much more time on childcare than men do. And having more children will certainly be an obstacle for women to

pursuit their career goals. In Japan, we had a contrary finding that women tend to be happier with more children, while there is no significant correlation between men's happiness and how many children they have.

As we all know, in most Japanese family, men are the breadwinners. Having more children could be a heavy load for them since more children means severer financial pressure.

Fifth, in China, people living in suburbs and outskirts of a city are significantly unhappy than those who live in country village, which is a surprising result since people living in suburbs and outskirts of a city have much more resources than people living in country village, including medical resources, educational resources and employment chances. However, with rapid development of urbanization, many problems are neglected. When economic growth slows down, problems pop out. As the most affected group, suburb-dwellers have sacrificed much due to over-urbanization. In Japan, people who live in big cities are significantly happier than those who live in country village, especially for men. According to the Ministry of Health, Labor and Wealth, in 2011, in Tokyo, Osaka and Yokohama, after spending necessary living expenditure, people still have much money left from their income. As we referred in previous section, income is one of the most important indexes of determining individuals' happiness. The result that people living in big cities are happier might because they are richer. Especially for men, they have less financial pressure to feed their families.

Chapter 5. Social Capital and Happiness

5.1 How to define social capital?

Scholars of happiness continue to debate the causes of happiness while predicting happiness still remains a challenge. It is generally agreed that a combination of internal and external factors plays a role in determining individuals' happiness. It has been proved that wealth does not always increases individuals' happiness. Then the question is what else can be the vital factor? Recent research has proposed that social capital may be the candidate that has been overlooked.

Social capital has defined differently by different scholars. As a result of debates it remains as to what makes up social capital in different contexts (Robison et al. 2002). Although defining social capital is difficult, in general it refers to a certain set of values or norms, social networks, activities, mutual concern, and trust among members of a group that provide connection and cooperation (Fukuyama 1995; Putnam 1993).

The first well-known conceptualization of social capital was suggested by Coleman (1988), who argued that three dimensions of social capital exist: 1.trust and obligations, 2.information channels (meeting colleagues and friends, or people living together), and 3.norms and effective sanctions. Coleman (1988) argued that these dimensions of social capital encourage

coordination and cooperation among members of a group, and thus facilitate the development and well-being of the society.

Later, Putnam (1993) suggested that social capital includes trust, mutual assistance, norms of reciprocity and obligations, and social networks. Compared to Coleman (1988), this approach emphasizes on interpersonal networks by means of informal and formal associational engagement.

Some researchers argued that it is important to recognize the complexity of this phenomenon, and suggested that social capital should be evaluated within a mix of indicators (e.g., Healy 2004; Onyx and Bullen 2001). Therefore narrow definitions may jeopardize its applicability to different cultures (Fuller and Hannum 2002). Hence, in this paper we used the classification provided by Uphoff (2000). Uphoff (2000) suggested that largely, social capital can be classified by structural social capital and cognitive social capital. The main difference is that structural social capital can be seen its existence or be activated, for example, social organization and information channels (meeting friends, colleagues, people living together). While cognitive social capital is more emphasis on untouchable things such as attitudes, values, and culture, etc. The table below is how Uphoff (2000) classified different type of social capital.

<Table 5.1.1> Categories of Social Capital

	<i>Structural</i>	<i>Cognitive</i>
Sources and manifestations	Roles and rules Networks and other interpersonal relationships Procedures and precedents	Norms Values Attitudes Beliefs
Domains	Social organization	Civic culture
Dynamic factors	Horizontal linkages Vertical linkages	Trust, solidarity, cooperation, generosity
Common elements	Expectations that lead to cooperative behavior, which produces mutual benefits	

Source: Uphoff (2000)

Beyond the cross-sectional evidence, it is relevant that social capital and happiness are related over time. Recently, Bartolini, Bilancini, and Pugno (2013) showed that the decline of measures of social capital predicts the decline of happiness in US over the past 30 years. This suggests that the erosion of social capital (Putnam, 2000) may be an important component of the complementary explanation of the Easterlin paradox in US, which is further confirmed for Germany (Bartolini S, Bilancini E, & Sarracino F, 2013), and some Asian countries including China and Japan (Bartolini S, Sarracino F., 2015). However, depending on how to define social capital and happiness, the relationship between social capital and happiness is still vague, especially in Eastern countries due to lack of research. Moreover, most scholars paid their attention on examining the significance of correlation of social capital and happiness rather than making comparison among different societies, especially in terms of Asian countries. In this paper, we put our focus on comparison of two societies. To measure social capital, we adopt a *structural/cognitive* distinction, whereby structural social capital is measured

by organizational membership and cognitive social capital is measured by a composite index of trust, reciprocity, and mutual help. According to Uphoff's (2000) classification of social capital, we selected variables are both included in 2012CGSS and 2012JGSS. Those variables are Number of people living together, Fmeeting (How frequently do you meet your friends?), Association, Volunteer as structural social capital; and Position (in the society in 10 levels), Neighborc (Neighborhood Environment: Mutually Concerned for Each Other), Neighborh (Neighborhood Environment: Willing to Provide Assistance), Comcoop(View on Community Cooperation at Natural Disaster), Contribution(Wish to Make Contributions Towards Society), Estimation of human nature, Trust toward society and Religion as cognitive social capital.

Obviously, there is no universal definition for social capital yet. As an exceedingly abstract and vague conception, it is impossible to make a perfect questionnaire that includes every single factor that can be categorized as a part of social capital. Hence, when we make quantitative analyses to expose the relationship between happiness and social capital, we cannot analyze the influence of social capital as an ensemble. However, what we can do is to analyze single factors. The aim of this paper is to compare China and Japan. Besides objective factors such as socio-economic factors, subjective factors and social connections also have strong influence on individuals' happiness. Thus, to be convenient to choose and categorize these neglected factors in influencing happiness, we have applied the conception of social capital in this paper to categorize variables. These variables are further categorized as

structural social capital and cognitive social capital in the basis of prior studies by Uphoff (2000).

5.2 Comparative Analysis

Table 5.2.1 and Table 5.2.2 are regression results of social capital variables and happiness controlled by socio-economic variables. Model 1 is regression of socio-economic variables and happiness. And Model 2 is regression result of social capital variables and happiness controlled by socio-economic factors. Since most Chinese women have career life while most Japanese women mainly do housework after getting married or bearing children, there is a big difference between Japanese women and Chinese women in terms of social pattern. Thus, we differentiated gender to make new regressions to compare male and female in each country, and compare male and female in two countries, respectively.

Table 5.2.1 Ordered Logistic Regression Results of Social Capital and Happiness (China)

Variables	Model2	Male	Female
Observations	4174	2086	2088
Structural Social Capital			
People living together (Reference: Living alone)			
2 people	1.097	1.127	1.070
3-5 people	1.099	1.113	1.076
5 or more	0.899	0.908	0.875
Meeting friends	1.155***	1.160**	1.143**
Association (Reference: No)	1.395***	1.367**	1.437**
Voluntary activity (Reference: No)	1.183*	1.255*	1.093
Cognitive Social Capital			
Position	1.308***	1.327***	1.300***
View on Neighborhood Environment ²	1.262***	1.181*	1.362***
Wish to make contributions towards society	1.109**	1.081	1.135**
View on human nature	1.111***	1.098*	1.114**
Trust in people	1.349***	1.478***	1.261**
Religious Category (Reference: No)			
Buddhism	1.078	1.340	0.923
Christianity	1.560*	1.160	1.722*
Taoism & Folk Beliefs	0.634**	0.853	0.467**
Islamism	2.029***	2.976***	1.235
Adjusted R-squared	0.081	0.092	0.078

*p<0.05 **p<0.01 ***p<0.001

² Neighborhood Environment=(Neighborc+Neighborh+Disastercoop)/3

Table 5.2.2 Ordered Logistic Regression Results of Social Capital and Happiness (Japan)³

Variables	Model	Male	Female
Observations	1530	747	783
Structural Social Capital			
People living together (Reference: Living alone)			
2 people living together	1.606*	1.916*	1.304
3-5 people living together	1.149	1.552	0.775
More than 5 people living together	1.012	1.220	0.699
Frequency of Meals with Friends	1.116**	1.131*	1.109
Association member (Reference: No)	0.988	1.043	0.920
Voluntary activity (Reference: No)	1.105	1.292	0.958
Cognitive Social Capital			
Position in the society in 10 levels	1.134***	1.274***	1.035
View on Neighborhood Environment ⁴	1.515***	1.537***	1.493***
Wish to Make Contributions Towards Society	1.033	0.870	1.208*
Estimation of Human Nature	1.235***	1.223***	1.282***
View on Trust/Distrust in People	1.088	1.242	1.002
Religion (Reference: No)			
Buddhism	1.202	1.053	1.468
Christianity	0.845	0.550	0.962
New Religions	0.835	0.780	0.926
Others	0.911	0.337	2.245
Adjusted R-squared	0.148	0.185	0.133

***p<0.001 **p<0.01 *p<0.05

³ Controlled variables (socio-economic factors) referred in previous chapters are not listed in the regression table due to limited page size.

⁴ ⁴ Neighborhood Environment=(Neighborc+Neighborh+Disastercoop)/3

5.2.1 Structural Social Capital and Happiness

<Number of People Living Together>

For structural social capital, from Table 4.2.2 and 4.2.3, we got slightly different results in terms of correlation between numbers of people living together and happiness in China and Japan. We grouped this variable into 4 groups. In Japan, more and more people choose to live alone. Thus, here, we want to see whether this choice is positively influencing happiness. Second group is for people who have only one family living together. In our dataset, about 90% of people in these group is married people who are living with their spouses. Third group is for the majorities. Both in China and Japan, these families are testified to be majorities, in other words, core families. In Japan, people who live in 2-people families are happier than those who are living alone. This result is somehow out of expectation. As we all know, there are more and more people in young generation tend to live alone. According to many interviews, these young people choose to live alone because they believe that it is free and more convenient to live alone. However, obviously, from our finding, we can see that the freedom and convenience of living alone do not have positive enough influence on their happiness. In China, how many people live together does not have influence on happiness.

<Frequency of Meeting Friends>

Frequency of meeting friends is one of important indicators of happiness. People tend to be happier to have more meals with friends in general. What's more, in China, people who are members of at least one association or who at least attended one voluntary activity tend to be happier.

<Association Member and Voluntary Activities>

Contrary to frequency of meeting friends, association member and voluntary experience do not have significant impact on Japanese people's happiness. When comparing male and female in both countries, frequency of having meals with friends does not have significant influence on Japanese male, but on Chinese male. And voluntary activity only significantly influenced male in China.

5.2.2 Cognitive Social Capital and Happiness

In comparing two countries in terms of cognitive social capital, variables are grouped as follows.

<Personal Dimension>

Firstly, in personal dimension, one important variable is perceived personal position in society in 10 levels. It is testified to be significantly positively related to happiness both in China and Japan. In Japan, perceived social position is testified to be positively correlated with male's happiness. However, perceived social position is not significantly correlated with Japanese women's happiness. On the contrary, both male and female are positively influenced by their higher evaluation of perceived personal position in society.

Second, in terms of religious belief, people who believe in Christianity and Islamism are happier than those who do not have a religious belief. And people who believe in Taoism and Folk beliefs are much less happy in China, Buddhism does not have significant influence on individuals' happiness. On the contrary, religious belief does not have significant correlation with happiness of Japanese people. When comparing male and female, in China, Christianity and Taoism & Folk Beliefs only shows significant influence on female, while Islamism only have significantly positive influence on male, in China.

<Community Dimension>

Firstly, people who possess more positive view on neighborhood environment tend to be happier both in China and Japan, and both for male and female.

Second, people who have stronger willingness to make contribution towards society in China tend to be happier. It does not have significant influence on Japanese people's happiness in general. However, when controlled by gender, we found out that females who are more generous on this issue tend to be happier.

<Societal Dimension>

Firstly, estimation on human nature shows significantly positive influence on happiness both in China and Japan, both for male and female.

Second, in terms of trust in people, there are different results showing in the results table. For Chinese people, no matter for male or female, people who show more trust on others tend to be drastically happier. However, this does not have significant influence on Japanese individuals' happiness.

5.3 Results and Discussion

Comparing China and Japan, there are mainly 4 common points. First, in terms of structural social capital, people tend to be happier to have meals with friends more frequently. Second, people are happier with higher perceived social position. Third, people tend to be happier when they have more positive view on neighborhood environment. Fourth, people tend to be happier as more positive as one believes in the goodness of human nature.

There are also some different findings between China and Japan. First, organizational membership and voluntary experience only show significantly positive influence on Chinese people.

Second, perceived social position does not have significant influence on Japanese female, but on Japanese male, Chinese male and female. There is one saying goes in China that “No comparison, no harm.” As mentioned in previous chapter, most Japanese women’s “career” after getting married is doing housework at home rather than chasing for real career goal in the society. Without pressure from work place, and without comparison between colleagues, women may feel less pressure from comparison. This might be the reason why perceived social position is only related to Japanese male’s happiness.

Third, in China, people tend to be happier when they show more trust towards other people. However, in Japan, trust is not significantly related to happiness.

Fourth, religion is one of the important factors that affects individuals' happiness in China. However, it is not in Japan.

Fifth, compared to males, females have stronger intention to participate in social life in Japan. The reason might come from their lack of career life. Without career, they need to find some other ways to get credits from people besides families. However, we could not have such finding in China.

From the adjusted r-squared, we can see that selected social capital variables have stronger explanatory power in determining happiness than socio-economic factors only. When socio-economic factors can only explain 9% of happiness for Japan, 2.8% for China, models in chapter 4 can explain 14.8% for Japan, and 8.1% for China.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

Let's make a brief conclusion about findings in previous chapters.

In dimension of socio-economic factors, there are several common points. Health, wealth, the currently-married or cohabitating, having more children have positive correlation with happiness in general. What's more, women are happier than men. And individuals' happiness is a U-shaped pattern in terms of growing age.

Differences of determinants of happiness in two countries are concluded as follows. First, in China, male are happier to have more children while female are not which is contrary to Japanese case. Second, it is a unique case that when divorced, widowed or separated, there is no significant decreasing of Japanese female's happiness. Third, university or higher educational background makes people happier in China. However, educational background is not significantly correlate with happiness in Japan. Fourth, relative household income is a determinant of happiness in China, which has influence both on male and female, while it only shows significant impact on female in Japan. Fifth, people living in suburbs or outskirts of the city in China are significantly unhappier than those who live in country village. In Japan, people live in big cities are happier.

In dimension of social capital, both structural social capital and cognitive social capital have strong impact on Chinese people and Japanese people.

However, when comparing two countries, there are overwhelmingly more factors have significant influence on Chinese people's happiness. In both China and Japan, cognitive social capital has stronger influence on happiness than structural social capital. Thus, we can say that norms, values, beliefs and attitudes are crucial determinants of individuals' happiness in China and Japan. When comparing male and female, both in China and Japan, males are more likely to be affected by social capital than females.

<Implications>

According to our research results, education is a crucial determinant of happiness in China. To improve individuals' happiness, Chinese government should implement policies to improve educational level in general. What's more, since social capital plays an important role in determining happiness in China, how to promote cultural and ethical progress is the priority among priorities. For Japan, government should make more policies to promote female-friendly working environment to increase marriage rate and fertility rate.

Obviously, social capital factors are testified to have strong influence on individuals' happiness both in China and Japan. It is important for governments to improve individuals' social connections and lead individuals to have more positive attitudes embedded in their mind.

<Limitations>

The aim of this paper is using general social surveys conducted in China and Japan to make comparison to see the common points and difference between two biggest economic entities in East Asia. There are many such researches conducted in Western countries. However, East Asia is still a place that is overlooked. The meaning of this paper is to find out common points and differences between two countries through the topic of happiness.

However, there are some limitations of this paper. First, only using cross-sectional data, it is difficult to figure out causality. Second, we did not conduct a longitude study in this paper. However, determinants of happiness differs with time goes by. It is an important overlooked area of happiness studies. Third, we put more focus on comparison between two countries. Thus, we only superficially pointed out correlation between determinants and happiness. Thus, this paper is a touchstone of more consummate later studies. I am looking forward to deep and profound further studies in the future.

<Acknowledgement>

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