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The impact of subjective social class and social mentality on public attitude in the Third Distribution

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The public's social mentality has an essential influence on the attitude toward participating in the Third Distribution and the implementation of the policy. From the perspective of subjective social class and prosocial behavior, based on social cognition theory and existing literature, we established the citizen class-society mentality and attitude model in China. The model mechanism is verified by a questionnaire survey of citizens' subjective social class, sense of social fairness, and subjective well-being. The results showed that subjective social class positively influenced individuals' attitudes toward participation in the Third Distribution, but expected social class negatively moderated the relationship between citizens' participation experiences and attitudes. In addition, the subjective social class in the past influenced individuals' attitudes to participation in the third distribution through subjective well-being and the sense of social fairness, and the effect of the intermediary path of subjective well-being was stronger than the sense of social justice.

KEYWORDS

the Third Distribution, social class, social mentality, prosocial behavior, China

Introduction

After achieving its first centennial objective of creating a moderately wealthy society in all aspects, China's leadership has prioritized common prosperity, striving for affluence shared by everyone, both materially and culturally. The government has established a specific goal of achieving common prosperity by 2,035, which has been emphasized in the government's major development plans and documents. To attain this goal, China makes an effort to create a reasonable distribution system that benefits everyone. At the tenth meeting of the Central Finance and Economics Commission in August 2021, Xi Jinping emphasized that "promoting common prosperity in high-quality development, correctly handling the relationship between efficiency and fairness, and building a basic institutional arrangement."

The Third Distribution, with its unique role, has become an important institutional arrangement for promoting common prosperity under the new development stage. The Nineteenth Party Central Committee also proposed to give play to the role of the third distribution, develop charity, and improve the pattern of income distribution. The Third Distribution is an act of high-income groups and enterprises giving back to society through voluntary gifts, charitable donations, and voluntary activities to balance

efficiency with equality and reduce the income gap. These behaviors are under the influence of moral, cultural, and customary factors and are encouraged by the government instead of compelled.

A primary concern of the Third Distribution is the internal logic and mechanism of citizens' participation, which are essential to promote the implementation and development of the Third Distribution policy. Previous studies have mainly focused on the financial charitable donations in the Third Distribution, with the objects of corporations and celebrities. While the values embedded in the Third Distribution should be mutual assistance for individuals, which is more suitable to be attributed to prosocial behavior. The factors influencing prosocial behavior are primarily explored in social exchange theory and social norm theory, and can be classified into external factors such as environment and situation; and internal factors such as social cognition and self-perception. Social cognitive theory is one of the most important theories in social psychology, which believes that human behavior is determined by perception and processing of social situations. As the theory underlying social exchange theory and social norm theory and the bridge between external and internal factors, however, few studies have examined prosocial behavior with social cognitive theory as a direct perspective.

Therefore, this study will focus on the concept of social mentality based on social cognitive theory, to explore the relationship between citizens' subjective social class, sense of social fairness, subjective well-being, and citizens' prosocial behavior in the Third Distribution, and to explore the moderating roles between the relationships.

Literature review

Social class

Social class refers to groups which are formed for a variety of reasons, including economic and political, and are in different positions in the social hierarchy. There are objective differences in social resources and subjectively perceived differences between these groups (Kraus et al., 2012; Guo et al., 2015). Social class is an important social environmental variable that can be divided into subjective and objective social class. A variety of studies have applied education, occupation, and income as the proxy variables of social class. However, these factors only measure one aspect of socioeconomic status and have objective limitations. In addition, scholars have noted that objective social class has limited predictive power, especially in low-income groups, its predictive power for psychological and behavioral outcomes decreased significantly or even disappeared when income reached a certain level (Steptoe, 2002), but subjective social class had better predictive validity (Kraus et al., 2013; Hu et al., 2014).

Subjective social class refers to "an individual perception of their position in society" and the perception of the resources and prestige they possess (Jackman and Jackman, 1973). Subjective social class is centered on perceived relative rank, which is an individual understanding and perception when comparing themselves to others (Kraus et al., 2012). It includes both perceptions of socioeconomic status and judgments about the environment and social opportunities, as well as the individual perception of social status in the current, past, and future (Singh-Manoux et al., 2003). Identity-based motivation theory suggests that if subjective social class does correlate with individual perception, then it necessarily influences motivation and behavior (Destin et al., 2012). Thus, subjective social class captures more information about social status than objective social class. Therefore, the study of subjective social class is more accurate and relevant, and this study emphasizes the focus on subjective social class in the variable of "social class" to explore the relationship between subjective social class and citizens' participation behavior in the Third Distribution.

Subjective social class and prosocial behavior

Prosocial behavior is voluntary behavior that benefits others or society, including cooperation, helping, comforting, and donations, etc. (Eisenberg and Miller, 1987). And the Third Distribution refers to a distribution mechanism in which individuals, enterprises, and other social organizations are driven by volunteerism and morality to redistribute social wealth and ultimately achieve social equity through social assistance, private donations, charity, volunteering, etc. (Wu, 2010). Therefore, with the Third Distribution related policies developed in China, prosocial behavior, as a classic research field in social science, also provides a new research perspective for this study.

According to social cognitive theory (SCT), social class has a significant impact on prosocial behavior. Some scholars believe that people in lower social classes are under stress with fewer social resources and perceive lower social status, which makes them more inclined to pay attention to others and rely on others to help them achieve their life goals (Kraus et al., 2009); meanwhile, dependence on others has led to a contextualist social cognitive orientation and therefore higher levels of empathy, which is an important factor of prosocial behavior (McMahon et al., 2006; Page-Gould et al., 2010). Consequently, citizens in lower social classes will practice more prosocial behaviors.

However, another view is that people in high class will exhibit more prosocial behavior. According to the "warming effect," individuals tend to engage in prosocial behavior if they feel positive emotions through social comparison (Isen,

1970). Individuals who perceive themselves as superior in social comparisons will increase self-confidence and satisfaction, which leads to higher psychological resources and a greater willingness to pay attention to others' situations and needs, resulting in prosocial behavior. Individuals often use subjective social class as the dimension of social comparison, while prosocial behavior is costly and consumes its own resources (Dovidio et al., 2012; Guo et al., 2015), and compared to lower social classes, higher social classes are less constrained by work and life stress (Wilson and Musick, 1997) and have more time and money to engage in prosocial activities. For instance, participation in the Third Distribution such as charitable giving and volunteering, requires time and money. Therefore, such academic views are more in line with the context in this paper: subjective social class influences attitudes to participate in the Third Distribution.

It has been argued that the two inconsistent findings mentioned above are likely due to the neglect of the moderating role of social mobility (Tan et al., 2019). An individual's decision-making process for a behavior includes the expectation of the outcome (Wang et al., 2012), and subjective social mobility in the individual cognition tends to influence the individual's perceptions and attitude (Li, 2016; Zhang, 2016). It has been shown that expected reward plays a moderating role between social class and prosocial behavior; and individuals' expectations about behavioral outcomes would influence the relationship between social class and prosocial behavior: the prosocial behavior of low-social-class individuals is largely influenced by expected reward, and in the unrewarded context, individuals in lower social classes have less prosocial behavior than high-social-class individuals (Wilson, 2000; Lu et al., 2014). It can be inferred that individuals will be more active in the Third Distribution if they believe participation will help them reach a higher social class. Therefore, this paper explores the relationship between social class and attitude to participate in the Third Distribution in a dynamic perspective of subjective social mobility. The following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Subjective social class has a significant positive effect on participation in the Third Distribution.

H2: Expected social mobility acts as a moderator between subjective social class and participation in the Third Distribution.

The mediating role of sense of social fairness

Social class can have important effects on individual social mentalities, such as perceived social fairness (Li et al., 2012; Li, 2016), and subjective well-being (Howell and Howell, 2008; Diener et al., 2010; Zhou et al., 2021). Among them, the sense of social fairness is an individual perception of the degree to which social fairness in society is realized. The function of the sense of social fairness is to give individuals beliefs that motivate them to strive for future goals (Hafer and Bègue, 2005). Social Exchange Theory states that the potential intention of other-benefit behavior is self-interest, and regarding helping others as an investment for their own future (Blau, 1968). Individuals with a high sense of social fairness believe that giving in a fair society deserves to be rewarded, and they tend to pursue win-win in interactions and thus present more prosocial behavior (Bègue et al., 2008). In addition, individuals with a high sense of social fairness have a more positive self-perception and are more capable of helping others (Zhou and Guo, 2013a). Therefore, the sense of social fairness positively influences prosocial behavior (Ji et al., 2014; Li et al., 2014). Conversely, a sense of unfairness can cause individuals' unwillingness to be bound by the social norms so that they exhibit more selfish intentions and behaviors (Zitek et al., 2010).

Individual's social class can affect their perception of social fairness (Guo and Zhou, 2014). Those in the lower classes possess fewer social resources, which is a competitive disadvantage, so they perceive more unfairness and have lower levels of sense of social fairness (Whyte and Han, 2008; Guo et al., 2015). A study found that college students' subjective social class was positively related to just world beliefs (Zhou and Guo, 2013b). In the online environment, just world beliefs mediate the relationship between social class and online altruistic behavior (Zheng et al., 2021). Therefore, this paper proposes the following hypothesis:

H3: The sense of social fairness plays a mediating role between subjective social class and participation in the Third Distribution.

The mediating role of subjective well-being

Subjective well-being is a perception that arises from an individual's holistic assessment of the quality of life based on personal measures (Diener et al., 2010). The "happiness paradox" is an ongoing debate on whether economic growth can improve people's happiness. Although some empirical studies have shown that income growth does not lead to higher happiness (Easterlin, 1995), compared to more positive feedback (Veenhoven and Hagerty, 2006; Stevenson and Wolfers, 2008), this has been interpreted as an overall change during a long period of time for the whole society (Easterlin et al., 2010). Whereas, this study focuses on changes in individuals over a time span of 10 years. According to social class theory from the social cognitive perspective, people in lower social classes have a lower sense of control and higher threat sensitivity due to their fewer possession of resources and lower social status (Kraus et al., 2009; Johnson et al., 2011), to the detriment of subjective well-being, but in contrast to high-social- class individuals. Thus, for individuals, an increase in social class in

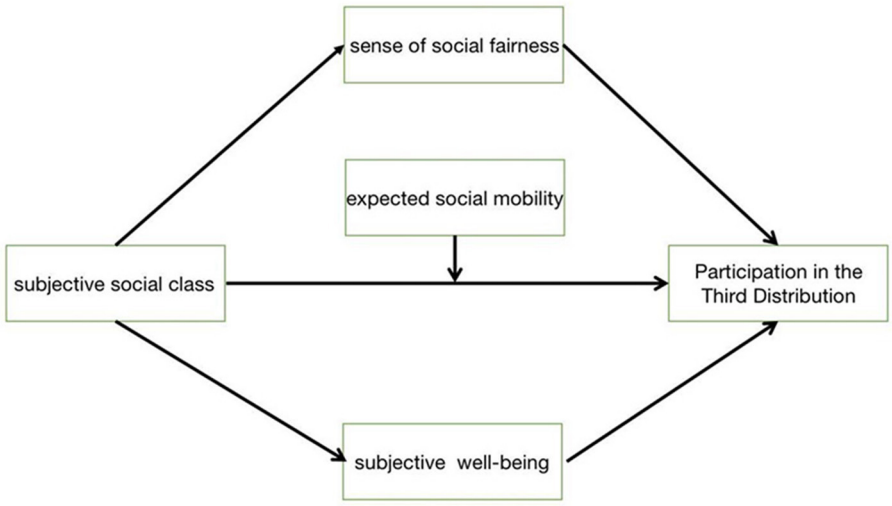

FIGURE 1
SEM 1.

the overall social environment has a significant positive effect on their subjective well-being (Liu et al., 2012; Run, 2012; Curhan et al., 2014).

Where does well-being come from? In addition to economic satisfaction, scholars have noted that people perceive well-being when achieving their potential and when their behavior is in agreement with inner values (Ryff, 1995). Many studies have shown that prosocial behavior can enhance individual subjective well-being (Yang, 2016; Cui et al., 2021), and Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory reports that self-actualization is the highest level of human need; helping the underprivileged can make people feel the realization of self-worth and can bring great psychological satisfaction (Zhong, 2015); charitable donors can directly derive self-joy and satisfaction from their behavior, and this intrinsic satisfaction is one of the motivations that drive individuals to engage in prosocial behavior (Andreoni, 1990). Thus, individuals with high subjective well-being are more likely to hold positive attitudes toward participating in the Third Distribution.

H4: Subjective social class has a positive effect on subjective well-being, in other words, subjective well-being plays a mediating role between subjective social class and participation in the Third Distribution. We establish SEM 1 in Figure 1.

Methods

Data collection

This paper employed a quantitative research design and conducted an online survey in China. We employed the snowball-sampling technique to recruit respondents from October to December 2021. A total of 347 adults completed questionnaires in this study, 24 invalid datasets were filtered out, and 323 valid samples were obtained, with a valid return rate of 93%.

Measures

Independent variable: Subjective social class

For the measurement of subjective social class, the most representative instrument is the MacArthur Scale of subjective (SES), which is a 10-level ladder, each representing the position of people with different levels of income, education, and prestige. Respondents are asked to select their social class level, with higher scores indicating a higher subjective perception of their social class.

Dependent variable: Citizen participation in the Third Distribution

Using a self-administered scale, activities were classified into four categories: "charitable giving," "voluntary activities," "community mutual help," and "mobilizing others to participate," based on Sun Chunchen's "Ethical Explanation of the Third Distribution." Respondents were asked "How often have you participated in the following activities in the past?" To measure the respondent's past participation in the Third Distribution, one is "never participate" and five is "always participate;" asked the respondents "Which of the following third distribution activities would you participate in the future?" to measure the respondent's future participation in Third Distribution, with one being "very reluctant" and five

TABLE 1 Demographic characteristic ($n = 323$).

	N	%		*N*	%
Gender			Education		
Male	138	42.7	Elementary school or below	17	5.3
Female	184	57.0	Junior high school	38	11.8
Inconvenient	1	0.3	High school	41	12.7
Average monthly income			University/College	186	57.6
No income	35	10.8	Master's degree or above	41	12.7
Under ¥5,000	92	28.5	Age		
¥5,001–10,000	104	32.2	18–29 years	156	48.3
¥10,001–20,000	64	19.8	30–45 years	108	33.4
¥20,000–50,000	23	7.1	46–59 years	37	11.5
Over ¥50,000	5	1.5	60+ years	22	6.8

being "very willing;" The respondents were asked "Which of the following ways do you prefer to participate in the Third Allocation?," with "charitable giving" and "voluntary activities" as direct one-way participation, with a score of 4. "Community mutual help" is direct two-way participation, with a score of 3. "Mobilizing others to participate" is indirect participation and scores two points; if not selected, it scores one point. The scale consists of three main questions with 12 sub-tests. The Cronbach's alpha = 0.732, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) = 0.849; the significance level of Bartlett's sphere test sig was 0.000, indicating that the reliability of the scale was good.

Mediating variable: Subjective well-being

Well-being is generally measured by allowing respondents to choose the level of happiness that fits their situation, commonly using a three-point scale, a four-point scale, or a five-point scale. In this study, the five-point scale was used by asking, "In general, do you feel that you are happy in your life?" The five-point scale was used in this study. "Very unhappy" is 1, "very happy" is 5.

Mediating variable: Sense of social fairness

We employed the questions used in the China General Social Survey (CGSS), and asked "In general, do you think society today is fair or unfair?". Five sequential options are given: "not fair at all," "relatively unfair," "not fair but not unfair either," "relatively fair" and "totally fair" in order of 1–5 points.

Moderating variable: Expected social mobility

In the same way as the subjective social class measure mentioned above, using the MacArthur scale, respondents were asked to select the social class rank they expected to be in 10 years from now on a scale of 1–10, with higher scores representing expected higher classes. Then "expected social class" minus "subjective social class" equals "expected social mobility."

Sample

Demographic characteristic

As shown in Table 1, in the 323 respondents, 57.0% of the respondents were female, 42.7% were male, and one (0.3%) was inconvenient to disclose. Respondents were all above 18 years of age, with 156 (48.3%) aged 18–29 years, 108 (33.4%) aged 30–45 years, 37 (11.5%) aged 46–59 years, and 22 (6.8%) aged 60 years and above.

In terms of education, 17 (5.3%) with elementary school education or below, 38 (11.8%) with junior high school education, and 41 (12.7%) with high school education. One hundred eighty-six (57.6%) had a bachelor's degree, and 41 (12.7%) received a master's degree or above.

Average monthly personal income, 35 (10.8%) with no income, 92 (28.5%) with < ¥5,000, 104 (32.2%) with ¥5,001–10,000, 64 (19.8%) with ¥10,001–20,000, 23 (7.1%) with more than ¥20,000–50,000, five (1.5%) with more than ¥50,000,000.

The overview of explanatory variables

Regarding the knowledge of Third Distribution, 31.6% of the participants said they are quite concerned, 22.6% are very concerned, and only 13.3% are quite unconcerned, and 5.3% are very unconcerned. 28.5% of the participants said that they know the Third Distribution generally, 23.2% said they know it relatively, and 19.2% said they know it very well, which shows that most of the participants in the questionnaire have basic knowledge of the Third Distribution. And 30% of the participants think that the Third Distribution is relatively relevant to them, and

TABLE 2 Effectiveness test results.

Variable	Main effect: participation in the third distribution		Moderating effects: participation in the third distribution
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Constant term	36.672***	23.451***	34.159***
Gender	0.464	0.899	0.957
Age	0.282	0.283	0.296
Education	−0.260	0.618	0.390
Income	0.133	−0.063	−0.007
Subjective social class		1.711***	2.138***
Subjective social class* expected social mobility			0.128
R^2	0.005	0.282	0.332
ΔR^2	0.005	0.227	0.008
F	0.407	24.955***	23.134***

*p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001 same below.

26.6% think it is very relevant to them. Overall, the respondents have a general concern and understanding of the Third Distribution and are aware of its relevance to individuals.

The majority of the participants perceived themselves to be in the middle and upper middle class, with a mean value of 5.8 for subjective class. 20.1 and 20.7% of the participants perceived themselves as being in the average class in Tier 5 and Tier 6. 43.7% of the participants perceived themselves to be below average, and 56.3% of the participants perceived themselves to be above average.

Regarding the sense of social fairness, 30.7% of the participants thought it was relatively fair, and 18.3% thought it was totally fair, making a total of 49%. While only 25% of the participants thought it was unfair, another 30.7% thought it was not fair but not unfair either. This indicates that the participants as a whole think that society is relatively fair. As for subjective well-being, 43% of the participants thought it was relatively happy and 24.8% thought it was very happy, indicating that the participants' overall subjective well-being was relatively high.

Data analysis and results

Common method analysis

Common method bias (CMB) may exist in this study as all of the questions in the survey were answered by the same respondent. To determine the common method bias, Harman's one-factor test was performed using factor analysis. The first factor explained only 35.484% of the total variance, which was well within the acceptance range of 40% (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The result indicated the absence of any major issues with the data.

The direct and moderating effects

We used hierarchical multiple regression to test the direct and moderating effects. The results are shown in Table 2. Key demographic factors of gender, age, education and income, were also included in the regression analyzes to control for their potentially confounding effects. Independent variables and potential moderators were all entered into deviation score form by subtracting the sample mean from the variable score (Aiken and West, 1991; Tabachnick and Fidell, 2001).

First, gender, age, income and education were entered into the regression equation. Subjective social class was entered in the second step. The interaction term depression × family cohesion was entered in the third step.

Direct effect

In model 1, the public's gender, age, education, and income do not affect their participation in the third distribution significantly. In model 2, the results show that subjective social class significantly predicted the participation ($B = 1.711$, $p < 0.001$), and added a statistically significant increase in the prediction ($\Delta R\wedge 2 = 0.227$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that when the people perceives themselves to be in higher classes, they are more likely to participate in the Third Distribution, therefore the Hypothesis 1 was supported.

Moderating effect

As shown in Model 3 in the table, the effect of the interaction term (subjective social class × expected social mobility) on participation is not statistically significant ($B = 0.128$, $p = 0.052 > 0.5$), H2 was not supported. However, the *p*-value is

TABLE 3 Results of the test for intermediate effects.

Effect	Path relation	Effect value	95% confidence interval	Quantity of effect
Direct effect	Subjective social class-> participation	0.9576	[0.5781, 1.3370]	59.15%
Mediating effect	Subjective social class->sense of social fairness -> participation	0.2977	[0.0637, 0.5408]	18.39%
	Subjective social class -> subjective well-being -> participation	0.3635	[0.1587, 0.5775]	22.45%
Total indirect effect		0.6612	[0.4153, 0.9218]	40.85%
Total effect		1.6188	[1.3253, 1.9123]	100%

CI, confidence interval; LL, lower limit; UL, upper limit.

very close to 0.05, the following of this study will try to make further exploration.

Mediating effects

To analyze the parallel mediation model of the influence of subjective social class on participation in the Third Distribution, we used the PROCESS macro for SPSS (Hayes, 2012). The bias-corrected bootstrap method was employed to test the parallel mediating effect. The analysis was based on 5,000 bootstrap iterations, and the confidence interval (CI) was set at 95%. Age, education, income and gender were controlled in each model.

Table 3 shows that the direct effect of subjective social class on participation was significant, the effect value was 0.9576 with 95% CI [0.5781, 1.3370], excluding 0. In addition, the total indirect effect was significant. Subjective social class had a significant indirect effect on participation with an effect value of 0.6612, CI [0.4153, 0.9218]. Further, the mediating role of sense of social fairness was significant, with an effect value of 0.2977, CI [0.0637, 0.5408]; and the indirect pathway through subjective well-being was also significant, with an effect value of 0.3635, CI [0.1587, 0.5775].

In summary, the effect values of each model are within the confidence interval and none of the confidence intervals contain 0. This proves that the effects of the two mediating paths are significant and the parallel mediation model holds. It shows that the sense of social fairness has a mediating role between the subjective social class of citizens and their participation in the Third Distribution, and H3 was supported. Subjective well-being has a mediating role between the subjective social class of citizens and their participation in the Third Distribution, and H4 was supported.

The effect size of the direct effect is 59.15%, and the effect sizes of the two mediating paths are 18.39 and 22.45%, respectively. It indicates that citizens' subjective social class has the largest direct effect on their participation in the Third Distribution, while the mediating effect of subjective well-being is higher than the mediating effect of sense of social fairness. Such findings suggest that whether people participate in the Third Distribution depends more on their assessment of their own living conditions, while the assessment of social development will play a lesser role. This may be due to the continuous popularization of individualistic in modern Chinese society, people are more advocating the recognition and protection of personal property (economy) and freedom (politics) rights, and respect and encourage personal struggle and achievements. Besides, most people will substitute themselves as givers and devotees in the third distribution, and Participation in the Third Distribution is more for the satisfaction of spiritual. According to Maslow's Needs Theory, only when one's basic needs reach a certain level, that is, they think that their social class is high enough and their life is happy enough, they will consider participating in the activities that contribute to themselves and help others such as the Third Distribution.

Further exploration of moderation analysis

In the previous test, the moderating effect of the variable "expected social mobility" was not statistically significant. Therefore, we attempted to add the similar variable "expected social class" as a moderating variable to the regression model to test whether there is a moderating effect of "expected social class" in the relationship between subjective social class and participation.

Similar analyses were conducted on the further exploration. As shown in Model 4 in Table 4, the interaction effect of subjective social class and expected social class had a significant effect on participation ($B = -0.26$, $p < 0.001$), and added a statistically significant increase in the prediction ($\Delta R2 = 0.031$, $p < 0.001$).

As shown in the Figure 2, the slope of the two lines of low and high regulation changes significantly and the slope tends to flatten out, interfering with the effect of subjective social class on participation as the regulation effect increases, i.e. The expected social class negatively regulates the relationship between subjective social class and participation. In other words, the weaker the positive relationship between citizens' subjective social class and their participation in the Third Distribution when their expected social class is higher, and to another extent, Hypothesis 2 is partially supported. This suggests that when

TABLE 4 Results of further exploratory tests.

Variable	Main effect. Acts of participation in the third distribution exercise		Moderating effects. Acts of participation in the third distribution exercise	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Constant term (math.)	36.672***	23.451***	34.159***	14.374***
Gender	0.464	0.899	0.957	0.815
Age	0.282	0.283	0.296	0.377
Education	−0.260	0.618	0.390	0.293
Income	0.133	−0.063	−0.007	0.019
Subjective social class		1.711***	2.138***	1.101***
Subjective social class* Expected social mobility			0.128	
Subjective social class* Expected social class				−0.260***
R^2	0.005	0.282	0.332	0.362
ΔR^2	0.005	0.227	0.008	0.031
F	0.407	24.955***	23.134***	25.545***

*p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001 same below.

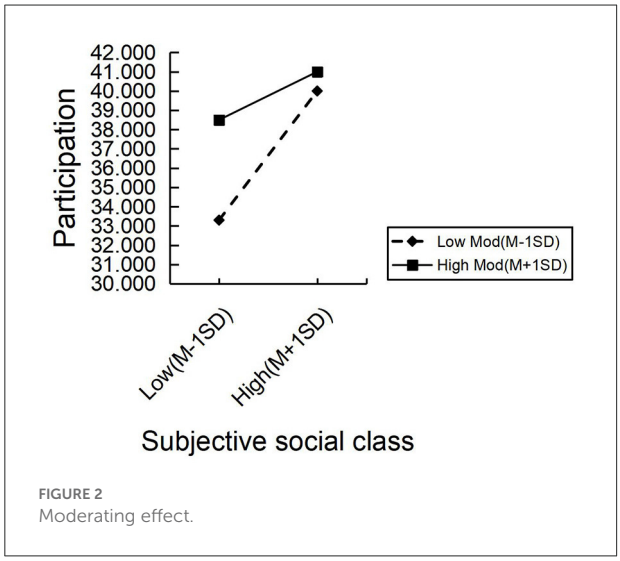

FIGURE 2
Moderating effect.

people's expected social class is lower, their subjective social class is more likely to influence their participation in the Third Distribution; conversely, when people's expected social class is higher, their subjective social class will be less likely to influence their participation in the Third Distribution.

As to why the moderating effect of "expected social mobility" is statistically insignificant while the moderating effect of "expected social class" is significant, we propose two statements to try to explain this situation: First, "outcomes outweigh processes." The "expected social mobility" is a quantification of the process of people's class mobility, while the "expected social class" is a quantification of the final class that is reached after this dynamic process. This indicates that the outcome of class mobility is more important to people than the process, i.e., "whether a high enough social class will be reached in the future" will influence (moderate) the relationship between subjective social class and participation in the third distribution at this stage. Secondly, "horizontal comparison is more important than vertical comparison." "Expected social mobility" is based on the change of one's desired class and the class one is in, which implies the comparison of one's own developmental changes and is a kind of vertical comparison. While the "expected social class" implies a social comparison between oneself and others in the future. In other words, people will imagine and compare the gap between their own social class and others in the future, which is horizontal comparison, will influence (moderate) their behavioral decisions in the present.

Besides, for the negative regulation findings, we can consider "expected social class" as a "reward," and this reward is particular, personal, and You have what others do not. When people's expected social class is low (the effect of this "reward" is insignificant or even negligible), the behavioral decisions related to the Third Distribution will be more influenced by the current social class situation. When people's expected social class is high (the effect of the "reward" is large enough to make people imagine a certain degree of satisfaction and superiority), then the current situation can be appropriately ignored, the subjective social class will have less influence on the participation in the Third Distribution.

Combining the two analyses of moderation, we found that expected social mobility does not significantly moderate the relationship between subjective social class and participation in

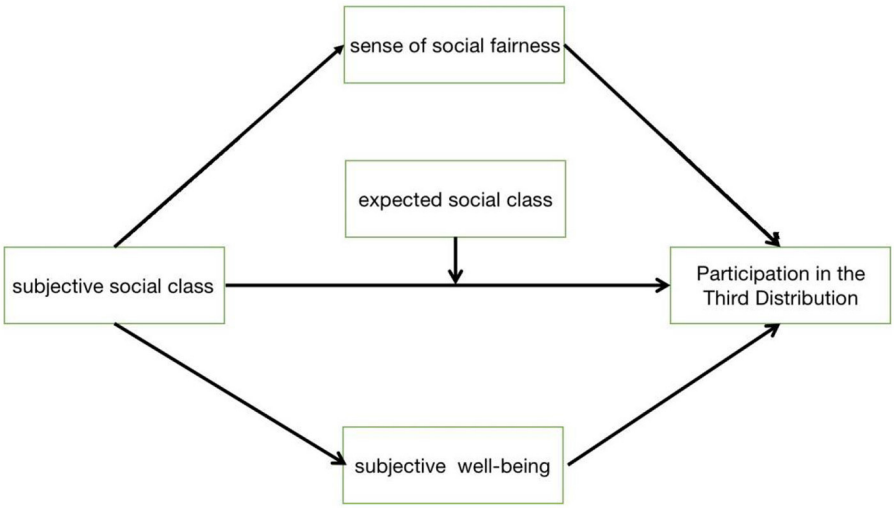

FIGURE 3
SEM 2.

the Third Distribution, while expected social class had a negative moderating effect. The following model is derived as Figure 3.

Summary and discussion

This study investigated and quantified the public's subjective social class, expectation class, subjective well-being, and sense of social fairness using a questionnaire survey to construct a model of the citizen class-society mentality and attitude for analysis of the Third Distribution. The results showed that while subjective social class positively influenced individuals' attitudes toward participation in the Third Distribution, expected social class negatively moderated the relationship between citizens' participation experiences and attitudes. And the subjective social class of citizens affected individuals' attitudes toward participation in the Third Distribution through subjective well-being and the sense of social fairness. In addition, of the two mediating paths, the mediating path of subjective well-being has a stronger effect than that of the sense of social fairness.

In conducting the data analysis for this study, we found that expected social mobility does not moderate the effect of subjective social class on Third Distribution participation attitudes statistically, which is different from the results of many previous empirical studies. We presume that this may be due to the fact that the questionnaire used convenience sampling and snowball sampling, which resulted in our having many college students in the sample. Students are thought to be in transitional classes and have a large bias in their perceptions of their social class and expected class. This is also a limitation of this research that the sample is more concentrated on some characteristics of income, education, and occupation, and to some extent lacks sufficient diversity to represent the overall condition of society.

In different cultural contexts, there are various influencing factors for charitable giving, especially in many western countries, which are also influenced by religion and tax payment. Studies in the United States found that donors' education level, religious organization, economic conditions, personal volunteering tendency and early experience were positively correlated (e.g., Drollinger, 1997; Laufer et al., 2010). Looking at British households, including education level, living area, real estate, social status of occupation, gender, family income level and tax amount generated by donation behavior, determine whether British families will make charitable donation (e.g., Jones and Posnett, 1991). In Canada, the influencing factors of charitable donation are more related to the family income of the research subjects, whether they are community members, marital status and age, religious activities and participation degree, and community residence time. On the other hand, the amount of charitable donations was influenced by the subjects' tendency of volunteerism, social tax incentives and social mobilization (e.g., Michaud, 1993; Freeman et al., 2009).

These findings shed light on strategies to promote participation in the implementation of the third distribution policy and citizens' participation in pro-social behavior. Fundamentally, the national economy should be maintained at a steady pace and increase individual economic income in order to improve their subjective social class. It is also important to create a better vision of the future and hope for progress in the quality of life, so that they have expectations of achieving the expected social class and social mobility. At the same time, maintaining a fair and just social environment and enhancing

people's happiness, which in turn promotes participation in the Third Distribution. In which the fair and just social environment is more stable for individuals than subjective well-being, so the impact of enhancing subjective well-being is more immediate and strong.

The government has many options for building the public trust in donation policy study. The existing consensus in the academic community is that "Command and control" is easily criticized, and there have been many failed cases of the method "Government telling others doing" (Black and Kingsford Smith, 2002). The approach adopted in the United States generally tends to be legislatively driven and varies widely from state to state. In the UK, the government has also used a fundraising self-regulatory body, the Fundraising Standards Board. It would also undoubtedly be useful to learn more about the interplay between fundraising, regulation and the public trust it aims to promote. Ultimately, all regulation, whether initiated by the government without its oversight or enacted and monitored by the government, needs to have the potential to change donor perceptions of the sector in order to change direction and level donor support (Sargeant et al., 2010). More academic research is therefore necessary to understand how such reporting requirements change donor behavior.

Previous studies on the Third Distribution in China often limited the participation of individuals in the third distribution to charitable donations at the economic level, but in fact, the coverage of the third distribution can be extended to community mutual aid, participation in volunteer activities, etc. For ordinary citizens, the Third Distribution conceptualized as prosocial behavior can better reflect its meaning. This study explores the influence of subjective social class on participation attitudes from the perspectives of prosocial behavior and social psychology, opening up a new perspective for research related to the Third Distribution. Future research could measure objective social class more effectively and incorporate it into models for comparison with subjective social class; or include factors affecting subjective social class to further explore the impact of individual psychological motivations on participation in the Third Distribution.

Data availability statement

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article/supplementary material, further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author.

Ethics statement

Ethical review and approval was not required for the study involving human participants in accordance with the local legislation and institutional requirements. Written informed consent to participate in this study was not required from the participants in accordance with the national legislation and the institutional requirements.

Author contributions

All authors listed have made a substantial, direct, and intellectual contribution to the work and approved it for publication.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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