

The Connotation and Value of Urban Community Governance in the New Era

Dekuo Liang

Law School, Shanghai University of Political Science and Law, Shanghai, China

ldksbs@163.com

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Abstract: The basic connotation of urban community governance in the new era is to reach community consensus through deliberative democracy, participation of multi subjects in community construction, resolution of community conflicts through deliberative governance, and all residents benefiting from the community development. The value orientation of urban community governance is to take the people as the center and safeguard the rights and interests of residents; The people are the masters of the community and improve community autonomy; To promote the harmony of the community; Multi-negotiation, seeking the greatest common divisor of the most people.

1. Introduction

The report of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) puts forward “building a social governance pattern of co construction, co-governance and sharing” from the perspective of system construction, which points out the direction for strengthening and innovating social governance in the new era. The foundation of realizing “co-construction, co-governance and sharing” is “co-consultation”. Make things discussed easily, and people's affairs should be discussed by people. The government should not act recklessly and arbitrarily. This is the true meaning of people’s democracy. Building a new era of social governance pattern is a systematic project, which needs to take measures from many aspects and angles, implement policies comprehensively, and form a joint force. The most important thing is to lead and promote multiple subjects to participate in social governance, and build a social governance community in which everyone is responsible and enjoyed.

2. The Connotation of Urban Community Governance in the New Era

2.1 Co-Construction: Multi-Subject Participation in Community Construction

Co-construction is to form a community governance pattern with the leadership of the Party committee, the leadership of the government, the coordination of community neighborhood committees and social organizations, and the wide participation of community members, so as to realize the positive interaction between governmental governance, social self-regulation, and residents’ autonomy. We should fully implement the main responsibilities of Party committees and governments at all levels in community construction, and bring the strengthening and innovation of community construction into the performance evaluation index system of community Party committee and government leading groups and leading cadres. Promote social forces to participate in community construction, and strive to form a good situation in which everyone participates and everyone is responsible. Social organizations, enterprises and institutions, and the people are encouraged to participate in community construction through government purchase of services and opening of public service market. We should vigorously cultivate and develop community social organizations to provide professional community services for communities. Working units in the community will open cultural, educational, health, sports and other activities facilities for community residents, and promote co-construction and resource sharing. To cultivate the enthusiasm of residents to participate in community affairs, guide and mobilize the majority of

residents to participate in community construction in an orderly manner.

2.2 Co-Governance: Resolving Community Conflicts through Consultation Governance

Community consultation governance is to change the previous administrative order style, paternalistic approach, to ensure the equality and interaction of multiple subjects. In the context of contemporary China, the prominent problem of deliberative governance is the loss of leadership governance authority, and even the risk of “governance failure”^[1]. As a result, some government departments dare not promote consultative governance. Xi Jinping pointed out that if the people’s views are lost, the people’s position is skewed, the people are biased, and the people will not trust you. When that happens, it will endanger the party’s ruling base and ruling position^[2]. In acquaintance communities, especially those transformed from the unit systems, we should give full play to the autonomous role of the community elite. These community capable people play the role of leaders or moderators, and affect the attitude and behavior of ordinary residents to a great extent. When the community conflicts occur, it is easy for these community capable people out of their own social prestige and public will, to mobilize ordinary people to participate in the collective conflicts. Fei Xiaotong believes that the relationship structure of Chinese people is a “social circle” formed by the pattern of differential order, which makes the public supply of Chinese society depend on the morality of an individual or a group of individuals in the center of the pattern of differential order to a certain extent^[3]. In resolving community conflicts, community capable people can drive the lesser capable people, and the lesser capable people can mobilize their own network to make big conflicts small and small conflicts nothing.

2.3 Sharing: Development Achievements Benefiting Community Residents

Improving people's livelihood and well-being is the fundamental purpose of community construction and community service, so that the results of community development benefit all residents. This adheres to the people-centered development idea, and makes the cake bigger and divided better, so that the people's sense of happiness and acquisition can be more guaranteed and enriched. Community construction planning cannot be hung on the wall, and community service can not only be expressed in words. It is necessary to respond to people’s livelihood concerns, highlight problem orientation, deal with people’s anxieties and difficulties, and do more practical things to warm and win people’s hearts. To protect and improve people’s livelihood, we should seize the most direct and realistic interests that people are most concerned about, seek more benefits for people’s livelihood and solve more worries about people’s livelihood, and constantly make new progress in education for children, security for the elderly, support for the weak, income from work, housing and medical care for the sick. In the new era, “the main contradiction of our society has been transformed into the contradiction between the people’s growing needs for a better life and the unbalanced and inadequate development”. The people’s needs for a better life are increasingly diversified, multi-level and multi-faceted. They not only put forward higher requirements for material life, but also have increasing requirements for democracy, rule of law, fairness, justice, security and environment^[4]. To ensure and improve people’s livelihood, we should correctly grasp and conform to the practical needs of the changes of the main social contradictions in our country.

2.4 Consultation: Deliberative Democracy and Community Consensus

Consultation is the basis of co-construction, co-governance and sharing. It requires multiple subjects to reach consensus through consultation. The real “agreement” must be based on “consensus”. “Consensus” means that all parties involved accept the knowledge that is valid, binding between the subjects. The key to reaching agreement through mutual consultation is mutual understanding among members. Such consultation cannot be based on “influence”, but only on the real “agreement” among members of society. Because only truly reasonable consultation can be stable, non temporary, non superficial and non mandatory. Under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, socialist deliberative democracy is an important form of democracy in which all aspects of the people carry out extensive consultation before and during the decision-making process to form consensus around major issues of reform, development and stability and practical

issues involving the vital interests of the people. According to the requirements of consultation for the people and consultation by the people, grassroots consultation refers to the democratic form of consultation in towns, streets, administrative villages and communities around urban and rural social governance, grassroots public affairs, social public welfare undertakings, practical problems involving the vital interests of the people, and enterprises and institutions around democratic management. In the process of community decision-making and implementation, the community neighborhood committee should fully listen to the opinions of all parties, seek the greatest common divisor, and reach consensus or coordinate differences in the form of consultation and dialogue. We will establish a list system of community consultation items, including property management services, environmental sanitation improvement, lighting and greening projects, low rent housing applications, social assistance and relief, land acquisition and resettlement, etc. We will determine consultation topics around public affairs and public welfare undertakings involving the vital interests of community residents, and safeguard the interests of the people through community consultation, and improve residents' participation enthusiasm.

3. The Value of Urban Community Governance in the New Era

3.1 Taking the People as the Center and Safeguarding the Rights and Interests of Residents

Taking the people as the center is the fundamental political position of social governance thought in the new era. China's constitution stipulates that "all power of the People's Republic of China belongs to the people". According to this provision, China's sovereignty belongs to the people, and all other powers of the state come from the people's sovereignty. The original intention and mission of the Chinese Communists is to work for the happiness of the Chinese people, to serve the people wholeheartedly as their fundamental purpose, to use power for the people, to tie feelings with the people, and to work for interests of the people. It is the starting point and foothold of all work to insist that the interests of the people are above everything else and to realize, safeguard and develop the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the people. In the report of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, Xi Jinping stressed the importance of upholding the main position of the people, upholding the principle of building the party for the public, governing for the people, practicing the fundamental purpose of serving the people wholeheartedly, implementing the Party's people-centered line in all the activities of governing the country, taking the people's yearning for a better life as the goal of struggle, and relying on the people to create historical greatness.

Urban community governance should adhere to the people-oriented principle, put the rights and interests of residents in the highest position in the heart, and serve the community residents wholeheartedly. To safeguard the fundamental interests of residents as the fundamental goal of community development, solve the most concerned, direct and realistic problems of residents, and realize the sharing of development achievements by residents. "Whether the people are satisfied or not, whether they are happy or not, whether they agree or not" is regarded as the only standard to measure the quality of community work. Community cadres should listen to the voice of the residents and respond to their expectations. The measures of benefiting the people in the community continue to be proposed, the reform of people's livelihood continues to deepen, and the sense of gain and happiness of the residents continue to increase, which greatly enhances cohesion and boosts their confidence.

3.2 The People Are the Masters of the Country and Improve Community Autonomy

The people being the masters of the country is the essence and core of socialist democratic politics. The report of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China points out that the development of socialist democratic politics is to embody the will of the people, protect the rights and interests of the people, stimulate the creative vitality of the people, and use the system to ensure that the people are masters of the country. There are two important forms of Chinese socialist democracy: electoral democracy and deliberative democracy. They are that the people exercise their

rights through elections and voting, and that all aspects of the people are considered through full consultation before and during the implementation of major decisions, so as to reach consensus on common issues as far as possible. These two forms of democracy do not replace and negate each other, but complement each other, which together constitute the institutional characteristics and advantages of China's socialist democratic politics^[5]. Specifically speaking, community residents have autonomy, including property autonomy, financial autonomy, personnel autonomy, management autonomy, education autonomy, and service autonomy, which is embodied in “Four Democracies” (democratic election, democratic decision-making, democratic management, and democratic supervision) and “Four Selves” (self-management, self-education, self-service, and self supervision).

Community neighborhood committees should mobilize and organize community residents to manage community affairs and promote community residents' autonomy. The residents' meeting may decide on the following matters: to formulate regulations and conventions on residents' autonomy; To examine the annual work plan and report of the residents committee; To evaluate the work of the residents committee and its members; Other important matters concerning the interests of all residents. The “Three Carriages” perform their respective duties and cooperate with each other. The neighborhood committee is the main body representing all the residents in the residential area, or the representative of the public interests of the residential area, the owners committee is the representative of the interests of the owners, and the property service enterprises represent the interests of the daily management and operation maintenance personnel of the residential area. For the daily affairs of residential quarters, the division of labor among the neighborhood committee, the owners committee and the property service enterprise is: the neighborhood committee is responsible for supervision and guidance, the owners committee makes decisions, and the property service enterprise implements them.

3.3 Tolerance and Harmony, Promote Community Harmonious

Socialist harmonious society refers to a society of democracy and rule of law, fairness and justice, honesty and fraternity, vitality, stability and order, and harmony between man and nature. The concept of harmonious community comes from the harmonious society, which is to build the community into a social life community with orderly management, perfect service, beautiful environment, good public security, convenient life and harmonious interpersonal relationship. Xi Jinping, the general secretary, attaches importance to the construction of safe China, long period of stability, Chinese people live and work in peace and prosperity, and the stability and order of the Chinese socialist society. Community is the cell of society. The foundation of building a harmonious society and a safe China is harmony of the community and the community spirit of tolerance and harmony.

“Tolerance and harmony” embodies the traditional ethical spirit of the Chinese nation, which is “the propriety is to uphold harmony” and “harmony is mutually beneficial”. It embodies the character of inclusiveness and compatibility, as well as the spirit of pursuing harmony, focusing on cooperation, advocating humility and magnanimity. Inclusiveness is to care for and respect everyone, pay attention to individual differences, cultural diversity and ethnic diversity, fully consider the value differences in gender, age, occupation, social status, political belief, religion and mental or physical disability, and pay special attention to the needs and empowerment of vulnerable, oppressed and poor people. Inclusiveness is to analyze specific problems. In the face of community conflicts, we should be tolerant, allow different voices and respect the rights of participants. We should adhere to the principle of more consultation when we are in trouble and more consultation when we are doing things. We should recognize multiple differences and encourage extensive participation and dialogue. Only in this way can we eliminate the estrangement and its ideological roots of community contradictions, enhance the sense of belonging and cohesion of residents, and promote community harmony.

3.4 Seeking the Greatest Common Divisor through Multiple Negotiations

Without equal participation and frank dialogue of multiple subjects, community governance will

be reduced to a means and tool for strong interest groups to seek private interests. The main body of community multi negotiation includes party organizations, neighborhood committees, residents' representatives, representatives of resident units, representatives of community social organizations, staff appointed by sub district offices and other stakeholders. It can also cultivate some new negotiation subjects, such as retired veteran cadres, veteran party members, deputies to the National People's Congress, members of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, Party representatives, leaders of grassroots mass organizations, migrant workers and businessmen, and migrant population. In particular, we should pay attention to the expression of the opinions of the vulnerable groups, safeguard the rights and interests of women, children, the elderly, the poor and the migrant population, so that the strong groups can be regulated and the vulnerable groups can be protected.

In urban communities, there are some phenomena, such as cadres disdain to participate, young and middle-aged people have no time to participate, migrant population is unwilling to participate, the elderly will not participate, and so on. The main body of participation is not extensive and the representativeness is not enough, which makes it difficult to carry out autonomous activities and the results of consultation difficult to identify. To change this situation, we need to adhere to the core leadership position of community party organizations in grassroots community work, give full play to the leading and coordinating role of Party organizations, lead community residents' autonomy, coordinate the allocation of community resources, resolve major contradictions and disputes, and coordinate multiple interests. In view of the problems of virtual and marginalization of the neighborhood committee, we should build a platform for the neighborhood committee, return the power and empower it, and vigorously cultivate and enhance the autonomous ability of the neighborhood committee. We should improve the internal governance structure of the neighborhood committee and set up a number of professional committees as needed to make the community governance more refined and specialized.

4. Conclusion

Urban community governance in the new era should realize the rights and opportunities of residents to effectively participate in community governance through equal consultation and frank dialogue. When planning community affairs, fully listen to the opinions of all parties, seek the greatest common divisor, and reach consensus or coordinate differences in the form of consultation and dialogue. In the process of resolving community conflicts, we should make full use of all forces to check and balance each other and promote each other, so as to transform structural internal friction into an effective force for community construction. In the provision of community services, we should adhere to the demand orientation of residents, fully activate the potential capability of everyone, and realize mutual help among residents.

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