Research on Community Multi-Governance under the Guidance of Social Integration Theory: Take community T in Beijing as an example

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Abstract: Reviewing the research on community multi-governance in China in recent years, we have accumulated rich research results on the community's multi-governance models, multiple governance experiences, and existing challenges. Based on the research on the governance measures and effects of the community T in Chaoyang District of Beijing on the express delivery industry, this paper analyzes the application of the theory of the social integration in the process of governance and summarizes the feasible ways of multi-governance of urban communities in China: the Party organizations play an important leading role in the organization; the community provides an organizational platform for social inclusion; promote the social integration of community new members to improve the level of community governance.

1. Introduction

With the progress of our society, community public affairs are becoming more complex than ever before. As the core of urban residents' daily life, in both China and other countries, the community has increasingly assumed the comprehensive functions of consolidating political power, building basic-level arty organizations, providing public services, and promoting social development. The management of community public affairs requires all stakeholders to achieve community harmony and development in equal consultation and mutual reciprocity. That is what is called 'community multi-governance'. During the last years, Chinese researchers and scholars have done a myriad of work to analyze and study community multi-governance based on practical investigation and theory learning. The result is the special community governance model which combines the basic-level Party organizations and the community in China.

Nowadays, although the governance subjects of the community are diversified, the differences in the preferences of each subject and the limited channels of participation in governance result in difficulties in community governance. Some governance subjects are still excluded from the governance system. Innovative approaches and theoretical perspectives are in need to tackle such an issue. This paper reviews the existing research on community multi-governance in China and presents some of the current challenges faced by communities. Focusing on these challenges, the paper discusses the case of a community in Beijing, community T, attempting to show feasible ways of community multi-governance with the use of the social integration theory.

This paper consists of three parts. In the first part, it summarizes the research on the community multi-governance experiences in recent years and the present situation in China. The second part of the paper is the introduction and analysis of issues, governance practices, and effectiveness in community T based on investigation and interview. Meanwhile, the paper finds a few drawbacks and provides suggestions. In the remainder of the paper, the experiences of community multi-governance under the guidance of the social integration theory in community T are explained.

2. Present situation of community multi-governance in China

The theory of community multi-governance originates from the multi-governance theory, emphasizing the diversification of the community governance subjects. With the collaborative action on the basis of their own interests, the Party organizations, sub-district office, neighborhood

committees, residents, enterprises within the community, and other governance subjects jointly use their own resources and power to solve the problems in the community and provide public services to achieve the common goal of improving community governance capacity and building a better community. After long-term practice and analysis, researchers have accumulated some achievements in the models, experiences, and challenges of community multi-governance in community affairs.

2.1 The models and experiences of multi-governance in China

Based on the situation of communities in different regions, The models of multi-governance in China are divided into four typical models:

(1) Shanghai: the administrative-led governance model. This model gives the sub-district offices community management authority from the government and constitutes a 'sub-district community' by classifying the communities according to functions. The Shanghai model takes the sub-district offices as the management center. It builds the coordination of different organizations through the integrated command-execution chain and the orderly grid management by using digital and information applications.

(2) Shenyang: the community residents' autonomous governance model. The characteristics of the model are that it first adjusts the scale of the community reasonably, and then reconstructs the organizations to build a framework for community democratic autonomy. After the community is merged according to the new changes in the society, a new community organization system with clear layers from decision-making to implementation is established, so as to clarify the rights and obligations of each community governance subject and highlight the function of community autonomy.

(3) Beijing: hub-social organizations' participatory governance model. This model highlights 'Party committee leadership, government responsibility, social organization participation, and market operation'. Community governance shows the 'separation of government and the society' and 'separation of power and responsibility'. It plays a bridge role for community organizations and makes social organizations provide professional and appropriate services. Governance subjects cooperate through negotiation with the help from local government departments.

(4) Guangzhou: the project-based governance model. Guangzhou's model takes the project as the carrier. The government outsources or purchases services authorized by the service project to achieve community participation in multiple subjects and launches a series of activities centered on specific public service projects.

From the four typical models of urban community multi-governance, it can be seen that the current community governance system in China presents the characteristic of 'one core and multiple'. Such a characteristic means that each governance subject jointly participates in the management of community public affairs under the leadership of the government and the Party organizations. There are three experiences that can be concluded from them: Firstly, making top-level institutional design. Community governance needs an orderly system. The reform from 'administration' to 'cooperation' is essential. To reduce the monopoly of government and introduce the power of other subjects, it is necessary to clarify the boundaries of power and responsibility of governance subjects. All four models have cut direct government intervention. At the same time, a set of scientific and feasible main body collaboration paths is designed. Each governance subject is woven into a governance network by using advanced information technology. Secondly, innovating the rules and regulations. Shenyang model shows that in order to ensure the effective integration of social organizations and autonomous organizations into the governance system, it is necessary to strengthen the construction of non-legal rules in the communities and establish the formal relationship between governance subjects in the form of 'residents' conventions', 'organizational rules' and 'management rules', which are complementary to the law. Third, service supply should be based on demand. The Beijing model and Guangzhou model introduce quality services in different forms. In view of the problems such as 'who provides community public services' and 'how to provide them', we should be guided by meeting the needs of different levels of

communities and residents, give full play to the advantages of the public and private sectors, and achieve win-win cooperation among the government, social organizations, and communities.

2.2 The challenges of the existing community multi-governance models in community affairs

The existing community multi-governance models basically set up interaction and governance organization. However, community affairs in real life become complicated, socialized and diversified when the public affairs that should be undertaken by the government, market, and society are gradually transferred to the community. Diversified governance subjects' interests are scattered, governance resources are limited, governance rights and responsibilities are vague, and community exclusion and other factors lead to difficulties and challenges in the governance of specific affairs in China.

(1) The governance subjects are scattered and lack consultation. In the process of community public affairs management, each subject shows a preference for governance because of different interest starting points. In addition to the dispersion of participation objectives, each subject often acts independently or conflicts in the process of governance. Without an effective communication platform, the degree of participation is shallow and participation procedures are dispersed, which cannot form a resultant force.

(2) Governance resources are idle and lack integration. Community public affairs governance needs to invest in corresponding human and material resources. Apart from the lack of resources due to differences in development levels, a large number of resources in urban communities in China have not been effectively utilized, such as community venues, volunteers, public infrastructure, and so on. Besides, missing supervision of the use of resources leads to the existence of using public resources for private. Finally, it is difficult for some organizations to establish, carry out activities, and maintain because legislation lags behind organizational legitimacy.

(3) Governing authority and responsibility are unknown, which causes a vacuum. The government delegates power to the community but there are problems with power allocation, power use, and responsibility in the governance of specific affairs. Some sub-district offices and neighborhood committees do not have the ability to undertake the governance power from the government, which will lead to the vacuum of power undertaking, the confusion and alienation of community roles, and the absence of community affairs governance.

(4) Community exists exclusion. The community is a small and relatively closed whole. The members of the community have high similarities in interests, preferences, psychological culture, and so on. Therefore, the community becomes homogeneous and excludes external personnel. For the new community members, it is difficult to fully integrate into the original community interpersonal network and social life. The appeals of these people are often easily ignored, which increases the difficulty of community affairs governance.

3. Community multi-governance under the guidance of the social integration theory in community T

Under the changing trend of community affairs, community multi-governance needs innovations to cope with the new situation. Social integration theory refers to a dynamic process in which a certain group of people in the society integrates into the mainstream group of society, acquires economic and social resources equally, and differentiates in social cognition. According to previous studies, there are three levels in the progressive process of social integration of a city group: economy, social relationship, and cultural psychology. Social integration represents a new bridge-type social capital that crosses cultural differences, regional identity, and social boundaries, and breaks through the old interpersonal network and communication relations.

A community in the Chaoyang District of Beijing (represented by 'community T' in this paper) has successfully applied the theory of social integration in the governance of the express delivery industry in the community. By promoting the social integration level of express delivery workers working in the region (referred to as 'the riders' in the rest), the chaos of the express delivery industry has been rectified and an effective multi-governance mechanism has been established.

3.1 The introduction of community T

Community T is located in the Chaoyang District of Beijing, with an area of 1.23 square kilometers and a permanent population of about 40000 people. It is one of the highest residential densities in the city and is also a typical old residential area in Beijing. Community T consists of six communities. Most residential buildings were built in the 1980s and are short of infrastructure, with narrow corridors and a lack of elevators, express cabinets, and parking garages. The roads between buildings are complex. There are 11 express delivery stations and 395 express delivery riders in the community.

3.2 Problems the community facing

The defects of community T make a slow distribution, customer disputes, and traffic safety problems during the delivery process. When dealing with these community affairs, the rider group is outside the community governance system so they cannot express their requirements and play a role as the governance subject. The root of this problem is the low level of social integration of the riders into the community. Specifically, there are three points:

(1) The riders' economic income was damaged. The riders working in community T have a large number of orders. However, their efficiency was low because they have to upstairs and downstairs slowly without elevators and it was difficult to find the locations of their customers. Thus, the riders are often complained by the customers about slow speed or secondary distribution problems, which seriously affected their income. In the case of insufficient work income, the riders were less satisfied with work and life. This situation influenced their economy level integration into the community badly.

(2) It is difficult for the riders to establish new relationships. The resident structure of community T includes both the elderly and the young, and the needs of residents are different. Coordinating with customers increases the workload of the riders and conflicts with customers. Eventually, the riders left because of the huge work capacity and heavy pressure. Frequent disputes and a high turnover rate led to the alienation between the residents and riders, making the establishment of a good social relationship hard. Therefore, the integration of the social relationship level could not be achieved.

(3) The riders' cultural psychology level of integration could not be realized. Social integration is the combination of economic, social interaction, and cultural adaptation. Under the premise of failed integration at the economy level and social relationship level, the riders' cultural psychology level integration of community was impossible. Compared with community residents, the riders had no identity in the community. They were far away from community activities and cultural life and isolated from community circles. That was the reason why the riders did not have the consciousness and responsibility to actively participate in the community multi-governance.

3.3 Governance approaches with the social integration theory

Focusing on the problems in the express delivery industry within the community, community T had taken a series of specific measures to solve the problems and improve the community governance ability by promoting the social integration of the riders.

(1) Building the '1+6+N'service station system. According to the principle of proximity and the characteristics of the riders' work, the Party committee established the '1+6+N' service station system by using the community's activity center and the idle bicycle shed. This system included: a rider leisure center station, six community express stations, and numerous posts in district stores. Social enterprises were introduced into community express stations to equip with express cabinets, charging piles, electric vehicle charging boxes, and other supporting facilities. Each service station provides drinking water, food, emergency medicine, rest spaces, and psychological assistant services. The service station system solved the problem of distribution. The work efficiency of the riders was greatly improved and their working condition was improved, which facilitated their economy level integration.

(2) Establishing basic-level Party organizations at express outlets as well as conducting identity

authentication and standardized management. The sub-district office guided the express outlets to establish Party organizations to educate and manage the riders with the help of the Party committee. Each express delivery enterprise jointly set up a 'rider group' that consisted of the riders distinguished by companies. They equipped with special identity cards for their riders. After the riders acquired the identity of community members, their interaction with community residents and cadres increased. The residents' attitude toward the riders greatly changed. If disputes occur, they could be resolved through community or Party organization channels. The interpersonal relationship between the riders and residents was considerably improved and the turnover rate is reduced, which was deepening the social relationship level integration of the riders.

(3) Holding various activities to break through cultural boundaries. In order to enrich the life of the riders, the neighborhood committee took the initiative to organize a series of sports entertainment, festival culture propaganda, birthday celebration, and other activities. At the same time, the Party organizations actively carried out education to improve the ideological level of the riders. These measures drove the riders to integrate into regional cultural life, which generated their sense of belonging and identity in the community.

After the implementation of the above approaches, the social integration level of the riders had boosted. They successfully joined the community multi-governance system. The riders played five roles in the governance of community public affairs: community information submission, community civilization propaganda, community municipal management, community security prevention, and community support for the elderly.

3.4 Effectiveness of the community multi-governance

Through the implementation and implementation of the above measures, the express delivery mess in community T had been controlled. The multi-governance system composed of the '1+6+N' service station system and the 'rider group' provided a comprehensive platform for subject interaction. It successfully promoted the transformation of the cooperative governance model of the interaction at upper and lower levels.

The effectiveness of improving the community governance was reflected in the satisfaction of the riders and residents. One of the riders said: 'The number of deliveries on a monthly basis has doubled than before, but complaints are fewer.' Having the identity authentication, the riders really became a part of the community, 'In the past, it is hard to enter the community and the security often stopped us. The community cadres and residents did not know us so they always been worried. Now, we all have a certificate so that there is no obstruction at any time.' In addition to working more conveniently, the riders' life had become rich and warm. He said: 'At Dragon Boat Festival, the neighborhood community sent us delicious rice dumplings. I felt particularly happy and warm.' As for the residents, 'the riders are all good. They have been certified by our sub-distinct office, and we are assured.'

Through the joint efforts of the Party committees, the sub-distinct office, and the communities, the express delivery riders in community T have realized integration into the community. They formed a new community group and built a community environment of 'co-construction, co-governance, and sharing'. 'Community T is an old neighborhood, which is far too kind. Beijing is really big, but in this community, I have a special feeling of home.' said a rider.

3.5 Suggestions to community T

After the riders deepened their social integration level in the community, the community multi-governance system was significantly improved. However, there are still two defects: First, the funds for governance are limited. Although the community cooperated with companies to reduce the cost of establishing service stations and holding activities, there is still a financial problem. Second, community public affairs are complicated and new problems always occur with the development of the society. The community is unable to deal with all new issues. Third, the quality of governance subjects is different, which makes conflicts in management and cooperation. For the above problems, the present governance approaches should be improved in the following aspects:

(1) Defining the organizational nature of the 'rider group'. There is no formal and legal

definition of the organizational nature of the 'rider group' in community T, so it is difficult to deal with the problems in the operation of the organization objectively and fairly through legal channels. It is suggested to refer to the management of basic autonomous organizations to provide a legal guarantee for the operation of the 'rider group'.

(2) The function of the '1+6+N' service station system and the 'rider group' could be enriched. Regarding the new problems in community public affairs, the '1+6+N' service station system and the 'rider group' are able to play a more active role in a wide range of fields. For example, increasing service content for epidemic prevention and control, organizing the riders to assist in advocacy supervision and material support, and responding to emergencies.

(3) Improving the quality of the riders. The existing measures are to cultivate the riders' sense of responsibility to the community through cultural and educational activities. But relying solely on spiritual encouragement cannot effectively improve the work and service attitude of the riders. The riders need to be evaluated regularly and be awarded material rewards. With the combination of material and spiritual incentives, the riders would change their original perceptions and become better civilization members.

4. Experiences from community T

The key to resolving the contradictions in community T lies in the macro planning and resource integration led by the basic-level Party organization, and the cooperation of other governance subjects. More importantly, community T has explored the critical role of express delivery workers in community multi-governance. This successful experience can be imitated and promoted in other areas. According to the multi-governance experience of community T, we can summarize the use of the social integration theory in community governance in China:

4.1 The Party organizations play an important leading role in the organization

The status and guiding ideology of the Communist Party of China determines that the Party organizations should actively listen to the demands of the masses and actively seek solutions by using their own advantages. On the other hand, basic-level governance and the Party organization's work complement each other. As the leading center to carry out various work, the Party organization forms a joint force through integration and coordination, laying the foundation, grasping the direction, and opening up the road for promoting the social integration of multiple subjects. Other subjects consult and cooperate under the unified leadership of the Party organization to provide suggestions to ensure the implementation and improvement of the governance projects.

4.2 The community provides platforms for social integration

The new members of the community have to break through the objective institutional barriers and subjective interpersonal barriers to integrate into community life. Community public service has the characteristics of a targeted individual and comprehensive content, which can provide a highly comprehensive organizational platform covering each community member. Through this platform, new members of the community can gain access to public services from the sub-distinct office or the neighborhood committee, participate in community activities, and communicate with the original residents. These services and activities strengthen the relationship between the new numbers and the residents, thereby possessing identity and recognition within the community and promoting the formation of bridging social capital.

4.3 Social integration of new community members enhances community governance

The new members' participation in community governance removes safety hazards and gains moral stimulation for the community, reflecting a change in their perception of being a member of the community. Through practical governance actions, the efficiency, quality, and effectiveness of community governance are improved as well as creating a harmonious and welcoming atmosphere in the community. This shows that the social integration of new community members and the progress of community governance capacity are mutually reinforcing.

5. Conclusion

This paper has argued that applying the social integration theory effectively facilitates community multi-governance, as community T has shown. The major finding is that improving the social integration level of community new members requires the efforts and cooperation from the Party organizations, the sub-distinct offices, and the neighborhood committee. Meanwhile, a better multi-governance system could be established.

The study draws on one case only. Although this case is typical and enlightening, the available measures and the conclusions need to be further explored in other cases. To sum up, multi-governance of urban communities provides a feasible way for the improvement of governance capacity and governance modernization in China. It will be of important that future research could expand theoretical horizons in order to find appropriate ways of community governance in different areas. The modernization of any country's governance requires unremitting reform and progress, which requires the tireless pursuit of scholars.

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