

# Discussion on Mechanism of Public Participation in Community Governance

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**Abstract.**With the development of innovative social governance models, the grassroots social governance model led by the government is transforming into a new governance model with the participation of multiple subjects. In practice, it is necessary to bring into play the importance of multi-subject participation in community governance (CG), including community party organizations, street offices, social organizations, and residents. The pluralistic subjects have the problems of imperfect development of community party organizations, unclear legal status of street offices, inadequate development of social organizations, and low enthusiasm of resident participation. Therefore, in the process of participating in the CG mechanism, there are problems such as lack of effective communication horizontally and lack of smooth channels vertically. Multiple subjects should communicate closely to effectively break through the horizontal barriers and actively participate in the governance system to smoothly run through the vertical channel. These play crucial roles in the participation of multiple subjects in CG.

**Keywords:**multiple subjects, CG, governance mechanism, public participation.

## 1. Multiple Subjects of Community

The current community composition is characterized by diversification and complexity. In the community, there are both residents and various kinds of for-profit organizations and non-profit organizations. There are also migrant population among the resident population. Inevitably, it will be interest disputes under the situation of multiple subjects. The community is the coexistence space of multiple subjects. The living space of various subjects will inevitably overlap. The overlap of living space makes the community contradictions both numerous and miscellaneous. If these problems are not solved well, it will affect the harmony of the community. The traditional mediation of community committees has been difficult to adapt to the growing maturity of right awareness of residents. The settlement of community conflicts requires the joint participation of community party branch, street offices, social organizations, and residents. It shall be settled through negotiation on the premise of legality and rationality. Resolving grassroots contradictions is the purpose and significance of community governance (CG).

Community party branch. Community party branch is an indispensable and important subject in modern CG. It is the basic organization of the party and is the core of CG. In the current CG, a hierarchical party organization system has been formed. Community party rganization carries out works under the guidance of street party working committees. Street party working committees guide the construction of community party organizations to ensure that CG to implement the theories, lines, principles, policies and member training tasks of the party. The operation mechanism of the community party branch reflects the characteristics of a hierarchical system obviously. In practice, the superior party working committee has the right to appoint, remove, lead, and assess the community party members.

(2) Street offices. In grassroots CG, street offices are at the end of the administrative management system. The model of "municipal government-district government-street office" has been formed in practice. Street offices play a leading role in community management. The specific work is carried out CG according to the requirements of the superior government. The appointment, dismissal, training, assessment, and treatment of staffs are arranged and managed according to the

administrative management system. It can be seen from the work operation mechanism that the tasks are assigned by community within the jurisdiction. On the one hand, grassroots communities need to complete their tasks. On the other hand, grassroots communities should deal with the tasks assigned by street offices. Therefore, the administrative operation mechanism of "district government-street office-community" has been formed.

(3) Social organizations. Promoting the participation of social organizations in social governance has become an important part of innovative social governance. Generally, social organizations are divided into two types: for-profit and non-profit. Non-profit organizations include the entertainment organizations, associations, and foundations of community. The typical representative of for-profit organization is the property company. As the main body participating in the CG, the property company usually has entered the community when the property is delivered under the commercialization of modern real estate, and its organization is generally operated according to the corporate system. However, as an economic organization, its goal is to maximize the interests, so it is unable to pay for the interests of residents in all aspects in participating in CG. For other social organizations, such as various associations and mass entertainment groups, they play a more important role in enriching community entertainment activities in participating in CG. The participation in CG is more organized according to the mobilization or requirements of the government.

(4) Residents. As the main body of CG, residents are the source of all community power. At present, residents express their interests by participating in various autonomous organizations and social organizations. For autonomous organizations, they are more likely to participate in the residential committee and the residential council. The residents also participate in social organizations and are members of social organizations. They participate in the expression of opinions and suggestions on CG through social organizations. One is to form the main participation mechanism of "residents-residential committees-residential councils". Democratic election, democratic decision-making, and democratic consultation have been formed to participate in CG. The other is to form a participation model of "residents-social organizations-community units". Residents participate in community affairs through their posts and relevant organizations. At the same time, a variety of participation channels are established under the organizational operation mechanism.

## 2. Issues of Participation in CG

Different subjects participate in CG from the perspective of their practical needs. From the perspective of the relationship among multiple governance subjects, the mutually beneficial rule of urban grassroots social governance system at the benefit level is to enable each to perform duties in social governance. The legitimate interests and demands will inevitably be guaranteed. When there is a conflict of interest, there will be a corresponding interest coordination mechanism to take effect [1]. Different subjects have rights and obligations to participate in CG. This causes different problems in horizontal communication and coordination and vertical participation channels of multiple participants.

(1) Community party branch. Community party branches work under the guidance and supervision of the superior street party working committee. The appointment, removal, and assessment mechanism of the party branch personnel should be elected and assessed by the party committee at the same level. In reality, the party branch is set up in the community. The personnel of community members should be determined through democratic election or superior appointment. However, community party members are assessed by all the members on the work of the community party branch in practice. There are some problems in the appointment, removal, and assessment mechanism of personnel. Meanwhile, a large number of party members in community units or enterprises and public institutions have not been able to join the community party organization, which makes most party members fail to effectively participate in the community

party organization after the eight-hour working day system. Thus, it is difficult to implement the docking management system for party members and to form dual management and participation mechanism.

(2) Street offices. At present, the basic management mode of two levels of government and three levels of management system has been formed in the urban administrative hierarchy. As an administrative organ at the grassroots level, the street office usually plays a role in conveying the instructions of the superior and dispatching relevant tasks. With the development of community management system, the management system with too many levels will lead to low administrative efficiency in the process of government participation in CG. The drawbacks of overstaffing are also increasingly apparent. In terms of working mechanism, the street office has formed a role orientation of the intermediate communicator. A great deal of work is done simply by transferring. At present, the legitimacy of the identity of grassroots street offices is in an embarrassing situation for them to participate in CG. The participation of street offices in CG is not clear in law at the present stage.

(3) Social organizations. The social organizations refer to enterprises, institutions, and economic organizations in the district. A large part of them intersect with the community due to the interests. Some organizations involved in CG, such as community volunteer organizations, legal aid institutions, various entertainment associations, elderly associations, have low enthusiasm in CG. However, active participation in CG is more economic organizations that generate interest relations, such as intermediary service enterprises and property service companies. At the present stage, the important problem that leads to the reluctance or insufficient participation of relevant units and organizations is the lack of an effective participation mechanism and platform. This platform can be integrated into multiple organizations for negotiation. At the same time, there are great governance difficulties in the access system, supervision system, and relief system of social organizations.

(4) Residents. Residents are the main body of CG. The most difficult problem in the current CG is that the participation and enthusiasm of residents in CG are obviously low, which has affected the development of democratic politics. The breadth and depth of residents participation in CG are also obviously insufficient. Residents are usually involved in matters that are not essential to the community. There is too little reference to the rights of residents. The path for residents participation in CG also has some problems. The mass abandonment of residents assembly or council makes it difficult for the residents to express their interests.

### **3. Analysis of Issue Reasons**

The focus of social governance has been shifted downward. The innovative CG model has allowed more subjects to participate in CG. The wisdom of all people is gathered to provide multi-dimensional decision support for CG. However, multiple subjects have different problems, which are unable to be competent for this task. The reasons for the issues of multiple subjects participating in the CG mechanism are as follows.

Community party branch. Party organizations should play a leading role in CG. However, the practical effect in the current CG is not as perfect as designed by the theoretical system to a certain. The main reasons are reflected in two aspects. On the one hand, there are problems in the mechanism of the party organization participating in CG. The work coordination mechanism between the party committee and the residents committee has not been implemented. As the leading core of CG, party committees only have the right to participate in the coordination and suggestion of the formulation and implementation of relevant policies in CG. This model is a kind of consultation after the event rather than participation before policy formulation. On the other hand, there are some problems in the mechanism of community party members participation in CG. Party members are pioneers and model forces in society. Party members should develop their leading role in community construction. Nevertheless, the participation enthusiasm of party members in the community is insufficient in reality. Party members in community units and social organizations

have not formed a channel to participate in CG. There is no dual management mode and participation mechanism for party members in the place of residence and work.

Street offices. At present, various social functions are gradually separated from units. This has not led to the substantial weakening of the state control over grassroots society. In terms of control mode, the overall control of units is gradually transformed into technical governance of hierarchy. Administrative power has been brought into the track of legalization and standardization, which has improved the efficiency of governance [2]. It is not difficult to find that the current government is working hard to transform functions and decentralize rights to the society. In practice, the administrative operation mechanism is almost a hierarchical system that has not changed in the reform. Especially, under the current CG, the communities are subject to the direct administrative interference of the government. The hierarchical management system makes the community lose the vitality of autonomy and the innovation of governance. The work of the government for communities is more leadership rather than the supervision and guidance relationship designed by the system, which has formed a "paternalism" style and has not changed obviously. The reason is a profound cultural influence. The traditional official ideology has a great relationship with the civil society in China.

(3) Social organizations. There are also a large number of community units, non-profit organizations, and volunteer groups. They are different from government organizations and have different organizational networks. Through organization network and scale, it can effectively make up for the lack of some capabilities of the government organizations. But, there is no effective platform for different organizations to participate in CG. The channel of participation mechanism is not available. The participation mechanism of different social organizations is based on market principle, public interest, and communities identification, thereby meeting the needs of the community and jointly participating in the management of community public affairs [3]. The problem of social organization is also prominent. In particular, relevant enterprises that have closely connection with the government and social organizations that rely on government subsidies, organizational and personnel systems are restricted by the government. A further problem is the lack of supervision for the regulations and the behaviors within social organizations.

(4) Residents. As the subject of CG, the participation of residents has always been a problem in CG in many countries. Compared with developed countries, the social environment for civil society has not been fully formed. There are some problems in the way that citizens maintain right awareness, actively participate in politics and effectively express interests. Firstly, the control of current government for community organizations make the channels for residents to participate in CG fail to play the advantages of the system. Secondly, residents participation in CG is mostly a kind of participation in affairs not involving rights and interests. Such as the participation in fellowship activities of community, cultural performances of the elderly, publicity of national program, and popularization of basic knowledge. So more residents naturally lost their enthusiasm for participation. Finally, there are great differences among the participating groups. The elderly and the group with low education level are more active in participating. The above are the reasons why the participation channels and the participation degrees in CG are not enough. The system design of residents participation in CG is divorced from the practice.

#### **4. Countermeasure for Effective Participation**

Multi subject participation in CG is an inevitable trend of the transformation of government functions and the development of social governance. It is also a requirement for the development of grassroots democratic politics. The mechanism of multi subject participation in CG is a continuous process to reconcile conflicts or interests and to take joint action. It includes both formal institutions and rules to that people obey, but also the informal institutions and arrangements that people agree [4]. Therefore, the problems of multi subject participation in CG are hot and difficult research topic at present. It is important to solve the obstacles and problems of multi subject participation.

(1) Party Committee is the core force leading CG. Firstly, party committees directly manages community affairs by appointing cadres to the posts of directors or deputy directors of the community committee through the street party working committees or the district government party committees. Meanwhile, Through the absorption of party members from community units and social organizations, they can also be organized and managed after the eight-hour working day. These people can actively participate in community party organizations and CG. Through the dual management of the majority of party members, the enthusiasm of participating in CG will be improved and the vanguard and exemplary role of party members will be brought into play. Furthermore, the deliberative democracy mechanism will be brought into develop by establishing the deliberative mechanism and platform for community party members. Party organizations can widely listen to suggestions and opinions and provide the strength of the majority party members for CG. The above measures can help the party committee better play a leading role in CG.

(2) Grassroots government is the role orientation of the general responsible department of CG. The society should not deny the role of government in CG. Without the policy support and the financial guarantee of government, the residents are unable to achieve self-government [5]. The role of grassroots government in CG is more a kind of "guardian" who directly intervenes in community affairs. The phenomenon that overdependence of communities on the government is quite prominent. To change the current "Paternalism" management model, the government should constantly delegate power to self-management of community affairs. Correspondingly, the relationship between the government and the community is reflected in policy support and work guidance. On the one hand, according to the needs of social development, government gradually eliminates the street offices and directly establish "district government- community management" system. This measure can flatten the hierarchical system and reduce intermediate links. The governance efficiency of the government can be improved. The satisfaction of the masses is constantly enhanced by reducing staff and financial burden. On the other hand, in the current environment of strong government and weak society, the organizational capacity of the government can enable more subjects to participate in CG. It is necessary to construct the participation mechanism. The government will organize joint community meetings to form a regular meeting mechanism. It provides a participation path for all community subjects to participate in CG. The government is both the owner of administrative power and the general responsible department of CG. The continuous decentralization of powers and interests by the government can make community subjects more dynamic and enthusiastic to participate in CG.

(3) Social organizations are established in accordance with the needs of community development and government reform. The construction and growth of social organizations have been restricted by the government and affected by various factors for a long time, which lead to not kept up with the needs of CG development. The government should give more financial and policy support to foster social organizations. The government has promoted social organizations to exert function of CG through the mode of purchase project to achieve the goal of streamlining administration and delegating power. However, due to the imperfection of social organizations and the lack of organizational regulations, the internal personnel system is interfered by the government for the appointment and assessment of personnel. Finance independence and audit mechanism are also difficult problems. Firstly, in order to strengthen the self-construction of social organizations, government should improve organizational structures and establish reasonable restraint mechanisms. Secondly, it is necessary to strengthen the internal personnel assessment and supervision mechanism to improve the incentive and elimination mechanism of staff. Especially for social welfare organizations, non-profit organizations are a pattern for the government to transfer social functions. The organization and personnel systems should not fall into a mere formality because of the lack of restraint mechanisms. Thirdly, the government can establish a cooperative mechanism for social organizations to participate in CG. The government shall take the lead in organizing the participation of social organizations with similar or complementary functions. Cooperative consultation meeting can be established to meet the needs of the government works so as to achieve

the goal of cooperative governance. Lastly, the design of social organization access system is important. The government focuses on supervision during and after the establishment of administrative law. The government could relax the prior management of social organizations to allow more subjects to participate. Taking the value of system as the orientation can provide support for social organizations to participate in social governance. It will innovate social governance and satisfy people aspirations for a better life.

(4) The active participation of residents is the key to the effectiveness of CG. Community residents are the most direct subject of CG. With the development of economy and society, the right consciousness of citizen has been constantly enhanced. More and more civil society has been established in China. But there is still a big gap between the theoretical design and the practical effect in terms of citizen participation. Citizens mainly express their interest demands by participating in party organizations and social organizations of community. However, most citizens rarely participate in CG activities in practice. Due to the problems of participation channels, the breadth and depth of participation make residents lose their passion and motivation to participate in the community. Therefore, improvement measures are given as follows. Primarily, it is necessary to establish institutional channels for residents to participate in CG. The government may make it an institutional arrangement to convene residents assemblies regularly. The residents assemblies really play a role of supervision and restriction on the residential committees rather than a mere formality. Posteriorly, residents actively strive to pass the evaluation to participate in community residential committees, thereby forming channels for individual participation in community work. Finally, A cooperative and consultative mechanism to participate in CG needs to be formed for all residents. CG would move forward with the times through by fully mobilizing the forces of participants.

## 5. Conclusion

Communities is the place for residents to live, communicate, entertain, and other social activities. With the downward shift of the focus of social governance, CG has occupied a fundamental position in social governance., which has attracted more and more attention. In practice, the government should constantly play the role of multiple subjects participation in governance. Opening up the vertical participation channels and building the horizontal communication coordination mechanism will be the focus of future reform and construction. It is an inevitable choice for the development of CG to form the situation of party committee leadership, government responsibility, and multiple subject participation. It is great significance to constantly develop and improve the construction of mechanism and system for multiple subjects participating in CG. The relentless pursuit is to develop road and mode of CG in correspondence with national conditions.

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