

Analysis of Grid-Based Governance in Chinese Urban Communities

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Abstract: *The community grid-based governance model could not only stimulate the governance function of the community as well as improve the scientificity and order of community governance, but also improve the enthusiasm and initiative of the residents and the refinement and regionalization of urban community governance. This model has gradually become one of the mainstream models of urban community governance. On the premise of systematizing and deeply analyzing the typical urban community grid-based governance models in China, this paper, based on theories of refined governance and seamless governance, looks at three management models of urban community grid-based governance: the "All-dimensional Integration" model, the "One basic and three aspects" model, the "4+6" model. The problems in the process of urban community grid-based governance include: lack of public awareness of participation, low quality of the overall team of grid members, poor operation mechanism, and lack of financial guarantee. It also proposes measures to improve the grid-based governance of urban communities based on the existing problems, including: stimulating residents' awareness of participating in community governance, strengthening the team construction of grid members, promoting the management of refined operation mechanism, and expanding funding channels.*

Keywords: *Urban Community; Grid-based Governance; Community Governance*

1. Introduction

With the continuous development of society and economy, the traditional social governance model has failed to meet the requirements of the era, and the issue of community governance has increasingly become the focus of people's attention. At the same time, the development of community informatization and digitalization has also promoted the emergence of a new urban community governance model - the urban community grid-based governance model. Community grid-based governance refers to the reasonable division of the areas under the jurisdiction of each community through community distribution, the layout of residential commercial areas, territorial management, etc., according to the actual area, which is finally delineated as a grid-like layout, and the real-time supervision and management grid through the information technology platform to achieve dynamic supervision, which is an emerging digital management model, while achieving innovation and optimization of social governance [1]. The advantages of this service management model innovation for the government are that the government can identify problems in a timely manner, take the initiative to solve them, improve the speed and accuracy of incident handling, improve the quality of services provided to residents, improve their relationship with residents, and thus improve the level of urban community management. However, due to the complexity of the social development environment, the contradictory nature of community governance, and the diversity of people's needs for public services, the model inevitably has shortcomings in terms of operational mechanisms, participating parties, and team building. The improvement of these problems can promote the further modernization of urban community grid-based governance model. On this basis, the problems of grid-based governance in China's urban communities and the improvement measures are analyzed and studied.

2. Background of Grid-based Governance in Chinese Urban Communities

At present, China's economy and society are gradually transforming, and the social structure is also changing, while China's urbanization process is also developing continuously. These series of changes have improved people's living standards, making people pay more and more attention to their legitimate rights and interests. On this basis, the community, as the basic unit of China's society, assumes the

function of social service and management. And its function and role directly determine whether it can meet people's expectations. At the same time, the traditional community management model has revealed many problems, which can no longer meet the requirements of economic and social development in the context of the new era, thus leading to the emergence of urban governance problems. In such a context, grid-based urban community governance emerged, which has transformed from traditional scattered qualitative management to modern systematic quantitative management through updated information technology and innovative urban community governance model, improving the level of urban community governance and the quality of community public services, and thus promoting the modernization of community governance.

3. Theoretical Basis of the Study

3.1 Refinement Management Theory

Fine management was initially applied to the field of business management, but with the continuous development of social economy, the theory has been extended and applied to the field of government management. Refined management is defined as scientific management based on the refinement and systematization of rules and the use of a variety of high-tech tools to ensure the efficient, precise and sustainable operation of organizational management units, minimize management costs and improve management efficiency. Refined governance is characterized by systematization, target clarification and informationization. The community grid-based governance model is a concrete manifestation of this theory.

3.2 Seamless Government Theory

This theory was proposed by Russell M. Linden in his book "Seamless Government: A Guide to Public Sector Reengineering" in the 1990s. The theory explains three value orientations: The first is customer orientation, which believes that the government must start from satisfying the greatest needs of customers when innovating management systems and providing public goods, so that customers can purchase and use public goods at the least cost; the second is competition orientation, which believes that the government should improve the market competition mechanism for public services, allow and encourage private forces to participate in the provision of public services, and avoid the situation where the government has a monopoly on public services; the third is result orientation, which emphasizes the actual results of work, attaches importance to goals and outputs, requires the establishment of a flat organizational structure, faces the overall interests and overall processes, and works around the established goals [2].

The grid-based governance model of urban communities reflects that the government takes the interests of the people as the starting point, reduces the boundary restrictions between departments by gridding the communities, realizes the diversity of public service provision subjects, promotes two-way communication between the masses and the government, and brings the relationship between the government and the people closer. The grid-based governance model is a practical application of the theory of seamless government.

4. Typical Operation Model of Community Grid in China

4.1 Beijing Haidian District: "Full-dimensional Integration" Model

In 2006, Haidian District in Beijing developed a "full-dimensional integration" operation and management model by learning from the grid-based governance experiences of Chaoyang District and Dongcheng District in Beijing and combining them with its own actual conditions. Through internal integration and external linkage, this model connected data, integrated intelligent multi-processing platforms, and expanded multi-channels for people's services, which was multi-faceted and all-rounded [3], and could quickly identify problems and solve them in a timely and effective manner. Multiple forces worked together to govern urban communities. And multiple subjects such as functional departments, economic organizations, and social organizations in the same area, through the delineation of grids, unified their forces to achieve a reasonable system of shared governance and negotiate together to solve problems and conflicts in the region. In addition, the integration of data base and technology, the differentiation of information resources in the data center of the whole region, and the establishment of

the corresponding database worked together to improve the grid platform information system. Finally, the integration of management mechanisms and the establishment of a centralized-command and two-way-assessment work operation mechanism enabled the grid-based communities to provide stable services. The grid-based management in Haidian District is part of emergency management, making it possible to prevent emergency events in advance through the grid platform and better maintaining social stability.

4.2 Hubei Yichang: “One Basic and Three Aspects” Model

In October 2010, Yichang, Hubei Province, launched a grid-based governance model and explored a governance model of “One basic and three aspects”, which adhered to the principle of “people-oriented” and grid-based governance. First, the grid was divided according to the nature and characteristics of the area. More than 100 communities in Yichang were divided into 1,000 grids, each with a grid member for management. The second aspect includes: integrating service departments and institutions; integrating and setting up the original scattered departments into three types of institutions; improving community services by setting up three management centers, namely, general governance, grid and people-friendly services; and the communities then correspondingly establishing general governance, letter and visit maintenance and stability workstations, grid management stations and people-friendly services stations [4]; equipping corresponding full-time workers, administrators and volunteers. Third, the big data platform was improved; and the grid workers counted door by door, integrated the number of households, population, housing, individual households, and other information in the district in a unified manner and sorted them out according to one standard, while timely docking with corresponding functional departments to update dynamic information and unifying all data into a unified platform for management [5]. The grid-based governance model in Yichang, Hubei adheres to the people-oriented approach, and improves the efficiency and community grid-based governance effectiveness by improving infrastructure, promoting informatization of grid-based service work, and strengthening the technical platform.

4.3 Ningxia Dawukou District: “4+6” Model

The “4+6” model refers to the “four members” consisting of street cadres, community workers, assigned cadres and community police officers, and the “six members” consisting of old party members, 4050 people, low-income households and people who are enthusiastic about public welfare. These members, respectively, are arranged in each grid. Through clarifying their responsibilities, management content, management scope, etc., as well as setting up a post service desk in the grid community and providing staff contact numbers, residents can easily reflect their problems and express their demands in a timely manner. A community management incentive and reward mechanism is established to realize the hierarchical management of personnel and to form a new pattern of social management with the grid administrator team as the main body, supplemented by other volunteer teams and mutual help service teams with social synergy and public participation [6].

5. Problems of Grid-based Governance in Chinese Urban Communities

5.1 Lack of Awareness of Shared Governance among Community Residents

This is a consequence of the stereotype that traditional community governance in China is dominated by the government and the abstract nature of the concept of “grid-based”. At the same time, the complicated identity of community residents, the lack of community culture and the lack of community identity make some community residents lack the consciousness to actively participate in community governance. In addition, the lack of trust in the organizations that manage the grid further hinders residents’ active participation in community management.

5.2 The Overall Quality of the Grid Member Team is not High

However, many grid members in China’s community governance are old and retired, and their age limits affect their work efficiency to a certain extent. Also, their conservative thinking also hinders the innovation of the grid governance model to a certain extent. At the same time, the education level of grid members is generally high school or college education, which to a certain extent affects the use of the new information technology platform by grid members and thus affects governance effect.

5.3 Poor Operational Mechanism and Overburdened with Grid Governance Tasks

The cooperation between the community and government departments is not effective. Since the authority of community grid officers is restricted by the hierarchy, they cannot solve some professional administrative affairs, thus they have to report to the higher administrative departments. But many departments ignore the work of the grid officers, which in turn affects the efficiency of work. In addition, the community has a lot of tasks, including civil affairs, environmental protection, and community stability. The grid clerks not only need to deal with community grid affairs, but also need to cooperate with other departments' surveys, including census, social security work, etc. This leads to high work pressure and lack of energy for grid members, which affect the quality and effectiveness of grid governance.

5.4 Inadequate Financial Security

Grid-based governance and development cannot be achieved without financial support. The construction and maintenance of grid information platforms and the salaries of grid members require financial support. The main source of funds for grid-based governance is the allocation from the higher government, and the government financial input is the only reliance on its funding [7]. Although relying on this funding can meet the basic community grid-based establishment and operation, it is not conducive to the long-term development of grid-based governance. In the actual work at the grassroots level, the approval of funds has to go through a strict and complicated approval process before they can be used. This adversely affects the timeliness of the use of funds. Also, community grids do not have a perfect budgeting mechanism for funding, and in the process of funding approval, all departments will fight for their own interests to get the funds, which leads to the failure of applying for funds [8].

6. Measures to Improve Grid-based Governance in Chinese Urban Communities

6.1 Inspiring Residents to Get Involved

On the one hand, community social capital needs to be cultivated [9]. The increase of social capital will improve the sense of identity among residents, and by cultivating community social capital centered on the relationship of mutual trust and community identity among community residents, it can stimulate residents' enthusiasm to participate in community grid-based governance and promote the pattern of joint participation of multiple subjects in community grid-based governance. On the other hand, the main starting point of residents' participation in community grid-based governance is their own interests; therefore, cultivating community common interests is an important way to promote community residents' participation in community affairs. Only when residents feel that their needs can be met through the community, they will be more enthusiastic to participate in community affairs.

6.2 Strengthen the Construction of the Team of Grid Members and Enhance the Level of Community Grid-based Services

The construction of talent team plays a crucial role in the operation of community grid-based governance model. First of all, it is necessary to broaden the channels of talent introduction, expand the community establishment, and improve the professionalism of the team of grid members. At the same time, it is also necessary to set the necessary conditions according to the positions, including education, age, profession, experience, etc. In terms of salary and treatment, it is necessary to increase the subsidies for grid officers and establish a reasonable reward and punishment mechanism to improve the motivation of grid officers' work.

In addition, periodic training should be established to improve the overall quality of the grid workers' team by offering professional lectures and group discussions, etc. The training is not in the form of flooding, but rather personalized for different levels of need. Shifts are set up to conduct specific business training according to different criteria such as age, education, and work experience [10]. The training results can also be incorporated into the assessment system to improve the overall learning effect.

6.3 Broaden the Source of Funds

Funding is the guarantee for the effective implementation of the grid-based governance model, however, relying on the government's financial allocation alone is far from enough. Therefore, we should

expand the funding channels. Enterprises and social organizations are the main funding targets in addition to the government, various ways should be adopted to reach cooperation with them to alleviate the shortage of funds, and at the same time, guide residents to participate in the volunteer service team to alleviate the tight funding situation.

6.4 Establishing a Mechanism for Access to Community Affairs and Clarifying the Boundaries of Community Authority

The governance system is a complete, multi-sectoral, closely linked, interoperable and jointly constructed organic whole. The current development of community governance is constrained by insufficient grasp, held back by poor institutional mechanisms, and still lacking in the pivotal process of bearing the top and bottom. Therefore, it is necessary to clarify the boundaries of the functions between the government and the community, and not to impose on the community matters that do not fall within the scope of responsibility. To relieve the excessive burden of grid workers, so that they can better complete the work of public affairs within the grid. This approach can solve the problem of heavy tasks and burdens of grassroots staff. At the same time, the establishment and improvement of the community affairs list system can, to a certain extent, avoid the occurrence of some government departments lazy behavior and reduce the burden of grassroots work.

7. Conclusion

At present, with the strong support of the government and relying on the information technology platform, we have gradually promoted the construction of grid-based urban community governance and achieved certain governance results, which has changed the past situation of compartmentalization, streamlined and optimized the business process, innovated the service management operation mechanism, improved the quality of services provided to community residents and brought the relationship with residents closer, but the current grid-based urban community governance is not perfect. However, the current urban community grid-based governance is not perfect. And there are still some problems in the operation process. It is still necessary to conduct further research on China's urban community grid-based governance model and promote the modernization of China's urban community grid-based governance.

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