

An Empirical Study on Hainan Citizens' Participation in Urban Community Governance under the Background of Free Trade Port Construction

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Abstract: Hainan is in the period of high-speed development and transformation of government management. To build a free trade port with Chinese characteristics requires a modern social governance system that confirms to the trend of the times, and community governance is important part of whole social governance system. Citizens' cooperative participation in grass-roots community governance has the functions of creating a good living environment, reducing social conflicts, improving residents' sense of well-being and attracting all kinds of talents. Based on the perspective of multi cooperative social governance, this paper empirically investigates the current situation of Hainan urban resident's participation in community governance, explores the reasons for the lack of citizen participation in community governance, and puts forward suggestions for improving citizen participation in community governance.

Keywords: Citizen participation; Community governance; Empirical research

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1 Introduction

China's political and economic system is constantly changing. Since the establishment of Shanghai's first free trade zone in September 2013, China's free trade zone has been built into a wild goose matrix model of "1+3+7+1+6". In April 13, 2018, President Xi Jinping formally announced to the world that China supports Hainan's construction of a free trade port with Chinese characteristics in the speech at the 30th Anniversary Conference of the Hainan provincial special economic zone, which is another major historical opportunity for Hainan. The free trade port construction which represents the highest level of openness in the world, must has a modern social governance system. In the whole social governance system, community is the most basic governance unit. Community is the main place for ordinary people's daily life and living. The level of community governance directly affects the happiness and satisfaction of grass roots citizen.

The report of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China proposes: "It focuses on the construction of governance pattern of co governance

and sharing." "Co construction, co governance and sharing" as the concept of social governance rising in the current context, mainly refers to ensuring that citizens participate in the process of social governance in a real sense. Government theory originated in the nineties of the last century, which is mainly the ideological system of multi-agent cooperation in social management proposed after "market failure" and "government failure" in the west. In his book < Making Democracy Work>, Putnam proposed that the government should decentralize its power reasonably in the process of governance, so as to realize the Democratic requirements of various governance subjects and avoid the situation of government disorder and social unrest. Peters also mentioned the "participatory" social governance model in his book "the governance model of future government", which represents the direction of future government to change its function.

Building a free trade port with Chinese characteristics is not only the task given by the central government to Hainan government, but also the historical mission of every Hainan people. Actively encouraging every Hainan people to participate in the construction of grass-roots communities and building a harmonious grass-roots community environment can create a good social environment for the economic development of Hainan.

2 Materials and methods

In order to investigate the current participation of

Hainan residents in community governance, this research group mainly designs the questionnaire from the aspects of participation consciousness, participation willingness, participation behavior and influencing factors, and finally generates the questionnaire on the official website of questionnaire star. Due to the limited resources of the research group, the sample selection mainly focuses on the investigation of students who has Hainan cadastral and living in Hainan and their close relatives. Students of Sanya University came from all over Hainan, which is random and extensive to some extent. Wechat was used as the channel to distribute and forward the questionnaire, and 305 questionnaires were finally collected on the official website of the questionnaire star, all of which were valid. On the basis of questionnaire, the author summarizes the existing data through classification analysis and cross analysis. The classification analysis method refers to the classification analysis of citizens' participation in community governance from the age structure, education level, occupation, willingness to participate and other aspects, so as to understand the general situation of residents' participation in community governance. The cross analysis is used to investigate the relationship between the two variables. Besides, the following classification analysis and cross analysis charts are automatically generated by the official website of the questionnaire star, except for table 2.1, which was made by the author.

Table 2.1. Basic information of survey sample

Statistical indicators		Proportion	Statistical indicators		Proportion
Gender	Male	30.82%	Occupation	Personnel of Party and government organs and public institutions	12.46%
	Female	69.18%		Entrepreneur, employees of private sector or individual business.	7.87%
Degree of education	High school and below	4.26%	Students		52.13%
	Undergraduate or junior college	67.54%	Retiree		0.33%
	Postgraduate and above	28.2%	Other		27.21%
Age	18 and under	1.97%	Living time in the community	Within than 1 year	19.02%
	18-30 years old	63.93%		1-5 years	35.41%
	31-45 years old	31.48%		6-10 years	15.41%
	46-60 years old	1.97%		More than 10 years	30.16%
	Over 61 years old	0.66%		Ancestral home	Hainan
		Not Hainan	48.85%		

3 Research result

3.1 The influence of individual factors on citizens' participation in community

The author makes a cross analysis of the two variable based on the basic situation of the individual, the willingness to participate and the attitude to public affairs. Finally, the author finds that the gender,

native place and education level of the citizens have little influence on the consciousness of the citizens to participate in community governance and the satisfaction of the grass-roots social governance, and the data before and after can confirm each other. Due to the limited space, this paper only takes gender as the variables to show the survey results in Table 3.1, Figure 3.1^[1] Figure 3.2, table 3.2^[2], table 3.3 and figure 3.3^[3].

Table 3.1. Satisfaction degree of different genders to grass-roots social governance

X\Y	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Just so so	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Not certain	Subtotal
Male	4(4.26%)	7(7.45%)	40(42.55%)	29(30.85%)	9(9.57%)	5(5.32%)	94
Female	5(2.37%)	17(8.06%)	91(43.13%)	57(27.01%)	19(9.00%)	22(10.43%)	211

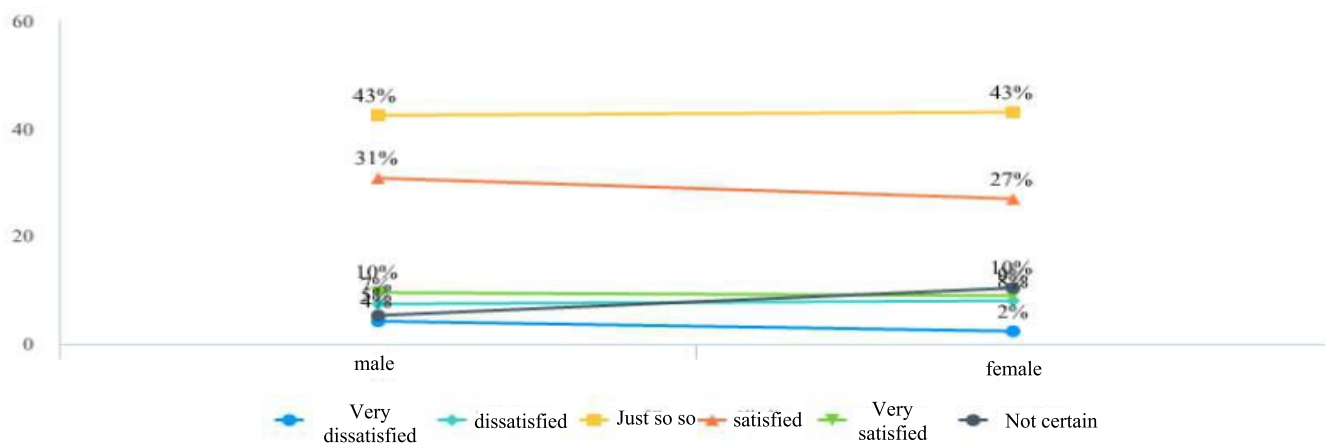


Figure 3.1. Satisfaction degree of different genders to grass-roots social governance

Table 3.2. Attitudes of different genders to community public affairs

X\Y	Everyone is responsible	Residents' participation has little effect	Community building is the government's business	Too busy to get involved	It's unnecessary because of working hard with little result	Subtotal
Male	89(94.68%)	20(21.28%)	23(24.47%)	29(30.85%)	13(13.83%)	94
Female	204(96.68%)	38(18.01%)	35(16.59%)	34(16.11%)	15(7.11%)	211

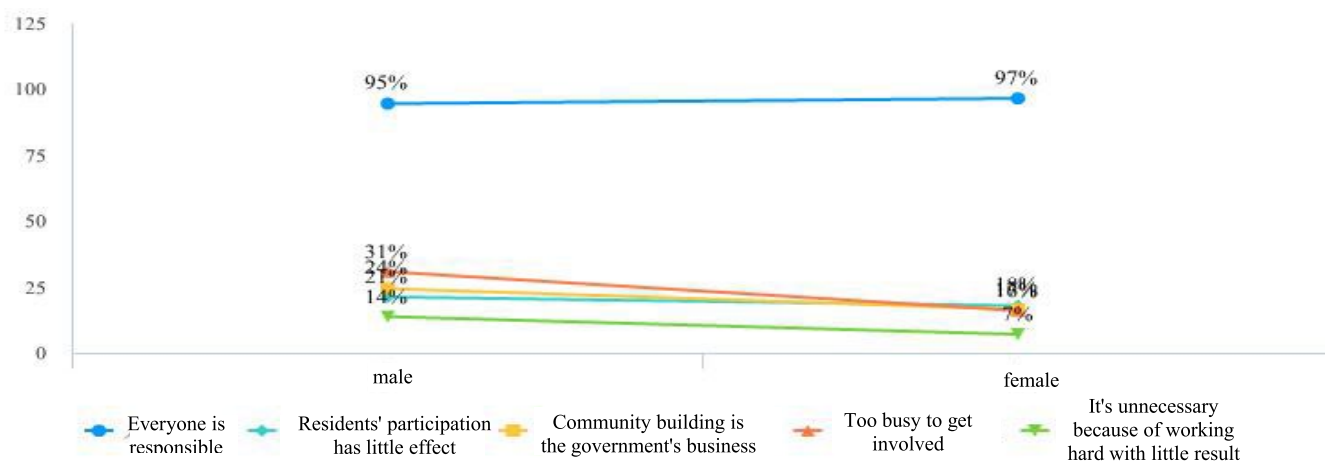


Figure 3.2. Attitudes of different genders to community public affairs

Table 3.3. Willingness of different gender to be resident representatives

X\Y	Affirmative answer	Negative answer	Not certain	Subtotal
Male	49(52.13%)	19(20.21%)	26(27.66%)	94
Female	108(51.18%)	43(20.38%)	60(28.44%)	211

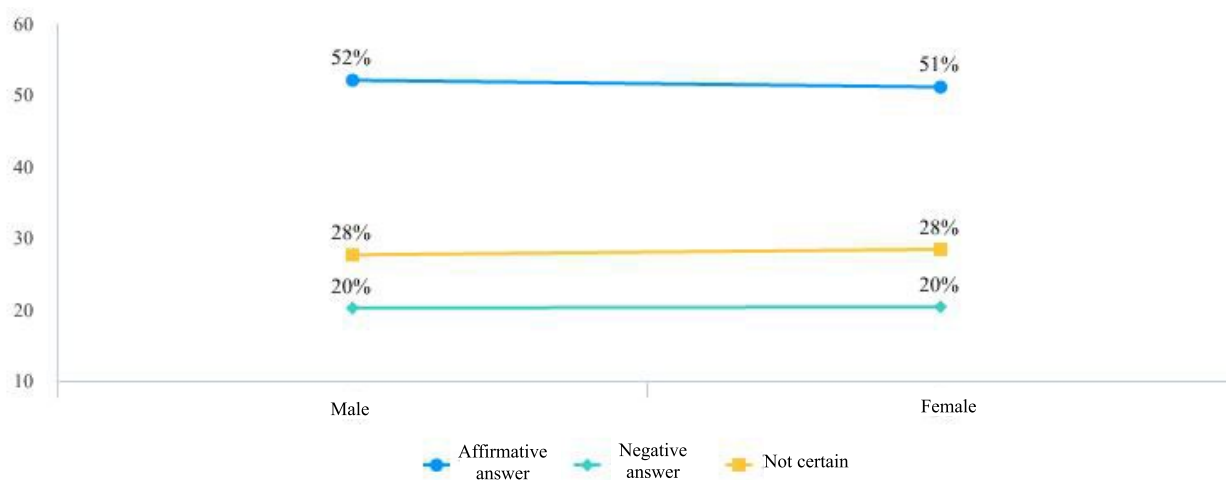


Figure 3.3. Willingness of different gender to be resident representatives

The age, occupation and living time of citizens will affect their participation consciousness in different degrees. Generally speaking, the older the citizens are, the longer they live in the community, the more willing they are to participate in community activities. 61.96 of the people who have lived in the community for more than 10 years are willing to reflect the residents' wishes with the community leaders when they are

selected as representatives by the residents, and are more concerned about the overall governance of the community, as shown in table 3.4 and Figure 3.4^[4]. The occupational status of residents will also affect their sense of participation. The staff working in party and government offices and public institutions are more willing to be residents' representatives than the staff working in private units.

Table 3.4. Relationship between living time and willingness of resident representative

X\Y	Affirmative answer	Negative answer	Not certain	Subtotal
Within 1 year	30(51.72%)	11(18.97%)	17(29.31%)	58
1-5 years	47(43.52%)	31(28.70%)	30(27.78%)	108
6-10 years	23(48.94%)	12(25.53%)	12(25.53%)	47
More than 10 years	57(61.96%)	8(8.70%)	27(29.35%)	92

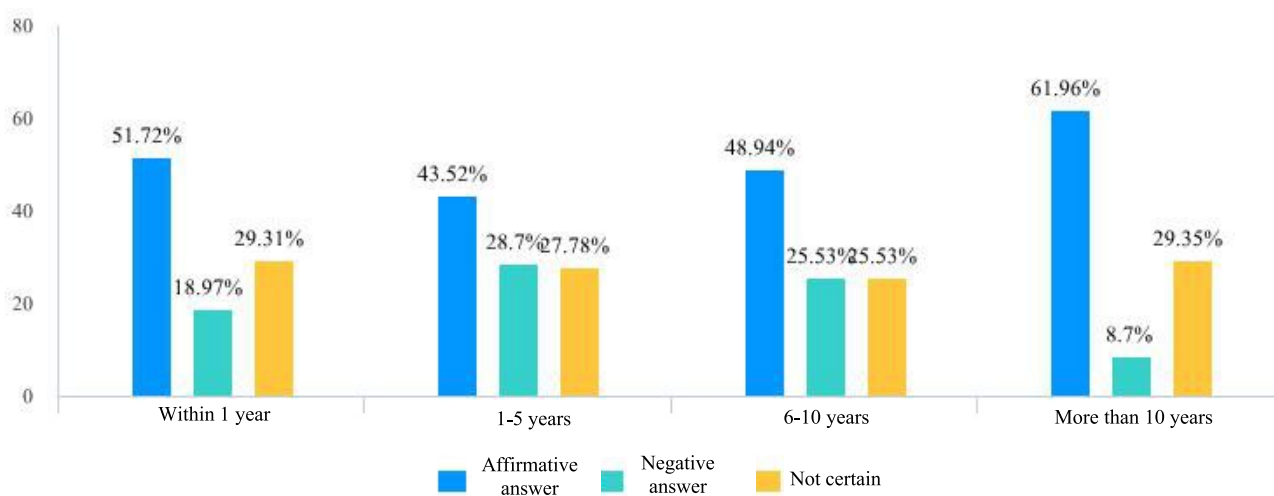


Figure 3.4. Relationship between living time and willingness of resident representative

3.2 The contradiction between citizen's participation consciousness and participation behavior

In the 305 questionnaires collected, among the single choice questions about whether the respondents agree that “community development cannot be separated from residents’ participation”, there are 84.95% of people choosing affirmative answer. Among the multiple-choice questions of “your attitude towards community public affairs”, the proportion of “everyone is responsible” is as high as 96.07%. This shows that individual citizens can realize the necessity of residents’ participation in community governance and have a certain sense of participation. And for the question “if you are selected to communicate community interests as residents’ representatives with community leaders, are you willing to actively participate?”, only 51.48% of people said yes. And the positive answer only is 41.97% for “will you actively ask for information such as community development planning?”. And most people access to community information through the community bulletin board, and the proportion of active access to the official website is only 19.02%. This shows that most residents are in a passive way to community governance. Generally speaking, the situation of Hainan residents’ participation in community governance has formed a paradoxical state of high citizen participation awareness and low participation.

3.3 The overall satisfaction of grass-roots social governance is not high

Among the respondents, the total proportion of “relatively satisfied” and “satisfied” with grassroots social governance in Hainan was only 37.38%. Generally speaking, the higher educational level the residents is, the higher requirement of social governance at the grass-roots level will be. And the longer the citizens live, the higher satisfaction of grass-roots social governance will be. Native place will cause obvious difference of the satisfaction degree of native place to grass roots social governance. The total proportion of “relatively satisfied” and “satisfied” of Hainan residents to the basic social governance in Hainan is 50%, while the total proportion of “relatively satisfied” and “satisfied” of non Hainan residents to the basic social governance in Hainan is only 24.17%. The total proportion of “very dissatisfied” and “relatively dissatisfied” of Hainan residents to the basic social governance in Hainan is 7.69%, while the total proportion of “very dissatisfied” and “relatively dissatisfied” of non Hainan residents to the basic social governance in Hainan is 14.1%. Through the comparison, it is found that the satisfaction of non Hainan residents to the grass-root social governance is low.

Table 3.5. The influence of native place on the satisfaction of social governance at the grassroots level

X\Y	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Just so so	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Not certain	Subtotal
Hainan	3(1.92%)	9(5.77%)	54(34.62%)	55(35.26%)	23(14.74%)	12(7.69%)	156
Not Hainan	6(4.03%)	15(10.07%)	77(51.68%)	31(20.81%)	5(3.36%)	15(10.07%)	149

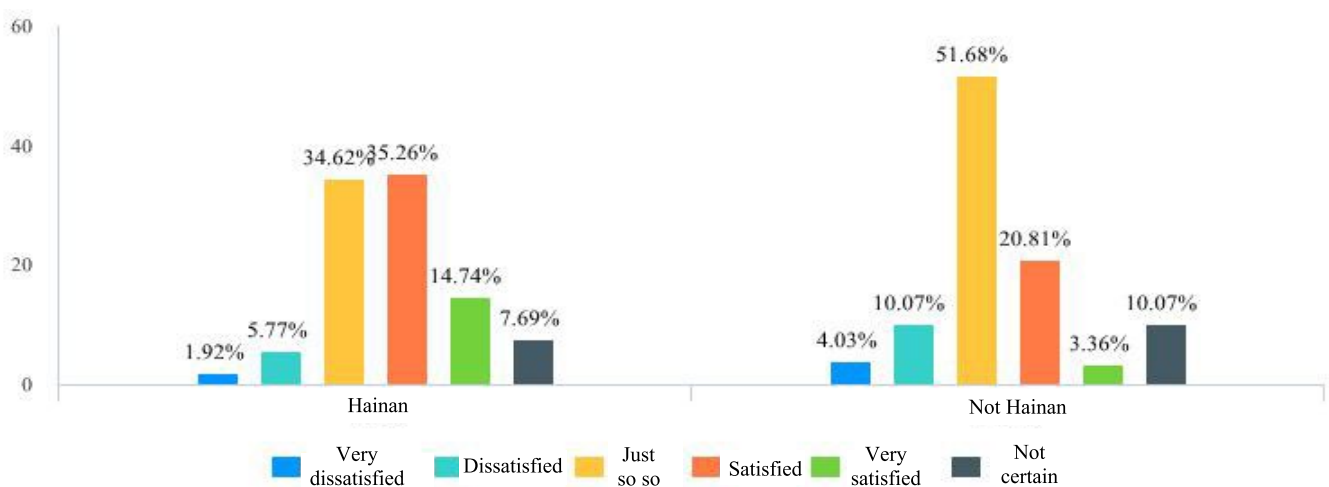


Figure 3.5. The influence of native place on the satisfaction of social governance at the grassroots level

4 Analysis on the causes of the investigation results

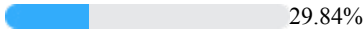
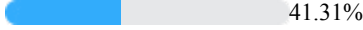
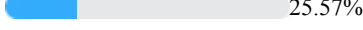
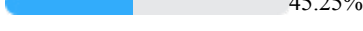
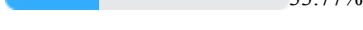
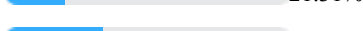

Through the classification and cross analysis of the questionnaire, the research group has come to the conclusion that the gender, native place, and education level of individual citizens have little influence on citizens' participation consciousness. The main reason is that in recent years, with the promotion and popularization of all kinds and all level of education, the cultural quality of citizens continuously improve, and the citizen's consciousness of right constantly awakening. But age, occupation, living time in the community will affect personal experience, self-awareness of the main body, sense of ownership and so on, so it will affect citizens' participation consciousness in varying degrees. In view of the contradiction between citizens' participation consciousness and participation behavior and the result of low satisfaction degree with the grass-roots social management, the author analyzes the main reason as follow:

4.1 Citizens lack in-depth participation

The survey found that citizens' participation in deep community governance activities is insufficient, and the participation process often presents. Among the multiple-choice a question of "what activities did your community hold", the survey found that residents participated in more recreational activities (as shown in table 4.1), such as cultural competitions and holiday

celebrations in the community. But there are few political and responsive activities such as basic-level election and seeking community development advice, through visiting individual interviews, we found that even if the community organized these activities, most of them were formalistic and could not meet the deep needs of residents. In a strict legal sense, the urban residents committee should be a grass-roots mass autonomous organization, because there are three "selves", "self-management, self-education and self-service" in the clear definition of the residents committee given in <the organic law of the urban residents committee of the people's Republic of China>. However, from the reality of the community operation system, we can see that the community members are regards as the nerve endings of the administrative organs by the superior government. Community neighborhood committee has undertaken many comprehensive social management work from higher authorities, such as civil affairs, family planning, social security and so on, which makes it lose the spontaneity and initiative of residents' self-management and become the passive executor of higher orders. The misplace of the role of community neighborhood committee results in the passive of citizens' participation in community development. Over time, citizens lack the channels and path of self-government. Though they know that everyone is responsible for community development, they cannot take part in community governance in real life.

Table 4.1. Collective activities held by the community

Option	Subtotal	Proportion
Grass roots election	91	 29.84%
Entertainment competition	126	 41.31%
Fundraising, charity	78	 25.57%
Holiday and festivals celebration	138	 45.25%
Community volunteer service	103	 33.77%
Consultation on community development	65	 21.31%
Other	106	 34.75%
Person number of this question which is filled in effectively	305	

4.2 The system of citizen autonomy has not been formed

The concept of "community" was first put forward by German sociologist Tennessee. He thought that community refers to those social relationship and

social groups which are composed of homogeneous population with a common value orientation. They have close relationships, make friends with others, help each other, help each other with diseases and full of human interest^[5]. From this, we can see that the original intention of community is that the members

of community mainly take emotion as the bond. In China, the community is divided into administrative areas according to the management needs of the government, and community residents committee is often seen as the first level branch of the subdistrict office. Secondly, since Deng Xiaoping put forward the housing system reform in 1980, after several rounds of housing system reform, China has basically established the housing commercialization mechanism. Most of the reasons why urban residents choose their own living environment are determined by their own and their families' economic strength. Therefore, people living in the same community present diversified characteristics of occupation, race, culture, habit and so on. At the same time, due to the increase of population mobility, acceleration of life rhythm, the decrease of spare time and other factors, it is common to see the unfamiliar relationship that "there is no fate to know you even we are face to face". When the survey asked "do you have a close relationship with other residents in the community?", 57.38% of people chose non-affirmative answer. When asked "do you live in a community where there are owners' committee or other organizations that represent the interest of residents?", only 39.02% of the respondents were positive; Among the multiple-choice questions of "what activities have communities held", only 21.32% of people choose "consultation on community development". The scattered interpersonal relationship in the community makes it difficult for citizens' needs to be fed back to the neighborhood committee and its superior government entirely, while the dislocation of the role of the neighborhood committee makes it focus on the implementation of the administrative work of the superior most of the time, and rarely carry out the investigation of residents' wishes. Therefore, due to the information asymmetry, the needs of citizens have not been fully met, so it is inevitable that citizens are not satisfied with grass-roots social governance. And the influence of native place on the satisfaction of the grass roots community governance is nothing more than the contrast effect. Hainan is located in the South China Sea, border of China. Comparing with other province, the economic development and social construction presents the status of low starting point and low developing. In recent years, the impact of environmental pollution and haze in the northern

mainland has made many talents of mainland come to Hainan, which has a better environment, to seek for development. From the comparative analysis of the survey results, the respondents whose ancestry is not from Hainan have lower satisfaction with the grass-roots social governance in Hainan, and the result of the evaluation of "just so so" also makes a large number of migrant workers stay in Hainan, and finally they become a part of the people of Hainan.

4.3 The laws and regulations of citizen participation are not perfect

"Since the founding of the people's Republic of China, <the Regulations on the Organization of Subdistrict Offices> which is announced to be repealed in 2009 has been guiding the work of social management at the grass-roots level. Although the regulations were repealed later, the management responsibilities of various organizations at the grass-roots level and the relationship between them have not been clarified, and community organizations like subdistrict offices still exist."^[6] At present, the main legal basis for community governance is <the Law of the People's Republic of China on the organization of urban residents committees> which is adopted at the 11th meeting of the Standing Committee of the Seventh National People's Congress on December 26, 1989, and revised at the 7th Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Thirteenth National people's Congress on December 29, 2018. This is also the basis of dividing government power and grass-roots autonomy. However, in practice, its guiding role in guiding citizens to participate in community governance has not been fully reflected. For example, this law does not give a detailed description of the rights and obligations other than the voting rights in the community governance, nor does it clearly stipulate the rights and responsibilities between the neighborhood committee and the property company, which makes some residents think participating in the community governance is voting elections, leading to some residents not having a clear understanding of their rights and obligations. With the development of the concept of diversified governance, the connotation of community governance and citizen participation is also constantly enriched. How citizens reflect the dominant position in community governance needs to be further clarified.

5 Suggestion on improving the participation of Hainan citizens in community governance

5.1 Create a democratic and equal dialogue atmosphere

Community is the most real place for people to live, involving all aspects of people's livelihood. Citizens have the right to speak and know about community development service in addition to the right to vote. The survey found that residents are very concerned about community environmental health, living convenience, openness and transparency of community work information, timely response to residents' needs and other aspects, which are the main factors to improve residents' enthusiasm to participate in public affairs management. Therefore, building a scientific and reasonable evaluation index system of community governance with citizens as the main body is the key to promote citizens' enthusiasm for participation and improve public satisfaction at the grass-roots level. Whether the community collects citizens' opinions on the development of the community, creates an atmosphere of sincere dialogue, deepens the depth of the public participation in the management of community public affairs through gathering residents together for consultation, or through channels of organized by residents themselves, or through modern means of communication, and achieves institutionalized cooperation of community workers and citizens through residents' conventions, procedures and other norms, jointly completes the governance of community public resources and public affairs, so as to enhance citizens' sense of participation and happiness, and finally realize the sound and sustainable development of the community as a whole.

5.2 Cultivate grassroots social organization

"One chopstick is easy to break, ten chopsticks are hard to break". Social organizations are the important support for citizens to unite and amplify their demands. The development of grass-roots social organizations is inseparable from the support of the government and the participation of citizens. In recent years, China has gradually attached importance to the development of social. At the beginning of 2018, Ministry of Civil Affairs issued <Views on the vigorous cultivation and development of community social organizations>, which proposed the development path

of community social organizations-- "guided by the needs of the masses, focused on the encouragement and support, and based on the ability improvement", and gave more attention and support to community social organizations, in order to make them become the new vitality of community governance^[7]. Based on the fully understanding its own reality, Hainan should formulate rules and regulations that are in line with the development of local social organizations in Hainan, formulate specific operating rules for encouraging, cultivating and supporting social organizations, and establish an environment suitable for the incubation of social autonomous organizations. Citizens should also fully realize the important role of the social organizations in the maintenance of their rights, actively participate in the construction of various social organizations, be familiar with community affairs, understand the working rules of social organizations, supervise the organizations' operation through part-time job and full-time job, so as to cultivate their interpersonal communication ability, interest coordination ability, organizational leadership ability, etc. Strengthen the integration and mutual trust of community residents, and improve the governance degree of community residents participating in community public affairs with the help of social organizations.

5.3 Improve the relevant legal system

In order to protect the needs and rights of community citizens in participating in community governance, it is necessary to establish and improve relevant laws and regulations. From the perspective of constitutional basis, the main function of public participation is not to provide more information to administration organs, but to provide effective legal protection for the public^[8]. Comrade Xi Jinping encouraged Hainan to "focus on institutional innovation, give greater autonomy to reform, and support Hainan's bold reform, bold approach and independent reform" in his speech on April 13, 2018. By issuing laws and regulations and Hainan can make clear the power, responsibility and relationship between the neighborhood committee and the superior government, make clear the generate routine of people consisted neighborhood committee, make clear the information of neighborhood committee financial budget and work audit and other aspects, stipulate citizens' participation responsibilities, channels and methods, and implement a system of

rewards, supervision and feedback to ensure that there are rules and laws to follow in every link of citizens' participation. A good system design is like giving citizens a clear manual to ensure that citizens really participate in community governance.

References

- [1] Table 3.1 and figure 3.1 is the question of "what is satisfaction degree of you to grass-roots social governance?" in the questionnaire.
- [2] Table 3.2 and figure 3.2 is the question of "what is your attitudes outwards community public affairs?" in the questionnaire.
- [3] Table 3.3 and figure 3.3 is the question of "if you are elected to communicate the interests of the community for the residents' representatives and community leaders, are you willing to actively participate?" in the questionnaire.
- [4] Table 3.4 and figure 3.4 is the question of "if you are selected to communicate community interests as residents' representatives with community leaders, are you willing to actively participate?" in the questionnaire.
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