

Research on the Path of Improving the Efficiency of Urban Community Governance from the Perspective of Collaborative Governance: A Case Study of Daqing City, China

Fengbo Han*

School of Political Science and Administration, Heilongjiang University, Harbin 150000, Heilongjiang Province, China

*Corresponding author: Fengbo Han, 2544464665@qq.com

Copyright: © 2024 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is cited.

Abstract: Under the background of “co-construction, co-governance, and sharing,” the role of the grassroots level is becoming increasingly important. In the past, the governance body was single with blocked information, and the inefficient governance mode required gradual transformation. In order to achieve collaborative governance and break through the obstacles in grassroots governance, the key lies in how to play the role of the community, coordinate the relationship between citizens and the community, and allow the community to better play the role of grassroots governance. Under the guidance of the concept of collaborative governance and combined with relevant data, this paper discusses the problems and current situation of community governance in Daqing City, China, explores the path to improve the efficiency of urban community governance, and puts forward relevant constructive suggestions to better realize the role of community in grassroots governance.

Keywords: Collaborative governance; Urban community governance

Online publication: January 18, 2024

1. Introduction

1.1. Concept elaboration

Governing the country focuses on the grassroots; Grassroots governance focuses on the community. Collaborative governance is the progress of the times and the inevitable requirement of social development. The predecessor of collaborative governance^[1] comes from synergetic, which was founded by German theoretical physicist Herman Haken in the 1970s. It belongs to the cross fusion of natural science and social science in the scope of discipline, and belongs to the independent theory. The connotation of collaborative governance theory mainly includes diversity, orderliness, negotiation, and dynamics.

- (1) Diversity: The main body of collaborative governance is generally two or more departmental organizations, finding the common value pursuit and value judgment between organizations. When

there is a common goal pursuit among organizations, it is conducive to fully integrating resources, cooperating with each other, and promoting the efficiency of action.

- (2) Orderliness: Under the premise of ensuring the diversity of governance subjects, different governance subjects must be in an orderly state, which is conducive to the improvement of resource utilization efficiency.
- (3) Negotiation: In the process of governance, each subject can fully negotiate and communicate on resource utilization and problems, and find relevant interests, so as to achieve a win-win situation. Negotiation can enhance the two-way communication between governance subjects and promote the realization of their common goals.
- (4) Dynamic: The mutual cooperation of governance subjects is inseparable from the mutual cooperation between subsystems. The social system and existence are constantly changing. This cooperation needs to make corresponding changes according to the actual situation to adapt to the operation of the social system.

1.2. Community overview

There are 33 streets and 258 communities in Daqing City. The total resident population of the community is 2,781,562. Among the population of the whole city, the population of 0–14 years old is 310,589, accounting for 11.7%; the population aged 15–59 years is 1,884,133, accounting for 67.7%; and the population aged 60 years old and above is 398,530, accounting for 21.1%, as shown in **Figure 1**. The education level of the population includes 501,943 people in university level; 1,040,838 in junior high school level; 503,352 in high school level; 577,055 in the primary school level, as displayed in **Figure 2**. After investigation, it is found that the proportion of residents living in cities and towns accounts for 72.48% of the total population of the city, the proportion of urban communities is more obvious.

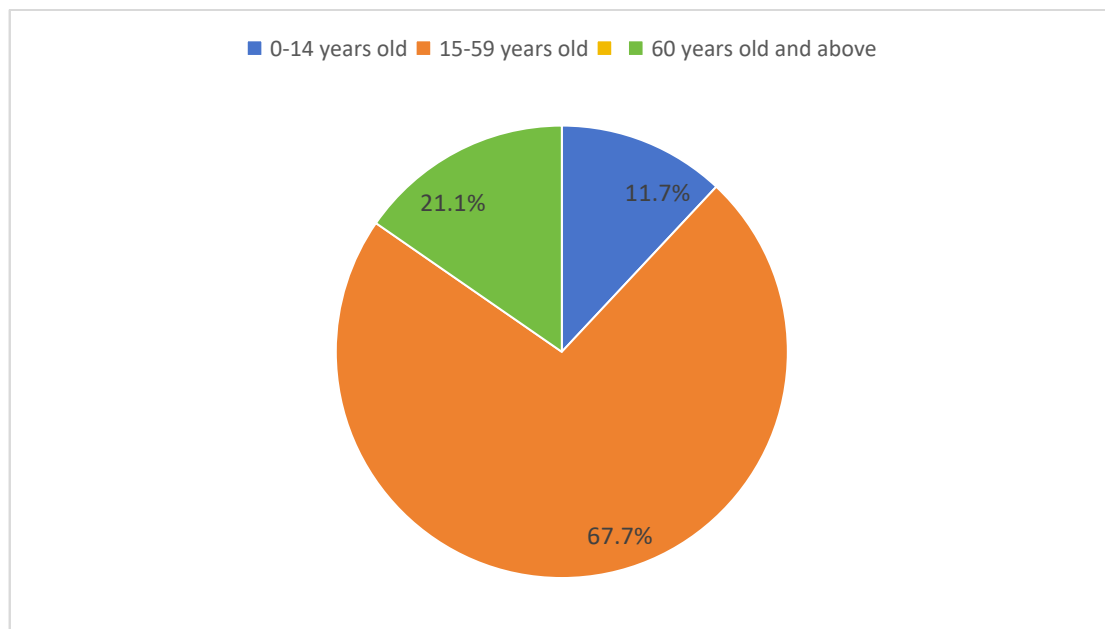


Figure 1. The proportion of age distribution of permanent residents in Daqing City

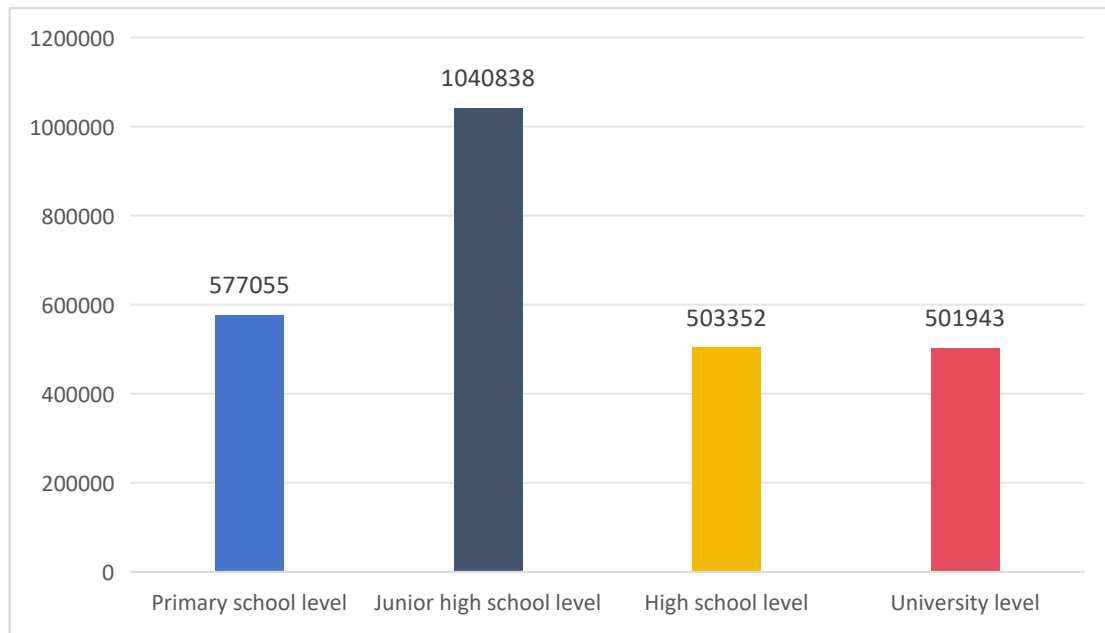


Figure 2. The proportion of population according to educational level in Daqing City

2. Current situation of community governance in Daqing

2.1. The governance model of “one committee, one station, and one meeting”

After continuous reform in recent years, Daqing City has changed from the original four-level management of city, district, street, and community to the three-level management of city, district, and community, which strengthens the functions of grassroots communities and makes the social management functions sink to the community. The effective implementation of community governance services should be promoted. A community governance model of “one committee, one station, and one meeting”^[2] has been formed, which is jointly managed by the neighborhood committee, the community workstation, and the residents’ council. The community party committee serves as the core, the community workstation as the platform, and the neighborhood committee and the residents’ council are jointly managed. As a grassroots mass autonomous organization of self-management, self-service, and self-education, the neighborhood committee works under the leadership of the community workstation. The community workstation undertakes the management and service functions under the direct leadership of the community party committee. The community residents’ council is directly led by the community party committee, it collects and sorts out the opinions of the community residents, organizes the discussion and submits it to the superior, and supervises the community workstation daily. The governance model of “one committee, one station, and one meeting” has laid the current community governance framework of Daqing City.

2.2. Community construction and service function optimization

In the construction of community team, Daqing City adopts five systems of election system, employment system, coordination system, compulsory system, and voluntary system^[3] in personnel employment to ensure the quality and quantity of community talent team. Especially during the epidemic period, volunteers for epidemic prevention and control were recruited by volunteer system, which ensured the effective implementation of epidemic prevention work. In terms of community functions, the establishment of community health service centers, community police offices and patrol security teams, as well as cultural

groups, has broadened the extension of community governance to education, medical care, sports, and other fields. In terms of community service, Daqing City organically combines community public service, business service, and self-service, and further strengthens community service functions through community service stations.

2.3. Highlighted role of the residents’ council

In recent years, the residents’ council has emerged as an “intermediate organization,” shown in **Figure 3**, in order to coordinate administration and autonomy in urban communities. Its members are composed of multiple representatives and hold meetings and consultations with neighborhood committees. It has become a freer, broader, and more representative organization of citizens’ interests after neighborhood committees and community workstations. It is also an indispensable part of achieving collaborative governance. In order to maximize the role of the community residents’ council, the community of Daqing City has widely absorbed the old soldiers, old models, old cadres, residents, and representatives of all parties, as representatives of the masses to participate in the discussion. This is to ensure the diversification of the main body of the proceedings, representing more interest groups. The residents’ council consults with residents’ committees and community workstations on issues related to the vital interests of citizens in the community, including public facilities, community resolutions, measures to benefit the people, life issues, and the improvement of citizens’ well-being. The residents’ council even works with the community to develop relevant rules and regulations, regulate community-related operations, constrain citizens’ incorrect behavior, etc., embodying the concept of collaborative governance in practice.



Figure 3. The operation mechanism diagram of residents’ council

3. Problems in community governance in Daqing City

3.1. Limited community autonomy

As the neighborhood committee directly carries out the management and service work under the guidance of the community workstation, the community workstation is equivalent to the direct superior, rather than the independent management and independent control. In this case, work carried out by the neighborhood committee is mostly in accordance with the instructions of the community workstation, which is only the executor, rather than participants. It can be seen that Daqing City has carried out community reform and further delegated its functions to the community, but the autonomy of the neighborhood committee is still greatly limited, which is not conducive to further development.

3.2. Weak legal awareness

In community governance, many residents have weak legal awareness. When they have contradictions with others and encounter problems, they do not understand the use of legal weapons to protect their rights. At the same time, community law enforcement face problems such as lax management, lax procedures, and lax supervision. The publicity and education of the law are not established, and there are even cases where

community law enforcers violate the law despite being aware of the law. Therefore, the level of community legal system needs to be improved.

3.3. Weak subject consciousness and low enthusiasm for participating in democratic management

The members of the community committee mainly comprise elderly people, and the awareness of other residents in the community to participate in autonomous management is weak. Many community residents only regard the community as a service personnel, and lack a sense of ownership. Young residents in the community are reluctant to participate in community self-government management. The reason is that on the one hand, the elderly residents in the community are mostly retired workers who have sufficient time to participate in community governance without career concerns. However, young residents are under great pressure in their daily work and they have to deal with a series of family chores after work, thus it is difficult to devote time and energy to community governance. On the other hand, young residents have less experience in social mobilization than middle-aged and elderly people, and they are poor at communicating with the governance subjects of all parties. They are not willing to participate in community governance through face-to-face communication and discussion, and their awareness of participating in community autonomy is generally weak.

4. Suggestions and countermeasures to improve urban community governance under collaborative governance

4.1. Strengthening common governance and creating a community decision-making mechanism with multiple participation

Community governance is mainly dominated by the government, so it is difficult to avoid the highlight of administration. On the one hand, the work of community workstations should be standardized ^[4]. Community workstations manage community neighborhood committees and residents' councils in a unified manner, are responsible for coordinating the two sides to jointly carry out community governance work, and engage in communication between community residents' councils and communities. Secondly, the neighborhood committee is no longer simply an executive department under the community workstation, giving it more independent management rights, and jointly carrying out community management work with the community residents' council. Thirdly, to strengthen the role of the residents' council, we should not only play the role of an intermediary organization but also actively introduce multi-party representatives in the allocation of members, ensure a high degree of participation in community affairs, regularly carry out internal meetings, write weekly reports, summarize the problems and results within a week, and standardize the system of the residents' council. It is necessary to ensure that the participants are diversified, the decision-making is reasonable and fair, and the suggestions are effective.

4.2. Ensuring the normalization of community volunteering and improving the ability to respond to sudden public events

In the survey, it was found that 80% of the residents were willing to participate in community governance affairs. In addition to the residents' council, the community volunteer team was also an indispensable force. In community governance, we often experience many unexpected problems that are difficult to deal with. Hence, the community and residents need to establish a sense of urgency, from passive acceptance of the problem to active search for the solution. Residents should become both the beneficiaries and participants of community governance. It is necessary to establish a long-term coordination mechanism between the community

and residents. The main body of community governance should be gradually guided to the residents. The community should carry out long-term investigation, find out the loopholes in daily management, establish and improve the community volunteer mechanism, ensure the normalization of the community volunteer team and carry out the incentive mechanism, and solve the problem of insufficient manpower and opinions in the face of the crisis. At the same time, community volunteers can also provide positive feedback to the community, urge revision, and cycle back and forth to improve the community's ability to respond to sudden public crisis.

4.3. Promoting the youth of the community team and building a strong community work team

We should establish and improve the recruitment, introduction, and evaluation system of community workers, enhance the welfare system and working environment, and attract more professional social workers and high-level young talents to fall into the community^[5]. This can be achieved by constantly improving the remuneration of community workers, providing a good working environment, and subsidizing new talents. Training should be regularly carried out, assessing the training results, and providing rewards and punishment according to the level. At the same time, more professional social work positions should be opened-up to ensure the professional level of community governance.

4.4. Actively cultivating multiple subjects of community governance and promoting orderly political participation of citizens

The orderly operation of politics requires the active cooperation of the broad masses of the people^[6]. Firstly, we should constantly cultivate citizens' sense of ownership in community governance and clarify the main role of residents. Citizens are encouraged to participate in residents' deliberations, medical education, and other fields, and put forward their own needs. Secondly, residents contact the community, build a service platform, collect and sort out the problems of residents' reactions on a regular basis, formulate countermeasures, and then provide feedback to the community for implementation. The establishment of the petition system is improved, providing supervision channels to citizens to supervise the community. Thirdly, for individuals or groups who have outstanding performance in community governance, the community should actively recognize and provide certain rewards to mobilize the enthusiasm of citizens' participation.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

References

- [1] Yang Z, 2023, Study on the Dilemma and Countermeasures of Rural Grassroots Governance from the Perspective of Collaborative Governance. *Rural · Agriculture · Farmers* (Edition A), 2023(12): 35–37.
- [2] Wang J, 2020, Study on the Countermeasures to Improve the Self-Government Ability of Grassroots Communities in Daqing City - Taking Wuhu Community in Daqing City as an Example. *Daqing Social Science*, 2020(03): 104–107.
- [3] Wang H, 2017, From Management to Governance: Research on Urban Community Governance in Daqing. *Daqing Social Science*, 2017(02): 120–122.
- [4] The Community, n.d., *Strengthening and Innovating Social Management Cadres Learning Reader*, CPC Central Party School Press, Beijing, 201.
- [5] Ma G, 2019, *Innovation in Community Construction and Development in the New Era*, China Book Publishing

House, Beijing, 10.

- [6] Wang N, 2023, Embedded in ‘Intermediate Organization’: The Organizational Logic and Operation Mechanism of Community Consultative Governance - A Case Study of the Community Consultative Council in X District of Z City. *Journal of Tianjin University of Administration*, 25(06): 80–87.

Publisher’s note

Bio-Byword Scientific Publishing remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.