

Integration of Social Capital: The New Dimension for the Strengthening and Innovation of Social Governance

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Abstract. Social capital is a kind of hidden resource contained in social relations, which is intensively centered on the aspects such as the trust and cooperation of citizens, the orderly citizen engagement networks and the fair and just social norms. The social capital theory provides a brand-new theoretical analysis tool for the governance of social conflicts in the new era and provides a practicable theoretical basis for the strengthening and innovation of social governance. From the characteristics of current social contradictions, the main reason for the easy intensification of these contradictions lies in the lack of social capital, and the crisis of trust, the insufficient engagement of networks, the lack of norms and other scarcities of social capital elements are the crucial reason for affecting the social harmony and stability. The integration and reconstruction of social capital are put forward to be taken as the focal point for promoting social governance innovation in this paper, and the specific implementation approaches are proposed from the four aspects of constructing political trust governance mechanism, realizing the legalization of system supply, perfecting the construction of citizen participation channels and guiding the healthy development of Non-governmental organizations.

Keywords: *social capital, social governance, new dimension*

1. Introduction

Since the reform and opening-up, because of the rapid growth of economy and the complexity and uncertainty of social transformation, a series of social problems have been arisen. The long-term development mode of "Efficiency Comes First and Balances Fairness" has brought about the division of interests and classes, which has led to a widening gap between the rich and the poor, the differences in values among the public have intensified the social contradictions and conflicts, and even many conflicts and confrontations have shown an acute trend. Besides, the coexistence of the relative backward of social structure adjustment and the uncoordinated economic and social development has further led the social tension become obviously intensified and superficial. Therefore, a sound social governance system must be built to promote the sustainable development of economic society, and the time is short and the task is grim. As this is not only the basis for comprehensively deepening the reform, but also the development direction of the reform and opening-up.

The report of the 19th national congress of the Communist Party of China has clearly put forward that "we shall strengthen the construction of social governance system, improve the social governance system under the leadership of the party committee, for which the government is responsible and with social coordination, public participation and legal guarantee, and make social governance more socialized, legalized, intelligent and professional.". However, the inertia of the traditional omnipotent government mode usually leads to the obstruction of social governance innovation, which results in the dislocation of roles and unsmooth operation in the process of social governance, the social construction cannot adapt to the development requirements of the situation, and it is difficult to get out of the practical dilemma of frequent social contradictions in the transitional period. The problem of "strong government and weak society" has been existed for a long time in the social management system of China, the management body is relatively single, and the participation of social forces is insufficient. Under the unitary social management structure of the government, the government and its related departments have made overall arrangements for the social life, and all kinds of social organizations, economic organizations, the public and the media are in a passive position, and social governance has become the internal affairs of the government.

In the modern society, it is difficult to deal with the infinite possibilities and various forms of social contradictions and problems by relying solely on the government, and it is also impossible for it to fully assume all social governance affairs and responsibilities. If we want to break the existing pattern of one-man operation of the government, it is necessary for us to fully mobilize the enterprises, Non-governmental organizations, civil society and other diverse forces to participate in the social governance. However, the multi-governance is inseparable from the reconstruction of many elements, such as the citizen participation, interest integration, value condensation and social norms, which is a systematic project, and it needs in-depth theoretical exploration and research.

The social transformation of China is a process of replacing the old with the new and creating the new with the old, which is a continuous, slow but profound comprehensive reform, it brings about comprehensive changes in social structure, beliefs, relationships and value systems, and there are even ruptures and fractures in many aspects and fields. The reason for emergence of social contradictions and conflicts is complex, but the slow accumulation and relative backward of social capital in the process of transformation is not only an important source for frequent emergence of social contradictions, but also increases the difficulty for the solving of social conflicts. This paper believes that the cultivation and accumulation of social capital shall be taken as the logical starting point of social governance innovation, and the institutional approach shall be established to solve the social contradictions and conflicts.

2. Social Capital: A New Theoretical Paradigm for the Strengthening and Innovation of Social Governance

P. Bourdieu (1986), a French sociologist, was the first one who introduced the concept of social capital into the field of sociology. He regarded the social capital as the actual or potential resource aggregation formed by social members in the process of mutual contact and communication. The famous American scholars J. Coleman (1990) and R. Putnam (1995) believed that the social capital embodied the key characteristics of social organizations, including the basic elements such as network, trust and norms, which could enhance the interpersonal cooperative actions and improve the efficiency of social operation. A. Portes (1998), R. Burt (1998), N. Lin (2001) and F. Fukuyama (2002) respectively defined the social capital from the aspects such as membership qualification, "structural hole", resources embedded in social structures, social norms and general trust. Although the emphases on the definitions of social capital of these scholars are different, they all regard social network resources, mutual benefit and collaboration, trust and norms as the core content, and believe that these elements play an important role in promoting social governance. In essence, social governance is the interaction between government and society, and social capital and social governance have the inherent logical connection and natural fit. Trust, networks of civic engagement, norms of mutual benefit and other basic elements of social capital are crucial to the construction of good social governance pattern, and it is also the basis and link for the maintenance and development of this pattern.

2.1 Social Capital Can Provide Trust and Cooperation for Social Governance

The trust relationship among the government, society and the public is the premise and basis for the formation of good social governance mode. Generally speaking, social capital can promote the formation and development of the two trust relationships in the process of social governance: the first is the trust between citizens and government; and the second is the mutual trust among citizens. The trust between citizens and government plays a dominant role in the social trust system. If the citizens in a society form a deep trust between social systems and government departments and make it become a cultural tradition, this kind of civic culture can promote and maintain the political harmony and stability, and this is the significance of social capital as a kind of cultural resource lies in optimizing social governance and promoting social stability. The mutual trust among citizens is also an important aspect of the social trust system, and the cultural values and attitudes emphasized by social capital are the lubricant of mutual trust among citizens as well as the catalyst for

promoting the civic cooperation. Social capital can effectively promote the social cohesion, which can transform the egoists who lack social morality and the sense of responsibility and self-centered calculators into the modern citizens who are willing to share benefits and responsibilities and have a sense of social welfare. Samuel Huntington pointed out that the phenomena of lack of trust and people are of different minds will lead to social disintegration. Therefore, "trust" social capital is a premise for improving the social governance, is an indispensable condition for realizing the positive interaction between the state and the citizens as well as the government and the society, and is the basis for building a social governance pattern of social collaboration and citizen participation.

2.2 Social Capital Can Provide Norms and Order for Social Governance

Social norms are an important guarantee for the orderly development of society. If we want to establish a normative social governance and operation system, we must have certain forms of social norms to restrain people's behaviors so as to promote the stability and unity of the society. Social norms are an important premise and effective guarantee for the optimization of social governance, and any orderly society needs to be supported by the systematic and scientific social norms. Social capital can promote the spontaneous generation of social order, and thus improve the efficiency and effectiveness of social operation. Hayek believed that norms and orders can only be formed gradually in the process of social growth, which are difficult to be designed and constructed deliberately, and the social capital that established through effective networks can promote this outcome. Social norms are manifested in many forms such as laws and regulations, moral norms and behavioral habits, which are gradually generated by the public in the practice of social life for the realization of personal interests. In essence, it is a kind of "spontaneous order", which shows the bottom-up evolution characteristics, and it is difficult to play a substantive role only by the so-called norms promulgated and implemented compulsively by the government agencies. Social norms are an important content of social capital, which can promote the formation of social trust and cooperation, and restrain and regulate the behavior of social members. Therefore, only the social norms are in the sense of social capital can help optimize the social governance and promote a harmonious and stable social order.

2.3 The Engagement Network Contained in Social Capital Can Optimize the Behavior of Social Governance

Under the conditions of the increasingly prominent public issues and the increasingly complex social contradictions, the subject of social governance cannot only be limited to government departments, which must be a broad participation group including the government, enterprises, social organizations and the public, thus the effective social governance can be achieved. It is an inevitable trend of social development for the joint management and collaborative governance of government, society and the public. The government will no longer be the only administrator of the society, but the organizer and coordinator of various social forces. On the premise of respecting the law of the market, many enterprises, Non-governmental organizations and the general public will be organized to participate in the management of social and public affairs together. In the process of studying social capital, Putnam proposed that there are two types of networks of civic engagement: horizontal type and vertical type. The former is to associate the social members with the same status and power together, the latter is to link the social members with vertical management relationship and unequal status and power together, and the latter is a kind of dependent social relationship. As for a social community, the denser the network of horizontal relationships, the easier the promotion of trust and cooperation; however, no matter how dense the vertical network is, how important the participants are and how close the connection is, it is hard to maintain the social trust and cooperation. The public engagement network is a horizontal network that crosses the social stratification, which can nourish the extensive cooperative relationships and promote the depth and breadth expansion of social governance; while the omnipotent government management is a typical vertical network, which is difficult to promote the deepening of trust and cooperation. Therefore, as

an important social capital, the networks of civic engagement can optimize the behavior of social governance and improve the system of social governance.

3. Lack of Social Capital in the Social Governance of China

It is just because of the lack of social capital and the insufficient investment that leads to the relative backward of social governance and slow social development at present in China. The lack of social capital is mainly manifested in three aspects, namely the shortage of social capital for "universal trust", the deficit of social capital for the "norm of mutual benefit" and the insufficiency of social capital for the "networks of civic engagement".

3.1 Trust Crisis is an Important Social Factor for Affecting the Social Harmony and Order

Firstly, there is a lack of public trust in government. This crisis of trust is mainly manifested in the public's doubt on the government's will and ability to govern the society. As the government and its staff have not fully understood the importance of social governance and social development in views and values and paid insufficient attention to the health and life safety of the masses for a long time, the people lack the right to know, the right to participate and the right to supervise, some public commitments have not been fully fulfilled by the government, the management practices of the government are not standardized and efficient, and the emergency response mechanism and crisis handling mechanism are not sound, which make the masses feel difficult for them to have deep trust in the government. Secondly, there is a lack of trust in the internal side of social system. The governance of high quality is an interactive process with full trust and extensive participation of all social members. However, in the social transformation of China, the universal social trust has not been established yet. The main reason is that at the time when the traditional social capital is being lost the modern social capital is not established yet, and there is a "break" between the tradition and the modernity. On the one hand, the traditional social capital system is broken down. Although a certain componential modern social capital has been produced, the influence of the old-fashioned social capital characterized by "blood relationship" and "patriarchal clan system" still exists, and what people believe is confined to a small circle such as family, etc., which are hard for them to believe in the outsiders. On the other hand, the rapidly established market economic system is not perfect enough, which leads to the value differentiation among people, and it has a negative impact on the formation of modern social capital. The market itself is a double-edged sword, which widens the distance among people while expanding the public space. Under the fierce competition pressure, the relationship among people presents a phenomenon of interest-based, which is difficult for them to form a trust relationship, and it finally leads to the dilemma of collective action in the social development and social governance.

3.2 The Lack of Norms is an Important Institutional Factor for Affecting the Harmony and Order of the Society

Angel once said that the rule of law is always an effective tool for maintaining the social order in a free society. In the concrete practice of public management in our country, the rule of law in the process of public management is mainly realized through routinization and legalization. This process is to bring citizens' participation in public affairs into an institutionalized and standardized channel by putting the value of democracy through legal procedures so as to reduce the uncertain and unstable factors of social development. The internal powers of the government shall be reasonably divided and the external decentralization shall be implemented to form a social governance pattern with clear powers and responsibilities and diversified subjects. The high-efficient operation of this pattern and system is inseparable from the guarantee of legal system. From the experience of developed countries and the development trend of social governance, it is of great significance to promote the scientific development of social governance by building a relatively comprehensive legal framework for social governance, clarifying the responsibilities of government and civil society in the field of social governance, and defining the related business

organizations, Non-governmental organizations and the limits of authority of citizens. Currently, the legal construction of social governance in China is still at a primary stage, the contents that specially support people to participate in social governance in the normative legal documents on social governance that have been issued are very few, and there is no explicit stipulations on the means and responsibilities of their participation. This is bound to lead to the fact that the activities of public management participated by the public and the Non-governmental organizations will be hardly valued by the government decision-making bodies, and the desire of the public to participate in social governance according to law is difficult to realize.

3.3 The Insufficient Engagement of Network is an Important Institutional Factor for Affecting the Harmony and Order of the Society

At present, the lagging development of the networks of civic engagement in China has led to the lack of social foundation for social governance. Under the ideal condition, it is very important for the effective governance of public crisis that the social subjects are mutually independent and cooperate whole heartedly to form a kind of voluntary and orderly network of civic engagement. The network of civic engagement can not only reduce the fraud cost in individual transactions, but also promote the formation of the norms of mutual benefit, speed up the circulation of relevant subjects' moral information, and enhance the social exchanges. The past successful partnerships can provide a template with cultural connotation for social governance and facilitate the formation of the future partnerships. It is just because of the insufficient development and utilization of the social capital in China that lead to the relatively slow development of civil society, the lack of vigor of the society, the relatively weak of the social autonomy and self-organization ability, which is far from forming a rational participation structure. As an important subject of civil society, the Non-governmental organizations are not only the network for condensing the social capital, but also the important support for the cooperation between the government and the public. The development state of the Non-governmental organizations is not only related to the cultivation of modern civic consciousness and public spirit, but also related to the formation and development of trust, identity and cooperative relationship between the government and civil society. Since the late 1980s, the Non-governmental organizations of China have made significant development, and their quantity, variety and legality have all developed and improved rapidly. However, they are still in a stunted state. As most of the Non-governmental organizations are established directly by the government or established with the help of the government, so they are highly dependent on the government and lack of voluntariness and autonomy, and they are generally small in scale, insufficient in funds, weak in ability, and limited in activity space and energy.

4. Integration and Reconstruction of Social Capital: Path Selection for the Innovation of Social Governance

Investment in social capital is an important path for the strengthening and innovation of social governance, and system and mechanism construction is a key link for the development of social capital. It is suggested to integrate and reconstruct the social capital in the process of social governance from the following four aspects of system and mechanism construction.

4.1 Build a Political Trust Governance Mechanism---The Necessary Premise for the Innovation of Social Governance

Political trust plays an exemplary and guiding role in social trust as well as a leading role in the whole social trust system. Under the current situation of the general lack of social trust, the cultivation of "trust" social capital shall start from enhancing the political trust so as to promote the general improvement of social trust. First of all, we shall promote the transformation of political trust relationship with the transformation of the government. Different administrative environments will produce different trust relationships, a conventional trust relationship characterized by "authority-dependence-compliance" will be generated under the management mode of the ruling

government, a contractual trust relationship characterized by "contract-control-obedience" will be generated under the management mode of management-oriented government, a cooperative trust relationship characterized by "competition-management-cooperation" will be generated under the governance mode of service-oriented government. We shall actively build a service-oriented government, and realize the transformation from a conventional and contractual mixed trust relationship to a cooperative trust relationship. Secondly, the reconstruction of political trust relationship shall be driven by the system construction. Generally speaking, system is the foundation of political trust, which also plays a fundamental role in the formation of social universal trust. The system construction must be based on the existing social development situation and focus on the construction of trust relationship in modern society, which can be started from the following aspects: The first is to win the trust of the people through transparent administration, truly implement information disclosure, and safeguard the people's right to know and right to express through decision-making consultation, hearing, publicity and other measures; the second is to win the trust of the people through democratic administration, encourage citizens to participate in the discussion and administration of state affairs, open channels for the expression of interest demands, and safeguard the people's right to participate; the third is to win the trust of the people through the performance-based administration, reasonably formulate and strictly implement the public service commitments, and accept the social supervision to safeguard the people's right of supervision.

4.2 Realize the Legalization of System Supply---The Only Route for the Innovation of Social Governance

Social norms not only include the institutional norms represented by legal systems, but also include the non-institutional norms represented by moralities and customs. Morality and custom are a kind of non-mandatory social norms that have internalized into people's mind, which have the universal and stable binding force. However, their formation is inseparable from the long-term edification, infection and education. At present, the dual economic and social transition in China has brought about great changes in the field of ideology, and there has been a certain degree of moral decline. Therefore, the cultivation of "normative" social capital must be started from the construction of the rule of law, and we must drive the healthy development of moral customs with a good rule of law. A complete legal system must be established if we want to strengthen the rule of law, we must ensure that there are laws to abide by and the laws are strictly observed, and we must maintain the dignity and authority of the law and strengthen the rigid constraints of the law; we need to further improve the socialist market economy system, create a free, fair and just market competition environment, and make the market rules and legal systems play a fundamental role in the allocation of resources, and the non-market factors such as power, money and "human relationship" shall be completely eradicated so that they will not be involved in the allocation of market resources. Our society is a typical "human relationship society", although "human relationship" can enhance the sense of identity and cohesion within a small circle and reduce the social transaction costs in the short term, from the perspective of the long-term development of the whole society, it will increase the transaction costs of the whole society. Therefore, it is necessary to realize the democratization and scientization of public decision-making, as well as enhance the routinization and legislation of public management, and thus promote the formation of "normative" social capital.

4.3 Improve the Construction of the Channels for Civic Engagement---the Key Move for the Innovation of Social Governance

An important goal of social governance innovation is to coordinate the interest relationships of all parties and resolve the various conflicts of interests, and this goal is also the urgent need of the current social reality. An important institutional source of social conflicts and social violence is the lack of effective interest expression and coordination mechanism, the insufficient civic engagement of networks, and the difficulty in draining the discontent emotions through normal channels. The urgent task for solving this problem is to establish and improve the mechanism of interest

expression and coordination, seek compromise in opposition, find balance in disagreement, and realize integration in differentiation, and thus maintain the harmony and stability of the society. Specifically speaking, first, we shall establish an information acquisition mechanism so that the citizens can fully understand the procedures of social governance, the processing process of social events and the information of public services, and create conditions for them to participate in social governance. Second, we shall establish a mechanism for people to express their opinions, and we need to encourage people to smooth the opinion expression channels through expression, supervision, complaint and report on the matters that involve in public interests. Third, we shall establish a mechanism of interest cohesion, and integrate the scattered demands through collective negotiation, collective expression, communication and consultation, etc. Fourth, we shall establish a mechanism for interest negotiation, and conduct a full negotiation through legal procedures and channels in the way of labor and capital negotiation and dialogue between parties involved in conflicts so as to resolve the conflicts of interest independently. The process of establishing and improving the interest expression and coordination mechanism is actually the process of cultivating and accumulating the "participation" of social capital.

4.4 Guide the Healthy Development of Non-Governmental Organizations---the Effective Channel for the Innovation of Social Governance

The Non-governmental organization is an important carrier for social capital, its quantity and quality can reflect the size of social capital stock of a society, and a mature civil society must be based on the rich Non-governmental organizations. Non-governmental organizations can cultivate and maintain the social trust, promote the creation and implementation of social norms, and itself is a kind of relationship network to express interest demands and participate in social governance. Therefore, Non-governmental organizations play a strong role in promoting the accumulation of social capital. Influenced by the planned economy system for quite some time, the political and economic forces of China are strong, while the social forces are weak, and the social atomization and fragmentation are serious. Under such a circumstance, it is necessary to cultivate the modern civil society through expanding the Non-governmental organizations and giving full play to their positive effects. At the macro level, we shall continue to deepen the transformation of government functions, intensify the institutional reform in public institutions, and provide favorable condition and environment for the development of Non-governmental organizations; at the micro level, we shall strengthen the planning, guidance and standardized management of the construction of the Non-governmental organizations, and give encouragements and supports for them. We shall give preferential policies to the Non-governmental organizations in the aspects of credit and loan and tax revenue, and in particular, we shall give greater support to the public beneficial Non-governmental service organizations and private Non-enterprise units. We shall further improve the construction of laws and regulations on the aspects of employment and social security for the employees of Non-governmental service institutions, and integrate them into the overall pattern of the personnel, welfare and social governance of the society, and make the Non-governmental organizations have a higher social status, thus enhance its attraction to the outstanding talents.

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