

# Challenges and Responses of Urban Community Governance from the Perspective of Risk Society

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## ABSTRACT

The modernity centred on subjectivism and anthropocentrism tries to grasp the external world with reason. However, with the development of history, it has developed into an uncertain global risk society. There are frequent emergencies in my country, and the adverse effects of various risk disasters on national stability and rapid economic development are increasing. The community is the bearer and the responder of risks. The demand of residents for good community governance is increasing, which also exposes the problems existing in community governance. This paper reflects on urban community governance from the perspective of risk society, and puts forward corresponding countermeasures and suggestions.

**Keywords:** *Risk society, urban community, community governance*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of "risk society" was first proposed and analysed by the German sociologist Beck in his book "Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity" published in 1986, referring to a series of special social, economic, political and cultural factors. The growth of human knowledge and the rapid development of science and technology has brought a strong effect to the whole world, leading to the formation of "humanized environment" and "socialized nature", instead of unknown and unforeseen risk become the dominant force of modern society, while human decisions to control these uncertainties will lead to new risks. These risks both in the structure and characteristics, or in the scope and extent, have undergone fundamental changes. We are "living on the volcano of civilization". With industrial development and technological progress, human beings are increasingly involved in "unpredictable risks". Whether it is natural disasters controlled by non-human factors such as earthquakes, droughts, floods, and locust plagues, or emergencies that occur during the development and operation of urban social development, which have an adverse impact on the smooth operation of the entire social network. It is not conducive to community residents to gain a sense of belonging.

Ulrich Beck argued that "risk" is a paradox and a by-product of the expansion of modernity. Risk is not due to

ignorance or lack of skill. On the contrary, the risk stems from increasing efforts to be rational. [1] To effectively curb the spread of the epidemic, as far as the risks of modern society are concerned, various unknown risks are not decreasing but increasing.

Grassroots is the deep foundation and important support of social governance. The focus of social governance will definitely fall on the community. Social risks are reflected in the community, which puts forward new requirements for community governance. The paper reflects on community governance from the perspective of risk society and improves the ability of urban communities to resist sudden risks and enhance community residents' sense of security.

## 2. RISK ANALYSIS OF URBAN COMMUNITIES

### 2.1. Ecological Risk of Community

The ecological risks faced by communities are homogeneous with those faced by society but have their own characteristics. With the rapid increase of community population, people's various practical activities and the extreme expansion of rationality poses a threat to the community ecological environment. Too much domestic garbage can't be cleared in time, resulting in the mess of community environment. Collectives or

individuals introduce "scattered and polluted" enterprises for economic benefits, in the suburban areas, including "village-in-city" communities, the production space of these enterprises is mixed with the living space of the community. Waste gas, wastewater, and incineration of various solid wastes caused serious air, water, noise or soil pollution in or around the community.

## **2.2. managerial risks**

Community management still emphasizes the leading role of the government and adopts a "top-down" management mode in resource allocation and allocation. Although authority under the system of government has the congenital superiority in emergency management, it is unable to satisfy the differentiated demands of different classes and different interest groups in terms of daily management. With the expansion of the scope of Internet applications, the role of community entity resources in the communication between community residents has gradually decreased. The grassroots government and community neighbourhood committees have not played their role. They are facing the weakening of the function of the management body. Beck pointed out that the formalism of the management system constructed by the government, experts, and enterprises and other risk liability entities. Various technical risk prevention measures seem to be good. But in practice, the unclear responsibilities of technical risk supervision entities and the diversity of technical risk manufacturing entities have led to the hypocrisy and absence of risk-bearers. [2] The overall management mode will appear the situation of government failure and bring risks such as safety management and health management.

The expansion of human knowledge, the continuous improvement of the laws of rationality, and the development of prevention and control technologies have brought more and more new threats, making people trapped in uncertainty and risk. Thus, the perception of "risk" in modern society and its prevention and control will be a long-term and arduous task.

## **2.3. Trust risk**

The trust crisis among community residents. Under the risk society is mainly embodied in the individual "anxiety" and "trust crisis" in interpersonal relationships. Risk society causes a crisis of trust among people, which is detrimental to the sustainable development between people. A small community may have people coming and going from all over the world, and it is no longer a region of acquaintances. Residents become "the most familiar strangers". Limited communication between the subject, and people are in a survival of anxiety. Especially in the epidemic, the fear of contagion has increased the mistrust among residents. Therefore, it is difficult to form community consensus. Meanwhile, the polarization

between the rich and the poor in social groups has made the stratification of the community obvious, and it is difficult to form a community consensus.

## **3. THE CHALLENGE OF URBAN COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE IN THE RISK SOCIETY**

### ***3.1. The high mobility of urban community population aggravates the risk and increases the difficulty of governance***

Urbanization rates are rising, and the separation of time and space has greatly enhanced social mobility. The prevention and control model that based on regional and administrative divisions is difficult to adapt to the mobile and global society. The scale and scope of risk in urban communities has also changed significantly, which was the regional risks spread into a global crisis. It is not only becoming more and more difficult for people to recognize and predict social risks, but also causes many risks to cumulate.

### ***3.2. The trend of individualization of urban communities affects the process of community governance***

Individuation refers to the gradual loosening of the framework of individual behaviour and the social structure of restrictive conditions, and resulting in failure. The individual is relatively liberated from structural constraints such as class, class, gender, and family. At the same time, personal identity is no longer defined by a certain collective, and the identity under the collectivism system has been eliminated to some extent. Beck believes that when modernization reaches the stage of reflexivity, individualization will reach the unprecedented level, and it will become a dynamic mechanism of risk society. The challenge of individualization to community governance is reflected in the following two aspects:

#### ***3.2.1. Community residents lack sense of participation and the civic spirit***

Residents are one of the main bodies of community governance. Without the participation of residents, not only can't it establish community self-governance, but also it can't form a good community governance model. Although all over the country, communities are encouraged to introduce social forces to participate in it, community construction still remains at the top-down administrative promotion of the government. The trend of individuation has led to the diversification of residents' interests, and pay more attention to personal rights and quality of life. Furthermore, there is growing indifference to political and community governance. Residents have

low awareness of participation in community autonomy and low sense of belonging with the community. Community autonomy lacks the participation of residents, which will greatly reduce the ability to deal with community risk situations.

### *3.2.2. Lack of effective cooperation among multiple subjects*

The 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China clearly proposed that building the social governance pattern of co-construction, co-governance and sharing by social governance institution, and clarified the basic positioning and roles of different governance entities such as the party, government, social forces, and the public. However, there are great differences in the needs and governance mechanisms among multi-governance subject. [3] The strength of multi-governance subject is unbalanced, and community governance is often dominated by the elite force. Each subject divides the boundaries of action and the scope of responsibility through their self-centeredness. Cooperation still has to be achieved within the field of self-interest of each subject, and there is no real cooperation beyond instrumental rationality. In the individualized society, the interest game among the multiple actors directly reduces the integration capability of the community, which seriously affects the process of community governance.

### *3.3. the imperfection of Community governance system and Rule of Law*

On the one hand, community management lacks supervision mechanism. For example, it is difficult to identify individuals who are responsible for community environmental pollution. The traditional principle of whoever pollutes controls, who pollutes who pays, and who pollutes who is responsible has been not suitable for risky society. Besides, some communities where the law is not clear about ownership of garage Spaces. In addition, it is difficult to restrict the work of centralized power departments in the process of governance.

On the other hand, the legal norms of community governance need to be improved. Although my country has formed a relatively complete legal framework, there are relatively few legal documents that specifically regulate community governance activities. There are problems such as the dislocation of the subject and object. [4] The unclear provisions of the law have allowed risk liability subjects to use the "vacuum zone" of the law to engage in activities to some extent. In the process of governance, there are not sufficient laws to protect the development of community work, leading to a decrease in the level of urban community resilience.

## **4. CONCLUSION**

### ***4.1. Comply with the "individualized tendency" to meet residents' demands and strengthen residents' awareness of community participation***

From the perspective of China's development process, In the past 40 years of reform and opening up, the process from a planned economy to a market economy has also been a process of disintegration and differentiation of the unit system. With the disintegration of the unit system, citizens have become atomized individuals, and the demands and choices of individuals have been more diversified. To break the barriers that the urban residents who are lacking in the intense awareness of participation and the sense of belonging in communities, it is necessary to take the needs of residents as the orientation.

Communities should carry out targeted service activities base on demand survey, exert the pulling force of the urban community to improve residents' awareness of community participation by organizing cultural and entertainment activities, establishing channels for residents to express their interests. In order to help solve the problem of "impersonalization" in the communication between residents, according to a certain proportion of personnel, it can recruit professional social workers, recruit volunteers.

### ***4.2. Develop a "round-table conference" pattern to enhance the cooperation of multiple subjects***

The round-table conference refers to an equal consultation meeting, participants sit around the round table regardless of hierarchy, and everyone participates in the meeting as an equal. The mode of operation focuses on good information processing, effective feedback and holographic communication. Therefore, the main framework of multiple co-construction in community governance is based on the spirit of democratic equality, knowledge sharing, full exchange and scientific decision-making. Building community organizations, volunteers, residents and other multiple cooperative alliances under the leadership of the government, at the same time, discovering "leaders" in the community, and making use of his charm and influence to enhance the community participation of multiple subjects, shorten the communication distance, increase the frequency of interaction, as well as enhance the cohesion of the community, so that the urban community is no longer just a certain geographical boundary, but has its own characteristics and gradually developed into a harmonious community.

#### ***4.3. Devote to the Evaluability of "side effects" to build the community smart platform and improve community meticulous construction***

The reduction of calculability accompanies by the increase of evaluability, and they are mutually conditional. Various consequences and recursive causal models must be balanced in their own or other sense, so that the actual consequences become incalculable and the possible effects will be more and more estimable. A large number of floating populations have laid hidden dangers for community management and emergency management in urban community. Therefore, it is necessary to construct a correlation between the factors affecting liquidity on full data so as to minimize the control error as much as possible. Using smart platforms to connect with communities to control the spread of risks and make scientific predictions by big data and algorithm models. Giving full play to the functions of Internet to grasp the dynamic information of residents and establish economic emergency response mechanism to ensure the productive life orderly.

#### ***4.4. Respond to "Imperfect regulations" to enhance the legalization of community governance***

Urban community governance should operate under a certain framework system. The legalization of community requires that the government must abide by the law and enforce it strictly, limiting administrative and management power under the legal framework. Therefore, according to the actual situation, detailed and clear provisions on the scope of responsibilities, boundaries of activities and governance methods should be made. What ' s more, Community legalization requires the government to act according to law and make full use of legal thinking and methods to resolve all kinds of community conflicts. Aiming at the formalism of urban community resident autonomy system and the undemocratic neighbourhood election process, [5] we can establish third party organizations to supervise and form a good legal environment for the legalization of community governance.

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