Social Governance Community: Development Context, Research Differentiation and Value Review

Kunhao Dai[1] & Xiaoliang Zhang[1]

[1] Research Institute of Social Development, Southwestern University of Finance and Economics
Correspondence: Kunhao Dai, Research Institute of Social Development, Southwestern University of Finance and Economics.

Abstract

The formation of the social governance community is an integral part of the modernization of governance capacity and governance system. Tracing back the course of social co-governance will help to better clarify the existing relationship and plan the future scientifically. This paper tries to grasp the evolution of the social governance community by reviewing the literature, focusing on the research and value connotation. The results show that: the development of the social governance community has a very clear context of the times and iteration; there are clear regional differences in the study of social governance community. Based on this, this paper examines the value of the social governance community and prospects for the future.

Keywords: social governance, community, modernization, field

1. The Development Context of Social Governance Community

1.1 The Origin of Social Governance Community

Social governance community can be divided into two concepts: social governance and community, and social governance includes two concepts: society and governance. In terms of its development, it is indispensable to retrace and interpret its basic concepts.

First, the term governance is not an original product of China's discourse system. However, it is not difficult to find that the word "rule", which occupies a strong position in traditional society, has a great similarity with it after a careful study of China's history, which is embodied in that both of them are a management model. The difference is that, compared with governance, governance contains more explicit inclusiveness, that is, the governance subject presents more diversified characteristics than the governance subject.

With the wave of reform and opening up, China's socialist market economic system has developed and become increasingly sound, and the subject consciousness of different social groups has been constantly awakened. Many scholars have keenly grasped the value and necessity of social governance, and carried out research in this order

of thinking. First of all, the two concepts of governance and rule have their own emphasis and should be treated separately. (Yu Keping, 2000) In his Ethics of Public Management, Zhang Kangzhi creatively elaborated the development trend of social governance in the post-industrial society era, proposed a three-dimensional reconstruction of the new model of social governance, and discussed public administration issues from the perspective of human moral existence, giving governance a humanistic feeling, based on specific government institutions and departments and using the skills of comparison between China and the West. (Zhang Kangzhi, 2003) Shen Ronghua and others presented a big theme from the perspective of power through a small incision, explored a new approach, analyzed the governance theory differently, emphasized the coordination between the government and civil society, and highlighted the diversity of governance subject composition. (Shen Ronghua & Zhou Yicheng, 2003) Tang Yalin believes that the transformation and taking root of the concept of "governance" in China must take into account the leadership of the CPC and the leadership of the government. (Tang Yalin, 2019) It can be seen that experts and scholars have a certain understanding of "governance" in the Chinese context, and its meaning continues to sublimate in the process of social development.

In western society, the research on "governance" focuses on its connotation. For example, Gerry Stoker pointed out that in the process of social development, the two concepts of "governance" and "reason" had already appeared, but for a long time people ignored the specific background and special social conditions of the word itself, so it was often used interchangeably with the word "rule" in the traditional political context. In his book New Governance: Governance without Government, Rob Rhods of the United States deeply summarized the use and significance of governance from six dimensions, and believed that "governance" was a kind of ordered control system that was very different from the past, or a new model of self-organizing network. Western scholars have conducted unique research on the connotation of governance, but they have not reached an agreement on its connotation understanding, and generally prefer vague

definitions.

The concept of community originated in the Greek era before Christ. It was advocated by Aristotle, who advocated that individuals should not be isolated from the crowd. "The demand for good" became the common interest of the community, resulting in the formation of a "city-state" of the community.

Since the Enlightenment, Kant and Hurd put forward the concepts of "national social community" and "national social community" from the perspective of social contract theory according to the nature of human freedom, both of which belong to the category of social community. In his book "Community and Society", German sociologist Stennis separated "community" and "society" for the first time. It is emphasized that "community" is a small-scale social connection based on geographical, kinship, friendship, humanities and other factors, which further expands the connotation of community to geographical community, blood community, cultural and spiritual community. (Ferdinand Tönnies, 1999) The Chicago School, based on the concept of "community" of Tennis, first integrated the concept of community, so as to understand the community from the perspective of community. After that, Parsons established the concept of "social community", focusing on the background of the community in the whole social operation. The operation of the community must be included in the whole social system. So far, the concept of community has gradually moved to the social field and gradually formed into a "social community".

1.2 Evolution of the Social Governance Community

Today, China has entered a new era of socialism with Chinese characteristics. At the Fourth Plenary Session of the 19th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, it was clearly proposed to build a community of social governance featuring common governance and sharing. Looking back on China's development history, the exploration and adjustment of the concept of building a community of social governance also went through a long period of time. The concept of "social governance community" is the latest policy proposed in the changing development of China from "social

management" to "social governance". "Social governance community" is the derivation of the concept of community in the field of social governance. In the historical context of community, it is in the pedigree of "community in society". (Li Rongshan, 2015) At present, the academic community has relevant research on the connotation, significance and development status of the social governance community.

For the research on the meaning of social governance community, most domestic researchers, like western scholars, regard social governance community as an organic combination of social governance and community. In the Study on the Significance, Basic Connotation and Construction Feasibility of the Social Governance Community, Zhang Lei proposed that the so-called social governance community in China is a social organism that realizes diversified and coordinated development based on geographical and social common interests. (Zhang Lei, 2019) Zhang Guolei and Ma Li put forward in the article "The connotation, goals and orientation of building a community of social governance in the new era - based on the interpretation of the Decision of the Fourth Plenary Session of the 19th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China" that the social governance community is both social action and community value. (Zhang Guolei & Ma Li, 2020) In "Towards a New Era of Municipal Community of Social Governance", Wen Jun proposed that the social governance community includes the subject and object of social governance and their spiritual culture, which is a combination of the three. (Wen Jun, 2020) Yu Jianxing and Ren Jie believed in the article "Social Governance Community and Its Implementation Mechanism" that the social governance community is based on a certain range of governance space and carriers, and members in this space have the responsibility of common governance. (Yu Jianxing, 2019) In the Systematic Review and Construction Path of the Social Governance Community, Xu Wenqiang believed that the social governance community is a specific practical path for social governance, a value community, a target community and a benefit community to achieve common game, coordination and cooperation among multiple governance subjects. (Xu Wenqiang, 2020)

With regard to the significance of the construction of the social governance community, scholars mainly carried out from three aspects: the theoretical production of social governance, the practice of guiding social construction and promoting the development of the country's comprehensive strength. Huang Jianhong and Gao Yuntian, from the perspective of national development, believed that the construction and implementation of the social governance community was an important way to practice the "governance of China" system. (Huang Jianhong & Gao Yuntian, 2020) Luo Qiangqiang and Wang Yang believe that the construction of a community of social governance is an effective practice of the socialist governance system and governance capacity with Chinese characteristics. Promoting a community of social governance can better stimulate the social subjectivity of the people to better build a harmonious and beautiful society. (Luo Qiangqiang & Wang Yang, 2020) Li Youmei and Xiang Feng also believe that promoting the construction of a community of social governance can effectively solve China's major social conflicts and stimulate the enthusiasm of the people to participate in social construction. (Li Youmei & Xiang Feng, 2020) Chen Song and Yin Lei believe that the concept of building a community of social governance is in line with the concept of development in the new era and is conducive to improving China's provision of "Chinese wisdom" in international social governance. (Chen Song & Yin Lei, 2020)

With regard to the reality of the construction of the social governance community, Xu Wenqiang made a comprehensive analysis of the reality of the construction of the social governance community, including potential challenges and favorable opportunities. On the one hand, the participation channels of the public in social governance are not clear and sufficient, on the other hand, the distribution of social governance power is sinking and the enthusiasm of the public in governance has been greatly improved, providing favorable conditions for the social governance community. (Xu Wenqiang, 2020)

Chen Song and Yin Lei discussed the realistic opportunities of building a community of social governance from both macro and micro perspectives, mainly involving the material basis

and theoretical conditions, endogenous power and scientific and technological support. (Chen Song & Yin Lei, 2020) Liu Wei and Weng Junfang, from the perspective of technology governance, believed that rational use of science and technology could bring positive effects on the subject, structure, mechanism and effectiveness of social governance, but unreasonable use would also bring about a series of problems such as "control" of technology and "overstepping" of power. (Liu Wei & Weng Junfang, 2020) Therefore, the use of technology should be reasonable and appropriate.

2. Research Differentiation of Social Governance Community

2.1 Research Status Abroad

The research on community can be traced back to Tennis. In his book Community and Society, he mentioned that community is the most basic form of organization, and community members have close relationships and strong sense of identity with the community. (Ferdinand Tennis, 2010) In his book Governance without Government: Order and Change in World Politics, American scholar Rosinaw believed that social governance must be a joint organization of different power mechanisms, including governmental and non-governmental mechanisms, as well as informal and common mechanisms. (James N. Rossinaw, 2001) In his Managing Public Organizations, Fliet pointed out that governance requires not only the coercive power of the state, but also the joint force of various micro groups in society. It is necessary to find a balance point in two aspects. (Kuiman, Fliet, 1993) In his New Governance: Management without Government, Roots proposed that governance will also have new features and connotations in the new era under the background of the transformation of the entire governance environment and governance methods. (R.A.W. Roots & Yang Xuedong, 2005) In his Governance as a Theory: Five Arguments, Gristok proposed that we should pay attention to the research and analysis of the subjects in the governance process. The traditional governance subjects are countries and governments with political influence, but these are government forces. In addition, we should also pay attention to non-governmental forces, such as civil institutions and actors in society. (Gary Stoke, 2019) Alcantara also believes

in the Application and Abuse of the Concept of "Governance" that governance not only depends on the unilateral leadership of the state or government, but also involves various audience groups of social governance, who are also the interest groups of social governance. Through their joint consultation and implementation, this is a reasonable and scientific "governance" process. (Cynthia Hewitt de Alcantara & Huang Yusheng. 1999)

Summing up foreign research results, few studies directly choose "community of social governance" as the research object or demonstration theme. Most of the research results focus on the social governance community from the perspective of social governance. They mostly focus on grass-roots governance in social governance, especially on the power of community governance.

2.2 Domestic Research Status

The social governance community was first proposed at the Central Political and Legal Work Conference in 2019. The fermentation time of this concept is still short, so there is room for improvement in the current research on social governance community.

First of all, most scholars are cautious about the connotation of social governance community. In Social Governance Community and Its Construction Path, Professor Yu Jianxing pointed out that "social governance community" is not a simple combination of "social governance" and "community", but also contains deeper connotation. The social governance community is a mutually supportive group formed by the government, social organizations and the public through consultation to achieve the goal of governing the society well. (Yu Jianxing, 2019) In Building a Social Governance System and Building a Community of Social Governance, Wang Tianfu proposed that "everyone" in building a community of social governance in which everyone is responsible, responsible and enjoyed should be composed of all social member organizations of the government and non-governmental organizations to participate in social governance, rather than a single social force. (Wang Tianfu, 2020) Wang Defu in Social Governance Community: Where is the New

Concept it is pointed out that the social governance community is changing from the former government responsible governance to "everyone has a responsibility" governance, and the former simple diversification of governance subjects has changed to a more cohesive "everyone is responsible" governance. (Wang Defu, 2019)

Compared with foreign countries, China's characteristic is that the orientation of taking the social governance community as the overall goal provides impetus for the development of relevant concepts. At present, there are governance communities at different levels, including rural governance community, urban community governance community and virtual cyberspace governance community.

2.2.1 Rural Governance Community

The rural governance community is a community formed by rural governance, and it is the specific practice of social governance community at the rural level. The main connotation is that the multiple subjects participating in rural governance have common governance goals, follow common governance values, and conduct a governance mechanism of multiple consultation and co governance. Different scholars in China have put forward corresponding opinions on rural governance community. Meng Xiangrui interpreted China's rural governance community as a value community, an organization community and a behavior community, and pointed out that it was formed through the combination of recognition of the value of customs and habits, interdependence of rural contract identity, and common goals for specific tasks. (Meng Xiangrui, 2020) He Lingling and Fu Qiumei believe that China's rural governance community is mainly composed of three boundaries, namely, the natural boundary, the operational boundary and the power boundary. All governance subjects jointly carry out rural governance through equal consultation. (He Lingling & Fu Qiumei, 2020)

2.2.2 Urban Community Governance Community

Fei Guangsheng pointed out that the reason for the implementation of the governance community is that the governance community cannot be created in a fragmented governance framework. Decentralized separation will make social governance fall into a fragmented predicament. (Fei Guangsheng, 2018) Li Yongna and Yuan Xiaowei believed that the governance subjects of urban community governance community should include government, social organizations and community organizations. It is necessary for multiple subjects to participate in community affairs decision-making and promote community unity. (Li Yongna & Yuan Xiaowei, 2020) She Xiang believes that in the area of community governance, urban community governance has difficulties in collective action. We should solve this problem by designing a good system, which is an important link to improve the community governance system and promote the modernization of social governance capacity. (She Xiang, 2014) Zheng Hangsheng believes that the government has changed its previous governance mode, and the system and mechanism for community governance are gradually improving to achieve the goal of cooperative governance. (Zheng Hangsheng, 2012) Xie Jinlin, from the perspective of national social relations, pointed out that the street housing system before the reform and opening up can no longer solve some problems in the community today, and there is still a long way to go to build a community governance system of "strong government - strong society". (Xie Jinlin, 2011) Wang Zhixin pointed out that the current practice of social management community must be placed in the grid management, which should include the role of social organization secretary, community neighborhood committee, grid manager, social worker, etc., so as to carry out refined governance. (Wang Zhixin, 2021)

2.2.3 Virtual Cyberspace Governance Community

With the rapid development of Internet technology in the 21st century, the popularity of Internet technology has brought great changes to human life. It can be said that the Internet has become an indispensable part of people's life.

Both Liu Lin and Cui Shuai believe that the establishment of a community of shared future in cyberspace is a new proposition put forward by the modernization of national governance capabilities and social management systems. It is necessary to vigorously train professionals in cyberspace governance to deal with security problems in cyberspace governance communities.

(Liu Lin & Cui Shuai, 2021) He Yuxin believed that, with the popularization of the Internet, the public's enthusiasm for political participation and social governance is rising, but the traditional network governance is a single subject of government governance. In the face of this situation, we should accelerate the construction of a network governance community where citizens, the government and society cooperate with each other. (He Yuxin, 2021) Liu Dating pointed out that in the face of our common cyberspace, we are also not born for ourselves. In the face of the responsibilities entrusted to us by the times, no matter individuals, society or the country, we are duty-bound. The governance of cyberspace requires joint efforts. (Liu Dating, 2021) Du Junfei also pointed out that China's network social management must move from closed to open, from simplicity to diversity, from virtual functions to reality, from isolation to cooperation, from ideology to pragmatic development, and more effectively feedback the real social management by further uniting the Internet community capacity. In this way, a unified front of coordinated input of multiple market players can be established, so as to form a virtual cyberspace governance community with Chinese characteristics. (Du Junfei, 2020)

3. The Value of Social Governance Community

Through the review of relevant domestic and foreign social governance literature, it can be seen that there are few direct researches on "social governance community" abroad, and the main research focuses on community governance. Foreign countries have accumulated experience in community grass-roots construction for a long time, and have played the functions of the community very well, and have a large number of relevant theories to further guide community construction, resulting in participatory governance, empowerment governance, cooperative governance and other governance branches. It takes society as the springboard, regards the social community as the combination of numerous social communities, and achieves the goal of social governance community through good community governance.

In China, it can be said that the concept of "social governance community" is a word with strong Chinese characteristics. The social governance community is taking shape step by step. During the period from the beginning of the founding of the People's Republic of China to the reform and opening up, the state managed the society in the form of control. Under the direction of the state administration, the whole country played a chess game, which was a unified management state. The period from reform and opening up to the Third Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee is a period of modernization exploration for the stage of co governance of multiple social subjects. During this period, social mobility and social differentiation were fierce, the consciousness of subjects in various societies was constantly strengthened, government departments began to gradually delegate their powers, and the relationship between the state, community, individuals and the market was also constantly changing, gradually improving the urban and rural grass-roots social self-governing system, and the diversified subjects of social governance gradually formed, and the term "social governance" was put forward at the Third Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee. At the recently held Fourth Plenary Session of the 19th Central Committee, it was formally proposed to build a "community of social governance", which is another Chinese practice of Marx and Engels' community thought, and also inherits the "people-oriented" thought of Chinese traditional Confucian culture, which has sufficient theoretical basis.

The whole social governance community research plate in China is divided into several different subsystems or different field spaces, mainly including rural governance community, urban community governance community and virtual network space governance community. But at the same time, there are also some problems such as strong sense of separation between different fields and lack of systematic integration. Professor Yan Jirong of Peking University believes that "modern social governance is a comprehensive system, and this complex is mainly manifested in the diversity of governance tasks, the diversity of governance subjects, and the diversity of institutional supply required for governance." (Yan Jirong, 2017) Therefore, in the promotion of the social governance community, we should coordinate multiple tasks, condense the subjects in different

fields into social governance, further make efforts in integration, and organically integrate the forces in different fields. There is still a long way to go to build social governance community, which requires all governance subjects and different fields to work together.

References

Chen Song, Yin Lei. (2020). Construction of China's Social Governance Community in the New Era: Theoretical Connotation, Practical Needs and Practical Path. *Chongqing Social Sciences*, (07), 51–62.

Cynthia Hewitt de Alcantara, Huang Yusheng. (1999). The Use and Abuse of the Concept of Governance. *International Journal of Social Sciences: Chinese Edition*, (01), 105–113.

Du Junfei. (2020). Network Social Governance Community: Concept, Theory and Strategy. *Journal of Huazhong Agricultural University (Social Science Edition)*, (06), 1–8+160.

Fei Guangsheng. (2018). Governance Community: The Choice of the Way to Innovate Urban Social Governance—From the Perspective of Fragmentation Governance. *Journal of Inner Mongolia University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)*, 50(06), 17–22.

Ferdinand Tennis. (2010). *Community and Society.* Translated by Lin Rongyuan. Peking University Press.

Ferdinand Tönnies. (1999). *Community and Society.* Commercial Press.

Gary Stoke, (2019). Governance as Theory: Five Arguments, Translated by Hua Xiafeng. *International Journal of Social Sciences, 36*(3), 10.

He Lingling, Fu Qiumei. (2020). Power Operation of Rural Governance Community in the View of Rural Revitalization. *Journal of Qiqihar University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)*, (01), 14–18.

He Yuxin. (2021). Building a network governance system under the vision of a community of shared future in cyberspace. *The Party History (II)*, (09), 65–66.

Huang Jianhong, Gao Yuntian. (2020). Building the Social Foundation of China's Governance: Building a Community of Social Governance in a New Era. *Journal of Xinjiang Normal University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)*, 41(03), 7–17+2.

James N. Rossinaw. (2001). *Governance without Government: Order and Change in World Politics.* Jiangxi People's Publishing House.

Kuiman, Fliet. (1993). *Management Public Organization*. Sage Publishing Company.

Li Rongshan. (2015). The Fate of the Community—From Hurd to the Change of the Contemporary Times. *Sociological Research, 30*(01), 215–241+246.

Li Yongna, Yuan Xiaowei. (2020). The construction logic and realization path of urban community governance community in the new era. *Yunnan Social Sciences*, (01), 18–23.

Li Youmei, Xiang Feng. (2020). The practical significance and theoretical thinking of building a community of social governance in China. *Journal of Jiangsu Institute of Administration*, (03), 51–60.

Liu Dating. (2021). Symbiosis Logic of the Construction Path of a Community of Destiny in Cyberspace. *Journal of Tianshui Administrative College, 22*(02), 29–33.

Liu Lin, Cui Shuai. (2021). China Plan for Building a Community of Shared Destiny in Cyberspace. *Journal of Qiqihar University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)*, (09), 9–13.

Liu Wei, Weng Junfang. (2020). Tearing and reshaping: the dual effect of technological governance in the social governance community. *Exploration and Contention*, (12), 123–131+199–200.

Luo Qiangqiang, Wang Yang. (2020). The Four Implications, the Value of the Times and the Direction of Efforts for Building a Community of Social Governance. *Zhongzhou Academic Journal*, (10), 69–74.

Meng Xiangrui. (2020). The connotation, challenge and construction path of rural social governance community. *Journal of Changchun Normal University, 39*(11), 59–64.

R.A.W. Roots, Yang Xuedong. (2005). New governance: no government management. *Economy and Management Digest*, (14), 6.

She Xiang. (2014). Collective Action Dilemma in

Urban Community Governance and Its Solution—Based on the perspective of rational choice institutionalism. *Journal of Social Sciences of Hunan Normal University.*

Shen Ronghua, Zhou Yicheng. (2003). The Theory of Good Governance and the Limited Guidance of China's Government Reform. *Theoretical Discussion,* (05), 5–8.

Tang Yalin. (2019). 70 Years of Government Governance in New China. *Social Science Abstracts,* (12), 20–22.

Wang Defu. (2019). Social governance community: where is the new idea? *Half Month Talk,* (21), 2.

Wang Tianfu. (2020). Building a Social Governance System and Building a Community of Social Governance. *Social Governance,* (01), 17–19.

Wang Zhixin. (2021). The structure of public space in the social governance community and its construction path. *Theory Guide,* (11), 74–77+91.

Wen Jun. (2020). Towards a New Era of Municipal Community of Social Governance. *Shanghai Urban Management, 28*(01), 2–3.

Xie Jinlin. (2011). The Change of Urban Grass roots Power and the Development of Community Governance—From the Perspective of State society Relations. *Yunnan Social Sciences,* (04), 20–24.

Xu Wenqiang. (2020). Systematic Review and Construction Path of Social Governance Community. *QiuSuo,* (01), 161–170.

Xu Wenqiang. (2020). Systematic Review and Construction Path of Social Governance Community. *QiuSuo,* (01), 161–170.

Yan Jirong. (2017). Social Change and Social Governance—Theoretical Interpretation of Social Governance. *Journal of Peking University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition), 54*(05), 69–77+2.

Yu Jianxing. (2019). Social Governance Community and Its Construction Path. *Public Management Review, 1*(03), 59–65.

Yu Jianxing. (2019). Social Governance Community and Its Construction Path. *Public Management Review, 1*(03), 59–65.

Yu Keping. (2000). *Governance and Good Governance.*

Social Science Literature Press.

Zhang Guolei, Ma Li. (2020). The connotation, goal and orientation of building a community of social governance in the new era—based on the interpretation of the Decision of the Fourth Plenary Session of the 19th CPC Central Committee. *Ningxia Social Sciences,* (01), 12–20.

Zhang Kangzhi. (2003). *Public Management Ethics.* China Renmin University Press.

Zhang Lei. (2019). Research on the Significance, Basic Connotation and Construction Feasibility of Social Governance Community. *Chongqing Social Sciences,* (08), 39–50.

Zheng Hangsheng. (2012). Cooperative co governance and composite governance: the integration of social management and community governance system. *Community,* (30), 10.