Resident Participation in Urban Communities: a Case Study on H Community in Anyang China

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After the *Reforming and Opening* in 1978, China has stepped into a rapid urbanization and industrialization period. With the rapid urbanization process, the population in urban cities began to grow rapidly, too. The importance of urban community governance gradually attracted many Chinese researchers’ attention during last decades. Resident participation in urban communities is one important content of urban community governance in China, and is regarded as an essential way for citizens to exercise their democratic rights at grassroots level in China.

This thesis takes H community in Anyang City of China as a case study, researches on what influence resident participation in H community. Based on the social capital theory, co-creation/production theory and the ladder of citizen participation theory, this research is conducted in a both quantitative and qualitative way. In this thesis, several possible factors are measured. The research received 112 valid questionnaires, and 7 interviews in total 4 of the interviewees are normal residents, the other three are members of urban residents committee of H community.

The results of this research show that resident participation in H community is influenced by gender and job, while social capital, age, education level, ownership and trust with the residents committee has no significant effect on resident participation. Interviews with residents show that social network can influence their participation in communities, and norms and trust may have influence on the high-level participation, but has no significance on the overall participation status. The results of qualitative interviews show that to a great extent, the urban residents committee actuall has some negative effects on resident participation. Based on these results, this paper comes up with several possible suggestions to improving the quality of resident participation in community.
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1. Introduction

1.1 Problem statement

Since the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, there is an increasing importance of community governance not only in Western countries, but also in China. The establishment of urban communities provides citizens with a possibility of self-governance, which both help the citizen to participate in politics and help the government to deal with a more and more complex society in China. The concept of \textit{Community} was introduced to China in late 20\textsuperscript{th} century. In 1991, the Ministry of Civil Affairs (MCA) in China officially identified the concept of \textit{Community Building (Shequ Jianshe)}. After that, 26 cities were listed as the first pilot project by the MCA to conducting the practice of community governance. In 2000, the State Council of PRC approved the report about the community building written by the MCA. Since then, the community building has begun to generalize from these pilot cities to the nationwide area (Li, 2003). Since the late 20\textsuperscript{th} century, community governance attracted many Chinese scholars, and they came up with considerable research achievement, including democracy building in community, economic development in community, community culture construction and so on, which provide a positive guidance to community governance in China (Fei, 1984; Yi, 2009; Sheng, 2013; Hou, 2016; Liu, 2017, etc).

However, due to the specific national conditions of China, there are some particular problems regarding to community governance in China. One crucial problem is that the community development is entering into a bogged down state, where neither the urban residents committees nor the residents behaves their proper functions as expected. On the organizational side, the urban residents committees are still be seen as a part of the government system and undertaking plenty works from superior local government. On the individual side, the urban residents do not show active and positive attitude to participating in community governance (Yi, 2009). According to a research conducted
in 2000 by Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, only 25% of the residents willing to participate in community activities and affairs. Many residents still think that the committee is the sole governance subject in community, and underestimate the importance of their own role as stakeholders (Liu, 2017)

1.2 Research objectives

Based on problems mentioned above, the main objective of this research is to explain the development of urban communities in China, and the influential factors affecting citizen participation in community. Ultimately, based on the result, this research aims to explore possible ways to stimulate resident participation in urban communities that fit the urbanization process in China.

1.3 Research questions

The research question of this thesis is what factors influence resident participation in community in China? Using a case study of H Community in Anyang City of China. To answer the research question, this research uses social capital theory, co-creation/co-production theory and the ladder of citizen participation, selects H community as a case study. H community is a well-developed urban community in Anyang, China, with a stable demographic structure. The data was collected through both questionnaires and interviews.

1.4 Research relevance

On the theory aspect, the research of the resident participation in community can help to clarify different roles of the governments, social organizations and residents in civic
society. The application of social capital and co-creation/production provides a new perspective to analyzing the citizen participation in China. The social capital theory focuses on social networks, norms and trust between residents and community (Putnam, 2000), which is beneficial to analyze the existing citizen participative problems in China on the theoretical level.

On the practical aspect, citizen participation and community governance in China are still in the initial stage, there exists many problems that need to be studied and solved. This empirical research tries to analyze the inherent mechanism of citizen participation and find out the influential factors to citizen participation in community level in China. This, firstly, could help to improve the trust and cooperation between urban residents committees and residents. Secondly, it is also beneficial to improve the self-governance ability of residents in the future. Finally, this research could enhance grassroots democracy and to stimulate the passion of resident participation in urban communities.
2. Theoretical framework

2.1 Social capital theory

2.1.1 Definitions of social capital

Social capital firstly emerged in the late nineteenth century, and been widely used in the economics, sociology and political science in late 1990s. There are various definitions and interpretations of social capital. Hanifan (1916) firstly used the term social capital in reference to social cohesion and personal investment in the community. According to Hanifan, social capital is not a real estate or personal property or cold cash, but the capital “tends to make these tangible sub-stances counts for most in the daily lives of a people, namely, goodwill, fellowship, mutual sympathy and social intercourse among a group of individuals and families who make up a social unit, the rural community” (Hanifan, 1916, p.130). Later, several scholars discovered this term. Jacobs (1960) emphasized the importance of neighborliness in the modern metropolis. Bourdieu and Schlicht (1980) underlined the social and economic resources embodied in social networks. Coleman put the term firmly and finally on the intellectually agenda in the late 1980s. He defined social capital as a variety of different entities, which consist of various aspect of social structure and facilitate certain actions of actors (Coleman, 1988). Putnam (2000) defined social capital as the connections among individuals and argued that social capital could stimulate co-operation and enhance individual relations in communities, and therefore, social capital is beneficial to building and maintain democracy.

Except the relations and connections among individuals and communities, some scholars also emphasis the value that social capital represents and creates. From this perspective, social capital is the collective value of all social networks (who people know), and the inclinations that arise from these networks to do things for each other,
therefore, some specific benefits resulted from the trust, reciprocity, information and cooperation (Sander, 2015). Others also define social capital as a particular resource that arise from special social structures, and that actors using to achieve their personal interests (Baker, 1990). Similar to Baker, Uzzi and Dunlap (2005) also emphasized the individual interests and benefits. They defined social capital as a tool to individuals that helps to get access to information and skills, and therefore, ultimately enhance their power in the network. Coleman (1988), on the contrary, claims that the effective norms in social capital means that members in the community should forgo self-interest and act in the collective interest.

2.1.2 Key elements of social capital

Despite the various definitions of social capital, there are some common aspects that can be concluded as key elements of social capital. In this view. Putnam (2000) identified three key elements, social networks, norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness.

**Social networks** involve mutual obligations; these connections between citizens foster norms of (generalized) reciprocity: I’ll do this for you without expecting anything specific back from you, in the confident expectation that someone else will do something for me down the road (Putnam, 2000). **Trust** is another crucial element in social capital. Trust refers to a positive expectation that other actors refrain from opportunistic behavior even when they have the opportunity to do so (Klijn, Edelenbos and Steijn, 2010). In social capital, viewed trust is not only a component of social capital, but also the antecedence of social capital (Fukuyama, 2001). Fukuyama suggested that social capital is a kind of ability that arise from the general trust in society, and this ability can be found both in small groups like family and in big social groups. Coleman (1988) emphasises the importance of trustworthiness among the members and argues that without trust, the group or the institution could not exist. He believes that
Social capital depends on two elements, trustworthiness and the actual extent of obligations held.

Social networks and norms of reciprocity can facilitate trust among community by frequent communications or meetings between members (Coleman 1988; Putnam 2000). Social networks involve mutual obligations; these connections within citizens foster norms of (generalized) reciprocity (Putnam, 2000). Therefore, the establishment of trust, social networks and norms are three aspects for community governance. Citizen participation plays a core role in community governance. The citizens’ ownership and commitment to community can be enhanced by individuals’ participation in social networks and public affairs (Peng, 2009).

2.2 Co-creation/production

Social capital is closely related to co-creation/co-production. On the one hand, social capital is an important effect factor that can accomplish the promises of collective action (Ostrom, 1996). On the other hand, social capital is a crucial element to develop commitment because social capital make people feel that they are not along even if they are in minority position (Schafft and Brown, 2000).

2.2.1 Definitions of co-creation/production

According to a systematic review of co-creation and co-production, the concepts of co-creation and co-production are closely linked and the distinctions between co-creation and co-production are ambiguous (Vooberg, Bekkers and Tummers, 2015). Thus, this research uses the concept of co-creation that actually including elements of both co-creation and co-production.
The idea of co-creation firstly emerged in private business sectors, where multiple stakeholders across the entire value chain started to work together, in order to improve the quality of service (Gouillart and Hallett, 2015). In recent years, researchers in public management field increasing paid attention to this theory and apply co-creation to public sectors. In private sectors, co-creation primarily refers to the direct user involvement of clients in production (Brandsen and Pestoff, 2006). Co-production means a more restricted service co-delivery role for voluntary and community organizations in public service processes (Osborne and McLaughlin, 2004). Others believe that co-creation/production generally means a growing direct involvement of citizens in the production delivery, such as welfare and education services (Pestoff, 2004). Some emphasizes the relationship between various stakeholders. In this view, co-creation/co-production refers to “the provision of services through regular, long-term relationships between professionalized service providers and service users of other members of the community, where all parties make substantial resource contributions” (Bovaird, 2007, p847). Voorberg, Bekkers and Tummers (2015) defined co-creation as the active involvement of end-users in various stages of the production process. In this perspective, co-creation/co-production should be an active participation of service users of all members in the community. Despite all these different definitions and emphases, there is a common notion that the involvement and participation of the citizens or organizations transform the ways of public services delivery (Brandsen and Pestoff, 2006).

2.2.2 Influential factors of co-creation

The motivations to co-produce can be influenced by many factors on the organization side and on the citizen side (Voorgerg, Bekkers & Tummers, 2015). On the organization side, there are four main factors. The first one is the compatibility of public organizations with citizen participation. This refers to the extent that the public
organizations willing to invite citizens into organizational structures and to communicate with citizens (Andrews and Brewers 2013; Davidsen and Reventlow 2011). This could also related to the second factor, the attitude towards citizen participation. Apparently, an open attitude of public officials is beneficial to co-creation (Ryan 2012). However, because of the unpredictability of citizens behavior, some public officials unwilling to involve citizens and to share partial powers to citizens (Edelenbos and van Meerkerk, 2016). This leads to the third influential factors, the risk-averse administrative culture. The last factor is the incentives for co-creation. For instance, sometimes it is unclear that what benefits that citizen participation can result in (Edelenbos and van Meerkerk, 2016), such as increasing of public interest (Lam, 1996). Another incentive of public sectors to co-creation is that public sectors lack of problem solving capacity by themselves, therefore they are willing to seek co-creation in order to better delivery (Bovaird, 2007).

On the citizen side, citizen characteristics, customer awareness (ownership) and trust are some main factors (Voorberg, Bekkers & Tummers, 2015). Citizen characteristics, such as their intrinsic values, education and family composition play an important role (Wise, Paton and Gegenbuber 2012; Alford 2002). These characteristics all concern to the willingness to co-create (Alford, 2002). A sense of ownership is another crucial factor that influences citizen participation. Ownership makes citizens feel responsible for the improvement of the quality of service delivery, and therefore, they are willing to devote their time and effort to participate in community (Alford, 2002). Trust is also important to co-creation. The trust I mentioned in social capital is mainly regarding to the trust among actors in social networks. Here in co-creation, trust also includes the trust between citizens and public officials.

The application of the co-creation model to public sector is a big challenge to Chinese top-down government system, however, also helpful to analyze the problems and find out possible solutions for citizen participation in China. Social reforming in China requires improving the quality of public service delivery and stimulating public
participation.

2.2.3 The participation ladder

Citizen participation plays a core role in co-creation. In terms of different level of citizen participation, Voorberg, Bekkers & Tummers (2015) identified three types of co-creation: citizen as a co-implementer, citizen as a co-designer and citizen as an initiator. Citizen as co-implementers refers that citizens only perform some implementation tasks such as garbage disposal; citizen as a co-designer means that citizens take part in decision-making process and decide how the service should be designed; citizen as an initiator, or self-organize, means that citizens plan or design by themselves with little government interference. No matter which kind of co-creation all involve citizen participation. So this research also incorporates the ladder of citizen participation defined by Arnstein (1969).
According to Arnstein (1969), the ladder of participation includes three main levels (see figure 2.1): nonparticipation, tokenism, citizen power, and eight rungs: manipulation, therapy, informing, consultation, placation, partnership, delegated power and eventually, citizen control. On the bottom of the participation ladder is non-participation, including manipulation and therapy. Manipulation refers to an "illusory form of participation" (Arnstein, 1969, p.218), that under the name of citizen participation, the real purpose of power-holders is to "manipulating" them and building citizens’ support. Therapy means that rather than improve or correct the real reason that caused social problems, the power-holders actually use mental health experts to "curing them of their pathology" (Arnstein, 1969, p.217). Non-participation usually includes the appearance of participation, however, this kind of participation usually use the power to demonstrate citizen participation rather than give or share the power to citizens.
Tokenism level includes three rungs: informing, consultation, and placation. Informing is the very first step real citizen participation. By informing, citizens can aware of their rights, responsibilities, and options. However, this is an only “one-way flow of information” (Arnstein, 1969, p219), and citizens cannot get feedback from power-holders. And of course, there is no room for negotiation. At the consultation rung, citizens are invited to give their opinions and advices. The most often used way is attitude survey, neighborhood meetings, and public hearings (Arnstein, 1969). It seems like that citizens are been consulted and been involved into decision-making circle, however, the real power still in the officials’ hand, and citizens opinions do not have substantial effect on decision-making. The placation is the rung where citizens begin to have some effect on decisions and plans. At the tokenism level, citizen participation are some good tools and steps toward holistic participation (Arnstein, 1969). However, citizens are usually only consulted or been informed, they do not actually influence the decision-making process.

On the top of the ladder is the citizen power, including partnership, delegated power, and ultimately, citizen control. At the partnership rung, citizen can actually share the planning and decision-making responsibilities through negotiation (Arnstein, 1969). Citizens are not just consulted, they are actually work partners with public officers. The delegated power rung is where the citizens begin to become the majority and dominator of the decision-making. Power-holders, on the other hand, have to start the bargaining process with citizens. Finally, when citizens completely become the sole decision-makers, it comes to the citizen control level. At the citizen power level, the roles of citizens and power-holders that in tokenism change (Arnstein, 1969). Power-holders are no longer the sole decision-makers, citizens’ voice become increasingly crucial for decision-making, and power-holders have to share planning and decision-making responsibilities with citizens.
2.3 Theoretical framework

The conceptual model consists of the three main concepts of this article. The social capital is one of the most important influence factor for co-creation, including three difference elements: social networks, norms and trust. In co-creation parts, different factors on the organization side and the individual side will be both examined. The ladder of participation is used as an outcome of co-creation. This research tries to find out the influences of various factors, and the relations between these factors and the different level of citizen participation.

(Figure 2.2: Theoretical framework)

2.4 Definitions of related Concepts

Before conducting the research, in order to prevent confusions about some concepts, some key concepts need to be explained in advance. These concepts have particular meanings in mandarin, or may have different practical meanings under Chinese
circumstances.

2.4.1 Community

The concept of *community* was firstly introduced into sociology by German sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies in 1887. He defined *Gemeinschaft*, translated as *community* is a group of people who are related to each other by blood, neighborhood and relationships, and have intimate social interactions with others; people in the same community usually share common value, roles and beliefs (Tönnies, 1887). Subsequently, some other scholars explained community from regional perspective and defined community as a particular region where people live together. From this perspective of view, community is an area where people organized by region, and everyone living in the community is in an interdependent interaction with others (Park, 1925). There are more than 140 definitions about community, and generally speaking, these definition can be divided into two categories. The first one is the community is a social association in which members share common norms, values, interests or goals; the second is the community is a group of organized people live in a particular region (Yang, 1981).

The concept of community was firstly introduced in China by Chinese sociologist Fei in 1984. Combined with various definitions, he defined community as a big group consists of various social groups (such as family, ethnic group), or social organizations, which gathers in one same region (Fei, 1984). Some Chinese scholars think these kinds of social groups and organization are organized by certain norms (Zheng, 2013) or social institution and social relations (Lou, 2012). Similar with western scholars, Chinese scholars conclude region, population, identity and culture as four main elements of one community (Yi, 2009). The definition of community that identified by Chinese official documents, however, is a little different from this. According to the documents of the Chinese Ministry of Civil Affairs (2000), the community means a
“unit of social life composed of people who live in a certain geographical area. At present, the scope of urban communities generally refers to the jurisdiction of the urban residents committee”. This definition stresses two dimensions of community. First, it recognizes the regional feature of the community, just as most scholars’ definition; second, it stipulates the scope and the administrative attribute of (urban) communities. So unlike those communities initiate naturally, urban communities in China usually have explicit boundaries that stipulated by local governments. In practice, resident participation in urban communities generally refers to the participation in these “administrative communities” in the urban area. Based on this, this paper uses the definition of Chinese Ministry of Civil Affairs.

2.4.2 The urban residents committee

The urban residents committee is a special organization of the community in China. According to the Organic Law of the Urban Residents Committee of the People’s Republic of China:

“An urban residents committee shall be a mass organization for self government\(^1\) at the grass level, in which the residents manage their own affairs, educate themselves, and serve their own needs” (The Organic Law, 1989, article 2).

“A residents committee shall develop community service activities for the convenience and benefit of the residents and other related public services. An urban residents committee shall manage its own property; no other departments or units (danwei)\(^2\) may infringe upon their right of ownership of property” (The Organic Law, 1989, article 4).

\(^1\) Unit: a translation of a particular Chinese word Danwei, normally refers to a place that people work in, for example, a school, a hospital, a social organization can all call a Danwei.
The urban residents committee is an organization that helps all residents in the community deal with the public affairs, manage the public property, realize the demands of all residents of the community. According to the law, the establishment of a urban residents committee is decided by the local government, the urban residents committee, however, is not an official governmental organization. Theoretically speaking, the urban residents committee is not governed or commanded by local government. The role of the local government is to support, and to give guidance or advice to the urban residents committee. The urban residents committee is supposed to be consist of 5~9 residents of the community, who should be elected by all residents over 18 years old or representative residents. In practice, however, the urban residents committee is usually been considered as the extension of local government. The urban residents committee is intervened by local government a lot (Hou, 2019). This will be discussed in following chapters specifically.

2.4.3 The Sub-district office

The sub-district office is the most basic local governmental organizations at grass roots and the twig of the Chinese regime system. The purpose to establish sub-district office is to enhance the connection between citizens and local government. According to the official documents, except for finishing administrative works that ordered by superior government, the sub-district office is also suppose to guide the urban residents committee, support and help the residents committee organize community activities. Usually, there are more than one urban residents committees under a sub-district office. In practice, this kind of support and guide sometimes turns into directly “lead” and “command” the urban residents committee, which will be also discussed in the following paper more specifically.
2.4.4 Development of community governance and the URC

Before any further discussions, it is necessary to introduce the development of the urban community and the urban residents committees first. Although the concept of “community” was officially introduced to China in late 20th century, the practice of community, named as the “urban residents committee”, started since 1954. According to Chinese scholars, the development of urban community can be divided into three periods, 1949-1958, 1958-1990 and 1990-now (Tang and Chen, 2003).

1949-1958: Emergence
In October 1949, the People’s Republic of China (PRC) was established, the central government abolished the Baojia System\(^1\), a community-based system used in Chinese mainland during the Republic of China (ROC) period. It was important to create a new system to replace the Baojia System, and to promote citizen participation. In December 1954, the Regulation of Urban Residents Committees of the PRC was established at the Fourth Session of the First National People’s Congress. The basic mission of the urban residents committees is promoting public welfare on the community level, encouraging citizens to participate in community and delivering citizens’ opinions and requirements to superior local governments. The Regulation was well implemented and around 1956, almost every city in China had established their own urban residents committees. According to the Regulation, the chairman, vice-chairman and other members of a residents committee shall be elected by all the residents who have the right to elect or by the representatives from all the households. In this period, the urban residents committees and the members of committees were highly recognized by citizens, all affairs in the community would consulted residents (Lin, 2000). The Regulation of Urban Committees of the PRC made a solid foundation of community governance.

1958-1990: Stagnation

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\(^1\) *Baojia System*: a community-based system that was invented by Anshi Wang in the Song Dynasty, and has continued to the ROC period. Ten neighbor families made up of a *Jia*, and ten *Jia* made a *Bao*.
In the early stage of PRC, the urban residents committee was well developed. However, there existed a potential threat - the Planned Economy. The planned economy was used in China since 1949. During the China’s 1st Five Year Plan, from 1953-1958, the highly centralized planned economy generally permeated through the whole society. In 1958, after the Great Leap Forward\(^1\) campaign, all urban residents committees in China were replaced by the People’s Commune.\(^2\) Since then, the urban residents committee became a part of local administrative unit and became marginalization (Liu, 2000).

**1990-Now: Revival**

In 1978, the Reform and Opening in China began, marked that then planned economy ended and the introduction of market principles. This successful economic policy changed Chinese society significantly. The changes can also be reflected in the community level. In 1983, the people’s commune was replaced by townships. In 1990, the Organic Law of the Urban Residents Committee of the PRC went into effect, which replaced the formal Regulation of the Urban Residents Committee. Since then, the urban residents committee came into a new develop period until now. According to the Organic Law, each residents committee is composed of 5-9 members, including chairman, vice-chairman and other members, All committee members shall be elected triennially by all residents who possesses elective rights in the community. Any resident of an residential area who has above 18 shall have the right to elect, regardless of his/her ethnic, status, race, occupation, family background, religious belief, education and length of residence. The urban residents committee shall be responsible to the residents assembly that held by residents above 18. The residents assembly has right to displace members of the residents committee and hold a by-election (The Organic Law, 1989)

Figure 2.3 shows relations among the sub-district office, the urban resident committee, the residents assembly and residents.

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\(^1\) The Great Leap Forward: an economic and social campaign in China from 1958 to 1962. The goal of this campaign is to realize industrialization and collectivization in a short time by some impractical and radical plans. It was considered to be an economic disaster and made extremely negative affects to all aspects of the Chinese society.

\(^2\) The People’s Commune: was established during the Great Leap Forward and was reconstructed in 1983. The People’s Commune was an administrative organization in urban and rural areas in China in that period.
After decades' development, nowadays there are three different urban community governance modes in China, means three different relations between community residents and the residents committee. The first one is *government-dominated mode or Shanghai mode*. This mode refers that the local government give sustainable power to sub-district office to lead the urban residents committees. In this mode, the public sectors are the main community governance actors. Though based on the Organic Law, the committees should be self-governance organizations, in practical they became a part of government systems. The second mode is *cooperative mode or Jianghan mode*, means that urban residents committees are still a part of government systems and government owns the dominated resources. However, in this mode, residents are aware of the importance of participation and co-create with government. The third mode is the self-governance mode or *Shenyang mode*. In this mode, community is totally a public space for private affairs, where residents directly participate in community governance. Government is a supplement or a facilitator with indirect intervene (Yi, 2009). The A community in this paper belong to the second mode- cooperative mode and this mode is also most common in China, which makes this research on A
community has a certain representativeness.

2.4.4 Self-organization and self-governance organization

In order to avoid confusion, it is necessary to explain another two concepts: self-organization and self-governance organization. Self-organization, also called civic initiatives, generally refers to those organizations that initiated by residents, social entrepreneurs and so on, pursuing a community purpose not a business purpose (van Meerkerk, 2016). Self-organizations are bottom-up initiatives, and in these self-organizations, society actors develop ideas and project on their own and directly involved in services delivery (Bovaird, 2007). In this case, the house-owners association is a self-organization. This organization is initiated by all community residents and provides residents with community services.

As introduced above, the urban residents committee is defined as a self-governance organization in the Organic Law of the Urban Residents Committee of China. The urban residents committee of a community is not initiated by the community residents, instead, the committee is established by superior local government. The reason that the urban residents committee defined as a self-governance organization is because all members of the committee shall be residents of the community and be elected by all other residents or the representatives of residents in the community. The urban residents committee is actually an “agent” that helps residents governance urban communities.
3. Methodology

To answer the research question, this research uses a combination of case study, in-depth interviews and quantitative survey.

3.1 Case study

This research chooses H community, one of the most important urban communities in Anyang China, as a case. H community established in 2004 and located in Wenfeng District in the Anyang, with 42 residential buildings and over 5000 residents\(^1\). According to existing information, there are three main features of H community.

First of all, Anyang is a mid-level city in China. Unlike those urban communities that possess advanced social capital and education resources in big cities (Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen), H Community is a common community in a common city in China. According to data of previous years, the GDP of Anyang city was in the average lever among all cities in China, which means that Anyang could reflect the general level of cities in China. Second, H community has a stable demographic structure. Because of the urbanization in China, the amount of China’s internal migrants is around 16% of total population and young generation prefer to stay in big cities after get graduate (Palmer, Perkins & Xu, 2011). Huge amount of floating population causes unstable demographic of urban communities (Mu, 2016). Thus if a city is too big, there will be a huge amount of floating population, who may have less ownership to community. On the contrast, if a city is too small in China, most young generation will leave for bigger cities, as a consequence, there will be a huge amount of elder generation. Neither of these two cases can reflect the general situation in China. Anyang is a middle-sized city in China, which makes the demographic structure more rational that the two cases above. As for H community, the population is composed of both old

\(^1\) Retrieved from: http://ha.cnnc.org.cn/anyang/anhuiyuan/news/1329288302864.html
generation and young generation, including more than 800 elders and 900 teenagers\(^1\), which fulfill the population diversity. The third feature is that H community is well-developed and fully equipped. As a community with more than 20-year development, the H community is stable and mature. The H Community is fully equipped with kindergarten, parking lots, supermarket, community clinic, fitness center and others.

3.2 Quantitative survey

Quantitative survey is used to examine the indicators of social capital and influential factors on citizen sides. Sample selection follows the simple random sampling principle. Because of the huge amount population of the H community, usage of social media could help a lot. Therefore, in order to get quantitative data, an online questionnaire through an online social survey tool called Wenjuan Xing in China is used, and online questionnaires are spread with the help of social media Wechat.

3.3 In-depth interviews

The in-depth interviews samples are divided into two parts: the members of the committee and the residents in H community. The interviews to members of the committee guarantee a better insight to the attitude of the members and their incentives to co-creation. The interviews to the residents in the community is a supplement way to get a better understanding and comprehension of target groups after the quantitative survey. All these in-depth interviews are conducted by video chat.

3.4 Operationalization

\(^1\) Retrieved from: http://ha.cnnc.org.cn/anyang/anhuiyuan/news/1329288302864.html
3.4.1 Measurement of social capital

The measurement of social capital has always been controversial, because the three main characteristics as discussed in previous chapter, networks, norms and trust, are difficult to quantify. But even so, there are still many researchers try to measure social capital in various ways. Generally, the measurement of social capital is based on two levels: micro-level and macro-level.

The measurement of social capital on the micro level pays more attention to social networks and the individuals’ involvement in social networks (Yi, 2009). Coleman (1988) considered the amount of social capital owned by individuals depends on three dimensions: the scale and diversity of social groups, the amount of social groups that one participates and the ability that one can gain information from social groups. The position of one person in a social group should also be an indicator to measure social capital (Lin, 1999).

While the measurement of social capital on micro-level focuses on individuals’ involvement in social networks, the macro-level measurement stresses the trust, collective actions and norms.

Grootaert and van Bastelaer (2002) developed a Social Capital Assessment Tool (SOCAT) to measure social capital in both quantitative and qualitative ways. In quantitative part, they focused on three basic sets of indicators of social capital: membership in associations and networks, trust and adherence to norms, and collective action. Membership in local associations and networks is an indicator based on the density of associations and incidence of household memberships. Indicators of trust and adherence to norms focus on expectations and experiences of households, which require trust. This indicator were measured by asking questions related whether they would receive assistance from or give assistance to other members in their community under emergencies like illness. Indicators of collective action were measured by to what
extent the collective action or cooperation is initiated by members of community.

In 2004, Grootaert, Narayan, Jones and Woolcock designed another tool to measure social capital in developing countries, called the Integrated Questionnaire for the Measurement of Social Capital (SC-IQ). The full questionnaire is divided into six dimensions: groups and networks, trust and solidarity, collective action and cooperation, information and communication, social cohesion and inclusion, empowerment and political action (Grootaert, Narayan, Jones and Woolcock, 2004).

Based on this, this paper measures the social capital from two dimension: individual level (micro-level) and community level (macro-level). The individual level focuses on the social groups and networks that one possesses, including the following three parts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scales of social groups</td>
<td>1) How many social groups that one person join in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2) The frequency of activities that held by social groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role/position</td>
<td>1) The role of the individual in the social groups, for example, general</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>members, core members or group leaders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2) The frequency that one individual participate in group activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to gain information</td>
<td>1) Times and frequency that one individual gain information/help from other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>members in the group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2) The quality and effectiveness of the information/help.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The measurement of social capital on community level in this paper is focused on the interactions of the community members and is measured from two dimensions:
adherence to norms and cooperation, and trust (Cognitive social capital). To measure this, several questions relate to trust will be asked.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adherence to norms</td>
<td>1) To what extent do they acknowledge the <strong>norms of reciprocity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2) To what extent do they willing to give assistance to their neighbors (like taking care of kids, etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust among community members and cooperation</td>
<td>1) To what extent do they trust their neighbors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2) The frequency that they work with others in their neighborhood.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4.2 Measurement of Factors on the Citizen Sides

On the citizen side, citizen’s characteristics are some determining factors for whether they are willing to participate (Voorberg, Bekkers and Tummers, 2015). For example, personal education background, family composition and administrative skills and ability can make huge difference to citizen participation (Sundeen, 1988). Citizen’s ownership is the second factor needs to be measured. Ownership means that citizens are aware of what is happening in their community and are willing to take responsible for these stuffs, in order to make the community a better place to live in. To measure this, several questions related to responsibility are asked, like will they report to the Urban Resident Committee when they find public facilities been damaged or when they feel the public services need to improve. Trust is the last factor that this paper will measured. Unlike the trust mentioned in previous session, trust here means residents’ attitude towards the Urban Resident Committee and the members of URC.
### Table 3.3: Measurement of factors on the citizen side

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Residents’ characteristics                 | 1) Some general characteristics (gender, age, education, job, etc.)  
                                           | 2) Family structure                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Ownership/ responsibility                  | 1) To what extent they are willing to report to the URC when they find public facilities been damaged.  
                                           | 2) To what extent they willing to report to the URC when they feel unsatisfied with the public service.  
                                           | 3) The frequency they provide the URC with ideas that can improve the living environment in the community.                                      |
| Trust to the URC and the members in the URC | 1) To what extent they trust the URC.  
                                           | 2) To what extent they are willing to seek help from the URC when they in emergency (like ill, unemployment).                                     |

### 3.4.3 Measurement of Citizen Participation

As discussed previously, the ladder of citizen participation includes nonparticipation, tokenism, and citizen control. With the combination of the particular circumstance of community governance in China, this paper divides residents participation in A community into five level in terms of the ladder. The lowest level is nonparticipation. The nonparticipation identified by Arnstein (1969) is discussed from power-holders’ perspective and refers that power-holders try to manipulate and “cure” citizens to support them. This research tries to figure out what influence residents behavior, so it is more reasonable to identify nonparticipation from residents’ perspective. Thus, the nonparticipation in this paper refers to those residents who are not willing to participate in the community themselves. The second level is still the informing, refers to those residents who only participate in the community on the informing level. The third level
is consultation, refers to those residents who actually participate in voting or in the residents meeting held by the urban residents committee. The fourth level of the ladder is placation, in which the residents start to have some degree to influence the plan. According to this definition, this paper identifies those residents who used to participate in the community as co-deliverers as placation-level participators. Because as co-deliverers, they do have some influence on the program and maybe can affect the process, but still they do not have actually influence on decision-making process. The highest level of residents participation in this paper is the partnership level. The resident who currently or used to be a member of *house-owners association*\(^1\) can be identified as a partnership of the urban residents committee.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.4 Measurement of residents participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Measurement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonparticipation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnership</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

\(^1\) House-owners Association: a kind of social organization in China. House-owners Association usually initiated by the residents in one community, and all members of the association are residents. House-owner Association helps residents deal with affairs of the community. However, unlike the urban residents committee, a house-owner association is neither a governmental organization nor a professional organization.
3.5 Data collection

The quantitative data is collected by online questionnaires. The online questionnaires are designed with a social survey software called *Wenjuan Xing*, and spread through a social media app called *Wechat*. With the assistance of acquaintance of H community, the questionnaires are spread in several Wechat groups that make up with all residents of H community, in order to make sure that all responds are from H community. This research has received 112 valid responds in total.

In order to have a better understanding of residents participation, this research also selects four residents to do in-depth interviews. To ensure the diversity of the residents, this research chooses four person from five different participation levels. The following are some basic information of four interviewees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Participation level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Zhang</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Li</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Placation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Zhao</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Consultation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Wei</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Nonparticipation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to test the factors on the organization side, this research also interviews three members of the urban residents committee. All these 7 interviews were video interviews through Wechat.

3.6 Reliability analyze
The research uses the Cronbach’s alpha testing the reliability of questionnaire data. Cronbach’s alpha of social capital, ownership and trust in the urban resident committee is 0.817, 0.909 and 0.890. The result shows a high reliability of these variables.
4. Quantitative Results and analysis

4.1 Social Capital

As described in last chapter, the measurement of social capital in this paper divides into three main dimension: social network, adherence to norms and trust among residents of the community. Following are the general results of social capital part.

4.1.1 Social network

To measure the social network situation of residents of H community, several questions are asked in the questionnaire. The first question is “currently whether you are in any social groups, especially those groups in your own community?”. Only approximately 17% have chosen “yes”, which means only 19 of 112 respondents actually take part in social groups, most of them do not join any groups. Among 19 respondents, 16 of them only take part in 1 or 2 social groups, 3 of them take part in more than three social groups. Most of these social groups remain 30~50 members. There is only one group owns more than 100 members. What’s interesting is that, most of social groups that residents choose to join are interest-based groups, like dancing club, sing club or table tennis club. These questions are going to measure the scale of social groups that one person join. The results show that, among these residents who actually join in social groups, most of them prefer those small and interest-based social groups. Next question is “how often do you usually join the activities of social groups?” The result shows that near half of these residents join the activities of social groups only 1~3 times a month. Only one joins the activities everyday.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>选项/Options</th>
<th>小计</th>
<th>比例</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>每月 1<del>3 次/ 1</del>3 times a month</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>42.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>每周 1<del>2 次/ 1</del>2 times a week</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>42.11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The another question is that “ what is your position in your social groups?”. There are 14 of them answered that they are just normal members, only 3 of them are group leaders. But no matter in what position, most of them answered that they can always gain information that they need from other group members. One of them said she makes really good friends with other group members, and they help each other a lot. This will be discussed more specifically in qualitative analysis part.

The results of social network related questions show that most of the researched residents (93/112) do not join any social groups. However, this neither means that they don’t have any social network, nor that they have low level social network. One of the interviewees said that the reason that he does not join any social groups is that his work is almost all about work. Thus his social life is more related to his work. He thinks it is not necessary to join social groups or community activities. Among 14 person who join in social groups, the results are quite positive. Most of them are satisfied with their groups and attend the activities regularly.

### 4.1.2 Adherence to norms of reciprocity

Norms of reciprocity is one crucial element of social capital. To measure this, the residents are asked that to what extent you agree with the norms of reciprocity and to what extent are you willing to give assistant to other members in the community, even though you may not get pay back. The following is the result of these two questions.
I believe in the norms of reciprocity and I think all members in the community should stick with the norms. Approximately 82% of them agree or strongly agree with the norms of reciprocity and think others in the community should stick with the norms. Only around 7% of them disagree or strongly disagree with norms of reciprocity. When asked whether they are willing to give others in their community assistant, more than half of them strongly agree with that. There are only 6 person disagree or strongly disagree with this. From the results, we could see that most of the researched residents of H community are adherence the norms of reciprocity and are willing to help each other.

4.1.3 Trust in other residents of the community

The trust in other residents of the community is tested from two questions. The first question is about whether they trust others in the community or not. And the second question is when they come across some community-related problems, whether they
are willing to work with others to deal with the problems. The research subjects are asked to finish the scale from strongly disagree, disagree, middle, agree to strongly agree. Table 4.3 is the results of these two questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>选项 (Options)</th>
<th>非常不认同/strongly disagree</th>
<th>不认同/disagree</th>
<th>一般/Middle</th>
<th>比较认同/agree</th>
<th>非常认同/Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>我认为我的邻居及其他社区成员是值得信任的/I trust in other residents in my community, because I think they are trustworthy.</td>
<td>3(2.68%)</td>
<td>3(2.68%)</td>
<td>20(17.68%)</td>
<td>51(45.54%)</td>
<td>35(31.25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>当我发现社区管理中存在问题时，我愿意和我的邻居或其他社区成员一起合作解决这个问题/When I face some community-related problems, I am willing to cooperate with other residents to deal with the problems together.</td>
<td>6(5.36%)</td>
<td>2(1.79%)</td>
<td>29(25.89%)</td>
<td>32(28.57%)</td>
<td>43(38.39%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3: trust in other residents in your community

Table 4.3 shows that, for the first question, 35 respondents, around 31%, strongly agree with the statement “I trust in other residents in my community, because I think they are trustworthy”, another 51 respondents agree with this. Approximately 20% of respondents choose the middle scale, which means that they are not quite sure about whether others in the community are trustworthy or not. There are only around 6% respondents disagree or strongly disagree with this. For the second question, the result is also very positive. Around 39% of respondents choose strongly agree with the statement “When I face some community-related problems, I am willing to cooperate with other residents to deal with the problems together”. Nearly 30% agree with this. Only about 8% of respondents disagree or strongly disagree with this. The results of these two questions show that, most of the respondents trust their neighbors in their
community, and are willing to work with them when come across some community-related problems, which means that the trust level of H community is unexpectedly high.

4.2 Factors on the citizen side

4.2.1 Characteristics of residents of H community

The characteristics of residents of H community are measured from gender, age, education level, job and the length of residence. There are 112 valid questionnaires in total been received. Among 112 respondents, 60 of them are male, and 52 are female.

Age

This research divides age from 4 ranges: 18~30 years old, 31~45 years old, 46~60 years old and 60 years old and older. Residents under 18 years old are not taken in to consideration. Because according to the Organic Law of the Urban Residents Committee of China, only residents over 18 years old can join the residents assembly or vote for the urban residents committee. In this research, over 50% responds are in the 46~60 group. There are 16 person in the 18~30 group, 28 person are in the 31~45 group. Only 10 people are 60 years old or older. This may because of the sampling error, that the questionnaires are spread through social media, and many elder people do not use social media as frequency as young generation.

Education level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>选项/Options</th>
<th>小计/Number</th>
<th>比例/Pertencate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>高中及以下/ High school or below</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8.93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>中/大专/ Technical secondary school or Junior college¹</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>33.93%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Technical secondary school: a kind of special technical education school in China. The level of this kind of school is under college and university.
Junior college: another kind of special education institution in China. Usually, the level of this institution is under university, but higher than technical secondary school.
Table 4.4: Education level of respondents of H community

Table 4.4 shows that among 112 respondents of H community, 10 of the graduates from high school or below. Around 34% of them have went to a technical secondary school or a junior college. There are 52 of them own a bachelor degree. Around 11% of them own a master degree or above.

**Job**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>选项/Options</th>
<th>小计/Number</th>
<th>比例/Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>学生/Students</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>公职人员（公务员及含教师在内的事业单位人员）/Stuffing of government affiliated institutions(^1) or government employees</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>企业管理人员及商务人员//Business executives</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>企业一般职员/General stuffs in enterprises</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>29.46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>私营企业主/个体户/Household of individual business</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>离退休/Retirement</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17.86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>暂时无业/Unemployed</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>其他/Others</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>本题有效填写人次/Total:</td>
<td>112</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5: Jobs of respondents

Table 4.5 shows the different kind of jobs of respondents of H community. There are two

---

\(^1\) Stuffing of government affiliated institutions: a special kind of work in China. It refers to those who work in institutions related to social culture, education, public health, etc. For example: education institutions, research institutions, museum, environmental protection institutions and other government affiliated institutions. People who work in these institutions are supported by government, but they are not civil servants.
of them currently students. Nearly 30% of them are working in government or
government affiliated institutions. Around 20% are business executives and 33% are
general stuffs in enterprises. 6 of them own their individual business and 20 of them are
retired already. No one is unemployed.

4.2.2 Ownership of residents of H community

The ownership of residents is measured from four statements. Responds are asked to
choose the acceptance of the following four statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>选项/Options</th>
<th>非常不认同/Strongly disagree</th>
<th>比较不认同/Disagree</th>
<th>一般/Middle</th>
<th>比较认同/Agree</th>
<th>非常认同/Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>我认为爱护社区公共施舍、维护良好的社区环境人人有责/I feel responsible for the good environment of my community, and everyone else should do this too.</td>
<td>4(3.57%)</td>
<td>1(0.89%)</td>
<td>5(4.46%)</td>
<td>36(32.14%)</td>
<td>66(58.93%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>当我发现有社区公共设施被破坏时,我会主动告诉居委会/When I find the public facilities in my community are damaged, I will report to the URC proactively.</td>
<td>4(3.57%)</td>
<td>3(2.68%)</td>
<td>25(22.32%)</td>
<td>34(30.36%)</td>
<td>46(41.07%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>当我对社区管理和服务不满意时，我会主动告诉居委会，表达不满/When I am not satisfied with the community service, I will tell my dissatisfaction to the</td>
<td>3(2.68%)</td>
<td>10(8.93%)</td>
<td>34(30.25%)</td>
<td>33(29.46%)</td>
<td>32(28.57%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The first statement is about the extent that residents willing to take responsibility of community stuff to establish a better community environment. The result of this option is quite positive, near 60% of them strongly agree with this, and another 32% agree with this. Only around 5% in total strongly disagree or disagree with this statement. For the second statement, “When I find the public facilities are damaged, I will tell the urban residents committee proactively”, there are around 41% of the respondents choose “strongly agree” with this, around 30% agree with it. These two statement about ownership are just related to some general responsibility, and the results seem quite positive, too. The next two statement related to some specific rights that they own as residents, and the results of these three statement, however, are not as positive as that of the formal two. The third statement is about whether they are willing to express their dissatisfaction with the community service to the urban residents committee or not, and only about 58% in total agree or strongly agree with it, while there are over 90% of them think that everyone is responsible for a better community. There are 34 respondents choose “middle”, which means that they are not sure if they will express their dissatisfaction to the committee. When it comes to whether they are willing to give their advices to the urban residents committee, the result is basically similar with the third one. The results suggest that even though most of the responds do feel responsible for their community and willing to do their job, like tell the urban residents committee about the damage of public facilities, to make a community a better place to live. However, many of them are not able to express their dissatisfaction and their opinions to the committee.
This kind of results can be caused by many reasons. For example, they may not have time to go to the urban residents committee, and to communicate with the stuffs, or, according to one interviewee, “sometimes I cannot find the proper way to express their dissatisfaction and opinion. I do not know who I should talk to or where I should put my letters.” And another reason may, “Sometimes I cannot get respond from them (the urban residents committee), so next time maybe I do not want to do this anymore.”

4.2.3 Trust in the urban residents committee of H community

To measure whether the responds trust the urban residents committee or not, they were asked to answer to what extent do they agree with the following two statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>选项/Options</th>
<th>非常不认同/Strongly disagree</th>
<th>比较不认同/Disagree</th>
<th>一般/Middle</th>
<th>比较认同/Agree</th>
<th>非常认同/Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>我认为我所在的社区居委会是值得信任的/I trust the URC of my community. It is trustworthy.</td>
<td>2(1.79%)</td>
<td>5(4.46%)</td>
<td>48(42.86%)</td>
<td>42(37.5%)</td>
<td>15(13.39%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>当我遇到困难时（生病、失业等），我会主动寻求社区居委会的帮助/When I face difficulties (like illness or unemployment), I will seek the URC for help.</td>
<td>4(3.57%)</td>
<td>22(19.64%)</td>
<td>45(40.18%)</td>
<td>30(26.79%)</td>
<td>11(9.82%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.7: Trust in the urban residents committee of H community.

For the first statement, “I trust the urban residents committee of my community. It is trustworthy”, only around 13% highly agree with this, and near 40% of them agree, which means that only about half of the respondents in total think the urban residents committee is trustworthy. Approximately 43% of the respondents choose a vague option,
which means that they are not sure about whether they should trust the urban residents committee or not. The results of next statement are rather negative than the previous one. For the statement, “when I face difficulties (like unemployment), I will seek the urban residents committee for help,” only around 37% of the respondents in total agree or highly agree with this. About 20% of the respondents will not seek the urban residents committee for help at all.

However, according to the residents committee of H community, they are willing to help residents with their personal problems. One committee member said, actually they have some activities from time to time, and they will invite some local companies which have recruit needs. They also post some recruitment advertisements outside the committee office, in case some residents need them.

Many of the respondents will not seek help from the urban residents committee do not mean that they distrust the committee. Maybe it is because they are not aware that they could ask for help from the committee. According to one interviewee, he thinks that unemployment is his own business and he does not want other people, especially strangers, know that. He thinks it is embarrassing. So he would prefer take care this kind of thing by himself or seek help from his friends and relatives, rather than go to the urban residents committee and ask for help.

The results suggest that, compare with the trust in neighbors, the trust level of 112 respondents toward the residents committee is not that satisfactory. Actually, there is a gap between residents and the urban residents committee. From the residents committee’s perspective, they are always willing to help residents who comes across problems. And indeed, they take a few actions to do this. On the residents’ side, however, many of them not sure about whether they should trust the residents committee or not, so they have hesitation to ask help from the committee.
4.3 Residents Participation in the Community

According to Arnstein’s ladder of citizen participation, there are three main different level of citizen participation, non-participation, tokenism and citizen control. In terms of the ladder, and combining with the particular circumstance of H community, this paper measures residents participation of H community through 6 questions. Following are the results of these six questions.

**Residents participation on the Citizen Power level**

The first question is “whether you are a member of the House-owners Association. The house-owners association of a community is totally a social organization that consists of selected residents. The house-owner association is supposed to help other residents of the community deal with various kind of community affairs. Although the house-owner association is neither a governmental organization nor a professional organization, it has much more channels and possibilities to express their voice and the needs of residents. And according to the official documents, the house-owners association is supposed to accept the guidance of the urban residents committee and to cooperate with the committee to solve the problems of the community. Thus, the house-owners association is kind of a co-designer or a partnership of the urban residents committee. In terms of the ladder of citizen participation, being a member of house-owners association can identified as the “citizen power” level.

The citizen participation on the citizen power level is the only level that citizens can have actual influence to decision-making. The results of this research show that only 8 person, around 7%, of 112 respondents are members of the house-owner association. This means that respondents that actually participate into the decision-making procedure is quite few. This research may has limited samples, however, the results can be proved by other researches. The another research conducted by Yi in 2009 shows that the only about 13% of responds in F community participate into the decision-making level, and most of the respondents don’t think they have capacity influencing
decisions of the urban residents committee.

**Residents participation on the Tokenism level**

At the middle of the ladder of citizen participation is the *Tokenism* level, including informing, consultation and placation. As discussed in chapter 3, combing with the particular circumstance of the H community, the residents participation on the tokenism level is divided into three levels, in terms of various kinds of community activities. The informing level participators refer to those residents who only participate in the community on the informing level. The result shows that there are 32 respondents only participate in the community on the informing level. Usually, they are informed by the urban resident committee though the community billboard or get information from other residents. The consultation level participators refer to those residents who actually participate in voting or in the residents meeting hold by the urban residents committee. Informing and consultation are two main levels that residents can participate in the urban communities, near have of the respondents have participated on these two levels. Those residents who used to participated as co-deliverers are identified as the placation level participators. They start to have some degree to influence the program or the process, but still they do not have validate substantial influence on decision-making process. The result shows only 35 respondents have participated on this level.

In order to find out why they do not participate in the community activities, like residents meeting and voting, some possible reasons were given for them to choose.
Table 4.8 shows the most important reason that residents do not participate in residents meeting or voting is they do not received any announcement. Almost 60% of the respondents chose this reason. Another 35% respondents think they are too busy take part in community activities because of their work. Around 13% respondents think that they are not familiar with the members of residents committee so they do not want to participate. Only 3 of them think that community activities have nothing to do with them. This suggests that people ownership has little connection with residents participation. People do not participate in the community not because they have no ownership of their community. It is mainly because they do not get any announcement, or they are busy with work.

### 4.4 Multiple regression

Last section shows the descriptive result of quantitative survey. In order to text relations among all interdependent variables and the dependent variable, this study uses multiple regression with SPSS26.0 analyzing quantitative data. Independent variables are citizen characteristics (gender, age, education level, job).
4.4.1 Assumptions of multiple regression

*Continuous dependent variable*

One basic requirement to run a multiple regression is that there should be one dependent variable measured at the continuous level. To meet this requirement, the dependent variable of this research, resident participation, is re-coded as a continuous variable. From 1 to 2, the closer the score is to 2, the higher the participation is. Table 4.9 shows the mean score of resident participation is 1.48.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptive Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.9: Descriptive statistics

*More than two independent variables*

Another basic requirement of multiple regression is that there are two or more independent variables measured either at the continuous or nominal level. In this research, independent variable like social capital, trust in the urban resident committee and ownership are measured at the continuous level, while residents’ characteristics, including gender, age, job and education are measured at nominal level.

*Independence of observation*

In this research, the independence of observation is checked with the Durbin-Watson statistic. As table 4.10 shows, the Durbin-Watson statistic for this analysis is 2.049, which means that there is independence of residuals in this research.
Model Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
<th>Durbin-Watson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.440a</td>
<td>.194</td>
<td>.139</td>
<td>.31552</td>
<td>2.049</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b. Dependent Variable: Participation

Table 4.10: Model summary

Checking for multicollinearity

The first stage to identify multicollinearity is to check the inspection of correlation coefficients. The result shows that there are no correlations greater than 0.7 in this research.

The other stage to identify multicollinearity is the inspection of Tolerance/VIF value. In this research, as shown in table X, all the Tolerance values are greater than 0.1 (the lowest is 0.439). So based on these two stages, there is no multicollinearity problems with this research.

Checking for unusual point

This assumption is checked with the Casewise Diagnostics, and the result show that the all standardized residuals are less than ±3 (the minimum Std. Residual is -1.947, the maximum is 2.116), which means there is no outlier problem with the data.

Checking for normality

Figure 4 shows that the residuals are normally distributed and the points are
approximately aligned along the diagonal line. So the data has not violated the assumption of normality.

Figure 4.1 Normal P-P Plot of regression standardized residual
4.4.2 The result of multiple regression

As shown in the ANOVA table, the “Sig.” is .002, which means that $p < 0.005$. So this is a statistically significant result.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>2.487</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.355</td>
<td>3.569</td>
<td>.002b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>10.353</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>.100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12.840</td>
<td>111</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: Participation
Table 4.11: ANOVA

Table 4.12 shows that age, education level, social capital, trust in the urban residents committee and ownership have no significance ($p > 0.05$) on resident participation in urban communities. Gender ($p=0.045$) and jobs ($p=0.002$) have significance ($p < 0.05$) on resident participation. Compare to male residents, female residents are more likely participate in urban communities.

Table 4.12 Results of multiple regression analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (Constant)</td>
<td>1.021</td>
<td>.194</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>.132</td>
<td>.067</td>
<td>.491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td>.096</td>
<td>.313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edu</td>
<td>.041</td>
<td>.319</td>
<td>.002**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job</td>
<td>.071</td>
<td>-.034</td>
<td>.749</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Capital</td>
<td>.015</td>
<td>.029</td>
<td>.824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust in URC</td>
<td>-.015</td>
<td>-.034</td>
<td>.749</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ownership</td>
<td>-.049</td>
<td>-1.013</td>
<td>.313</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R Square | Adjusted R Square
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.194</td>
<td>.139</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < 0.05; **p < 0.01.
5. Qualitative Results and analysis

In order to have a better comprehension of the quantitative results, this research also interviews 7 residents and members of the urban residents committee of the A community, 4 of them are residents, and others are the committee members. All the respondents are invited to a video chat through WeChat. The interview lasted around 30 to 40 minutes. All the interviews are in Chinese and all the quoted context in the following chapters are translated into English based on the transcripts. To protect the privacy of respondents, I only use the family name in this paper. After discussed with the committee members, they are unwilling to put their name in the paper. All the other information in the following discussion is authorized by respondents.

5.1 Interviews with the residents of H community

5.1.1 Social capital and residents participation

Social networks

Social networks are one of the most important elements of social capital and is essential for all citizens, especially in community life. Not only because social networks are beneficial for individuals gaining information and resources from others, but also because social networks are related to people’s mental and physical health both. What’s more, in community life, a close and stable relationship with other residents can greatly improve the life quality of residents, especially for elder people (Zhao, 2014). Being involved in social groups is one crucial way for individuals establishing social networks. Since this research studies on resident participation in H community, here I selectively focus on those social groups that both initiated by residents and composed of residents of H community. In this research, I interviewed four residents, two of them (Zhang and
Zhao) currently join this kind of social groups, and another two (Li and Wei) not.

Size of social groups

The size of social groups is a key element to measure the scales of social networks. Normally, the larger a social network is, the more information and resources one can obtain (Zhao, 2014). In this case, since I focus on the particular groups that initiated by residents of H community and also mainly composed of residents of H community, the size of social groups that interviewees is not that big. There are around 20 people in the social group that Zhang join and the number of Zhao’s case is 50.

Structure of social groups

Unlike those political groups or some social organizations, the structure of social groups that composed of residents are very horizontal. The sponsors and other organizers are also residents and they are friendly and easy to communicate. As the sponsors of this kind of social group means that instead of power, you take a lot responsibilities and do not get paid. The sponsors have to organize activities and sometimes, supply equipment. The biggest benefit of this horizontal structure is that the atmosphere of groups is light and relaxed.

“Actually I know the sponsor of our group and I became good friends after I joined this group. I think she (the sponsor) is friends of all members in our group because she is very easy-going. We often gather together and discuss affairs of our group. We would also talk about our daily life and when someone face difficulties, we are always willing to give advice and assistance.” (Zhang)

“I think it is important for the sponsor being nice and friendly to other members in the group. Because if the sponsors are impolite and arrogant, no one wants to join the group anymore.” (Zhao)
**Relationship intensity**

The relationship intensity is the strength of connection between an individual and other members of his or her social network (Xu, 2013). The relationship intensity have great influence on what and how much information an actor can get from other members. According to the two interviewees, they are both satisfied with their relationship intensity with other members in groups. And they both agree that they can always get assistance and information they need from other members.

“Actually, in my group, people will make their own small groups with some close friends. For me, I am in a small group composed of 4 people. We 4 people are very good friends, and share everything with each other. It is so lucky I have these close friends who have similar interests with me. And of course, we are always ready to help each other. I am also friendly to other members of my social group, but we are not that close. I will talk to them, but not that often. (Zhang)

When asked if they can get information or help from those members who you are not familiar with, Zhang said:

“Normally I will not ask them for information or help, unless I am in emergency. For me, it is just little awkward to ask someone I barely know for help. But I believe that if I ask, they will help me anyway. ”

Zhao also said she is close with a few members of her social group and mostly they just stay together when they take part in group activities. She also mentioned that they have a Wechat group, people are active in this Wechat group. They often share some information about community activities. But still, the most information she get is from her close friends.
Social network and resident participation

When asked “do you think joining in social groups is beneficial for you to participate in community”, one of them thinks there are no obvious correlation between joining social groups and participating in community governance.

“(Because) most time I just hang out with my group members, this actually does not help me get connections with committee members. Maybe the sponsors will contact with committee members more often, because sometimes we need to borrow venue for our activities. Most normal members, like me, do not contact with committee members a lot. In many cases, we just show up and join our own activities.” (Zhao)

However, another interviewee gave a different answer. She thinks joining in social groups help her get more information about community activities, she and her friends in the group will discuss whether to join or not. Sometimes, if she unwilling to join, her group friends will convince her to join with them. This may explain why trust in other group members have significance on placation-level participation.

“Several months ago, there was an activity organized by the residents committee, and they need volunteers. At the beginning, I did not know that, until other group members told me when we were dancing together. I did not plan to join at first, because actually it was nothing to do with me. But some of them want to. Then they convinced me to join with them together. It turned out to be fun, and I even talked to the committee members about my own suggestions, although they did not accept. But sometimes they do accept. So from my opinion, I think join in social groups is actually help me concerns more about community life and get more participate in community activities.” (Zhang)

We also asked other interviewee who do not join in any social groups do they think it is helpful for them to get more involved in community governance if they join social groups. One of them not sure about that, because he never thought about this before.
Another one thinks it may have help. However, he does not plan to join social groups now because he is too busy with work.

**Adherence to norms**

Norms of reciprocity is one crucial elements of social capital identified by Putnam. It shows whether a people willing to commit to his or her community and help others under the condition that he or she may not pay back directly. The quantitative results show that most of respondents (around 82%) agree with norms of reciprocity. The results of interviews with four residents is similar with that. One of them strongly agree with the norms.

“(Because) I actually obtained benefit from the norms. Several years ago, my mother, who was almost 70 years old and had mild Alzheimer, was lost in the community. Usually the nurse would company her when she wants to walk in the community. However, that day the nurse took a day off and I was at work. She was at home alone and she wanted to go out for a walk. Then she got lost and could not find way home. Luckily, some residents found her walking alone and though she might need help. They did not know her, so took care of her for a while, then took her to the residents committee. They finally found the card with my contact information and called me. Half hours later when I rushed into the committee, those who found my mother were still there talking to her. I was so grateful that they helped my mother. (Zhang)

When asked them to what extent do they think norms can influence their participation in the community, there are some different voices.

Two of them (Li and Zhao) agree with the quantitative result. They think that whether or not they believe in the norms of reciprocity, will not affect they participate in community activities. From their perspective of view, there is no clear correlation between these two things.
“(For example), for me, I totally agree with the norm of reciprocity, and I am willing to help my neighbors if they ask. I also believe that my neighbors will help me if I am in emergency. But this won’t change the fact that I do not participate in the community very often. Just as I said previously, I am too busy to take part in community activities. This does not mean I am not willing to help others in my community. Actually, I think there are many ways to prove one person is adherence to the norm. Participating in the community is one way but not the only way that I can help other residents.” (Li)

The other two interviewees, however, think that the norm of reciprocity has great influence on resident participation. “If someone is really adherence to the norm of reciprocity, he or she will be attracted to the community activities.” Said Zhao.

**Trust in neighbors**

The results of quantitative survey show that most of the respondents, around 75% of them trust their neighbors, and around 67% of them willing to work with their neighbors dealing with community problems together. The results of interviews is similar to this. Although the duration they have been living in H community is different, four interviewee all think their neighbors of the community are trustworthy. Then I asked them why they choose to trust their neighbors. Li, who has been living in H community for only 4 years said, even though he does not interact with neighbors a lot, he just tend to trust them unconsciously, it is kind of good of faith. Actually this kind of trust is just general trust, that the neighbors will not hurt me. But when he face some difficulties or in emergency, he prefer to seek help from friends or relatives, rather than neighbors.

The other three interviewees also think their neighbors are trustworthy. Their trust in neighbors, however, is based on interactions with neighbors. This is reasonable, since they all have been living in H community for over 5 years.
“I have been living in here for 7 years, and all neighbors are so kind to me. For example, my neighbor who lives upstairs, always give us special local product of his hometown. And another guy in our building, will put up the new Spring Festival couplets\(^1\) every year. This are just some small things, but they make me feel so warm living here. I think they are very good neighbors and, of course, I trust them.” (Wei)

When asked “do you think the trust in neighbors have influence on your participation in community”, the answers of interviewees are similar with the answers of the norm of reciprocity. Li think there are no direct relations between these two affairs. The reason is actually the same with that of the norm of reciprocity. The others think trust in neighbors do have influence on their participation in the community. Zhang is a member of house-owners association. She said that the reason she became a member of house-owners association is partial because of the trust in neighbors.

“I am a very outgoing person, so I can get along well with many residents in my community. My neighbors often come to me when they have troubles. I feel that they trust me, and I trust them in return. Then I think there must be better way that I can help them. So several years ago, I joined the house-owners associations.” (Zhang)

Wei used to participate as volunteer many times in community activities and he is very enthusiastic about this. He think this is a good for him to get connect with other residents in the community. “If I distrust my neighbors. I definitely won’t participate so many times.” Said Wei.

To conclude, the relationship intensity of the social network is a key factor that effects resident participation, especially on the placation-level participation. The stronger the relationship intensity is, the more community information and resources individuals can get, and the more possibilities for them to participate in community. According to some

\(^1\) Spring Festival couplets: a traditional Chinese decoration. Chinese people put up Spring Festival couplets on their door very Spring Festival, representing good wishes.
interviewees, trust in neighbors also has influence on their participation in the community. Trust in neighbors makes them more willing to participate in the community and get more connection with other residents. As for adherence to the norm of reciprocity, it is complex and different interviews have different opinions.

5.1.2 Ownership

Four interviewees all have a high sense of ownership with H community, even the interviewee who has been living here for only 4 years feel responsible for community. Since the quantitative results show that the sense of ownership has no significance on placation-level, consultation level, and informing level, here I asked them to what extent do they think ownership can influence their participation.

Zhang, who is a member of house-owners association, thinks that ownership affects a lot on her participation in community. In fact, she thinks her sense of ownership in one essential factor that makes her join the house-owners association.

“I think a sense of ownership is actually another important reason that I became a member of house-owners association. Being a member of house-owners association is not an easy work. I have my own job, my personal stuffs. I have to say, being a member of the association takes me a lot of spare times, and I do not get paid for this. For example, we have to cooperate with both the residents committee and the property management company of the community, communicate with other residents, help them deal with all kinds of trivial matters. …… I just feel responsible for my community and I think I have the capacity to do this.” (Zhang)

Wei thinks the same as Zhang. In his opinion, even though he is not a member of house-owners association, he participated as volunteers for many times. He said, if he does not feel responsible for the community, he will not participate in this kind of activities.
5.2 Interviews with the members of the urban residents committee

5.2.1 The compatibility of the Urban Residents Committee of H Community to co-creation

As discussed in previous chapter, the compatibility of the public organization to co-creation can be divided into two parts. The first part is whether the public organization has the inviting organizational structures and procedures or not; the second part is whether the organization has a proper platform or infrastructure to communicate with the citizens (Voorberg, Bekkers & Tummers, 2014). However, the research shows that the compatibility of the urban residents committee of H Community is not quite satisfactory, neither on the structures and procedure side, nor on the infrastructure side.

First, the organizational structures and procedures of the urban residents committee of A Community is administration and bureaucratization, even though the urban residents committee should be a self-governance organization. This can be proved from two dimensions. The first one is the organizational structure of the urban residents committee is quite similar to the structure of superior local government, called the sub-district office. This kind of vertical organizational structure is actually respond to the demands of local government, not to the demands of residents participation. The space of residents participation is, to some extent, shrink. The second one is that the staff composition of the urban residents committee is also intervened by sub-district office, too. The research finds that even though according to the Organic Law of the Urban Residents Committee of China, the members of the urban residents committee should be elected by all residents in the community or the residents’ represents. However, in practice, the superior local government intervene a lot in the general election of the urban residents committee. This becomes a common phenomenon not only in H community, but also in most urban residents committees in China. In this way, instead
of guide and supervise, the sub-district office, in fact, directly lead or command the urban residents committee.

Second, the compatibility to communication with residents of the urban residents committee is also limited by the administration and bureaucratization. As showed previously, the local government sometimes becomes the direct leader of the urban residents committee, the residents committee actually becomes the subordinate body of the local government. According to the members of the committee, on one hand, they have to deal with a lot administrative works and tasks that assigned by the local government. On the other hand, they also have to arrange activities and meetings to encourage residents participate in to the community. Considered there are only 9 official members of the urban residents committee, these can be far too many works and pressures. Therefore, they tend to give the administrative works and tasks the priority, and sometimes they do not have enough time or budget on maintaining infrastructures to communicate with residents. The huge amount of administrative works and pressures also lead to another result, that is, in order to finish these works efficiently, the committee members tent to use some fixed ways to simplify their works, rather than co-creation with residents. For instance, instead of communicating with residents face-to-face, they prefer the informing and notification.

To conclude, the research shows that the administration and bureaucratization still exist in the urban residents committee, which, to some extent, limits the compatibility of the committee to co-creation with residents.

**5.2.2 The attitude of the Urban Residents Committee**

The attitude of public officers is one crucial factor that influences citizen participation. The results of this research show that the attitude of the urban residents committee of A Community is quite conflicting, which can be reflected by two sides. On the one hand,
out of doubt, they are welcoming residents’ participation. According to one member of committee, they often organize activities, such as art festival, training session, to encourage residents take participate in community actively. On the other hand, because of the local government intervention and the administration of the urban residents committee, the members of residents committee undertake plenty administrative works. Under this circumstances, even though the committee members complain a lot that they take too much pressures, they own some administrative resource and power. Bureaucracy still exist in the residents committee. Thus, based on these two sides, the committee members are willing to get residents involved in community governance, however, only on the co-implement level. Normally, most decisions, for instance, what activity and when should the activity hold, are all decided by the committee, residents are encouraged to take participate as a co-deliverers of community services, such as volunteers. This can also be proved by the quantitative result. According to the survey, only 7.14% of the respondents have directly involved in the decision-making procedure, in other words, the co-design procedure, while there are approximately 31% of the respondents have participated as volunteers in community activities.

The members of the urban residents committee gave a successful co-creation case with residents to prove that they are willing to co-create with residents of the community.

Table tennis (Ping Pong) is one of the most popular sports game in China. Many people start learning table tennis since they are little kids. H committee member said:

“A few years ago, the committee received some letters from residents. They suggested that there should be a particular space for kids to learn and practice table tennis. This was a quite constructive advice. The residents committee noticed that there were plenty of residents who are really interested in and also good at table tennis. Particularly, some retired residents often gathered and played table tennis together in their spare time. We invited some of these people and discussed with them. After discussion, we decided to establish a table tennis teaching class
in the community, any child who is interested in table tennis can join. The teachers were the community residents. We also planned a particular place for this activity. The class was so welcomed among residents and many children joined the class after school.”

This is a very successful co-creation case in this community, and from decision design to implement, the residents played a crucial role in every procedure. This case shows that sometimes residents committee members are willing to co-create with residents and figure out solutions together. “It is our duty to collecting residents’ opinions and cooperate with them.” Said one committee member. However, she also admitted that this kind of co-creation does not happen all the time. Because it is not possible for them to discuss everything with residents. They have a lot of work to do every day and plenty of task need to accomplish, so normally, they just want to finish all the assignments allotted by superior local government.

To sum up, the attitude of the committee members of H community is that, they are open and positive to have residents get involved in community governance however, mostly on the implement level. The reason for this is they have taken a lot pressures from sub-district office and hardly have spare time or energy to co-create with residents.

5.2.3 The Incentives of the Urban Residents Committee

As showed in the last session, there are only 7.69% of the research objects have directly participated in the decision-making procedure, and around 21% have participated as the co-deliverers. The proportion is not that satisfactory, but still, co-creation do exist in H community. So, what is the incentives of the urban residents committee to co-creation? The results of interviews with members of the committee shows that, there are mainly three incentives to co-create with residents.
The first kind of incentives of the urban residents committee to co-creation with residents is actually a compulsory. On the one hand, it is because of the self-governance” nature of the residents committee. It is their duty to organize activities and get residents involved into community governance, like holding residents meeting and residents listening. On the other hand, as discussed previously, although the urban residents committee is a self-governance organization according to the law, still, in practice, the committee is intervened a lot by superior local government (sub-district office). Actually, except for intervention, the superior local government also plays monitor role. In other words, the residents committee needs to cooperate with residents because of the supervision of sub-district office. As introduced before, the superior local government is also in charge of the community construction. So naturally, the sub-district will give some assignments and tasks to the residents committee. For example, as one committee member introduced, the human resources department of the sub-district office would check the numbers of unemployed residents of every subordinate community and the result is one important index selecting the best community in the district. To accomplish the index, the committee has to do their best to help unemployed residents, liking holding recruitment fair or training conference. The supervision of superior local government is like a “hard incentive” for the residents committee and make the committee cooperate with residents.

The second incentive to co-create with residents is the limited ability of the urban residents committee. There are only 9 person in the residents committee and it is not possible for them to finish everything of the community. So except for cooperate with some social organizations and enterprises, it is also necessary for them to co-create with residents. One committee member introduced a method:

“*There are many elderly person who lives alone in our community. It is our duty to take care of them and supply some basic service for them. However, there are only 9 members in the committee and we cannot guarantee that we can give them help immediately when they need. Then we came up with an idea. We established seven sub-*
unites in the community, and each of us in charge of one. Each of us can build our own support groups in our sub-unite. Residents can participate into the support groups as volunteers. Many residents take part in, even some children.”

Because of supply groups, not only the elderly person get better cared, but also the other residents get involved into the community. More importantly, the residents can interact with the committee members through this way, and the committee can provide services better. In this case, the residents committee and the residents become partners, and both of them get benefit. But still, this is on the implement level.

The third incentive for the residents committee to co-create with residents is to improve the quality of the public service, and build a better environment of course. Even though the committee members faces many pressures and barriers, still, they want to make the community a better and more comfortable place to live. After all, it is their community, too. To achieve this, it is necessary to cooperate with other residents of the community. For instance, the residents committee of H community often organize basketball games with the community basketball team. The committee members would communicate with basketball team members and give them help if they need. The residents committee also build a small community park for residents under the requirement of residents.
6. Discussion

Chapter 4 and 5 presented the results of quantitative survey and qualitative interviews. The quantitative results show that on the residents’ side, the ownership of residents and the trust in the urban residents committee have no significance on resident participation. What influence residents participation is gender and category of jobs. Social capital has no significance on the resident participation in H community. However, qualitative interviews show some difference. Some of the interviewees think the norm of reciprocity and the sense of ownership do affect their participation in the community, while some not. From the social capital perspective, social network also has effects on resident participation, while trust in neighbors and adherence to norms are complex and different interviewees have different opinions. This chapter is the general discussion based on both quantitative and qualitative results.

6.1 Quantitative discussion

In terms of the ladder of citizen participation, this research divides resident participation in the community into five levels: nonparticipation, informing, consultation, placation and partnership. Since among 112 respondents, there are only 8 of them used to participated on the partnership level, and only 6 of them do not participate at all, so here I selectively discuss the results of resident participation on the informing, consultation and placation level.

6.1.1 Residents’ characteristics and participation

The result multiple regression shows that only gender and job has significance on resident participation in urban communities, while age, education level not. Besides, compare to male residents, female residents are more tend to participate in community affairs. What is unexpected is, according to many western scholars, education level has
positive correlation with resident participation (Yi, 2009), but this study shows the different situation. In this section, two questions are discussed emphatically. The first one is why female residents are more active than male residents in urban communities? The second one is why education level has no significance on resident participation in urban communities?

**Why female?**

The result shows that compared with male residents, female residents are more active in all kinds of community affairs. They join in house-owners association, be volunteers in community activities, and participate in residents meeting and so on. What’s more, among 9 members of the urban residents committee of H community, 8 of them are women. We can see that female’s participation in the community is divided into three levels. On the top is being members of urban residents committees. The second level is being members of house-owners association. The third level is normal residents taking part in community affairs, being volunteers.

In fact, women’s participation in the community has attracted great concerns of researchers, especially feminism. Moses (2003) thinks that women undertake three important works. The first one is the reproduction activities, including giving birth to babies, raising babies and parents, and housework. The second one is production activities, which means instead of being housewives, more and more women are taking jobs and making money. The third one is the community duties, which means that compare with men, women take more responsibilities on dealing with community affairs. In Japan, there is a kind of community called “matriarchal community” (Wang, 2006, p.56), where women take part in community activities and governance as representatives of family, while men are less concerns about community affairs. In China, most members of urban residents committees are women. For instance, a social survey conducted in Shaoxing City in China, there are 343 female committee members in the whole city, which is twice the number of male committee members. In some other
cities, the proportion of female committee members is more than 90% (Xu, 2010). There is even a particular concept about female committee members in China: the *dama* of residents committee.

The question is why female residents participate in communities a lot, while male residents not? One important reason is that, compare with men, women are more patient, sensitive, and easy to communicate with (Wang, 2006). Except for administrative tasks, the residents committee members have to deal with plenty of trivial matters of residents. For example, they have to communicate with residents patiently, help residents solve difficulties in life, which requires patience and sensitivity (Xu, 2010). That is why most urban residents committees’ members are female. This can also explain why female residents tend to participate in community life. As Moses said, women undertake three important works, reproduction, production and community duty. However, for many men, they only undertake production activities. Community life is much related to family stuffs, which women concerns more than men. Women are more sensitive about these kind of stuffs and naturally, they are willing to pay more attention to community activities.

**Why education level has no significance?**

To answer this question, it is necessary to give attention to a particular Chinese word: *danwei*. In the first chapter, this word is briefly mentioned, which generally means a working place, like a school, a hospital or a public organization. In fact, it is not just a working place. *Danwei*, as a special “unit” system, actually has significant influence on Chinese society, and on community governance.

The *danwei* system the predecessor of urban community system, and is a product of planned economic in last century China. After the People’s Republic of China

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1 Dama: in mandarin, it means women around 50 years old.
established in 1949, central government thought the most important task is to develop economic construction and industrialization. Under the support of central government, many large factories, like steel mills, been established. These large factories, and some other large institutions, such as hospitals, schools and state-owned enterprises, built their particular living area for their employees. People who worked together also lived together. So actually, in that period, *danwei* not only refers to a working place, but also a living place. The *danwei* provided their employees with food, living apartments, health care, even kindergarten for their kids. So basically, a large *danwei* is like a small complete society and all activities of one person are within the *danwei*. Under this system, individuals highly rely on *danwei*, because *danwei* is the only channel where they can get social resources and economic benefits. People who lived in the same *danwei* are closely connected and highly committed to *danwei*. After the Reforming and Opening in 1978, mainland China began to implement market economy instead of planned economy. Urban communities gradually replaced the *danwei* system, and nowadays, *danwei* generally refers to a working place, not a living place any more. After decades years developing, urban communities become increasingly important, although, the effects of *danwei* system still exist.

According to many western researchers, the higher the education level is, the more political efficacy and responsibility is. So people with higher education level and social status tend to get participate in politics (Lin, 1999). What is abnormal is that education level actually has no significant influence on resident participation in urban communities in China, because of the influence of *danwei* system. Similar with this result, the research conducted by Yi in 2009 shows that education level, social status and personal income also have no obvious effects on resident participation in community. He argued that the different results between China and most western countries are caused by *danwei* system, too. Even though participation in urban communities shall be a crucial way for urban residents to participate in politics, in practice, the influence of *danwei* system makes urban communities only a living place for most urban residents. Because residents usually cannot get social resources and
interest from urban communities, instead, *danwei* is the main channel where they can obtain both economic and political interest. Therefore, for most residents, participation in urban communities is not a real “political” participation. The reasons why people with higher education level are more likely to participate in politics is that they have more qualified capacities and can gain more resources and interests. As urban communities in China are only a living place for most residents, those who have high education level are more likely to purchase their ambitions in real “political” participation through *danwei* rather than in urban communities. As for residents who have normal education level, they also need to devote themselves to *danwei* in order to get social resources and benefits. Therefore, education level has no significant influence on resident participation in urban communities in China.

The results also show that residents who work in government or government related institutions not participate in community life a lot. This is also because that they can achieve more economic and political interests through their work, it is not necessary for them to participate in community, even though they may have higher political capacity than other residents. Another research conducted by Xia in 2011 also proved that, not only young residents work in government and institutions, but also those working in private enterprises do not participate in the community governance as actively as elder or retired residents.

6.1.2 Social capital and resident participation (quantitative discussion)

The result of multiple regression shows that social capital has no significance on resident participation in urban community, which is contrary to most western scholars’ researches. The reason for this result is the poor social capital storage of H community, which is caused by three aspects.

The first one is the administrative attribute of urban communities in China. As
explained in the previous chapter, most urban communities in China are formed under the lead of local governments. This administrative attribute limits the sociality of urban communities. The second one is that the urban community in this research is a gated community. In fact, most urban communities in China are gated communities and have clear boundaries. And the scope of these communities are stipulated by sub-district offices. The sealing of urban communities causes the separation between social life and community life. For most residents, the urban community just a living place, their most social activities are out of the scope of the community. The second one directly leads to the third aspect- the low familiarity between residents of H community. For most residents, the main emphasis of their life is out of the community, and they are not that intimate with other residents of their community. Another research conducted by Zhao and Zhang also proved this. They studied four different communities, and two of them are similar with H community in this research, and social capital has no significant influence on resident participation. While another two communities have higher social capital storage and social capital has significance on resident participation (Zhao & Zhang, 2019).

6.1.3 Ownership, trust and residents participation

The quantitative results show that the sense of ownership and trust in urban residents committee do not have significance on residents participation, which is contrary to many western scholars’ research. They believe that a strong sense of ownership means a strong feeling of be responsible for community services, this responsibility would push them to participate in community. (Talsma and Molenbroek, 2012). Why is it different in the H community? The most important reason is the disconnection and separation between residents and the urban residents committee.

As mentioned in previously chapters, the urban residents committee shall be a self-governance organization, all members of the committee should be elected by residents
or the representatives of residents of the community. One of the basic and crucial working principle of Chinese Communist Party is “from the masses, to the masses”, which means that government should go deep among the masses and respond the demands of masses. This principle works for the urban residents committee, too. The residents committee should closely connect with residents, help them solve their difficulties, and respond to their demands. However, because of the intervention of superior local government, the urban residents committee actually becomes a subordinate organization of local government. Plenty of administrative works assigned by superior local government take up most time and resources of the urban residents committee. Instead focus on community construction, the residents committee spend much time on finishing administrative tasks, which caused the disconnection and separation between residents and the residents committee. Some research shows that in many communities, residents just see the committee members as a part of sub-district offices, not a part of their communities. This also deepened the disconnection and separation between residents and the committees. The disconnection and separation make residents cannot have access to communicate or cooperate with the committee members, even though they may have a strong sense of ownership and willing to participate in community affairs. Just as the result shows, more than 70% respondents who did not participate in residents meeting answered that the reasons are they did not know committee members or they did not received any messages. Even though they feel responsible for community construction and want to trust the committee, they do not have access to participation. This explains why the sense of ownership has no significance on resident participation in urban communities, especially on the consultation level and informing level.

However, the interviews with four residents show that a sense of ownership can influence the high level participation, like partnership level. According to interviewees, it is because they feel responsible for the community that make them become members of the house-owners association or volunteers of the community. Unlike middle-level participation, which is to a large degree dominated by the urban residents committee or
the sub-district office and residents have little initiatives, the high-level participation is more affected by residents. For instance, when it comes to placation-level participation, although the urban residents committee still largely in charge of these affairs residents start to have some initiatives. Therefore, on placation-level participation, ownership may has some influence. The partnership-level participation is totally depends on residents themselves, so according to the interviewees, ownership becomes a main factor that affects their participation. Based on this, we can assume that the higher the participation level is, the more influence of ownership has.

To sum up, the norms and trust may have influence on high-level participation because on this level, residents have certain initiatives and norms and trust can affect their individual behaviors. However, in H community, only a few residents have participate on this level, the middle-level participation is the most common way that they can have. Therefore, the quantitative result shows the norms and trust have no significance on overall participation situation.

6.2 Qualitative discussion

6.2.1 Social capital and resident participation

As discussed in quantitative discussion part, social capital has no significance on resident participation in H community. According to the results the qualitative interviews, however, some particular aspects of social capital can have influence on resident participation in the community. Zhu (2019) studied three urban communities in Zhejiang Province in China, and the result shows that norms of reciprocity and the social network have significance on resident participation in urban communities, while trust not. In this research, the result of interviews shows that social network can influence the resident participation in urban communities, especially the relationship intensity of the social network.
Joining in social groups can expand the social network of individuals, which helps residents obtain more community information and resources from other residents. The most important thing is the relationship intensity with other group members. The relationship intensity is a key indicator of social network that reflects the strength of correction between group members. The relationship intensity has great influence on the extent that individuals can obtain information and resources from social groups. Granovetter (1973) came up with two different categories of social relationship: “strong ties” and “weak ties”. In his argument, “weak ties” are more powerful in information and resource obtaining because “weak ties” are generally among heterogeneous members, which is beneficial for individuals get access to various kinds of information and resources. “Strong ties”, however, are usually among homogeneous members, so they have similar information and resources, which is not beneficial to the diversity of information.

“Strong ties” and “weak ties” that Granovetter argues is actually the scopes or channels where individual can obtain information and resources. “Weak ties” means that they have various channels to get contact with heterogeneous people, which increases the possibility of obtaining different kinds of information and resources. The precondition for Granovetter’s view is that individual actually takes part in many social groups or contacts with heterogeneous actors. The problem is, in the case of H community, many of respondents do not join in any social groups. Even though among those who join in social groups, most (near 85%) of them only join in one or two groups. The research conducted by Yi (2009) also showed that most of the residents do not have diverse social network. In his research, only around 20% respondents join in social groups, and near half of the respondents have a stable relationship with only 3 residents in their community. This means that in China, many residents do not have access to heterogeneous actors of their community. In other words, they do not have a lot “weak ties” in their communities. Except for announcement from the residents committee, the main channel for them to get community information and resources is joining the community groups and communicating with group members. In this case, the
relationship intensity with other group members becomes a crucial factor that affects the amount and quality of community information and resources they can get. Therefore, contrary to Granovetter’s view, for urban residents in China, the more powerful relationship intensity is, the more ability and possibility for individual to get information (Xu, 2013). The more community information and resources they get, the more possibility for them to participate in community activities.

Combine with the quantitative result, social capital may have influence on some certain individual’s behaviors, but on the whole, it has no significance on the overall participation in urban communities in China.

6.2.2 The urban residents committee and resident participation

Social capital, some residents’ personal characteristics and ownership can influence individuals’ behaviors. The urban residents committee, however, determines the depth and width of resident participation in the community. In other words, urban residents committees have decisive effects on which level you can participate. This is because most community activities are dominated by urban residents committees or sub-district offices. Mostly, urban residents participate passively on middle-level participation, like being consulted or informed. Residents cannot really get involved into the decision-making procedure. Under this circumstance, even though some residents really want to participate in decision-making level, they just cannot get access to this. The low compatibility of urban residents committee to co-creation also causes the scarce of diverse participation channels. Currently, the channels for residents participation in the community including, being informed, residents meeting or listening, social groups, voting, community volunteers and house-owners association. Among these channels, only house-owners association is not dominated by urban residents committees. This limits the possibilities that residents participate in community actively.
7. Conclusion

This thesis focused on various factors that may influence resident participation in H community in China, using a combination of social survey and interviews. The factors on the citizens’ side were mainly tested by social survey. In this research, 112 online questionnaires were received through the social media Wechat and the data was analyzed using multiple regression with SPSS26.0. After the social survey was done, 4 residents and 3 members of urban residents committee of H community were interviewed.

The quantitative result shows that, on the residents’ side, gender and job have significant effects on residents participation, while age, education level, ownership, and trust in the urban residents committee not. Social capital has no significant influence on residents participation in urban communities neither. However, the result of interviews with residents of H community shows that social network may influence the resident participation in urban communities by relation intensity of the social network. Ownership and trust in the urban residents committee may affect certain individual’s behavior, especially on the high-level participation. But they don’t have significant influence on the overall status of resident participation in urban communities.

Interviews with residents committee members show that, instead of promoting resident participation in community, the residents committee can have negative effects on resident participation. First, the compatibility of urban residents committee to co-creation with residents is weakened by the administrative and bureaucratic of the committee structure. The excessive intervention by sub-district office makes the urban residents committee become a subordinate department of local government. Instead of community construction with residents, the urban residents committee pay more attention to the administrative works assigned by sub-district office. This directly causes the disconnection and separation between the residents committee and residents.
Second, the attitude of urban residents committee towards co-creation is conflicting. According to the residents committee members, they are willing to co-create with residents and to get more residents involved in community governance. It is their duty to do this. However, too much works and pressures caused by superior local government makes them have little time to cooperate with residents. Therefore, they prefer to get residents involved on the implement level, rather than the decision-making level. Third, incentives of the urban residents committee to co-create with residents are complex. Generally speaking, there are three main incentives. The first one is the compulsory command and supervision from superior local government. To fulfil tasks and indexes, the urban residents committee has to organize activities regularly, and get residents involved. However, these kinds of activities always become formalistic at last. The second incentive is because of the limited ability of urban residents committee. Usually there are thousands residents in one community and only 5~9 official committee members. It is impossible for them to handle all community affairs. Therefore, they need to cooperate with residents. Still, mostly on the implement level. The third incentive is to improve the quality of public services.

The weak compatibility, conflict attitude, and the complex incentives to co-creation actually to a great extent limit the resident participation on the high level. Therefore, in order to improve resident participation and promote co-creation in communities, the primary task is reforming urban residents committees. The first reform measure should be the de-administration and the independence of urban residents committees. The most important thing is decreasing the intervention of local governments. Local governments should stay back and play as the supervisors and guiders, not commanders. The first step of this is making a clear boundary between sub-district offices and urban residents committees. Only in this way can the urban residents committee become real self-governance organizations. The second measure is establishing diverse money raising channels. According to the Organic Law of Urban Residents Committee, residents committees manage community property by themselves, however, in practice, the funds of residents committee is mainly depends on superior local governments funding. This
also decrease the independence of residents committee. It is important for urban residents committees to establish diverse money collecting ways, like cooperating with other social organizations and enterprises, and build their own fund management system. The third way is building an information exchange mechanism. Just like the survey shows, the reasons most residents do not participate in residents meeting or community activities are that they have not received notifications or they do not familiar with residents committee members. Lacking of information exchange platform is one serious barrier for resident participation. For example, the urban residents committee could establish several Wechat groups and post community activities in these groups. They could also build an official website or an official Wechat account.

There are some limitation of this research. The first one is that all the interviews were conducted with video chat through Wechat. Compare with face-to-face interview, interviews with video chat is more difficult to build trust between the interviewer and interviewees, because there are no direct face-to-face interactions. The second one is that this research considered gender, age, education level and job as the basic characteristics of residents, while there might be other personal characteristics that can influence resident participation in urban communities, like marriage status, and family income (Zhu, 2019). With the development of urbanization, resident participation in urban community becomes an increasingly important issue in China that needs further studies. Two points can be considered in the future research. First, as mentioned above, there are other residents’ characteristics that may influence resident participation in urban communities. Except for marriage status and family income, based on China’s particular national conditions, whether a member of the Communist Party and family structure need to be considered too. Second, the floating population becomes a crucial social phenomenon in China now that has many potential effects on the Chinese society, especially on the demographic of urban communities. This research only focuses on the resident participation in one urban community with a stable demographic structure, which means that there is little floating population. In the future research, a comparative study between urban communities with stable demographic structure (like H
community) and urban communities with a certain number of floating population can be considered.
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Webpage
Appendix 1: Questionnaire

1. Your gender:
   1) Male;  2) Female

2. Your age:
   1) Under 18 years old;  2) 18~30 years old;
   3) 31~45 years old;  4) 46~60 years old;  5) Over 60 years old

3. Your education level
   1) High school or under high school;  2) Technical secondary school or junior college;
   3) Bachelor degree  4) Master degree or above

4. Your job
   1) Students.  2) Stuffing of government affiliated institutions or government employees;
   3) Business executives;  4) General stuffs in enterprises;
   5) Household of individual business;  6) Retirement;  7) Unemployed;  8) Others

5. Currently, have you joined in any social groups of H community, like chorus, community dancing clubs or others)
   1) Yes (If choose “yes”, then go to number 6)  2) No

6. How many social groups mentioned above have you joined?
   1) 1~3 groups;  2) 3~5 groups;  3) Over 5 groups

7. Normally, how often do your groups organize activities?
   1) 1~3 times a month;  2) 1~2 times a week;
   3) 3~5 times a week;  4) Everyday

8. Normally, how often do you take part in group activities?
   1) 1~3 times a month;  2) 1~2 times a week;
   3) 3~5 times a week;  4) Everyday

9. Your position/role in the group?
1) Group leader or core members 2) Normal members; 3) Others

10. To what extent that you agree with statement “I can always get information or assistance from other group members that I need”?
   1) Strongly disagree; 2) Disagree; 3) Middle; 4) Agree; 5) Strongly agree;

11. To what extent that you agree with following statements

11.1 I believe in the norms of reciprocity and I think all members in the community should stick with the norms.
   1) Strongly disagree; 2) Disagree; 3) Middle; 4) Agree; 5) Strongly agree;

11.2 I am willing to help other members in my community. Because I believe that they would do the same to me when I need help someday.
   1) Strongly disagree; 2) Disagree; 3) Middle; 4) Agree; 5) Strongly agree;

11.3 I trust in other residents in my community, because I think they are trustworthy.
   1) Strongly disagree; 2) Disagree; 3) Middle; 4) Agree; 5) Strongly agree;

11.4 When I face some community-related problems, I am willing to cooperate with other residents to deal with the problems together.
   1) Strongly disagree; 2) Disagree; 3) Middle; 4) Agree; 5) Strongly agree;

12. To what extent that you agree with following statements

12.1 I feel responsible for the good environment of my community, and everyone else should do this too.
   1) Strongly disagree; 2) Disagree; 3) Middle; 4) Agree; 5) Strongly agree;

12.2 When I find the public facilities in my community are damaged, I will report to the URC proactively.
   1) Strongly disagree; 2) Disagree; 3) Middle; 4) Agree; 5) Strongly agree;
12.3 When I am not satisfied with the community service, I will tell my dissatisfaction to the URC proactively
1) Strongly disagree;   2) Disagree;    3) Middle;    4) Agree;     5) Strongly agree;

12.4 I will always give my advice to the URC proactively.
1) Strongly disagree;   2) Disagree;    3) Middle;    4) Agree;     5) Strongly agree;

13. To what extent that you agree with following statements
13.1 I trust the URC of my community. It is trustworthy.
1) Strongly disagree;   2) Disagree;    3) Middle;    4) Agree;     5) Strongly agree;

13.2 When I face difficulties (like illness or unemployment), I will seek the URC for help.
1) Strongly disagree;   2) Disagree;    3) Middle;    4) Agree;     5) Strongly agree;

14. Are you the member of House-owner Association?
1) No;                            2) Yes

15. Have you ever took part in co-deliverers of community services (like volunteers)
1) No;                            2) Yes

16. Have you ever took part in the resident committee elections?
1) No;                            2) Only 1 time;       3) 2 times;           3) 3 times and over

17. Have you ever took part in resident meetings or resident hearings?
1) No;                            2) Only 1 time;       3) 2 times;           3) 3 times and over

18. Do you often pay attention to the notice board of the community?
1) No;                            2) Yes

19. What makes you not participate in the community activities, like resident meeting, hearings or voting? [Multiple choice]
1) I don’t what to because it’s nothing to do with my interests;
2) I don’t familiar with the committee members;
3) I am too busy to participate;
4) I have never received announcements;
5) Other reasons;
Appendix 2: Interview guide with residents

1. Basic information about interviewees: age, job, education level.
2. Have you joined any social groups of H community? Why?

   (If the answer of question 2 is “yes”, then)

3. How many members in your social group? What’s your position in your group?
4. How do you think of the group structure of your social group? How is your relationship with other group members (Relationship intensity)
5. Do you think that joining in social groups can help your participation in H community?

   (If the answer of question 2 is “no”, then)

6. Why don’t you join in any social groups? Do you think that if you join in some social groups will help your participation in H community?

7. How do you think of the norm of reciprocity? Why? To what extent do you think the norms can influence your participation in the community?
8. Do you trust your neighbors of H community? Why? To what extent do you think trust can influence your participation in the community?
9. How do you understand the sense of ownership? Do you have a sense of ownership to H community? Why?
10. To what extent do you think the sense of ownership can influence your participation in the community?
11. Have you ever participate any activities of H community? Like volunteering, voting, residents meeting or listening? Why?

Appendix 3: Interview guide with members of the resident committee

1. Basic information about the urban resident committee of H community.
2. How do you think of the existing structure of the committee? (Like staff composition and work procedures.)
3. Are there any regular platforms to communicate with the residents of H community? (Like face-to-face communication, suggestions & complaints box, or other online channels.)
4. Their attitude toward resident participation in urban communities.
5. Under what circumstances will you choose to cooperate with residents? Why? (Name some examples please.)