subtheme 1: democratic governance for socioeconomic development

• self-management of community life

The Function of China's Urban Street Offices in Community Public Service Construction

Take an example: Qingbaijiang District, Chengdu, Sichuan.

Zhenyu Luo,

Key words, Function, Community, Public Service, urban street offices,

Abstract Chengdu is the capital city of Sichuan province and located in central Sichuan Basin. It is the center of technology, business, finance, transportation and communication hub in southwest of China. It is established in 1921 and now with a total area of 1.24 square kilometers and governing 9 districts, 4 cities and 6 counties and the population is 12.579 million. Qingbaijiang District is located in the north of Chengdu (18 kilometers away) and it is the main industrial area.

The urban street offices is an institution established by the people's government of municipal district or city not divided into districts. The main functions of urban street offices are: improving the work for city residents, improving the communication between government and city residents, and reporting to the government about the objections and requirements of residents in time. This article attempts to analyse the construction of the urban street offices in community public service of Qingbaijiang District. It analyses deeply through literature survey, field research and combining theory with practice. Then reveals the primal problems and causes, and makes suggestions on relevant policies to solve the problems through analysing the specific issues.

I. The properties and working characteristics of China's urban street offices

1. The properties of China's urban street offices

The China's urban street offices produced in the 1950s. It is set up in the need of people's government of municipal districts or cities not divided into districts. It is the representative office in a designated area with approval of the people's municipal government. It shall subject itself to the administrative leadership of the people's government of municipal districts or cities not divided into districts. It is not the municipal government but an agency appointed or authorized by superior government to exercises a part of government rights. The fundamental purpose of urban street offices is to serve the people in the areas under its jurisdiction. By the end of 2008 there were 6524 urban street offices in 663 cities and 778 municipal districts.

2. The function of the urban street offices in community public service

As the representative office of people's municipal government, the characteristics of urban street office includes administrative execution, representativeness and regional comprehensive. With the development of the society, the urban street offices get closer to people's life, and play an important role in community public service.
(1) Improving the communication between government and city residents

When China was being plan-economic period, the "working unit system" caused most people believed that the working unit could solve all the problems. At that time, the "working unit" became the only communicational link between the government and people. But as the disintegration of working unit, a new community of living is formed. The way of communication between the government and people has changed. When people get in trouble, they ask urban street office for help instead of working unit. In that case the government and city residents need the communication and understanding of each other. From the point of view of the urban street offices, it is the organization closest to city residents' working and living. The urban street offices could know the objections and requirements of residents fast and correctly, and report to the superior government. From the point of view of government, residents should know well the policies and regulations of our nation. As a representative office, the urban street office is a policy implementer who can implement the policies and regulations finally. And in the process, on the one hand, residents could understand the policy, on the other hand the distance between government and residents get closer.

(2) Coordinating relationships of the community

Coordinating relationships of various sectors in community is one of the most important functions of the urban street offices in community public service. Specifically, it coordinates relationships of government and residents; and also coordinates relationships of residents and various organizations in community.

(3) Implementing constructional and developmental planning of the community

The function of implementing the community management and development plan authorized by the government including municipal administration, welfare and economy. This is the most important function of the urban street offices. As a direct policy implementer of community public service, the urban street offices should implement various affairs of the community. It play an increasingly important role in community management and development.

II. The current situation of the community public service of Qingbaijiang urban street offices

1. Introduction of Qingbaijiang urban street offices

The Qingbaijiang District with a total area of 378 square kilometers and 18 kilometers away from Chengdu. It governing 9 villages and towns. There are 2 urban street offices: Hongyang urban street office and Dawan urban street office.

(1) Introduction of Hongyang urban street office

Hongyang urban street office with a total area of 14 square kilometers and governing 4 community neighborhood committees(Yudai, Caijiamiao, Qingjiang road and Tuanjie roud) and 4 administrative village (Shunjiang, Yonghong, Hongfeng and Tongjing). The population is 50,820.

(2) Introduction of Dawan urban street office

Dawan urban street office with a total area of 15.53 square kilometers and governing 4 administrative village (Gexin,Shuangyuan, Huangjin and Dafu) and 5 community (Huagong road, Yihu, Shijiaxing, Xiaojiayuan and Dawan). by the end of 2009 the population is 59,216.
2. The questionnaire survey about the community public service of Qingbaijiang urban street offices

In order to know about the condition of Qingbaijiang district urban street office community public service, we took a questionnaire survey there. According to the density of population, we gave out 95 questionnaires in Qingjiang Road, 95 in Dawan community and 70 in Yonghong community. Finally we get 234 effective questionnaires.

(1) Basic information of interviewee

In this investigation of the community residents, there were 46 women and 88 men. Their age distribution mainly focus on 30 to 49 years old, it's the 40.6% of the total. In addition, the 18 to 29 years old group took considerable proportion. The education degree of the interviewee are junior high school (36.8%), senior high school (19.7%) and primary school (24.8). Their incomes focus on less than 800 yuan (30.8%), 800 to 1500 yuan (28.2%) and 1500 to 3000 yuan (24.4%).

(2) The daily life of community residents

The result of questionnaire survey about the daily life of community public service for community residents:
A. In the survey about domestic installation for community residents, the effective percentage of markets, the supermarket, the post office, bank, bus stations, hospitals and drugstore are 53.0%, 60.7%, 36.3%, 48.3%, 62.8%, 59.4% and 67.9%. In contrast, the recreation facilities such as recreational activity room and sport field are not enough, the percentage are 18.4% and 20.1%.
B. When the interviewee were asked if they would pay for the community service, 7.3% said they are willing to, 55.6% said they can accept but 37.2% said they won't to pay.

(3) The community health

The development of community health service is an important part of community public service. It plays an important role of ensure the health of community residents and promote community economy and social development. It is the important strength of implemented the Party's medical treatment and public health policies, provide the basic medical treatment service and medical treatment equalization. Therefore, the condition of community health service related to the construction of public service directly. The result of questionnaire survey in Qingjiang Road District, Dawan Community and Yonghong Community are:
A. The question about whether there is a community hospital(health clinic), the answers are :Yes(50.9%), No(33.8%) and Unclear(15.4%). It is thus clear that the popularization of community hospital(health clinic) is good.
B. The question about whether the community residents went to the community hospital(health clinic) when they get sick. 51.3% said they would like to, 20.5% said would like to choose a large hospital and 28.2% said prefer private clinic. It shows that the community hospital (health clinic) could satisfy the community medical needs basically.
C. The question about the expectation of improving the community hospital (health clinic), 40.2% expect knocked down the drug price. The percentages of expectation of improving the armarium, implement medical insurance and implement the visiting service are 30.8%, 20.6% and 8.4%.
(4) The community environmental sanitation and public security

Along with the comprehensive management of urban and rural environment, the Qingbaijiang District implemented the "Forest City Project" and began to accelerate development of 10 kilometers city's ecological corridors. The environment has been changed greatly. The results of the survey shows:
A. While only 4.3% of the respondents thought their own community is very suitable for living, but 67.5% of the respondents thought the community living environment is just fairish, and only 28.2% of respondents felt the community is not suitable for living.
B. The investigation about the problems of community environment show that 37.9% of the respondents thought the community green area is not enough, 43.8% of them considered the environmental pollution still exists, and 18.3% said the community environmental sanitation is not good enough. It shows that although the community environment sanitation had been changed greatly, but surrounding environment pollution became a prominent problem.
C. The investigation about the community public security shows that only 8.1% of the respondents thought the community public security was good, 61.5% of them thought it is just fairish, and 30.3% of them said that is bad. It shows most residents were not satisfied with the public security.

(5) The community education and culture

One of the main functions of the community is to satisfy the community residents' cultural demand. Rich and colorful community cultural activities can not only cultivate the community consciousness of community residents, but also promote the change of community presence, improve the community ethos, play a positive role of maintain social stability and promote the economic development. Therefore, cultural construction will become an indispensable assessment criteria of the community public service construction. In order to understand the community culture construction of Qingbaijiang District, the results of survey showed that 5.1% of the respondents said there were community recreational activities frequently, 29.9% of them said seldom, 47.0% of them said there was no community recreational activities and 17.9% said unclear. Nearly half of the respondents thought there were no recreational activities organized by community.

(6) The community obtain employment service and social security

Through the survey about three types of communities of Qingbaijiang District, it shows the percentages of respondents on the community obtain employment service and social security were: satisfied(3.0%), pleased(19.7%), just fairish(40.2%), and not satisfied(37.2%).

III. The analysis about problems of Qingbaijiang urban street offices in community public service

1. From the investigation results above, we can see the achievement of Qingbaijiang community public service construction but it needs to be improved and completed.

The main show is in the following respects:
(1) The public services provided by community could satisfy the requirements of community residents’ daily life. But the community residents’ requirements of spiritual culture had been unnoticed for a long time. As a result, the community public service developed imbalanced.
(2) Although the community medical treatment and public health have been changed greatly, but
when the residents get serious disease they prefer to go to big hospital because the standard of community hospital was limited. It could not solve all the medical problems.

(3) Although the community environment changed greatly through the comprehensive management of urban and rural environment, but for a long time the environment pollution still exists and has an adverse effect on community residents' health.

(4) The satisfaction of community residents about the community employment service and social security is low. Paying attention to the people's livelihood actively and improving the propell's livelihood effectively are the important functions of urban street offices. In the implementation of the community public service construction and development planning, it needs to intensify efforts to ensure the people's livelihood.

2. The primal problem of Qingbaijiang District urban street offices in the construction of the community public service.

(1) The public service provided by community intensify developing imbalanced

As China's economic system changing from planned economy to market-oriented economy, the status of community in urban management became more and more important. The construction of the community public service has become an important indicator of measuring the government management and government's ability in public service. There were only two urban street offices in Qingbaijiang District, Dawan and Hongyang. The two urban street offices with a total area of 30 square kilometers but the population has as many as 110 thousand. According to the survey result, the public service provided by community could satisfy community residents' daily routine. But the problems that follows restrict the development of community public service.

One is the community service items developing imbalanced. Hongyang and dawan urban street offices worked depend on the functional departments of district government. The service content based on government's requirements and working arrangement of urban street offices. It was an instructional service rather than needs. It was wishful thinking service. According to the questionnaire survey and field research, the community service items developing imbalanced because lacking of recreation ground and fitness center. Two is the underdevelopment of community service resource and service facilities. It intensify the imbalanced development. In Qingbaijiang, due to the problems left over by history of the early construction, there were no exercise yards in most old buildings. It could not satisfy community residents' requirements for holding recreational activities nearby. Except some communities near Qingbaijiang central square such as Qingjiang Road community and Dawan community, which could provide recreational activity field, the other communities were lack of recreational activity field and popularity.

(2) The community residents' cultural requirements were not satisfied

Because of the influence of planned economy system, some leading cadres thought that the community cultural construction was not pragmatic but theoretic, it was a soft data and could not influence economy development. Therefore, they payed no attention to improve the community cultural construction. Through the community culture construction survey we found that 47% of the 234 respondents said the community hardly hold any recreational activity. And 29.9% mean the community held recreational activities seldom. The community residents hoped the community provides service of supplementary course such as education and training. But according to the survey result only 5.1% of the the 234 respondents said the community held
activities like that. 54.3% of the respondents said the community never held activities such as education and training. And 21.4% said unclear about that. So the dissatisfaction of culture needs could be a serious problem in the community public service construction.

(3) The community health service was imperfect

The community health service was an important part of community public service. Since the construction of public service, Qingbaijiang District transformed the red cross hospital into community health service centre. In order to provide service better, the community health service centre implemented responsible doctor and nurse in four communities (Yudai community, Caijiamiao community, Qingjiang Road community and Tuanjie road community) and four villages (Shunjiang village, Yonghong village, Hongfeng village and tongjing village). The center covers an area of 5200 square meters. The working rooms covers an area of 5607 square meters. Now there are 20 section offices. In the survey of community health service, 50.9% of the respondents said there were community hospitals or health clinics nearby their community. It shows that the problem of "difficult to access medical service" has been relieved. But in the 234 respondents, 40.2% of them hope the drug price could be knocked down. At the same time, 30.8% of them said the community health centre improving the armarium. So in general, the community health service could not meet the diversified requirements of residents.

(4) The community environmental sanitation and public security need further improvement

Because Qingbaijiang was an old chemical industrial bases, the environmental problem lasted for a long time. In recent years, Qingbaijiang Introduce the large industrial enterprises such as PanGang Group. The community environmental sanitation of the industrial concentration area is getting worse. In recent years, Qingbaijiang continue to focus on environmental improvement and urban virescence. It has spent more than 3000 million for environmental protection. It close 319 paper mill and printing and dyeing mill which polluting seriously. The urban redevelopment for 6 primary distributor roads and 21 streets and the urban virescence made a great change of Qingbaijiang. The community vigorously promote the courtyard virescence, stereoscopic virescence and roof virescence. The series of movement improved community environmental sanitation and increase the satisfaction of community residents about the community environmental sanitation. Under investigation, 67.5% of the 234 respondents show that community living environment is fairish, 4.3% of the respondents thought their own community is very suitable for living, and 28.2% of respondents felt the community is not suitable for living.

IV. The suggestion of improving community public service construction

1. The principle of improving community public service construction

(1) The principle of people oriented and service residents.

The community public service construction should base on the material and cultural needs of community residents. Regard solving the problems of the basic material and cultural needs of community residents especially the people in straitened circumstances as the most important task. Regard to meet the general and insistent demands of community members as the work priorities of expanding community public service.
(2) The principle of combining the welfare and business

All the welfare service projects should give priority to urban street offices and the public is safeguarded by government. All the business projects give priority to enterprises stationed in street or founded by the other social organization, and the government gave a certain policy support. And pull off to achieve the socialization of community service, to achieve the diversification of investor, to achieve the servicing to the public, and the servicing team professionalization.

(3) The principle of site-specific recommendations and give support according to classification

Owing to the influence of history, politics, economy, culture and geographic customs, there are differences among cities. Even in the same city or same district, there are differences among communities. Therefore, according to the actual conditions of each community, improving the community public service construction entirety, and focusing on solve the important problems and debottleneck. We should reflect the support of government, and also to prevent undertaken of the government.

2. The innovation mechanism, ensure the effective supply of the community public service

(1) Construct the polybasic community public service supplying network

Facing the community residents the diversity of demand, any organization can only assume limited function, must develop and strengthen the community public service power, realize community public service the diversity of supply. This is to meet residents demand, the only way of the development of community public service.

(2) The government play the leading role in provided public service

China's community public service construction start later, the government should provide market or non-profit organization is unable or unwilling to supply, market or non-profit organizations supply or a non-competitive high service.

(3) The supply of public service in the process of introducing market mechanism to supplement the street office supply shortages

The result of the reaction from the questionnaire survey to see, in addition to the community residents is not willing to take part in the community to provide for a fee of public service outside, still have 7.3% said they are willing to, 55.6% said they can accept. Therefore, street offices in the process of providing public services should be the competitive mechanism into public service fields, and establishing an open, fair and fair market access mechanism for the community, to create a good investment policy environment, make the community public service supply marketization.

(4) Encourage and support the community folk organizations or individuals involved in community public service supply

To develop and expand the community public service of power supply, attract more community folk organizations and individuals, realize community public service the diversity of supply. Street offices shall take effective measures and create favorable conditions, to encourage and support more voluntary organizations, private enterprises and individuals to contribute to community public service cause.
(5) Mobilize the community residents participates in the community public service construction

In the community public service construction process, street agency should pay high attention to the participation of the communities, to take active measures to encourage community residents to participate in the construction of the community public service, form the community residents "build, sharing" the good situation.

(6) Strengthen the construction of community medical services, solve community residents a medical problem

From a government perspective, the community health service is a government on a certain welfare policy of public welfare undertakings, and has an unshirkable leadership, organization, coordination and support of the responsibility. Especially in real life, street agency as a government agencies, to probe the community health service, improve the health level of the community residents have important responsibility. Street offices and medical service agencies can make efforts together to related medical health propaganda education. For example: develop health consultation, free clinics, free health checks and other activities to attract the masses, help the community residents set up healthy consciousness, self-health care, so as to improve the health level of the community residents.

(7) Focus on people's livelihood, completes the employment service, the benefit was people

In recent years, street offices in community obtain employment service plays an important role in the economic development and social stability made certain contribution. But, in the community there is still part of low employment ability of vulnerable groups, need in the streets based on original work, increase community obtain employment support, solve community residents of employment problem.

(8) Concern for vulnerable groups, does the practical work, we should in the people

Weak group is in the economy, the society and so on in weak position, need help group. In community, weak group is mainly refers to the childless old abandoned baby, orphans and disabled persons, laid-off workers, and so on. Due to the disadvantaged groups in life than the general population to meet more difficult, therefore need street give them more attention. On one hand, from street agency management function, based on community service center as the platform, from the most vulnerable groups need to solve the problem of bit hot and difficult, and the disadvantaged groups of custom. Streets still can organize volunteers team, walked into the community, the thorough family, actively carry out hardship poverty alleviation and convenient service. On the other hand, for community vulnerable groups set up perfect community comprehensive security system. For vulnerable groups cannot afford medical treatment cost, the life cannot provide for oneself, need care and other characteristics, the existing health care system and hospitalization medical security assistance, on the basis of through the combination of the ministry of public health and to department and community levels to improve the welfare of civil affairs service resources and health security service of the integration of resources. At the same time, we should give full play to all levels within the jurisdiction of endowment institutions and community hospital guidance and radiation, establish comprehensive, multi-functional as soon as possible of the social security service network, especially to integrate all social forces, in improving the legal aid community and life assistance, psychological consultation, social security
in one of the function complete service network, and the disadvantaged groups provide rapid, efficient and convenient services.

Comments:


www.mca.gov.cn.

Email address: lzy551@126.com