

# The Model Construction of Residents' Participation in Community Social Organization Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior

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**ABSTRACT.** The inexhaustible power of community construction and community governance comes from the wide participation of community residents. As an important channel for community residents to participate in community construction, community social organizations must stimulate the enthusiasm and initiative of community members, and realize residents' organizational participation in community construction and community governance through participating in community social organizations. Based on the theory of planned behavior, this paper explores the exogenous variables of Attitudes Towards the Behavior, Subjective Norm and Perceived Behavior Control of residents participating in community social organizations, and puts forward the behavior model of residents' participation in community social organizations.

**KEYWORDS:** The theory of planned behavior, Resident participation, Community social organizations

## 1. Introduction

Since the reform and opening up, with the development of economy and the continuous reform of the political system, great changes have taken place in China's social life. The community social organization develops rapidly and plays an active role in the community governance and community construction. Residents can participate in the daily affairs of the community through social organizations to meet their own needs. The government can regulate and manage the community with the help of the community social organizations to ensure the order and stability of the community. Construction Plan of Urban and Rural Community Service System (2016-2020) issued by the Ministry of Civil Affairs also clearly sets the goal of having no less than 10 community social organizations on average in urban communities and no less than 5 community social organizations in rural communities by 2020.<sup>[1]</sup> In recent years, the state has taken various measures to create a favorable environment for the development of community social organizations, but the open policy has not aroused the enthusiasm of community residents to participate. At present, residents' participation in community social organizations mainly has the following characteristics: first, the number of residents participating is small, most of the members of community social organizations are mainly the elderly, and the enthusiasm of young people for community social organizations is not high; secondly, the community social organizations in which residents participate are single, the level is not high. The participation of community residents in recreational and sports activities is high, but the participation of charity, public welfare and mutual assistance activities is insufficient. Finally, the majority of residents are passive participants with poor initiative. Most of the community social organizations are dominated by the government or neighborhood committees, and a few are spontaneously established by residents.<sup>[2]</sup>

At present, the key of community construction is to stimulate the enthusiasm and initiative of community members and realize the organized participation of residents through participating in community social organizations. Compared with individual participation of community residents, organized participation is more beneficial to the effective and orderly participation of residents in community governance.<sup>[3]</sup> Based on the theory of planned behavior, this paper explores the exogenous variables of Attitudes Towards the Behavior, Subjective Norm and Perceived Behavior Control of residents participating in community social organizations, and puts forward the behavior model of residents' participation in community social organizations.

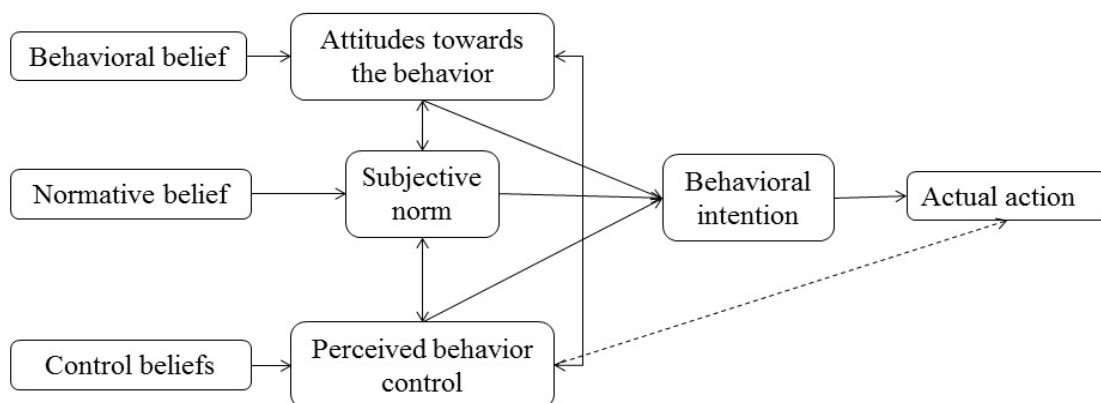
## 2. The Main Research Results of Residents Community Participation

Because the current community construction in China is mainly faced with the problem of low participation of community residents, the academic circles generally believe that how to stimulate the enthusiasm and initiative of residents' community participation has become the key to the current community service construction.<sup>[4]</sup> Under the impulse of this popular view, many scholars began to focus their research on the issue of factors affecting residents' community participation. At present, there are three main levels of academic research on this problem: the micro level of residents' willingness to participate, the macro level of external environment, and the overall level of combining the above two. The micro-level view is that gender, age, education, economic status, living time<sup>[5]</sup>, imagination and curiosity about knowledge<sup>[6]</sup> as well as the common interests and group identity of residents<sup>[7]</sup> these factors will affect residents' willingness to participate; Besides, Wan-ling Chen analyzed the micro-mechanism of residents' community participation from the perspective of game theory. He believed that the ability of residents to divide profits will also affect residents' community participation.<sup>[8]</sup> The macro level includes the legal system of system supply, party and administration, community participation system design and so on.<sup>[9]</sup> The time of community construction in our country is not long, it is still in the stage of exploration, it is basically the government leading, the system of "official standard" has not been broken, and the residents lack the institutionalized conditions to participate in community construction. The state of strong community administration also leads to the serious lack of residents' community participation<sup>[10]</sup>, which hinders the formation of community participation consciousness<sup>[11]</sup>, even if the residents' awareness of participation is raised, residents may be forced to choose not to participate in the absence of policy factors such as appropriate rules, systems, channels of expression of interests and social security.<sup>[12]</sup> There are also community population density, community location, community mobility, class division, type of community participation, community organization, community resources (human, material, financial) and so on, which will also affect the residents' willingness to participate.<sup>[12][13]</sup> On the whole level, it is believed that external constraints and one's own subjective attitude will act on the individual's behavior intention at the same time and have an impact on the behavior.<sup>[2]</sup>

### 3. The Theory of Planned Behavior and Variable Definition

The theory of planned behavior is developed on the basis of the Theory of Resoned Action (TRA), and has now become one of the most influential conceptual frameworks for studying individual behavior. The rational behavior theory believes that most human behavior is controlled by will, behavioral intention is the direct influence factor of actual behavior, which is affected by attitude and subjective norms. However, the theory of rational behavior ignores that people do not have strong control over their own behavior and attitudes, especially in the absence of skills and abilities or in the context of constraints.<sup>[14]</sup> To expand the scope of the theory, Ajzen adds a predictive variable to the theoretical behavior: Perceptual Behavioral Control.<sup>[15]</sup>

The Theory of planned behavior (TPB) believes that: (1) Behavioral attitude, subjective norms and behavioral perception control determine behavioral intentions. (2) When there is strong actual control, individuals tend to execute their intentions, and the behavioral intentions determine the actual behavior. (3) There are many obstacles in performing actual behaviors, which may limit will control. Therefore, in addition to behavioral intentions, the impact of perceptual behavior control on actual behavior should also be considered. To a certain extent, perceptual behavior control can be used as a predictive actual Indicators of behavior. The structure model diagram of planned behavior theory is shown in Figure 1.



*Fig.1 Theoretical Model of the Theory of Planned Behavior*

Attitudes Towards the Behavior(AB) refers to the degree to which a person likes or dislikes a certain behavior. Individuals have beliefs about the possible results or other attributes of the behavior, that is, behavioral beliefs. <sup>[17]</sup> Behavioral belief consists of two parts: the strength of belief (b) and evaluation(e). Behavior attitude depends on the strength of belief and evaluation, which can be expressed as a function:  $AB \propto b_i e_i$

Subjective Norm(SN) refers to the social pressure that an individual feels about whether to take a specific behavior. Subjective norms are affected by normative beliefs (n) and motivation to comply (m). Normative belief refers to the belief in the normative expectations of others; motivation to comply refers to the motivation of individuals to obey others or groups that have expectations of them, expressed as a function:  $SN \propto \sum n_i m_i$

Perceived Behavior Control (PBC) refers to the individual's perception of the difficulty of taking an actual behavior. It is mainly composed of two parts, namely control beliefs (c) and perceived power (p). Control belief refers to the belief that may promote or hinder the execution of the behavior; perceived power refers to the degree to which a person can control the perception of behavior. Expressed as a function:  $PBC \propto \sum c_i p_i$

Perceptual behavior control is not a new concept proposed in the theory of planned behavior. Similar views are mentioned in the health belief model and the interpersonal behavior model. The concept of perceptual behavior control is mainly influenced by Bandura's research on self-efficacy. Self-efficacy refers to the degree of self-confidence of the individual's ability to perform behaviors<sup>[17]</sup>.

#### **4. The Exogenous Variables of Residents Participating in Community Social Organization Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior**

##### ***4.1 Exogenous Variables Affecting Attitudes Towards the Behavior of Residents Participation***

###### ***4.1.1 Degree of Relevance to Interests***

Interests are an important driving force for participation. When residents are more closely related to the interests of the community in which they live, the residents will pay more attention to community affairs and show a higher willingness to participate. <sup>[18]</sup> There are different interest subjects in the community, and different interest subjects constitute diversified interests. The diversification of interests expands the differentiation of interests, and the needs for common interests become more abundant. The common interests of the community are generated in the interaction and game of the residents. In order to overcome the opportunistic behaviors brought about by a game, different stakeholders must establish a network of residents' participation, such as social groups and community organizations, to promote cooperation among residents. <sup>[7]</sup> When common needs arise, residents show a proactive attitude towards establishing or participating in community social organizations.

###### ***4.1.2 Satisfaction of Community Work***

Ajzen believes that one of the exogenous variables in the theory of planned behavior is the situational variable. In the structure of social behavior, Charles Algernon Parsons argues that behavioral situations can be divided into two types: those that the actor can control and those that the actor can not control, the former being the means and the latter the situational conditions. Jonathan Turner argues that actors'subjective choice of means of action is constrained by situational conditions. The participation of community residents is embedded in the structural context <sup>[19]</sup>. Residents have a poor sense of community situation, which may lead to a negative attitude towards participation in community social organizations. This paper believes that the residents' sense of community situation can be measured by the residents' satisfaction with community work.

##### ***4.2 Exogenous Variables Affecting Subjective Norm of Residents Participation***

###### ***4.2.1 Community Network Resources***

Social capital theory holds that social network is an important part of social capital, and the intensity of social network affects individual cooperation. Social capital can not only enhance public participation, but also accumulate in public participation. On the contrary, the reduction of social capital will bring about the reduction of public participation. <sup>[19]</sup> As far as the community network resources are concerned, the more familiar and frequent the residents are, the stronger the mutual influence among the residents is. When there is a sense of trust between the members of the community, they have a stronger sense of identification with the community, which stimulates their enthusiasm and

sense of responsibility for the public affairs of the community and their willingness to participate in the Social Organization of the community.

#### **4.2.2 Trust**

Deutsch argues that trust is a person's decision-making behavior in different contexts. According to Luhmann's research, trust can be divided into two categories: personal trust and system trust.

Personal Trust refers to the relationship of trust in the interaction with people, which is based on the experience of personal contact in daily life, and is based on whether the person to be trusted has trustworthy personal characteristics. Trust in systems requires that the communication media of the various systems of society are not abused and can continue to function. [20] Residents affirm the ability and reliability of community social organization, which will produce trust to the organization. It can be deduced that the degree of trust of community residents to community social organizations or neighborhood committees will affect the intensity of social pressure they perceive.

### **4.3 Exogenous Variables Affecting Perceived Behavior of Residents Participation**

#### **4.3.1 Information Platform**

Part of the reason for residents' lack of control over the behavior of participating in community social organizations is lack of information. In the era of information explosion, people receive a lot of information every day, so it is difficult to accurately receive useful information about community social organizations. In line with the trend of the Internet Age, community social organizations want to improve the participation rate of residents, we must pay attention to the Internet as a social media, strengthen contact with the residents through the Internet, understand the needs of the residents while promoting their own.

#### **4.3.2 Personality Traits**

According to the theory of rational behavior and the theory of planned behavior, personality trait is a very important exogenous variable. Davenport & Prusak argue that some people are born to help others and expect nothing in return. This personality trait is called altruism. Altruism refers to the initiative contribution of one's time and energy to meet the needs of others. [20] Community residents with altruism are willing to help the vulnerable groups in the community, and are more likely to establish and participate in voluntary, public welfare and mutual assistance community social organizations.

## **5. Conclusion**

Based on the theory of planned behavior, this paper constructs a determinant model which includes the exogenous variables of participation attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavior control (interest correlation, community work satisfaction, community network resources, trust, information platform and personality traits), The model is essentially an integrated model of community residents' self-determined participation in community social organizational behavior. Through the integration of the three factors of participation attitude, participation subjective norm and the control of perceived behavior, it integrates with the exogenous variables in the study, it helps to form a systematic understanding of the factors that influence the participation of community residents in community social organizations. It is worth noting that this study assumes that the participation behavior of community residents is a planned behavior, after thinking and reasoning, it is not applicable to some casual behavior.

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