

The Status Quo, Significance and Prospects of Youth Participation in Managing Communities in Macao

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Abstract: Blood-related organizations and religious organizations are the origins of Macao communities. There are many communities in Macao. Thus, Macao is also called “community society”. Young people often participate in communities in various fields, which is of great significance to the development of Macao's society. To this end, this paper analyzes the status quo and characteristics of Macao youth participation in managing communities. It also explores its benefits to the youth and society, and puts forward effective development suggestions on its future development trend to further promote youth participation in community activities in Macao.

1. Introduction

Macao communities, since the foundation of Renci Tang in 1659, the number of communities has developed at a blowout speed. Under the principle of “one country, two systems”, communities have played an important role in Macao's development since its return to China. Because of their high density and strong function, communities have assisted the government to manage the society for many years. They participate in the charity activities successively, assist the national war of resistance against aggression, “quasi-government” [1] and provides the pluralistic service for the society. They have shown their assistance role [2], and gradually forms the special social structure pattern of “government - community - society” [3].

Youth is the future of the motherland and the hope of the nation. In recent years, as the central government has put forward the strategic requirements for young people to “train new people who will take on the responsibility of national rejuvenation”, the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area has also launched corresponding youth training plans based on its own advantages. The Macao Special Administrative Region has given greater support on youth work. There is an organization specializing in the management of youth work-the Youth Department, which cultivates youth to integrate into society, encourages and supports youth and their communities, etc. It can be seen that the Macao Special Administrative Region government attaches great importance to the development of youth communities.

The society has urgent requirements for young people. It is not enough to rely on the government to carry out related work. Combining the unique advantages of Macao's “community society”, it has carried out diversified training of youth work. It allows young people to participate in the management of communities and even form youth communities. This is undoubtedly one of the most important and fruitful work.

2. Analysis on the Status Quo of Macao Youth Participation in Managing Communities

This research takes the communities managed by Macao youth as the main research object. This type of communities includes communities jointly established by the youth, such as: academic, rural, service, religious, student union and others, as well as youth committees formed by the youth of large communities. This research will further explore and study the overall situation.

As of the beginning of October 2021, there are 10,663 registered communities in Macao. Among them, there are 223 communities with youth in the name of the communities or involving youth in

the service field, accounting for about 2.1% of the total number of communities in Macao [4].

According to the database of youth communities of the Macao Education and Youth Development Bureau, the communities managed by the youth in Macao are divided into four categories: 1. youth communities; 2. student unions; 3. youth centers; 4. affiliated youth communities. This paper first mainly analyzes three influential, large-scale and emerging youth communities—"Macao Youth Federation", "General Association of Chinese Students of Macao" and "Youth Committee of International (Macao) Institute of Academic Research".

As a relatively short-established community, Macao Youth Federation has developed rapidly in recent years. In the 15 years since its establishment in 2006, with the strong support of the Macao Special Administrative Region Government, the Central People's Government Liaison Office in Macao and all sectors of society, there have been nearly 2,000 members. The community unites young people from all walks of life, actively carry out foreign exchanges, guide young people to grow up healthily, safeguard their legitimate rights and interests, and support the government to govern according to law. According to data, since its establishment, it has actively participated in social affairs, united many young people, and organized exchange activities with mainland China. It has organized various academic competitions, initiated charitable fundraising and other activities, and carried forward the "May Fourth Spirit" and upheld patriotism. It always actively contributes to the cause of "one country, two systems" [5].

The General Association of Chinese Students of Macao has a certain historical background. It has been established for 71 years since the day that the Youth Day was founded in 1950 and has more than 16,000 members. For more than 70 years, the General Association of Chinese Students of Macao has been loyal the motherland, building Macao, uniting young students, actively cultivating future social elites, and providing a platform for young students to understand the country, learn about Macao, and study and develop. Its spirit of educating people and using the form of "students serving students" enable young students to have a certain degree of leadership and coordination in the process of organizing activities. It also belongs to several committees in order to carry out diversified activities and exchanges, so as to truly cultivate talents for Macao and cultivate young people [6].

The Macao International (Macao) Academic Research Institute was established on September 1, 2013. It is a non-profit academic research authority officially approved by the Macao Special Administrative Region Government on June 7, 2017. It currently has experts and scholars in the fields of music, sports, education, psychology, literature, history, society, economy, management, language, information, art, medicine, physics, architecture, and astronomy. Since its preparation and establishment, it has successively published and participated in the editing of many books, and published papers in different fields in professional journals. The academic research results have won many awards in many research fields. In the early days of its establishment, a youth committee has been established to focus on training young researchers [7].

3. Characteristics of Macao Youth Participation in Managing Communities

Although young people have not yet rich experience and social experience, as the pillars of the future of society, their communities' number, types, functions, operating rules, nature and other aspects are diversified. In total, the characteristics of Macao youth participation in managing communities are as follows.

3.1 Youth Self-Established Communities Account for More Than Half of Them and Are Diverse in Types

Macao has a long history and its unique cultural background has formed the emergence of today's diverse, coexisting, free and harmonious social environment. Coupled with the increasing emphasis on youth power by the entire society in modern times, youth self-established communities have a better prospect.

The common ones in daily life are the social communities [8]. In Macao, where the cultural atmosphere is strong, caring and mutual assistance are the traits shared by the youth of Macao.

Communities of sodality have also emerged. Social services not only make young people more cohesive, but at the same time, they can cultivate their civic awareness and promote them to actively serve the masses.

In contrast, student unions, youth centers and affiliated youth communities started relatively late. Taking student unions as an example, it is mainly established by the higher education institutions. Since the establishment of the University of East Asia in 1981, Macao Higher Education has filled more than 400 years of higher education vacancies, so most of the student unions were established late. (See Table 1)

Table 1 Timetable for The Establishment of Major Youth Communities/Student Unions in Macao

Name	Establishment year
Student union of University of Macao	1993
Student union of Macao Polytechnic Institute	1993
Student union of Macao Institute of Tourism Studies	1996
The General Association of Chinese Students of Macao	1993
Student union of Kiang Wu Nursing College of Macau	1996
Student union of Macau University of Science and Technology	2001
Student union of Association of Macao Student in Shanghai (College)	2006
Student union of Macau students of Fudan University	2015

Source: the database of youth communities of the Macao Education and Youth Development Bureau, quoted from <https://portal.dsedj.gov.mo/>

After the return to Mainland China, due to the rapid economic development of Macau and social needs, youth centers and affiliated youth communities came into being.

3.2 Affinity and Irreplaceability

For young people, this paper believes that it is important for young people to lead and develop other young people. Its importance is mainly reflected in the following two aspects: First, communities are based on gathering young people. As a vigorous force of the same generation, they have affinity, so that the communication and cooperation are more convenient. Second, the activities organized by the communities are more targeted and appropriate. These activities, whether it is specialty competitions, visits and exchanges, need to have a common hobby and a vision of the times. The above two aspects are implemented by youth communities. They are undoubtedly irreplaceable while having affinity.

3.3 Political Function is Gradually Strengthened

With the development of society, the original single-function communities have transformed into multi-functional. Throughout the Macao youth communities, most of the functions have not been expanded or even changed. However, since there is no political party in Macao, there has been a phenomenon of “quasi-partyization” in which communities replace political parties. Therefore, some large-scale communities that based on the cohesion and development of youths themselves start participating in various government information agencies. They also participate in the election of the Legislative Council, and serve in national-level youth communities.

Among them, Li Liangwang, the president of the Youth Community for People Constructing Macao, in addition to serving as a member of the Municipal Council's Municipal Advisory Committee, was also successfully elected (directly elected) as a member of the 7th Macao Legislative Council election. At the same time, Zheng Anting, who was successfully elected in the same election, is also the president of Macau Association of Jiangmen Youths and a member of the Guangdong Provincial Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference [9]. In addition, many young leaders of organizations also hold positions in the All-China Youth Federation or youth federations of various provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions. For example, Luo Yilong, director of the Macao Health Bureau, concurrently serves as the vice chairman of the Macau Youth Federation and the National Youth Federation [10].

4. Significance of Macao Youth Participating in Managing Communities

The participation of young people in managing communities has a stimulating effect on the youth themselves, the communities and society. Its significance is as follows.

4.1 Cultivate a Sense of Social Responsibility

Formal communities have strict organizational charters and structural models. On this basis, they can have good organizational discipline. This is what young people urgently need to learn. This will strengthen the cohesion and coordination ability of young people, so that they can help each other and get a win-win situation. This will make young people gradually get involved in the society, understand the true meaning of life, stimulate and cultivate their inner sense of citizenship and social responsibility.

4.2 Cultivate Their Abilities

Just like the name of many youth communities, their essence is to unite like-minded youth. Participating in communities will give them an earlier and clearer understanding of the internal structure, general operations, and basic etiquette of their communities. During this period, they can assume the position they are good at, boldly express their talents and give full play to their strengths. Just like those outstanding youths, strengthening self-education and self-management capabilities in youth communities can cultivate the management skills of leaders and lay a better foundation for future development.

4.3 Enhance Their Communication Skills and Strengthen Contacts with All Sectors

As a kind of group animals, communication skills are indispensable and vital for human beings in social life. A person's maturity is inseparable from the coordination of complex social communication. Young people are prone to unsatisfactory handling due to their own experience. Because community activities involve many aspects, it is easier to get in touch with talents from all walks of life or government departments, which greatly enhances the communicative ability of young people.

4.4 Broaden Their Vision

As we all know, both Macao and the country are undergoing unprecedented rapid innovation. In the information age, if we lack the knowledge of the outside world, we will be uncompetitive like a frog in the bottom of a well. With the support of the government, it is relatively easy for youth communities to develop foreign exchanges and cooperation. There is no shortage of international youth communities in Macau, such as International (Macao) Institute of Academic Research. In addition to the nature of general youth communities, such groups also possess academic research properties. They can undoubtedly enable young people to observe the world more and absorb advanced international experience and information. For young people, it must be a valuable experience and experience.

4.5 Good for Physical and Mental Health

In recent years, the psychological problems of Macao's youth have received increasing attention from the society. With the popularization of the Internet, people can travel all over the world without leaving home. Therefore, too many young people are exposed to confined spaces, which is not conducive to the growth of young people. Participating in managing youth communities, being able to go outdoors, serve the citizens and give back to the society in activities, is more beneficial to their physical and mental health, which is a good way to achieve multiple benefits.

5. Prospects for Macao Youth Participation in Managing Communities

Youth communities, which are intertwined with multiple variable factors such as history and reality, physique and institutions, systems and branches, are inevitably constrained by these factors in their development path. Here are the analysis and suggestions.

5.1 Risk of Rapid Social Transformation

Nowadays, the social environment is constantly evolving, and the speed of change is accelerating, showing a dynamic trend. In this regard, this paper suggests that the development of youth communities should be vigorous and actively innovate. These communities should start in the aspects of organization, activities, and development, and strive to create vibrant youth communities to adapt to the high-level development of society.

5.2 Youth Personality Coordination

From the psychological analysis, because of the physiological factors, the youth themselves are not mature during the growth period, so they are more likely to have personalized choices in the community cooperation. In this regard, this paper proposes to restrict the communities' constitution and organizational structures, and adjust the disordered member collisions. The administrators should transform the community into an orderly and reasonable combination to make it organized so that the communities can be better utilized.

5.3 The Impact of Social Interests

In the material society, under the collision of diversified social interests and personal selfish desires, young managers may influence the management and operation of communities due to bad incentives. In this regard, this paper proposes to promote and optimize legal provisions to make the social role of youth communities have credibility. It is necessary to optimize the organizational structure to restrict and balance the management rights of youth communities. Under appropriate circumstances, senior association consultants can be hired as instructors to standardize and scientific community management.

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