

Research on Improving the Service Ability of Community Volunteers

-- Taking Community A as an Example

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Abstract: In recent years, with the rapid development of China's economy and society, the focus of social governance has gradually shifted from the macro level to the grassroots level. As an important part of grassroots governance, community volunteers play a crucial role. This study takes Community A as an example to conduct research. The volunteer team in Community A has the following problems in the process of participating in volunteer services: first, insufficient cognitive ability; second, low level of communication; third, lack of organizational and cooperation ability. In response to these problems, this study puts forward corresponding solutions and suggestions. First, training for volunteers should be strengthened to improve their cognitive ability and professional skills and enable them to better understand the meaning and value of volunteer services. Second, team building activities should be carried out to enhance communication and cooperation among volunteers and improve the cohesion and collaboration ability of the team. Finally, internal and external resources should be correctly recognized and fully utilized to provide more support and guarantee for volunteers.

Keywords: Community, Volunteer service, Ability improvement.

1. Introduction

The "China Volunteer Service Development Report (2022-2023)" shows that China's volunteer service is developing vigorously. There are already 232 million registered volunteers, and the number of volunteer service teams and projects has increased significantly, covering multiple fields [1]. As a new form of community organization, community volunteers play an increasingly important role in promoting community development, enhancing community cohesion, and providing services for residents. Community volunteer service has become a new way for the masses to participate in grassroots governance in the new era, building a new network of multiple subjects integration, and playing an important role in breaking through the "last mile" of social governance [2]. The report believes that community volunteer service has become a new force for the masses to participate in grassroots governance in the new era and plays an important role in breaking through the "last mile" in the community. Under the guidance of governments at all levels, community volunteer groups are constructed to be mutually permeable and integrated [3].

According to statistics, although the number of community volunteer workers in China is constantly increasing, the degree of specialization has not been correspondingly improved. This is mainly due to the lack of formal training and practical operation experience. Therefore, how to improve the quality of volunteers to meet the needs of community development has become an urgent problem. Group work is considered an effective means to improve the service level of volunteers. Through collective actions, interactive learning, and resource sharing, volunteers can better master service skills, improve service awareness and efficiency, and thus better meet the needs of the masses [4]. In addition, group work can also enhance cooperation and communication among volunteers and create a positive group atmosphere, further improving the overall service level of

volunteers.

2. Analysis of Research Objects

Combining practice, this research takes Community A in Nankai District, Tianjin as an example. It elaborates in detail on the volunteer service status of this community and the insufficient capabilities they face, analyzes their needs, applies it to organizational work, and puts forward some suggestions for improving the capabilities of community volunteers.

This research takes the volunteers of Community A as the research object. A total of 50 questionnaires were distributed in this survey, and 50 were recovered. Among them, 4 were excluded, and the effective questionnaires reached 46.

Among them, female volunteers are the majority, with a total of 26, accounting for 56.52%; there are 20 male volunteers, accounting for 43.48%; those aged 36-55 are the majority, accounting for 45.65%, followed by those aged 19-35, accounting for 43.48%; in terms of education level, more than half of the people have an educational level of junior college or above, followed by those with education below high school. Among the 46 volunteers, 67.39% became formal volunteers through online registration, and 32.61% of the volunteers did

Table 2.1. Basic Information of Volunteers

Item	Type	Number	Proportion
Gender	F	26	56.52%
	M	20	43.48%
Age	Under 20	2	4.35%
	20—35	20	43.48%
	36—60	21	45.65%
	UP 60	3	6.52%
Registration status	YES	31	67.39%
	NO	15	32.61%

The research methods include in-depth interviews with

community directors, staff members of social work stations, community residents, and community volunteers. The interviews aim to communicate with community leaders to understand the development status of the community and the progress of volunteer work, reveal the performance of social workers in their work and personal lives, and summarize the feedback, suggestions, and needs of community residents regarding volunteer work. Through communication with community volunteers, understand the participation forms, registration procedures, and problems faced in volunteer service. In addition, relevant information obtained from these interviews is also collated and summarized.

Table 2.2. Basic Information Table of Interviewed Persons

Interview object	Gender	Age	Identity	Basic situation
W	F	36	Volunteer	Have a good understanding of the community situation
X	F	23	Volunteer	Just started working and lack experience
Y	F	35	Volunteer	A full-time housewife
Z	F	44	Social worker	Community residents, warm-hearted and fond of helping others

3. Analysis of the current situation of volunteer service in Community

3.1. Current situation of volunteer service in Community A

In recent years, Community A has actively responded to the call of the Party. With the "five-social-linkage" mechanism as the core, it has deeply explored the governance model of "community + social work + social volunteer service + public welfare undertakings". The community has fully integrated the advantageous resources of communities and social organizations and carefully constructed a diversified public service system, aiming to further improve the rural governance structure and enhance governance efficiency. To achieve this goal, Community A has actively mobilized all forces, especially the "red steward" team, which includes Party members, building leaders, grid members, and volunteers. Together, they have constructed a grid management pattern of "cadres, Party members, and the masses" with three-level linkage to ensure that community management and service are seamless and comprehensive.

In addition, the community also actively encourages Party members and residents to participate in community governance. It has built a series of service facilities such as a party-mass service center, an elderly cafeteria, and a volunteer's home, providing convenient and caring services for residents. To solve the problems of enterprises and social organizations in the jurisdiction, the community has established a "co-construction council" and a "virtue and kindness alliance". By holding "council meetings" regularly, it has effectively promoted resource sharing and joint discussion of problems. With the support of the district Party committee and district government, Community A has also set up a social work service center and established a comprehensive public welfare organization, linking forces from many aspects such as the Communist Youth League, women's federations, and trade unions, injecting new vitality

into community governance.

3.2. Data collection

As can be seen from Table 3.1, in Community A, volunteers who have provided poverty alleviation and assistance account for 71.73%, followed by community services carried out by the community, accounting for 70.31%; volunteers who participate in health services account for 65.74%; volunteers who participate in neighborhood mutual assistance activities account for 34.79%. From this perspective, most of the volunteer service activities carried out in this community are targeted at disadvantaged groups, which is connected with the focus of the work of social work stations. In addition, in the past few years, the COVID-19 epidemic has had an impact on the community, resulting in nearly 67.38% of volunteers participating in epidemic prevention and control work. This is the largest number of people in volunteer service activities except for helping disadvantaged groups.

Table 3.1. Types of volunteer services

Participation type	Frequency	Proportion
Community service	69	70.31%
Epidemic prevention and control work	66	67.38%
Environmental protection	50	52.18%
Poverty alleviation and assistance	68	71.73%
Health service	63	65.74%
Neighborhood mutual assistance	32	34.79%
Animal protection	23	23.94%
Disaster relief	27	30.42%
Other types	4	4.37%

According to the survey, only one-third of people have participated in the training on volunteer service skills organized by the community. Through visits, we learned that most of the respondents think that training is very necessary. A small number of respondents think that training should be carried out according to specific situations and specific project needs. Only a small proportion of respondents said that they do not need training. Among volunteers, two-thirds of them want to receive basic volunteer training. In addition, in the training items, the proportion of training on communication skills, event planning and organization skills, and medical first aid accounts for more than half. This shows that most volunteers in the community often have not received professional training, which also leads to the lack of professionalism required for their volunteer work.

Table 3.2. Volunteer Service Training Statistics Table

Participation type	Frequency	Proportion
Training on basic knowledge	68	73.91%
Planning and organizational ability	54	58.7%
Communication skills	56	60.87%
Training on first aid skills	50	54.35%
Training on specific skills	46	50%
Training for cadres and leaders	22	23.91%
Other related trainings	2	2.17%

As can be seen from Table 3.3, the volunteer service activities most often participated by volunteers are volunteer service activities organized by communities or mass organizations, accounting for 80.43% of all service items. Public welfare activities participated by other social organizations have the lowest proportion, accounting for only 21.74%. From the above analysis, it can be seen that the

volunteer teams seldom take the initiative to organize activities. Most of them are carried out under the organization of communities and party-mass service centers. The volunteer work in Community A is led by social work stations. They receive government plans by purchasing services. Therefore, the volunteer work in the community mainly relies on the government and social work stations.

Table 3.3. Subject of Volunteer Service Organization

Subject	Frequency	Proportion
Community service center and Party-mass service center	74	80.43%
Government agencies	50	54.35%
Social work service station	60	65.22%
Other social organizations (volunteer associations, etc.)	20	21.74%

4. Problems in Community Volunteer Service

4.1. Insufficient Cognitive Ability

In the interview, it was found that the reasons why some volunteers are willing to participate in community volunteer service are very simple. That is, when they are free, they feel that there is nothing to do. When they see volunteer service activities organized by the community, they come here. They think that when serving others, they can also kill time. Some volunteers feel that they can meet more people and improve their social skills during volunteer service. Some volunteers participate passively because their children participate in volunteer activities and they feel uneasy.

According to the interview, volunteers usually have a limited understanding of volunteer service, mainly focusing on simple acts of kindness and good intentions. In addition, their initial purpose of volunteer service is very direct. They may not fully understand the specific definition of volunteers and the possible potential impacts, nor are they aware of the crucial role that volunteer service plays in strengthening community participation and promoting social progress. The insufficient understanding of their role by volunteers not only affects the quality of their work but also has an adverse impact on the construction and development of the community governance system.

4.2. Low Level of Communication

In the practice of volunteer service activities, the communication objects encountered by volunteers are basically divided into three categories: volunteer team members, team managers, and service objects. In actual service work, the author also found some problems. For example, during the activity, some volunteers cannot exchange information with other members in a timely manner, resulting in asynchronous information; there are doubts about the activity information issued by superiors, but they fail to communicate and solve them in time; lack basic patience for service objects and cannot clearly explain the content and requirements of relevant activities to service objects.

Among volunteers, communication is the most important way of information transmission. Through interviews, it is learned that due to the lack of communication with others, the communication ability of volunteers still needs to be improved. In addition, in the survey, 60.87% of volunteers want to receive training on communication, which shows that community volunteers attach importance to communication and want to conduct relevant training.

4.3. Lack of Organization and Cooperation Ability

The organization and cooperation ability of volunteers is crucial for the success of volunteer activities. At the organizational level, volunteers need to deeply understand the goals, processes, and details of activities so that they can efficiently manage and reasonably allocate the roles and responsibilities of volunteers. Such clear planning and execution ability is essential for the smooth progress of activities. At the cooperation level, volunteers need to have a clear understanding of their specific job responsibilities and be able to collaborate with team members to ensure the smooth progress of volunteer service activities. In addition, the ability to collaborate is also reflected in the mutual support among volunteers. When other members of the team face challenges or difficulties, volunteers should be able to actively lend a helping hand and jointly solve problems to achieve the overall goal of the team. This spirit of mutual collaboration is the key to the success of volunteer activities.

Through the investigation and discussion of volunteers, the author found the main problems in volunteer communication: First, volunteers do not know each other, and the cohesion of the volunteer team cannot be reflected; second, there is no clear division of labor in the work process. Often, work is carried out on site according to the specific situation of the work, and chaos often occurs; and they are also easily trapped and will not ask for help from people around them. From this point of view, the sense of collaboration among members of the volunteer team in Community A is not strong enough.

5. Countermeasures for Improving the Service Ability of Community Volunteers

5.1. Deepen the Understanding of Volunteer Service

Volunteers lack understanding of volunteer work in their minds. On the one hand, they need to rely on social workers and the government, forming a free-rider behavior, which makes their actions lack autonomy and independence. On the other hand, they are still unclear about their identity as "volunteers" and feel that they are just doing things for others and do not realize the value of their participation in community volunteer service. We must affirm that volunteer service can reflect public welfare value and promote the comprehensive and in-depth development of the community. Moreover, volunteers are not only an integral part of society but also independent individuals. Volunteer service can reflect the value of volunteers themselves. In addition, publicity and guidance work on improving the quality of volunteer service ability can be strengthened through various channels and methods to improve the cognitive level and degree of attention of volunteers. By carrying out activities such as selecting outstanding volunteers and displaying the results of volunteer service, the learning enthusiasm and initiative of volunteers can be stimulated.

5.2. Enhance Communication and Cooperation Ability

In the previous survey, 60.87% of people said that they want to strengthen their communication skills. In the interview, it was found that some volunteers do not know how to communicate with service objects. Especially in sympathy

activities, they need to talk with each other to enhance their relationship, but they do not know where to start. When contacting other people in the volunteer group, due to unfamiliarity, there will also be discomfort in communication. When encountering difficulties during activities, they seldom ask their colleagues for help. The volunteer team lacks a core cohesion.

In volunteer service, communication and teamwork among members are extremely necessary. Effective communication skills can enhance the effectiveness of volunteer service, increase the satisfaction of service objects, and enhance the sense of honor and pride of volunteers, and provide effective guarantees for their participation in their work and life.

Strengthen communication and cooperation among volunteer service organizations to promote resource sharing and experience learning. By organizing cross-regional and cross-field volunteer service activities, promote learning and communication among volunteers and improve their comprehensive quality and ability level. At the same time, strengthen cooperation and communication with relevant domestic and foreign organizations, introduce advanced concepts and technical means, and promote the innovative development of volunteer service.

5.3. Correctly Understand and Make Full Use of Internal and External Resources

The effective development of community volunteer service needs sufficient funds and materials to support. The development of volunteer work in Community A is restricted by many factors. In practice, there is a problem of material shortage, and the lack of material resources is a bottleneck restricting its development. Social workers can enable volunteers to give full play to their advantages in community and volunteer resources and mobilize all kinds of resources in the community.

The government and all sectors of society should increase investment in volunteer service and provide sufficient support such as funds, venues, and teaching staff for improving the quality of volunteer service ability. At the same time, encourage enterprises and social organizations to participate in the development of volunteer service through donations and sponsorships.

6. Summary

Volunteer service ability and quality improvement is the key to promoting the high-quality development of volunteer service. Through the implementation of measures such as deepening the understanding of volunteer service, enhancing communication and cooperation ability, and correctly understanding and utilizing internal and external resources, volunteers' political literacy, professional knowledge and skills, and service levels can be effectively improved. However, the improvement of volunteer service ability and quality still faces challenges such as insufficient resources, cognitive biases, and imperfect systems. Therefore, the government, all sectors of society, and volunteer service organizations need to work together to increase investment, strengthen publicity and guidance, improve systems and mechanisms, and strengthen the implementation of measures such as promoting exchanges and cooperation to promote the sustainable and healthy development of volunteer service. Looking forward to the future, with the continuous development and progress of society and the increasingly

diverse needs of the people for volunteer service, the work of improving volunteer service ability and quality will become more important and urgent. We have reason to believe that with the joint efforts of all parties, the volunteer service cause will surely usher in a more beautiful tomorrow.

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