

# Policy Corridors and Social Growth: Equity Realization Mechanism in Community Resilience Governance

## -- A Case Study of Sichuan Province, P. R. China

Wenhong Su\*

School of Public Administration, Sichuan University, China

\*Corresponding E-mail addresses: wenhongsu511@163.com

### Abstract

Since the beginning of the 21st century, the world has faced the dual challenges of traditional and non-traditional risks, which has led to the transformation of the connotation of equity from the fair distribution of material wealth and resources to the fair distribution of social risks. In this context, how to effectively deal with the "twin-mode" risks and continuously take into account the fair value has become a new imperative of the times, or alternatively, how to effectively interact between the government and the society during the normal state and emergency state to ensure the fair distribution of risks, and meanwhile uphold social equity? Community resilience is an important paradigm for understanding risk society and disaster response processes, but equity, as an important value element, has rarely been factored into research related to community resilience governance. This study attempts to construct an integrated framework of administration and value, and analyze the essentials of equity in community resilience governance. Starting from the connotation of fair risk distribution, it explores the fair realization mechanism in community resilience governance. The research applies a case study method, by using policy text collection, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, etc., to collect qualitative data to understand how Sichuan Province of P. R. China achieves fair value through three mechanisms of policy corridors, social growth, and capacity building to promote community resilience. Its realization of equity in governance provides real-world experiences and reflections for future practice.

### Keywords

Policy Corridors, Social Growth, Community Resilience, Social Equity.

### 1. Introduction

Since entering the period of "high modernity", the consequences of modernity have become unprecedentedly dramatic and generalized (Giddens, 1990). Human society has been moving towards an irreversible trend of high complexity and uncertainty. Risk society is no longer a feature of the transitional period of globalization and post-industrialization as previously thought, but a social phenomenon that will accompany mankind for a long time in the future (Zhang, 2020). Since the beginning of this century, the world has experienced catastrophic disasters such as hurricanes, tsunamis, earthquakes, and the latest COVID-19 pandemic. We have begun to re-examine the effectiveness of the original governance model. Under the continuous impacts of crisis and uncertainty, community resilience has become a hotspot of academic research in recent years. As a systems concept, community resilience (Berkes & Ross, 2013) has strong explanatory power for how natural, social and physical systems interact to influence post-disaster community functioning and resident well-being (Kendra, 2021). At present, many researchers have reached an effective consensus that community resilience

governance is an effective corridor for risk governance (Norris, 2008; Adger, 2005; NRC, 2012; Liao, 2018). Around the world, many countries have begun to devolve the threshold of risk governance upon the community level, and evidently such process has accelerated significantly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Community Resilience System Initiative Steering Committee believes that in the event of an impact, the ability or attribute that emerges from the community as a whole, that is, community resilience, is the core element of discussion through the process of risk prevention, resistance, recovery, and growth. Meanwhile, the Committee points out that the community resilience is an important paradigm for understanding grassroots risk and disaster response processes.

How to empower the community with the ability to change, adapt and change has become an element of community resilience governance discussions (Walker, 2004). The previous research took the concept of community resilience as the origin, and deduced that the realization of community resilience was ultimately manifested as a process, capacity, dynamics, and adaptation, rather than a result and physical stability. Therefore, the realization process of community resilience is regarded as a process combining a dynamic adaptive capacity network with a positive adaptive trajectory in the wake of adversity. Community capacity building becomes a necessary condition for realizing community resilience. Such view has become an established consensus. (Norris FH, 2008).

As Wilson (2013) points out, capacity building is a concrete concept rather than an abstract one. From a microscopic level, the elements of capacity building are gradually changing from a single natural element to a natural element integrated with social elements. The Natural Elements Framework focuses on the capacity to assess community resilience from the perspectives of community resources, active actors, public spaces, and other engineering resilience (Magis, 2010). From an even broader perspective, the integrative framework incorporates social factors (such as self-organization development and community activism) into the capacity to achieve community resilience. It suggests that community strength and characteristics include human-land connections, values and beliefs, knowledge skills and learning, social networks, participatory governance, diversity, etc. (Barkes, 2013). The value element has gradually gained prominence, but its importance has not been highlighted (Bruneau, Filiatrault & Lee, 2007). From a macro level, the subject relationship of the capacity building process has also become an important research perspective: Whose resilience? Who is responsible for building resilience, government or society? The government-led rationale (Wilson, 2013) emphasizes that the state system and administrative power play a leading role in the capacity building of community resilience governance. The residents' participation rationale (Kapucu, 2012) believes that residents themselves are the key elements of community resilience capacity building. The cooperation and reciprocity rationale (Reinhardt, 2019) regards capacity building as the result of two-way interaction between government and society. However, more importantly, why do these subject structures build community resilience? The responsibilities and values of multiple subjects such as the government, community residents, self-organizations, and volunteers under emergency conditions are included in the research scope of capacity building.

Therefore, it is necessary for current research to go beyond engineering fields such as specific technology, capacity assessment, and disaster recovery (Holling, 2012), turn to the evolution of the value elements in the governance field of community resilience building, constantly excavate the interaction between value elements and capacity building, and examine the important guiding and supporting role of value judgment in the construction of community emergency response capacity, so that it will eventually become an indispensable element of a strong, resilient, and healthy community. Reviewing the current literature, Aldrich D F et al suggests that social capital has value attributes, plays a role as a bridge and link in community resilience governance, and can effectively promote the improvement of community health.

Entress paid attention to the impacts of the government's non-normal death management measures on community culture and residents' humanistic emotions during the COVID-19 pandemic, and called on the government to adopt new administrative methods to solve various predicaments, such as the damages to community residents' mental health, the dissolution of community culture, and the collapse of public trust. Some studies have also examined and considered value elements like citizen participation (UNISDR, 2020), collective action achievement (Brown, Westaway, 2011), and internal trust (Liu, 2018). However, the research on equity, a key value element, has been insufficient and absent. Equity is generally understood as a phrase that includes a set of value preferences, portfolio design preferences, and management style preferences (Frederickson, 1968). Equity emphasizes that public administrators have the responsibilities and obligations in decision-making and organization implementation, while actively respond to public demands. This concept also includes requirements for the equality of government services. In the process of community resilience governance, the lack of equity usually brings some realistic predicaments and the failure of public administration values, such as disordered participation of multiple subjects, insufficient emergency response capacity of vulnerable groups, unprotected rights of minority groups, rampant individualism, difficult implementation of grassroots democracy. In light of disproportionate mortality rates among black people in the COVID-19 pandemic (Gaynor & Wilson, 2020), and the lack of equal access to health care for community minorities after disasters (Gadson, 2020), such realities force us to discuss the important role of equity as a value element in the field of resilience governance. This issue has already invoked reflection and scrutiny in the academic community (Roberts, 2020).

The current COVID-19 pandemic poses major challenges to the global public administration. It is particularly noteworthy that in an emergency state, the country will be more inclined to strengthen the government's administrative leadership function (i. e., top-down), thus resulting in a set of "unified leadership" of the government policy corridor, which leads to greater difficulty in transparency, participation and coordination in community resilience governance. This is perhaps one of the important reasons for the absence of administrative value or inequality phenomena (Fisman, Lin, Sun, Wang & Zhao, 2020). Government policies directly or indirectly affect every community within a nation-state, and corridors for community resilience building are directed to specific "corridors," which can have both negative and positive effects on community resilience. We are mostly worried that, due to the efficiency orientation of government policy corridors and the prevalence of social utilitarianism, will it ultimately lead to the difficulty of realizing the value of equity in the process of community resilience governance, and the gradual decline of the value advocacy of public administration? Coupled with full digital coverage and bureaucracy, will the excessive protection against pandemic risks affect the modern legal order based on individual rights, and will it shake the principle of fair procedures in social management? Current literature shows that some scholars have launched discussions on community resilience governance in East Asian countries (Lee, 2020; Chua, Kadirvelu, Yasin, Choudhry, & Miriam, 2019). For example, since the Wenchuan Earthquake in 2008, China has built a relatively stable and effective emergency governance model under an authoritarian structure. As a result, the roles and relationships of the government, communities and civil society organizations in China's disaster management have indeed changed (Wang & Guo, 2020), under which its performance has achieved remarkable results, especially in the global COVID-19 pandemic prevention and control. Government, non-government and civil society still communicate on an equal footing during emergencies and use their respective strengths to play a role in equitably safeguarding the lives of various groups of citizens (Bangura, Gonzalez, Ali, Ren, & Qiao, 2020). Such a policy corridor has been considered as a model for the global community to fight the Covid-19 pandemic in terms of coordination, solidarity, decisiveness, and leadership (Kai, & Cohen, 2020). Thus, under the conditions of big-

government-small-society or strong-government-weak-society, how can the experience of unified national leadership and policy integration better balance the conflicting administrative values in community resilience governance (Wang, 2021)? How to optimize the policy corridor to create a core that enhances the adaptive capacity of the community (Zhou, Bi & Ding, 2019), and renew the public administration's commitment to social justice in a state of emergency (Frederickson, 1978)?

All in all, the realization of equity in the process of community resilience governance has become a new research hotspot. Especially under the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, we inevitably must solve this issue, no matter under which policy corridor. Therefore, this paper seeks to find out whether it is possible to build a framework that integrates value and administration in community resilience governance, to promote social growth through policy corridors, to enhance community self-adaptation capacity, and to ultimately realize social equity as the key value element?

## 2. Realization of Equity in Community Resilience Governance

### 2.1. Equity and Community Resilience

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) views resilience, sustainability and equity as interlinked. Community resilience governance is one of the effective corridors for risk governance, and equity has become its primary value judgment. Critical reflection on equity has also been put on the agenda of community resilience building (Roberts, 2020). Resident participation, cooperative dialogue, and the cultivation of subjectivity awareness, as value elements that affect equity, have gradually become the focuses of discussion in the field of community resilience governance (MacLean, Cuthill & Ross, 2014).

Historically, risk has been associated with human society (Beck, 1992). Since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the world has faced both traditional and non-traditional challenges, which has led to the transition from fair distribution of material wealth and resources to fair distribution of social risks. Industrial society emphasizes fair distribution of resources such as wealth, opportunity, and freedom (Gosseries, 2005), and loses its power in the face of major risks (Imperiale & Vanclay, 2016). Researchers have incorporated risk distribution equity and risk sharing into the measurement of social equity (Pan, 2018). The value concept of fair risk distribution is unequal equality, that is, in terms of people's right to life and freedom and equality, risks should be redistributed, while human, financial and material resources should be used to help those who face more risks without capacity to change them in order to reduce those risk (Zhang, S., 2020).

On the need to achieve equity in community resilience, Young and Allen (2011) argue that those who are disenfranchised and incapable of influencing institutions, the built environment, and mainstream culture have been increasingly marginalized, while disaster-driven institutional creations have failed to reflect their interests, leading to inequities. Fitzgibbons and Mitchell (2019) identified this problem in their empirical research. They took the construction of 100 resilient cities initiated by the Rockefeller Foundation in the United States as a case, and obtained a formative evaluation of the construction of 100 resilient cities, and exploratively found such unfair problems as insufficient participation of marginalized residents, uneven distribution of urban resources, and risk inaction in resilient city projects. It is worth noting that, on the one hand, risk makes community residents' backgrounds and endowments undifferentiated, placing all community residents in risk scenarios. On the other hand, many scholars stress that the risk not only fails to eliminate the real-life inequities resulting from those subjects' developmental differences, but rather magnifies such inequities in risky circumstances, which further gives rise to more problems in the process of practical governance

(Xiang & Ma, 2013). Some examples are evident in this COVID-19 pandemic. Employers may fairly offer employees a sick-leave policy, but some employees cannot afford the burden of income shortfall due to lockdowns and thus cannot take real breaks (Evans, Berger, Phelan, & Silverman, 2021). Symptomatic people in the outbreak need to travel to free testing sites without public transportation, but some may not have private cars (Gadson, 2020). Relevant studies have shown that communities with a high proportion of the homeless, those without adequate insurance or employment, indigenous populations, immigrants, and persons with disabilities are treated unequally in communication, making them the most vulnerable communities in the COVID-19 pandemic (Berger, Evans, Phelan, & Silverman, 2020).

In a risk society, the connotation of equity has been greatly extended. In fact, the COVID-19 pandemic has negated the entire paradigm of public administration for millennials (Roberts, 2020). As early as the Conference at Minnow Brook, the predicament of value failure has been proved, while the link between resilience and equity is inevitable (United Nations General Assembly). Now we must reaffirm the important role of equity in community resilience (Waldo & Stever, 1988).

## 2.2. Equity Dimensions in Community Resilience

In past studies, scholars have paid more attention to equity in specific areas of risk governance, and discussions on the realization of equity in resilience governance have focused on areas such as climate and urban planning science. Some scholars have demonstrated that, by exploring the procedural elements (who participates, how to choose) and distributive elements (how outcomes of capacity-building programmes affect different groups) in urban adaptation to climate change (Archer et al., & Dodman, 2015; Bahadur & Tanner, 2014; Folke, 2006; Meerow & Newell, 2016), the realization of implicit or explicit equity elements is insufficient. Other scholars have considered equity as a political goal of community or urban governance, and outlined the mechanism for realizing multi-subject equity in community resilience governance by addressing the subject and object of resilience governance, "Whose resilience? Whose city?" (Vale, 2014).

So, what exactly is equity in the community resilience process? As the American jurist Bodenheimer (1974) said: "Equity and justice have a Proteus-like face, changeable, and can take on different shapes at any time and have very different faces." When equity is placed in the field of risk allocation, its connotation becomes more concrete. This study is not limited to a specific risk scenario, but based on the more representative perspective of "twin-mode" risk response, starting from the essence of fair risk distribution, to understand the equity connotation in community resilience governance.

Generally speaking, institutional equity constitutes the basis for realizing distributive justice, and institutional equity is achieved through a just and equal rights structure. The construction of rights structure is inherent in the policy design of community resilience governance. The government promotes the construction of engineering resilience of the physical attributes of the community from top to bottom, forming a set of inherent power and responsibility model, in which the government is the leading force. In the process of community resilience governance, to achieve cooperation and dialogue and fair risk distribution, this traditional one-way interaction model is obviously not applicable. Alexander (2013) raised the same questions and concerns by reviewing relevant theoretical literature, worrying that a resilient governance policy would make a certain kind of power, exploitation, and deprivation legitimate. Based on the above, we can draw a relatively reasonable conclusion,

A fair rights structure helps regulate the behavior of various subjects at the institutional level, so that multiple subjects can divide rights and assume responsibilities in an equal, harmonious and inclusive manner in community resilience governance. When communities face risks and

shocks, equity in the power structure is a guideline for achieving equity in the distribution of risks and subsequently community resilience.

Secondly, in order for the subjects of risk allocation to be "sensitive to aspirations but dull to endowments" (Dworkin, 1987), each subject must be placed in an equal and inclusive social network. On the basis of fair rights structure, each subject is the object of risk distribution, and its equity from the perspective of personality is the prerequisite of realizing fair risk distribution.

Under the "twin-mode" risk, in order to achieve the value goal of equity, community residents, as the first respondents in community resource allocation, must equally and fully participate in community resilience governance. In this process, the consciousness of subjectivity is cultivated, multiple subjects reach a collective consensus in a self-organized way, and finally form collective actions in resilient governance. It is worth emphasizing that the equity of the personality perspective in the risk state is the prerequisite of realizing the social dimension of community resilience, and vulnerable groups should be paid attention to in the process of achieving collective consciousness. Some scholars have found that different groups have different perceptions of value issues and unfair issues, so marginalized groups are more stressed than other groups in crisis conditions (Bowling, Vercruyssen, Bello-Ogunu, Krinner, & Dahl, 2020). It is about upholding and advocacy of equity for different groups to perceive the resilience of the community so that they can fully obtain community support to deal with crises and challenges.

In the above process, the consciousness of subjectivity is cultivated, and multiple subjects reach a collective consensus in a self-organized manner, and finally form collective actions in risk allocation (Perdomo, Sánchez & Blanco, 2020). The cultivation of participatory governance and self-organization enables all subjects to share risks, while residents' participation, community resilience, and community organization growth have been fully developed. Sustainability and adaptation have become the common vision of community resilience governance, bringing about endogenous development of the community. Under the guidance of the value of fair risk distribution, the community's emergency response capacity has been improved as a whole to cope with risks. Therefore, capacity equity is the foothold to realize fair risk distribution.

### **2.3. Policy Corridors and Social Growth**

After analyzing the equity of risk distribution from the three dimensions of rights framework equity, social relationship grid equity, and capacity equity, we can further deduce three corresponding equity realization mechanisms in community resilience governance, namely, policy corridor, social growth, and capacity building. These three promote the equity of risk distribution from different perspectives, so that the value advocacy of equity can be realized in community resilience governance.

"Policy" is generally understood as a set of "formal" rules and regulations related to the state, i.e., regulations issued to the community in the form of laws and policy documents that set the parameters of human behavior (Wilson & Bryant, 1997). The "policy corridor" is understood as the sum of the ways in which policies are implemented at the macro-scalar level. The policy corridors of different countries show different tendencies, and contain the systematic rights structure of the nation-state and the existing administrative logic, which directly or indirectly affect the behavior of stakeholders and actors. These policy corridors not only affect the decision-making corridor at the community level, but further impact the equity of risk distribution within the nation-state.

Fainstein (2015) said in "Resilience and Justice" that the term "resilience" has become a buzzword for disaster preparedness planning, and its core connotation is adaptation, not recovery to a pre-crisis state. However, Wilson (2013) argues that in most cases, national policies must play at least some role in guiding and influencing the transition to strong

community resilience. The policy corridor in community resilience is embodied in institutional norms, network structure, empowerment, etc. The government responds to the value appeal of equity by implementing public policies through administrative orders, system construction and other means, reflecting the country’s initiative to regulate fair risk allocation in community resilience governance. Thus the policy corridor in community resilience guarantees the realization of the value element of equity from the logic of the state and the bureaucracy.

Secondly, this study holds that social growth enables each subject to fully and ideally play its role in the equity of risk distribution, hence manifesting the fair value of community resilience governance. The growth of social forces brings the continuous development of the community's capital resources, human resources, material resources, and cultural resources. Multiple subjects actively interact in different field structures of the community, thus erecting the trust network of subjects. In the community network, the relationship between subjects is more open and coordinated, and different subjects can conduct more fair and equal dialogues and games on risk allocation. The interests of vulnerable groups in community resilience governance are protected, such as racial issues, wealth gap issues, women and children issues.

Moreover, there is a two-way relationship between policy corridors and social growth. Community resilience governance relies on a complex policy process, which promotes communication between communities and the wider society during policy implementation, thereby promoting social growth. Meanwhile, social growth has an adverse effect on the policy corridor, making community resilience governance more equitable and stronger.

The organic interaction between policy corridors and social growth ultimately rests on capacity building. The connotation and composition of community capacity building are embodied in the following aspects: risk cognition, action relationship, and self-governance. The logical starting point of fair risk distribution is that each subject measures unpredictable risks based on bounded rationality. Improving risk awareness enables multiple subjects to construct risk awareness and make scientific and effective judgments on the risks they may encounter. On the basis of risk judgment, an equal, effective and inclusive risk communication is reached, and a consensus on risk allocation is finally achieved. The gradually cultivated consciousness of subjectivity and community self-adaptation will help the community form a fair and just action relationship network in the crisis, and realize the fair measurement of risk distribution in the principle of difference.

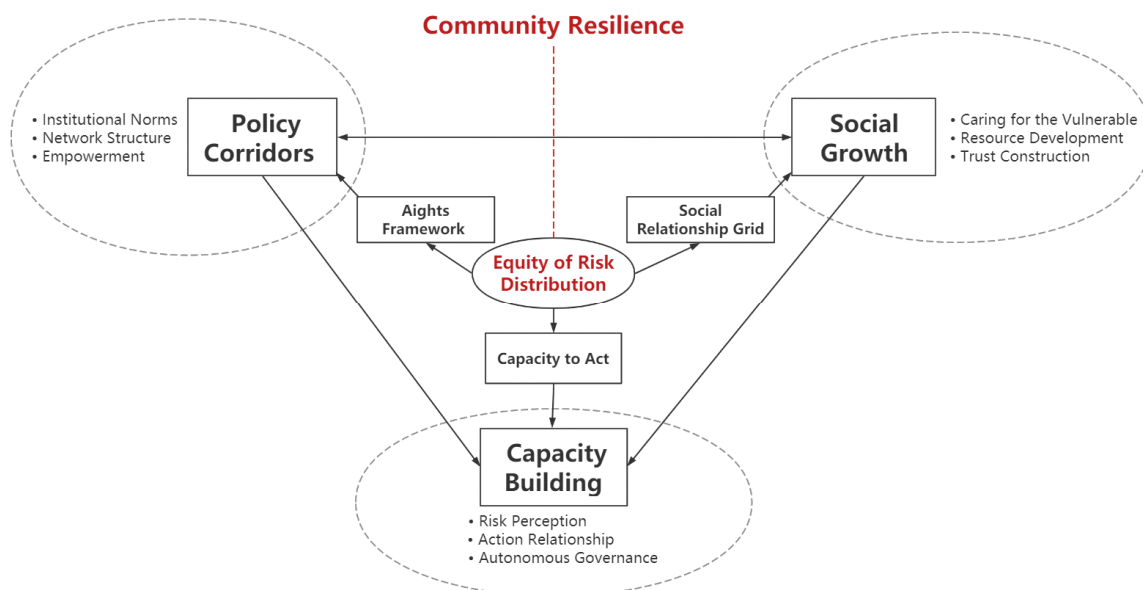


Figure 1. Research logic diagram

Based on the above, this study has three research hypotheses: First, national policies can promote the growth of social organizations, community residents and other social forces through specific corridors. Through social growth, residents' awareness of subjectivity can be cultivated, residents' awareness and ability to participate and rapid response in emergency governance can be improved, and an emergency governance system involving multiple subjects can be formed, so as to achieve equity, inclusiveness and equality of services. Secondly, in addition to the policy corridor, the state and society will also have a two-way influence process characterized by the interaction of policy forces and social forces. On the basis of the effective connection between supply and demand of public services, a partnership between the government and society will be established to effectively give full play to the residents' important role of autonomy and adaptability in community response to crisis events. Third, the fair value goal in community resilience governance needs to be achieved through continuous capacity building. In the specific context of risk allocation, policy corridors, social growth, and capacity building are closely related to the key element of equity.

### 3. Methodology

Sichuan Province, located in Southwest China, is an area with frequent natural disasters. Since 2008, four major earthquakes have occurred successively, including Wenchuan Earthquake (Ms 8.0), Ya'an Earthquake (Ms 7.0), Jiuzhaigou Earthquake (Ms 7.0) and Luzhou Earthquake (Ms 6.0). Catastrophic floods broke out in some areas of Sichuan Province for two consecutive years in 2020 and 2021. Frequent natural disasters have brought great threats to the safety of people's lives and properties, resulting in serious social and economic losses. Since 2020, COVID-19 has swept the world. Effective prevention and control of the new pandemic has become a common problem faced by mankind. As the core city in Western China, Chengdu (capital of Sichuan Province) is an important window for China's foreign exchanges. Three local epidemics have erupted one after another, which brought great pressure on epidemic prevention and control. Therefore, taking Sichuan Province as a representative example, we can have a better understanding of how to ensure the realization process and mechanism of equity under normalization and emergency under community resilience.

From 2012 to 2021, this study conducted in-depth interviews (Table 1), focus group discussions (Table 1) and policy document retrieval to explore the process of community resilience construction, its response to community problems and crises in Sichuan Province, and collected relevant qualitative data. Policy documents are the manifestation of the implementation of the government system. Collecting the policies related to emergency management and community resilience construction in Sichuan Province and analyzing the main values and behavior modes contained therein can more clearly explain the main ways and changes of the system to achieve community equity under the authoritarian structure.

The key point of in-depth interview is to "go deep into the inside of the facts", which lies in the mutually produced data arising from the respondents' interaction (Wengraf & Tom, 2001). The purpose of focus group discussion is to try to obtain the respondents' views toward the research questions in the communication, and let the respondents answer the research questions. Members of the research group have participated in the earthquake relief and reconstruction activities and community research in Sichuan Province. Through the introduction of the staff at Sichuan Mass Organization's Social Service Center, the research group contacted a number of relevant personnel involved in community construction and research. The targets of in-depth interview and focus group discussion mainly include three categories: community leaders, main leaders of social organizations, and scholars in public administration and community. In addition, in order to improve the reliability of the research, the research group participated in the Forum on building resilient cities.



**Table 1.** Information of in-depth interview and focus group discussion

code	Organization	Respondents	Time / place	form
A	Sichuan mass organization social service center	person in charge	11,November,2020 Sichuan social organization and Social Service Center	Focus group
B	Tong Meng social organization	person in charge	22,March,2020 Ya'an, Sichuan Province	depth interview
C	Torch community	director	12,April,2021 Ya'an, Sichuan Province	depth interview
D	Chengdu grid member, Sichuan Province	working personnel	25,June , 2021 Chengdu, Sichuan Province	depth interview
E	School of public administration, Sichuan University	associate professor	2,July,2021 Chengdu, Sichuan Province	Focus group
F	Torch community	director	25,August,2021 Ya'an, Sichuan Province	depth interview
G	Daybreak Community	Resident representative	26,August,2021 Ya'an, Sichuan Province	depth interview
H	One foundation public welfare organization	Regional head of Sichuan	29,August,2021 Chengdu, Sichuan Province	depth interview
I	Qingjiang Road community	director	30,August,2021 Chengdu, Sichuan Province	depth interview
J	Xingyue community	Resident representative	29, November,2021 Chengdu, Sichuan Province	depth interview
K	Xingyue community	Deputy director	29, November,2021 Chengdu, Sichuan Province	depth interview

Source: Authors

## 4. Research Findings and Discussion

### 4.1. Policy Corridor: Equity-Oriented Resilience Building

As an important manifestation of national power, policy itself contains a coping mechanism for social injustice. From the perspective of fair rights structure, policies can not only establish the principle of balance between power expansion and rights protection under emergency conditions, but also optimize the national governance system, integrate administrative resources, establish a unified emergency leadership system, and improve the overall national emergency response capability. It can also continuously promote management, resources, and services to sink to the community through empowerment to form a fair and inclusive social network to strengthen social forces and enhance individual capabilities.

In the COVID-19 pandemic, party committees and groups of party committees at all levels in Chengdu quickly changed from "normal leading organs" to "wartime frontline headquarters". Relying on the urban and rural community governance system, they quickly set up a pandemic prevention and control leading group and headquarters, and promptly dispatched grass-roots work forces of all lines to the front line of the battle, coordinated by horizontal linkage with municipal organizations, social governance, health and sanitation, public security, transportation, network information and other departments. Government officials at the grass-roots level and interviewees in the community pointed out that the governments at all levels and communities have established corresponding emergency management teams and plans,

which will be constantly adjusted according to the development of the disaster situation, in order to quickly respond to the occurrence of disasters. One interviewee said:

*A corresponding emergency management team has been established within the community, which is composed of resident young people in the community. According to the policy requirements of the government, a plan and a drill mechanism have been formulated to provide policy basis and standards for the community to respond to emergencies. (Interviewee K)*

The standardized system enables equal communication and orderly coordination among all subjects in the community emergency management system, forming a strong and resilient network structure. Sichuan Province has established a grass-roots governance committee covering the province-city-county-township, established the committee to uniformly manage the collection, distribution, use and supervision of community development resources, and formed the power structure of multi-department participation, unified power and responsibility, and effective execution from within the government, so as to put more human, financial and material resources into the community, and promote community capacity building with practices and reforms such as "regional party building", "grid management", and "social services". First, through the construction of regionalized party organizations, to attract multiple subjects such as state-owned enterprises, government departments, social groups and organizations within the community to participate in community governance. Second, within the government, the community in the jurisdiction will be divided into different grid units, and a grid mechanism and personnel team will be established, and the grid staff will be responsible for the identification, reporting and processing and evaluation of the internal affairs of the corresponding area, and timely discover and solve the demands of community residents. Third, to carry out service-oriented transformation of communities, establish a comprehensive community service management platform, and facilitate community members to handle corresponding administrative services that are convenient for the people and benefit the people in the community.

The impacts of disasters and risks are universal and extensive, thus the arrangement of the risk distribution system should take necessary measures to enhance the risk perception and coping capabilities of all members of society (Xiang & Ma, 2013). Therefore, empowerment is one of the important corridors to achieve fair risk distribution. When responding to major public crises, scientific empowerment is even more needed. In the midst of the latest COVID-19 pandemic, various communities in Chengdu set up an pandemic prevention and control headquarters for the first time, while the sub-district leadership team personally directed the pandemic prevention and control, thus specifying job responsibilities and clarifying the prevention and control process. On the basis of the community governance community composed of party members, street chiefs, grid directors, grid members, building managers, building staff, volunteers, etc., hence a community governance pattern that is vertically and horizontally interconnected has formed. For example, the intelligent grid construction in Pidu District adheres to the direction of "decentralizing management authority and delegating service power", and delegates authority to the first-level grid personnel to realize full-time pandemic prevention and control, which greatly promotes the power in the process of pandemic prevention. Responsibilities are matched, and a cross-departmental coordination mechanism has been established. The Chengdu Municipal Social Affairs Committee has established a mass prevention and mass governance mechanism through the leadership of party building, and meanwhile it also gives full play to the role of "mass autonomy". For example, Changlinpan Community actively mobilized social forces to provide basic food provision, drug demand provision, and human resource provision for community pandemic prevention and control, thus revitalizing the main body of the whole region, as well as building a small program of "benefiting people and facilitating life" to connect businesses, residents and volunteers. Through multi-subject coordination, the "self-sufficiency" of residents' necessities is completed,

and the power of residents' autonomy is used to promote pandemic prevention and control from "passive" to "proactive". These measures give vitality to each subject to varying degrees, so that community members have the ability to deal with risks. A community worker said:

*The government has formulated "six matters" for normalized pandemic prevention and control for our community, the key of which is the "eight-piece set" at the gate of the community (including: registration office, prevention and control form, thermometer, bulletin board, isolation point, etc.). We have 12 courtyards, all of which are implemented in accordance with the standards, and then the "five elements" of the community investigation (These are the five procedures for entering the community, including: professional work team, key objects, inquiry and registration, level-by-level reporting, and scan code reporting) and the "six dos and six don'ts" of home isolation (This is the standard of home isolation, including report one's health status in time, provide living materials, use wisdom in a timely manner,, do not go out, do not receive visitors, do not lie about your health status, etc.). These requirements and standards for pandemic prevention and control have formed a list, which we update and post every day and inform residents in a timely manner. (Interviewee F)*

#### **4.2. Social Growth: Subject Growth and Social Capital Regeneration**

As a fair realization mechanism in community resilience governance, social growth is embodied in three aspects: resource development, trust building, and vulnerable care. The capacity of a community depends on social and economic resources (Tia & Wilson, 2020). The stakeholders of the community are constantly differentiated, and the government's ability to provide resources for community governance is gradually weakening, which can no longer meet the demands of the development of diversified interests in the market economy (Guan, 2019). In the face of complex incidents, reliance on administrative resources unilaterally cannot effectively carry out various tasks such as prevention, treatment and recovery. More interaction, communication, understanding and dialogue are needed between the government and social organizations (Wang et al., 2020), and the synergy between the two is needed to improve community resilience and better cope with the theoretical problems and risks of the multi-community system.

The development of social organizations in Sichuan Province began with the Wenchuan Earthquake in 2008. The relationship between the government and social organizations has been constantly adjusted in interaction and cooperation, and has experienced the process of docking, recognition, and promotion of development. According to an interviewee of a social organization involved in disaster relief for many times:

*During the 2008 Wenchuan Earthquake, a large number of social organizations poured into the earthquake-stricken areas, which brought difficulties to the disaster relief work. During the Ya'an Earthquake in 2014, in order to avoid the disorderly participation of social organizations in rescue activities, the government took the initiative to establish a coordination organization for social organizations to participate in disaster relief, which was responsible for connecting the needs of disaster areas with social organization services, and recognized the advantages of social organizations in disaster relief. (Interviewee A)*

In recent years, Sichuan Province has promoted the development of social organizations and participated in social construction through a number of policies. For example, the "Notice on the Implementation of Overall Sustainable Construction Actions for Urban and Rural Communities" clearly proposes the ideas of promoting action through consultation, clarifying rights and responsibilities through conventions, promoting endogenous growth by external forces, and complementing internal and external forces, so as to enhance the overall resilience of communities by developing the growth of internal strengths in the community, promoting the development of social organizations and participating in community building. The main measures include:

First, establish a hub-type organization to promote the standardization of the development and operation of social organizations. Sichuan Province has established a social service center for mass organizations, which not only provides necessary administrative services for social organizations, but also incubates social organizations and provides them with financial support. It has established a social organization incubation base, a social organization support center and a five-level social work system, realizing the whole process of service from the establishment, management, and construction of service teams of social organizations. A social organization leader said:

*After the earthquake, all sectors of society provided a lot of disaster relief funds, and the group center asked social organizations to apply for corresponding projects in the form of contract awarding system. During this period, a large number of social organizations were established to use this fund for development. The group center also provides training for social organizations to help them develop. (Interviewee B)*

Second, the government purchases social organization services and guides social organizations to participate in community construction. The development of social organizations needs a lot of resources, and the government needs to provide services for community residents. By purchasing, the government allows social organizations to provide government public normalcy and emergency services, which can better meet the diversified needs of community members. Although all social organizations are mission-oriented and goal-oriented, social organizations have unique social and cultural qualities. They participate in the process of community construction and are more trusted by the communities they serve (Rivera & Erlich, 1998). Interviewee I pointed out that social organizations play a major role:

*Different social organizations play different roles. One Foundation mainly provides assistance for the construction of our emergency team, including the provision of equipment and materials, the training of emergency team and the formulation of emergency plan. Tongmeng Social Organization provides daily early childhood education and training, but during the post-disaster period, they mainly provide psychological counseling for the elderly, children and people with psychological trauma caused by the disaster. Through the participation of social organizations, the ability of community disaster prevention, treatment and recovery has been improved. (Interviewee I)*

In addition to promoting the development of social organizations, how to strengthen the internal strength of the community in order to cultivate the social capital of the community is also the key. In light of the lack of comprehensive capabilities of normalized management and emergency management in grass-roots communities, Sichuan Province has promoted community governance and development from the aspects of resource supply, management team building, and self-organization development. Sichuan Province has set up community public service funds, which are mainly used for the daily operation of each community and the construction of self-organization within the community. At the community level, a community council is established, a conflict and dispute mediation organization is formed by members of the community, and a procedure of democratic consultation is used to resolve community conflicts and disputes. A community volunteer team is established to explore and solve the demands of residents in response to management problems within the community. Communities are encouraged to formulate village rules and covenants that conform to their own conditions, and promote community residents to participate in community construction independently. In the prevention and control of the epidemic, various autonomous organizations in the community have actively participated in community epidemic prevention, built a community group prevention and group governance force, organized and carried out public welfare activities such as paired help, care services, and condolence visits, and improved the sense of trust and identity of neighbors within the community. A community representative said:

*The government encourages residents to set up diversified autonomous organizations to allow residents to independently manage their internal affairs and strengthen neighborhood mutual assistance; At the same time, the government gives the community a certain amount of community public service funds every year to ensure the daily operation of community service organizations, implement capacity improvement plans for community managers, and provide free training for community managers. (Interviewee G)*

Secondly, strive to give everyone equal rights, which is an important manifestation of equity in emergency situations, and we must provide care for vulnerable groups in the community. Equity rights in emergency situations can be examined from two aspects. First, the equality of the right to receive funding. For example, in the prevention and control of the latest COVID-19 pandemic, Sichuan Province has implemented free nucleic acid testing and vaccination measures for the entire population. Through nucleic acid testing and COVID-19 vaccination, the total social risk burden can be reduced on a large scale, and the life and health of individuals can be protected to the greatest extent possible. Second, the protection of vulnerable groups. Equal access to health care has been empirically verified to reduce the impact of population and epidemics. A well-functioning health care system, with vulnerable groups receiving equal resources, may have a high capability to minimize viral transmission and mortality (Vadlamannati et al., 2021). States, public administration scholars and practitioners “must make a conscious, active and ethical effort to serve and protect all people, especially the most vulnerable in our society” (Wright & Merritt, 2020). Respondents believed that in a disaster, more supplies should be provided to groups such as the severely affected areas, the victims, the mentally handicapped, the elderly and children, and targeted support services should be provided. One interviewee said:

*In disaster relief, we have implemented targeted assistance measures for the elderly, children and severely affected residents, including psychological comfort for the elderly and children, and material distribution to poor families. In the prevention and control of the latest COVID-19 pandemic, we have carried out fixed-point distribution of daily necessities and daily health checks for close contacts who have been quarantined at home. (Interviewee C)*

### **4.3. Capacity Building: Achieving Equitable Sustainability**

Global climate change and massive population movements mean that the latest pandemic is unlikely to be the last one we face (Settele et al., 2020). The community faces a complex situation where many risks are superimposed, instability and uncertainty have increased significantly, and new contradictions and challenges are constantly emerging. Capacity building enables each subject to have the feasible ability to deal with complex situations, thus sustainable equity becomes possible. In line with the principle of multiple, whole-process and balanced ability construction, effective risk perception is a prerequisite for fair risk distribution. On the basis of risk perception and assessment, each subject reaches a risk consensus and forms a set of harmonious action relationships in collective action.

Sichuan has made great efforts in cultivating subject risk awareness. During the epidemic prevention and control period, some residents have experienced social panic, and multiple departments in Chengdu have cooperated to make full use of the official *Weibo*, *WeChat* public account of Healthy Chengdu, the 12345 mayor's hotline, the pneumonia psychological assistance counseling hotline, the "Tianfu Citizen Cloud", and other information platforms, to release authoritative information in real time, to clarify doubts timely, to popularize health knowledge, and to positively guide public opinion and public sentiment. In order to promote scientific and effective epidemic prevention among the masses, Chengdu has distributed epidemic prevention materials to the masses, popularized health knowledge, carried out psychological counseling, and alleviating panic. For home quarantined medical observers, the

community has linked various forces to provide door-to-door epidemic prevention inspections, and at the same time actively provide humanistic care. One interviewee said:

*In early July, our entire community was in a state of confusion and panic. We are extremely worried about the spread of the epidemic and the shortage of living materials. But as the disposal work progressed, we realized that the outbreak was not uncontrollable. Through the community we-media, we learned that the community is still functioning in an orderly manner, and the community staff and volunteers have given us great confidence. (Interviewee C)*

Scientific risk perception helps multiple community subjects to correctly assess the internal and external shocks that the community may encounter, which is the prerequisite for social organizations, governments, and residents to achieve common actions. All subjects participate in public affairs on an equal footing by means of joint actions, and form a coordinated action relationship. In the new round of epidemic prevention and control, the Chengdu government has enabled all parties to fully participate in all fronts of epidemic prevention and control, mobilizing the strength of multiple entities, and coordinating the resources of all parties. The government, streets, property managements, community party members, volunteers, enterprises and many other subjects have been activated, and the "Chengdu Experience" drawn therefrom has been well received by the academic circles, business circles, and residents of all walks of life.

Once a fair and effective action relationship is formed, community self-governance becomes possible. After experiencing the test of the "4.20 Ya'an Earthquake", the prevention and control of the latest COVID-19 pandemic and the "8.11" catastrophic flood, Ya'an has basically formed a system of disaster prevention, mitigation and relief—the community self-management committee—the "First Respondent", hence setting up a benign emergency response system characterized by independent leadership, independent division of labor and independent implementation. After the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and the "8.11" catastrophic flood, the self-management committee of each new village gathering point in Ya'an quickly established a new village disaster prevention and mitigation leading group. The information on drought prevention is passed on to all grid members and residents. According to the pre-established emergency plan for disaster prevention and mitigation, the original response team in the new village is used, and the enthusiasm of internal residents to participate in it is established to set up checkpoints for epidemic situation, household inspections, Information integration, disaster information release and other crisis response team systems. One interviewee said:

*In the face of emergencies, communities must build up the ability to prevent, deal with, and govern themselves. For a limited time, the community is the "first whistleblower" of crisis and risk. Therefore, how to independently use various community resources to prevent and defuse grass-roots risks is an important criterion for measuring community capacity. (Interviewee C)*

## 5. Conclusion and Outlook

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic broke out and spread around the world. In the prevention and control of the epidemic, governments of various countries generally strengthened their administrative power to deal with risks, which triggered new thinking by relevant scholars on the principles of democracy and equity in public administration. Taking advantage of national mobilization to control the spread of the pandemic in a very short period of time, China has become an important carrier for scholars to use the advantages of emergency systems to ensure fair realization in a state of risk.

This study believes that value elements are essential in building community resilience. If equity as the goal of public administration value is absent, it will cause various practical problems such as value failure and resilience collapse. So what is equity in community resilience governance?

Different from the traditional equity of wealth distribution, the equity in community resilience governance is the equity of risk distribution, based on the power framework, social relationship network, and feasibility. Therefore, we can deduce the fair realization mechanism in the three aspects of community resilience governance: policy corridor, social growth, and capacity building, as manifested by:

First, the establishment of a rights framework in the form of a national emergency management policy aims to ensure the equity of risk distribution at the institutional level and to enhance community resilience. The main methods include: standardizing rights configuration, balancing network structure, and granting multi-subject rights.

Second, the main purpose of the policy corridor is to promote social growth, build social resilience, and meet the differentiated needs of multiple subjects under the risk of "dimorphism" to achieve social equity. The government incubates and promotes the development of social organizations through administrative power, which can strengthen the main body and strength in community resilience building, better serve the disadvantaged groups in the community and solve the problems existing in community governance.

Third, the realization of equity in community resilience is a continuous process, and it is necessary to continuously promote community resilience building through capacity building. The improvement of risk coping ability and awareness is one of the important parts of ability construction. Each subject forms a harmonious action relationship in the risk allocation consensus, and ultimately achieves independent governance, and builds a long-term community resilience and fair realization mechanism.

Finally, the author believes that as the importance of social elements in community resilience governance continues to be highlighted, relevant research on the fair realization mechanism in community resilience will be gradually deepened. In the subsequent research, the fair realization mechanism can be proved and verified in more community resilience construction cases, and the comparative political research method can be used to construct a quantitative model to analyze the community resilience and equity value in a more data-driven way.

## References

- [1] A Giddens. (1990). *The consequences of modernity*. Stanford University Press.
- [2] Norris, F. H., Stevens, S. P., Pfefferbaum, B., Wyche, K. F., & Pfefferbaum, R. L. (2008). Community resilience as a metaphor, theory, set of capacities, and strategy for disaster readiness. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 41(1-2), 127-150.
- [3] Walker, B., Hollin, C. S., Carpenter, S. R., & Kinzig, A. (2004). Resilience, adaptability and transformability in social-ecological systems. *Ecology & Society*, 9(2).
- [4] Liao, Su & Li. (2018). Urban community construction under the framework of resilient system. *China Administration* (4), 6
- [5] James, K., Lauren, C., Kimberly, G. (2021). Community Resilience: Toward a Framework for an Integrated, Interdisciplinary Model of Disaster. *Natural Hazards Review*, 22(4).
- [6] Berkes, F., & Ross, H. (2013). Community resilience: toward an integrated approach. *Society & Natural Resources An International Journal*.
- [7] Lan & Zhang. (2020). Community resilience and its realization corridor: from the perspective of governance system modernization. *Administrative reform* (7), 10
- [8] Community Resilience System Initiative Steering Committee (2011). *Community Resilience System Initiative (C R S I) Steering Committee Final Report: A Roadmap to Increased Community Resilience*. Oak Ridge, TN: Community & Regional Resilience Institute.

- [9] Cutter, S. L., Barnes, L., Berry, M., Burton, C., & Webb, J. (2008). A place-based model for understanding community resilience to natural disasters. *Global Environmental Change*, 18(4), 598-606.
- [10] Wu & Xie. (2018). Research on resilient communities based on urban public safety. *Tianjin Social Sciences*, No. 220 (03), 89-94
- [11] Entress, R. M., Tyler, J., & Abdul | keem Sadiq. Managing mass fatalities during covid: lessons for promoting community resilience during global pandemics. *Public Administration Review*.
- [12] Brown, K., & Westaway, E. . (2011). Agency, capacity, and resilience to environmental change: lessons from human development, well-being, and disasters. *Social Science Electronic Publishing*, 36(1).
- [13] Tia Sherèe Gaynor, & Wilson, M. E.. (2020). Social vulnerability and equity: the disproportionate impact of covid-19. *Public Administration Review*.
- [14] Gadson, D. N.. (2020). Advancing equity in public administration: prioritizing equality of outcomes in the covid-19 crisis. *Risk, Hazards & Crisis in Public Policy*.
- [15] H. George Frederickson, "Toward a New Public Administration", in Jay M. Shafritz & Albert C. Hyde, *Classics Of Public Administration*, Moore Publishing Company, Inc., Oak Park, Illinois ,P.391,1978.
- [16] Beck, U. (1992). The risk society: toward a new modernity. *Social Forces*, 73(1).
- [17] Roberts, A. (2020), The Third and Fatal Shock: How Pandemic Killed the Millennial Paradigm. *Public Administration Review*,80: 603-609.
- [18] Gosseries, A. . (2005). A theory of justice. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.
- [19] Imperiale, A. J. , & Vanclay, F. . (2016). Experiencing local community resilience in action: learning from post-disaster communities. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 47, 204-219.
- [20] Xiang ,J. & Ma,G . (2013). Institutional justice of risk allocation. *Jiangnan Forum* (4), 5.
- [21] Maclean, K. , Cuthill, M. , & Ross, H. . (2014). Six attributes of social resilience. *Journal of Environmental Planning & Management*, 57(1), 144-156.