

From the Perspective of Resource Dependence, Why Do Micro-social Work Organizations Emerge from the Circle?

-- Based on the Case Study of H Institution in Yunnan Province

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ABSTRACT

The diversity of social problems and people's demand for social public services are gradually showing a diversified trend, which raises people's expectations for social work. The traditional model of social work organizations can no longer adapt to the development of social work in the new social form. This paper discusses the development of social work organizations from the perspective of resource dependence. Through in-depth analysis of organizations of the same scale based on specific cases, it can be found that stable social resources are crucial to the survival of social work organizations, and resource diversification can promote the sustainable development of organizations. Therefore, social work organizations need to promote the diversification of social resources and reduce their one-way dependence on government departments. Increase autonomy.

KEYWORDS

Resource Dependence; Social Work Agencies; Independent Development.

1. RESEARCH BACKGROUND AND QUESTION

In recent years, social work has played a more important and necessary role in all aspects of society, providing more humane services to all sectors of society, meeting the needs of different groups, and gaining recognition in the whole society. In this process, the government is also trying its best to promote the sustainable development of social work. The state has issued policy documents to encourage the development of social work organizations and professionals through the purchase of services, the development of posts, policy guidance, the provision of workplaces, and the establishment of low-level social work stations. At the end of 2021, the Rural Revitalization Bureau of the Ministry of Civil Affairs issued the Implementation Plan of the "Hand-in-hand Plan" for Social work service Agencies during the "14th Five-Year Plan" period, emphasizing the continued implementation of the "hand-in-hand Plan" for social work service agencies. The "Implementation Plan" proposes to cultivate a number of politically reliable, effective and standardized social work service agencies from 2021 to 2025. By the end of 2022, a total of 11,125 social organizations had been registered and established in the China Social Work Network, which can be seen from the number of social work organizations that the development of social work has achieved certain results. But at the same time, the further deepening of the comprehensive deepening reform has made people's social public services increasingly diversified, and the current status quo of some social work organizations has not adapted to the development of social services in the new era. Wang Sibin, Ruan Tseng Yuan-qi, Shi Bainian, Guan Xinping and other scholars also pointed out at the 2019 annual meeting of the China Association for Social Work Education that the development of China's social work has a scale in terms of quantity, but there are outstanding problems in the development level,

development region, and development capacity that are insufficient and unbalanced. According to the existing research findings, many problems have been exposed in the actual operation of social work agencies: the internal management and operation mechanism is not sound enough, and professional supervision is lacking; On the other hand, it is faced with the doubts of the customers and society, excessive dependence on the government or external resources, and lack of autonomy and professionalism in the operation of the organization. This leads the author to think: under the premise of adapting to the current social environment, what can some social work organizations with development difficulties do to achieve self-rescue? Through in-depth analysis and exploration of H social work agency in Kunming, Yunnan Province, the author thinks about the existing problems of such agency and aspects that can be improved.

In this paper, the author adopts the resource dependence theory as the main research and analysis tool, which mainly explains that an organization must have scarce resources if it wants to survive and develop. Since then, social organizations will choose two different paths in resource acquisition, one is to continue this resource dependence relationship, and gradually lose the motivation for independent development and competitiveness. Forming the phenomenon of resource dependence; The other is to enhance the ability of independent development, enhance the ability of external access to resources or actively seek alternative resources to reduce dependence on resources.

2. REVIEW OF RELEVANT RESEARCH

First, it summarizes the problems that private social work agencies may face in their operation and development. At the micro level, there may be a large gap of professional talents, a serious loss of institutional talents, and a shortage of professional talents. The lack of personnel management, such as the comprehensive ability of personnel to meet the needs of institutional development and the lack of talent promotion channels, leads to non-professional problems, low social awareness, single financing channels, lack of professional talents, ethical dilemmas and other difficulties in private social work institutions. Secondly, there are also the following dilemmas under the internalization of social work agencies: the high dependence on government resources, the public nature and public welfare of the services provided by social work agencies, the vulnerable characteristics of the service groups and the non-profit nature of the organizations themselves make social work agencies overly dependent on the government; The weakness and lack of social resources, due to economic development and social recognition of social work and other factors, direct donations for the operation of social work institutions are insufficient; Lack of their own "hematopoietic" ability, lack of hematopoietic function; The stagnation of professional construction, in order to seek the survival of the organization and the current situation of project fragmentation and fund underquota, many private social work organizations focus on writing project application, bidding documents, coping with evaluation and other aspects, resulting in inadequate professional investment.

Second, scholars have also given relevant suggestions and strategies for existing problems: Explore a new model of government service purchase, improve the government management mechanism, strengthen the capacity building of institutions, build a network system for the development of social work institutions, strengthen professional training for social workers, make appropriate plans for the growth of staff, and enhance workers' sense of belonging to institutions; Through the establishment of effective management ideas, improve the professional ability of managers to improve the institutional management mechanism; Starting from the essential problems, strengthen the establishment of institutional service mechanism; Enhance public recognition of the organization through comprehensive checks.

Thirdly, the application of resource dependence theory in social work is analyzed.

In view of the special operation nature of social work institutions, resource dependence theory is gradually applied to related research. Regardless of the type, the key resources for organizational

development mainly include capital, human resources and technology, among which, capital is the primary key resource. Social work agencies, as one of the emerging types of social organizations in China, are unable to obtain funds through the market exchange of products and services due to the characteristics of private non-enterprises and the essential attributes of non-profit organizations. Funds and other external resources can only be obtained through social donations and government financial support, while organizational activities depend on its internal and external resources and the application of these resources, which constitute the basis of the existence and activities of an organization. No organization can have all the resources needed for development and achieve self-sufficiency in the true sense. To deal with the relationship between social administration, the first thing to do is to solve the problem of resource dependence of social organizations.

Through the review of literature, it can be found that social work organizations gradually move closer to the government, and eventually government purchase of services becomes the mainstream of the current society, and organizations become overly dependent on the government. Most studies on social work organizations focus on problems such as the lack of autonomy, the erosion of the essence of social work, and the loss of specialization of services due to the embedded construction of government-community relationship. This inevitably makes people think: in the context of the mainstream form of government purchase services, what can micro and small organizations do under the premise of adapting to the social background when it is more difficult to obtain government purchase projects? How to ensure the operation of the organization and maintain the survival of the organization? At the same time, under the circumstances of difficult operation of the organization, how to effectively reflect the professional presentation of social workers' values and service methods?

3. CASE ANALYSIS

Organization H of Yunnan Province is a private non-profit organization officially registered and established in 2019, and its superior unit is the Wuhua District Committee of the Communist Youth League, located in Hailinpu Street, Wuhua District, Kunming City. All full-time social workers in the agency have professional social work background. At present, there are four full-time social workers in the agency, one person in charge of the agency, and an indefinite number of social work interns. The services undertaken by the institution mainly include community services for children in distress, elderly services in old communities, community governance and democratic consultation. At the beginning of the establishment of the service center, uphold the people-oriented, to solve the problems of the people, to convey care, help others and help themselves. Benefiting the people. The service concept of self-improvement, always strive to constantly improve themselves, develop services, and develop toward a professional social work road, in order to become a new force to promote the development of social work in Wuhua District, and better serve children, youth and community groups in need.

3.1. Analysis of the Resource Status of H Organization

Financial resources. Like most other mainland social work organizations, Agency H's funding is mainly obtained through government purchase service projects and public interest venture capital, among which government purchase service projects are the main source of funding. The activities of the organization, the operation of the organization and the treatment and salary of the employees are almost completely dependent on external financial support, and even the amount of funds purchased has a serious impact on the quality of life of the organization. At the present stage, in addition to the democratic consultation and discussion in rural communities and the services for children in the community, the projects undertaken by Agency H also provide a series of services for the retired elderly in the old residential areas of the Railway Bureau, providing them with entertainment and leisure activities and the transformation of some residential areas.

Human resources. At present, the agency has one person in charge and four full-time social workers, all of whom have obtained the assistant social worker qualification certificate and are qualified to work. All the other staff members except the project leader have professional social work background. At the same time, the agency also employs a part-time supervising social worker to supervise the project and a part-time staff member to be responsible for the operation of the agency's online platform. Secondly, the institution also accepts professional social worker interns from colleges and universities to assist in the development of services, and gradually builds volunteer teams in community and village groups to participate in services.

Information resources. Organizations obtain projects through competitive bidding, and service objects and information are provided by the communities they serve, including service needs, detailed information of service objects, venue arrangement and personnel convening and coordination are supported. Organizations mainly design service plans according to community needs, prepare materials and personnel in the early stage, and provide professional services through their own professional knowledge. The community assists in convening and notifying service objects in advance, collecting relevant data and information, arranging relevant activity places and coordinating time.

Symbolic resources. The symbolic resources referred to in this paper are the social recognition of the institution, including the reputation and image of the institution and the credibility of the government. Among them, the most important and urgent thing for H organization is the credibility of the government. The organization has been established for the fifth year and has undertaken many different types of projects before and after, but its scale is small and it still does not have much influence in the social work industry. The credibility of the government is what H organization lacks at present, which will cause great obstacles to the organization's subsequent entry into the community to carry out services, volunteer recruitment, and self-organization. Symbolic resources are important strategic resources for the sustainable and high-quality development of an organization.

Social and political resources. In 2012, the Ministry of Civil Affairs and the Ministry of Finance issued the Guiding Opinions on Government Purchase of Social Work Services, which for the first time designed the top-level service system for government purchase of social work services. On November 13, 2018, the Ministry of Civil Affairs held the second launch and implementation meeting of the "Hand in Hand Plan" of social work service agencies in Kunming, Yunnan Province, analyzed the first batch of experience, and expected social work agencies and social work to play a more professional role. To a large extent, the release of this series of policies and regulations has provided support for the establishment and development of some private non-profit social work organizations. The establishment of H social work agency also benefited from a lot of relevant policy support and the gradual maturity of the overall social work environment.

3.2. Analysis of the Development Status of H Institutions

3.2.1. Unbalanced Unidirectional Dependence between Institutions and the Government

The project purchasers and resource providers undertaken by social work agencies are government departments, and social work agencies play the role of project implementers in the whole process, relatively speaking, they do not have much to say and make decisions. The government leads the operation of the project, and the contractor can only follow the rules of the buyer to implement the project. Government departments need political achievements, which is different from the starting point of social work organizations to provide services, and the administrative color is obvious, which restricts the innovative thinking and the richness of activity forms of social workers to a certain extent, and represses the play of professional advantages of social workers.

3.2.2. Lack of Self-hematopoietic Ability, Talent Shortage is Obvious

For micro and small institutions such as H organization, on the one hand, the government's purchase funds are insufficient, and on the other hand, they have not yet achieved "self-hematopoietic" and economic independence. Due to the single project resources and small number of projects, the stability of funds is restricted. At present, the main means of agency H is to obtain funds by undertaking government projects. The projects come from the government and have a single channel, but the number of projects provided by the government is limited, so the source of funds is not stable.

According to the interview with social workers in the organization, the average salary of social workers is within the range of 3000-3500. Under this influence, the salary development space of social workers is limited and the salary is not paid in time, which leads to the failure of the organization to retain professional talents and the formation of talent shortage. At present, there are only three full-time social workers in the organization except the person in charge, and the turnover is large, which makes it impossible to ensure stable social workers to carry out services and operate projects.

3.2.3. Numerous Management Assessment Procedures Affect the Service Effect

The development of social organizations depends on the support of the government, and the independence of social organizations is limited, mainly because social organizations have strong dependence on government registration, administrative system, institutional supply and other resources. First of all, management assessment resources in the government's purchase of public services are particularly important for the development of social work agencies. In the project bidding stage, project implementation and project evaluation, the government uses third-party assessment resources or community management assessment resources to conduct management assessment of agency H, and Agency H improves itself according to the requirements of each stage of purchase. Secondly, the government, as the buyer, has the primary right to speak on management assessment resources. The government decides what kind of management assessment methods should be adopted, and holds the power to allocate and use management assessment resources. Institutions need to comply with these requirements of management assessment. Finally, the organization did not obtain alternative management assessment resources.

4. BREAK THROUGH THE DILEMMA, WHAT TO DO?

4.1. Change the Asymmetric Resource Dependence between the Government and Social Work Agencies

First of all, the government should do a good job in the top-level design of social work agency policies, improve the loopholes in existing policies, listen to the opinions and suggestions of micro-private social work agencies at the grassroots level, understand the survival and development status of micro-social work agencies, which occupy the majority of the proportion, and improve the voice of the agencies in social policy formulation. Secondly, the government changed the original state of highly centralized resource allocation, transferred part of its powers to social organizations, decentralized resources, reduced the absolute control and dominance of the government over social resources, balanced the comparison of resources, and thus reduced the degree of external control over specific organizations.

4.2. Build an Interactive Platform to Promote the Interaction between Resource Subjects

Strengthen cooperation with similar organizations, i.e. with other social work agencies. "Once a person joins a network, the interactions that exist in the network can help the organization speak," Bott says. With the help of the platform provided by the Social Work Association, the communication

and cooperation among social work agencies should be strengthened, and some widely applicable resources should be shared.

4.3. Explore the Financing Market: Change the Status Quo of Single Fund Dependence

With the development of the Internet, digital technology has made online public welfare more digital and transparent, breaking the black box problem in the traditional public welfare model of resource delivery, so that donations can be traced, and public welfare has more credibility. Through the Internet and other new media, we can promote the concept of helping donors in the social scope, and rely on online platforms to solicit donations or other means of resource acquisition, which can effectively raise funds, realize the link between donors and the beneficiaries of donated projects, and improve the sense of individual participation.

4.4. Establish a Scientific Talent Management System

Professional talents are the main force to promote the construction of various work in the new era. At this stage, H institution must also strengthen the management of institutional talents, establish and improve the internal talent cultivation mechanism of the institution, and achieve talent accumulation. One of the reasons for the large turnover of social work agencies is the low level of salary and the greater pressure of living economy, which leads to the frequent change of professional social workers to other industries. Institutions should face up to the normal economic pursuit of social workers, reasonably formulate salary levels for internal staff based on factors such as total project funds, registration, qualification and workload of professional social workers, establish a stable growth mechanism for institutional salary benefits, and realize equal pay for equal work.

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