Urban Renewal Policy Research in Contemporary China-Based on the Dual Perspectives of Sociology and Policy Analysis

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Abstract. Urban renewal is the core issue of urban governance in contemporary China, and its policy system is undergoing a profound transformation from "large-scale demolition and construction" to "organic renewal". Based on the dual perspectives of sociology and policy analysis, this paper takes the policy life cycle as the logical main line, selects 15 core literatures (including 7 policy text analysis and 8 case practice studies), and systematically reviews the urban renewal policy documents at all levels from the four dimensions of ' policy evolution-tool construction-implementation mechanism-social effect '. It is found that the existing achievements have clarified the transformation track of urban renewal policy from economic orientation to people-centered, revealed the structural imbalance characteristics of policy tools, formed a ' micro-meso-macro ' multi-level social effect analysis system, and reconstructed the ' life-oriented ' value framework. At the same time, there are still some limitations in the research, such as insufficient policy coordination, lack of long-term effect tracking, insufficient attention to special groups and weak research on digital governance tools. This review clarifies the internal logic and practical dilemma of urban renewal policy by integrating the dual-perspective research context, and provides a theoretical reference for the follow-up policy optimization and the modernization of Chinese-style urban governance.

Keywords: Urban renewal; literature review; policy analysis; sociology; policy life cycle.

1. Introduction

As the core issue of urban governance in contemporary China, the policy system of urban renewal is undergoing a profound transformation from "demolition and construction" to "organic renewal". In 2021, the introduction of the urban renewal chapter in the " 14th Five-Year Plan " and the " Notice of the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development on Preventing Large-scale Demolitions and Large-scale Construction in the Implementation of Urban Renewal Actions " (hereinafter referred to as " Notice of Preventing Large-scale Demolitions and Large-scale Construction ") indicates that the value orientation of urban renewal at the central level has shifted to people-oriented and organic transformation ; the corresponding ' urban renewal regulations ' in Shenzhen, Shanghai, Nanjing and other places further refine the central policy into local practice programs. According to this, the specific policy object of this paper is a series of urban renewal policies centered on the ' 14th Five-Year Plan ' " Notice of the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development on the Prevention of Large-scale Demolition and Construction in the Implementation of Urban Renewal Action, " as well as the corresponding ' Urban Renewal Regulations ' of each city [1,2].

In this context, according to the policy object of this study, the existing research results are found, and it is found that the existing research has formed two major contexts : ' policy text analysis ' and ' case practice research '. The former focuses on policy evolution, tools and objectives, while the latter focuses on grassroots implementation, social feedback and spatial effects. This paper uses the research method of in-depth literature research as the core, selects 15 core literatures, including 7 policy text analysis and 8 case practice research, takes ' policy life cycle ' as the logical main line, integrates the dual perspectives of sociological policy research and public policy analysis, and combs the internal relationship between the literature from the four dimensions of ' policy evolution-instrument construction-implementation mechanism-social effect ', summarizes the current research

results and shortcomings, and takes the construction of urban renewal policy model as the research goal, for the follow-up contemporary.

2. The Evolution Logic and Target Reconstruction of Urban Renewal Policy

China's urban renewal policy has realized the transformation from the traditional economic profit orientation to the coordinated development of multiple themes. This transformation presents distinct characteristics of the policy evolution era, and also forms a clear echo with the latest policy orientation of "Notice on Preventing Large-scale Demolition and Construction". The existing research focuses on the stage division and the target changes and driving mechanism differences behind each stage, forming a complete analysis chain.

2.1. Stage Division and Refinement of Policy Evolution

In academia, the stage division of policy evolution presents a progressive context from empirical induction to theoretical deepening. The core is to reveal the transformation track of policy objectives through different dimensions. In the early empirical framework, the researchers divided the evolution of urban renewal policy into multiple stages by comparing and combing the domestic and foreign policy context, and distinguished the complex roles of different leaders in them, summarized the latest model of multi-subject organic cooperation, and creatively put forward the design of multiple objectives such as environment, economy, history and social development. Although the time dimension of China's policy has not been clarified, it provides a basic feature reference for subsequent theoretical analysis [3].

Further, based on 357 urban renewal policy texts in the past 70 years of New China, another research introduces the intermittent equilibrium theory to refine the analysis of the evolution process, and clearly divides it into three stages : ' equilibrium period (1949-2014) -intermittent period (2015-2016) -new equilibrium period (2017-) '. The equilibrium period is driven by the improvement of the physical environment, and the policy tools are mainly regulatory. During the hiatus period, the 2015 Central City Work Conference and the Guangzhou Jinlingtai event were the ' focus events ', the policy objectives turned to the endogenous ' people-oriented ', and the social tools increased significantly. The new equilibrium period is marked by the "14th Five-Year Plan" guidance on the transformation of old residential areas. The policy objectives have gradually changed to be people-centered and five-in-one, and the tool portfolio presents multiple characteristics of "regulation + market + society". This analysis not only supplements the time dimension and theoretical support, but also reveals the inevitability of the central government's introduction of "Notice to Prevent Large-scale Demolition and Construction". The introduction of the policy is not an accidental turn, but a logical continuation and deepening of the policy objectives after the ' intermittent period ' [4].

2.2. Framework Construction and Landing Transformation of Policy Objectives

The research on policy objectives focuses on the bridge from abstract framework to concrete landing. The core is to transform macro objectives into perceptible spatial functions and residents ' experience. At the macro-framework level, the researchers first proposed multiple target dimensions, including environment, economy, society, history and culture, etc., and clarified the core pursuit orientation of green ecological livability, industrial organic transformation and upgrading, social equity and inclusive sharing, protection and inheritance characteristics, etc., which provided the basic criteria for target classification for follow-up research, but lacked the clarity of the internal relationship between the goals [3].

In terms of the specific landing mechanism, some studies have taken several urban renewal cases in Shanghai as field samples, covering four categories: industrial site renovation, living environment improvement, public space upgrading, and historical and cultural protection. Through grounded analysis, the interactive logic system of ' Sansheng ' space (production, life, ecology) and ' Siyi ' city (Yiye, Yiju, Yile, Yiyou) is constructed, which fills the research gap of internal interaction of policy

objectives. The core value of this research is to concretize the abstract policy goal framework into the emotional experience that residents can perceive, highlighting the deep logic of opposing large-scale demolition and construction and paying attention to spatial quality, which is highly consistent with the latest orientation of people-oriented and multi-coordination of urban renewal policy, and builds a bridge for the local implementation of central policy [5].

2.3. Driving Mechanism of Policy Evolution

From the perspective of scale politics, the evolution of China's urban renewal policy is not a single ' central promotion ', but the result of the two-way interaction between the central goal guidance and the local interest game. In local practice, the researchers took Dongguan's "three old" transformation as a case to track the complete process of its scale interaction. The study found that in the policy application stage, local governments apply for land system innovation from the central government through ' scale up ', at this time, local governments are in a weak position ; in the pilot stage of the policy, the central government authorized local governments to carry out pilot projects through ' scale pushdown ', and communities and developers turned into strong parties, which could independently attract investment and distribute income [6].

This local game process fully demonstrates the complex interactive logic and complete policy life course in specific urban renewal cases, which is organically complementary to the ' focus event-driven ' theory at the central level. According to the research on the central level, the ' focus event ' is the key to trigger the policy discontinuity and promote the shift of the central goal. Local research reveals that local governments adjust the distribution of benefits through ' scale interaction ' in policy refinement. Both of them prove that the introduction of new policies such as ' Notice of Preventing Large-scale Demolition and Large-scale Construction ' is the direct embodiment of the central government's rectification of the local interest impulse of ' Large-scale Demolition and Large-scale Construction ', which further confirms the rationality of the interaction between the central and local governments as a driving mechanism [4].

3. Construction and Quantitative Evaluation of Urban Renewal Policy Tools

The research core of the policy tool is to reveal the application problems through multi-dimensional analysis, and provide direct empirical basis for the tool optimization of urban renewal policy. The existing research focuses on the idea of ' structural evaluation-optimization direction-fair bottom line ', forming a logical connection from a single regional case to macro-evaluation standardization.

3.1. Quantitative Evaluation of Policy Tools

After quantitative evaluation, it is found that there is obvious structural imbalance in policy tools. In the empirical study of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region, the researchers took the six core policies in the region as samples and divided the policy tools into three categories: environmental, supply and demand. Among them, environmental tools account for the highest proportion, mainly based on regulatory control and organizational guarantee, but there is a problem of insufficient operability ; the proportion of supply-oriented tools is second, mainly financial support and space support, and technical support is relatively weak ; demand-based tools account for the lowest proportion, and are mainly based on the needs of residents ' transformation, with insufficient social capital guidance and lack of market-oriented tools. Further, the differences in regional economic development further highlight this imbalance. This quantitative result represents the core historical characteristics of local policy promotion, which directly echoes the central urban renewal policy, and clarifies the core direction of tool optimization [7].

3.2. Comparison and Optimization of Policy Tools

Cross-regional comparison can refine common experience and optimization focus through tool differences in different regions, and provide reference for local policy improvement. In the comparative study of Shenzhen and Taipei, the researchers analyzed the differences from three dimensions: administrative management, implementation path and guarantee ability. In terms of administrative management tools, Shenzhen has delegated power to a certain extent, focusing on the signing of regulatory agreements ; the full-time coordination agencies set up in Taipei have a better coverage process and focus on convenience supervision. In terms of implementation path tools, the Shenzhen project is dominated by a single right subject, focusing on scale coordination; taipei allows public and private parallel, focusing on individual flexibility.

The difference in support capability tools is particularly noteworthy. Shenzhen's volume incentives are scattered in various policies, and the funds are mainly dependent on government funds; taipei clarifies the types of incentives through special measures, and the funding channels are more diversified, including trusts, real estate securitization, etc. The common experience of the two can be directly used for reference, and Taipei's multi-supervision practice in public participation also provides a specific possible implementation path for mainland cities to fit the orientation of "protecting residents ' right to know and participation" in the central urban renewal policy [8].

3.3. The Bottom Line of Fairness of Policy Instruments

The contradiction of fairness in the application of policy tools is mainly focused on the implementation of ' transitional paths ' (such as temporary changes in land use). In the case study of an urban area in Shanghai, the researchers believe that the contradiction of fairness is mainly reflected in three levels. At the basic fairness level, the contribution of the beneficiary does not match the concessions received, and some projects deviate from the initial industrial commitment. At the level of procedural fairness, there is asymmetry in policy information. Private enterprises need to collect information independently, and the approval process relies on personal experience rather than standardized processes. At the level of justice and fairness, although land income flows back to the public sector, there are disputes over the distribution of compensation, and spatial redistribution may also ignore the basic living needs of residents.

The core significance of this study is that, in line with the previous policy tool formulation process, it sets a fair baseline for the optimization of policy tools. The use of policy tools should take basic fairness as the core and improve the performance supervision mechanism of beneficiaries. This not only echoes the requirements of openness and transparency in central policies, but also provides a more specific value orientation for tool design to avoid social conflicts caused by improper application of tools [9].

4. The Implementation Mechanism and Governance Dilemma of Urban Renewal Policy

The core of the specific research on policy implementation is to reveal the complexity of grassroots practice, which is in direct contrast to the specific analysis of the specific situation in the policy and the orientation of multi-subject coordination. The existing research focuses on the effective mechanism and subject support, and presents the logical relationship between the multi-level interaction of each subject and the situation.

4.1. Mechanism Construction of Effective Implementation : Strong and Weak Coupling

The study points out that the effective mobilization of grassroots execution needs to balance the rigid institutional framework and flexible strategies. In the case of a street in Shanghai, the researchers put forward the ' strong and weak coupling ' mechanism. The ' strong mobilization ' is reflected in the rigid system design, while the ' weak mobilization ' focuses on the third-party interactive flexible strategies such as public services. The coupling logic of the two is reflected in three aspects. First, in

terms of functional complementarity, strong mobilization provides an institutional framework, while weak mobilization translates the system into life discourse to avoid the disconnection between policies and residents ' needs. Second, on the balance of effects, strong mobilization delineates the rigid boundary of compensation standards, and weak mobilization provides flexible space for case mediation to reduce conflicts. Thirdly, on the symbiosis of action, the integration of bureaucracy logic and life logic is realized, so that the policy implementation is not only in line with the norms but also close to the reality of residents. This coupling mechanism provides an operable grassroots path for the feedback of residents ' willingness in policy interaction [10].

4.2. Main Body Support of Execution Effectiveness

The initiative of the executive subject needs to rely on the common support of multiple subjects. In the case of the old reform in the eastern district of Xishi, the researchers found that policy autonomy is the premise. By bypassing the municipal jurisdiction and directly connecting with the provincial departments, the local government obtains the pilot qualification and policy space of the "three old" reform, and provides flexibility for implementation. Party building guidance is the guarantee. It stimulates enthusiasm through party member incentives and branch co-construction, and forces leading cadres to sink into research. Entrepreneur-type leaders are the core, and through a wealth of flexible strategies and demonstrations, they can effectively break the implementation deadlock.

This main support system echoes the ' strong and weak coupling ' mobilization mechanism summarized in the previous study. Policy autonomy provides institutional space for ' strong mobilization ', and subjective initiative allows the flexible strategy of ' weak mobilization ' to be implemented. The two together prove that the effectiveness of grassroots implementation depends on the organic combination of policy flexibility and subjective ability [11].

4.3. Governance Dilemma of Grassroots Implementation: Rigid Imbalance

As the end point of administrative execution, the street faces the most specific ' rigid imbalance ' dilemma in execution. As the first batch of urban renewal pilots in China, in the case of Qinhuai District in Nanjing, the researchers pointed out that the ' elastic imbalance ' is mainly due to policy gaps. The identification standard of illegal construction is vague, which is easy to breed rent-seeking space; in the reconstruction of public housing, the standard of new area confirmation is not uniform and difficult to copy; at the same time, the lack of compensation standards and the dispute over the fairness of the scheme make the streets bear the heavy burden of interpretation and coordination. The ' rigidity imbalance ' comes from the incompatibility of standards and procedures, which cannot respond to the core concerns of residents. The root of the dilemma is that the street bears the dual role of transmitting the rigid policy of the superior and refining the flexible policy according to local conditions. The imbalance between the two is the core of the problem and the key to breaking the situation [12].

4.4. The Logic Behind the Implementation Dilemma: Scale Political Game

The underlying causes of the implementation dilemma can be explained by the dynamic changes of power from the perspective of ' scale politics '. In the case of a community project in Dongguan, the researcher tracked and found that in the policy pilot stage, after the authorization of the central ' scale pushdown ', the community and developers became ' strong parties ' by ' improving historical land use procedures ' and ' private transactions of collective land ', and the government only passively approved ; in the stage of policy revision, the local government issued normative documents through " scale up " to stop the direct transaction of village enterprises, the government reverted to the " strong side, " and the interest space of communities and developers was compressed.

This power game forms ' consistent interests-smooth transformation ' ; the cycle of interest conflict-policy modification-interest redistribution not only explains the power root of the street 's ' rigid imbalance ' dilemma, but also reveals the game background of the central urban renewal policy and the local policy, that is, the local government needs to respond to the central policy and its own

adjustment policy, adjust and balance the interests of all parties, and avoid the large-scale demolition and construction under the leadership of capital [6].

5. Social Effects and Value Orientation of Urban Renewal Policy

The study of social effects has formed a multi-level and multi-angle analysis system, which echoes the value goal of the central urban renewal policy from multiple dimensions, showing a logical progressive relationship from micro to macro.

5.1. Micro Effect: The Type and Influencing Factors of Residents' Policy Preference

Residents ' policy preferences for urban renewal are diverse and influenced by emotional attachment and participation experience. In the case of Zhongshan Road Historic District in Qingdao, the researchers used the Q method to identify three types of preferences. "The tendency of building protection under the cognition of uniqueness" has a strong cultural identity to the block, and opposes the demolition of historical buildings and excessive commercial development; 'Developmental maintenance tendency of emotional attachment ' has deep feelings for the block, supports moderate commercial development and opposes extreme practices. 'Life-oriented participatory development tendency ', with the improvement of life quality as the core, emphasizes that the government needs to ask the people.

Further analysis shows that emotional attachment plays a role in strengthening the cognition of residence rights and weakening cultural identity, while participation experience plays a role in enhancing cultural identity and accommodating tourists ' rights. This conclusion provides a micro basis for "respecting residents ' wishes" in "Notice on Preventing Large-scale Demolition and Construction". It also suggests that in the process of policy formulation and implementation, policymakers need to formulate differentiated policies according to differences in preferences, and at the same time enhance policy recognition by expanding participation, which provides a specific and pragmatic direction for the further optimization of central policies [13].

5.2. Mesoscopic Effect : The Game Mode and Interest Balance of Multiple Subjects

The multi-subject game in the renewal of residential areas forms three modes: government-led, market-led and multi-participation. There are differences in the logic of interest balance between different modes. The researchers point out that the ' government-led model ' is represented by pure livelihood projects, with full government funding and prohibition of developer participation. The total social welfare depends on the balance between ' net income of renewal ' and ' social loss of non-renewal ', and the support of residents depends on the comparison of benefits and costs. The "market-oriented model" is represented by commercial development projects. Developer-led, government supervision, and residents ' support for renewal are the dominant strategies. The "multi-participation model" is represented by collaborative governance projects, with tripartite participation. Government policies are the key to balancing the interests of all parties.

The comparison of the three models shows that the government-led model is more likely to protect people 's livelihood but has great financial pressure, the market-led model is efficient but needs to prevent capital from profit-seeking, and the multi-participation model takes into account fairness and efficiency but has high coordination costs. This provides a model reference for the goal of multi-subject coordination in central urban renewal policies such as ' Notice of Preventing Large Demolitions and Large Constructions ', and also suggests that policymakers need to choose an appropriate game model according to the nature of the project and coordinate the interests of all parties through policy design [14].

5.3. Macro Effect : The Governance Path of Social Space Effecting Mechanism of Policy Evolution

The social space effect of urban renewal needs to be dealt with through a systematic governance framework, and a special path should be formulated for specific effects such as "gentrification". The two together constitute a macro governance system. Some studies have proposed a four-dimensional framework of ' value, subject, process and system '. The value orientation level balances ' space use value ' and ' exchange value '; at the level of subject coordination, the roles of government (institutional supplier), market (internalization of social costs) and society (substantive participation right) are clarified. At the level of governance process, response efficiency is improved through demand collection, contradiction feedback and digital monitoring. At the level of institutional rules, the ' 1 + N ' institutional system should be improved, and social spatial effect indicators should be established and included in urban physical examination [15].

In view of the specific effect of " gentrification, " other studies have pointed out that China 's gentrification includes the dual connotation of " upgrading low-income groups to the middle class " and " spatial agglomeration of the middle class, " emphasizing inclusiveness and proposing a three-in-one development path of " material, service and system. " Improve infrastructure and land management at the material space level, optimize public services and community services at the social service level, and promote urban-rural coordination and risk prevention at the institutional guarantee level. This path and the general governance framework form a "whole-part" complementarity, and jointly provide solutions for "avoiding spatial isolation and class solidification" in the "Notice of Preventing Large Demolitions and Large Constructions" [16].

5.4. Value Orientation : Reconstruction from Development Orientation to Life Orientation

The disadvantages of "development-oriented" renewal are becoming increasingly prominent, and it is necessary to turn to "life-oriented" to meet the needs of residents. This value reconstruction needs to be promoted from both theoretical and practical aspects. At the theoretical level, the researchers criticize that the capital logic dominates the urban space under the ' development orientation ', which leads to the decline of the inner city, the homogenization of space and the marginalization of daily life. Based on this, the ' life orientation ' update framework is proposed, which includes the following four dimensions. 'From orderly development to residents ' sense of security ', establish a ' people-oriented ' consensus and feedback mechanism ; 'From the balance of resources to the sense of fairness of residents ', to ensure the equalization and accurate supply of basic public services ; 'From the convenience of life to the satisfaction of residents ', return to the walking scale, optimize functional planning and transportation network ; 'From community participation to residents ' sense of belonging, ' return the right to use space, promote upstream participation, and awaken collective memory [17].

6. Summarization and Shortcomings of Existing Research Results

Based on the research contents of 15 literatures, the current research on urban renewal policy in contemporary China has formed a relatively complete system, and remarkable achievements have been made in four major fields. In the field of policy evolution, the transformation process from economic orientation to people's center has been clarified, and the characteristics of ' discontinuous equilibrium ' and the driving mechanism of ' central and local interaction ' have been revealed [3,4,6]. The field of policy tools is divided into three types of tools: ' environment, supply and demand ', and the structural imbalance is quantitatively revealed. The optimization experience is refined through cross-regional comparison [7-9]. In the field of policy implementation, it is need to construct a "strong and weak coupling" mobilization mechanism, analyze the initiative of the subject, and reveal the dilemma of "rigid-elastic imbalance" and power game [10,11]. In the field of social effect, a ' micro, meso and macro ' analysis system has been formed, and the framework of life-oriented value has been reconstructed [13-17].

Although the results are rich, this paper believes that there are still four shortcomings in the existing research: First, the research on policy synergy is insufficient. The existing literature focuses on a single policy or regional case, and lacks the synergy analysis of ' central policy and local regulations ' and ' cross-disciplinary policies ', which is difficult to explain the difference of policy complexity. Second, the long-term effect tracking is insufficient. Most studies are cross-sectional studies, lack of tracking of long-term social spatial effects after policy implementation, and it is difficult to judge the sustainability of the effect. Third, the lack of attention to special groups. The attention to residents is mostly focused on property owners, ignoring the policy experience of tenants, low-income groups, and migrant populations, and it is difficult to fully reflect fairness. Fourth, the research on digital governance tools is insufficient. The existing tools focus more on traditional types, and there is little research on the application of digital technology. Only Jiang Ling mentioned related technologies, which cannot fully respond to the requirements of "promoting digital renewal" in the "Notice on Preventing Large-scale Demolition and Construction".

7. Conclusion

The core conclusion of this study is that the research on urban renewal policy in contemporary China has formed a complete research context with policy evolution, tool construction, implementation mechanism and social effect as the main axis, and this context is highly consistent with the value orientation of the latest urban renewal policy evolution. The two complement each other in terms of ideas and provide the possibility for the further optimization of urban renewal policy. Further, these results provide a complete idea for the academic transparency of the policy implementation process, and provide many possible aspects for the improvement and optimization of the policy. However, the existing research provides rich theoretical support and empirical reference for policy practice, but there is still room for expansion in policy synergy, long-term effect tracking, special group attention and digital tool application. The significance of this review is that it innovatively takes the policy process as the train of thought, re-combs the policy research at all levels in the process of urban renewal, provides a unique perspective of sociology, clarifies the direction of the policy process, and also provides a possible field path for policy reflection.

Looking forward to the future, the follow-up research can focus on the shortcomings of the existing research direction, combine the development of digital technology and the change of social structure, further deepen the research on the inclusiveness and sustainability of urban renewal policies, try to carry out long-term tracking, and provide more powerful academic support for the modernization of Chinese-style urban governance.

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