

Urban Sustainability

Xiaoyi Yan

Public Participation in Urban Renewal in Macao

Types, Characteristics, and
Evaluation Tools

Urban Sustainability

Editor-in-Chief

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Preface

Urban renewal has emerged as a central concept in urban construction and development in Macao. The city, with its rich history of over three hundred years of colonization before reintegration with the motherland, has experienced the influence of many political regimes and socio-cultural environments. This has led to the creation of a distinct urban identity that marries Western and Eastern influences. Concurrently, Macao has developed a complex matrix of property rights and legal procedures, complicating stakeholder relationships in urban renewal efforts and presenting significant challenges to their realization. Engaging the public is increasingly recognized as an effective strategy to navigate the intricate web of interests within urban renewal projects. Yet, studies focusing on public participation in Macao's urban renewal are scarce. This book aims to fill that gap by investigating the nature and impact of public involvement in the urban renewal of Macao. It seeks to identify the unique features of different forms of public participation, evaluate the effectiveness of each type of engagement, and propose strategies to increase public involvement in urban renewal in Macao.

Structured into seven chapters, this text delves into the heart of the research in chapters three through six. Chapter 1 introduces the study, followed by a review of relevant theories in Chap. 2. Chapter 3 examines public engagement in Macao's urban renewal processes throughout different historical stages, while Chap. 4 dissects three distinct forms of public participation, analyzing their characteristics across nine dimensions. Chapter 5 offers a comparative analysis of methodologies for assessing the quality of public participation, introducing a tailored assessment framework for Macao. Chapter 6 delves into case studies of government-led public involvement in urban renewal, culminating in the conclusion in Chap. 7.

This publication is an adaptation of my doctoral dissertation and funded by the Macao Foundation. Previous research was supported by the Macao Science and Technology Development Fund. My advisor, Prof. Shen Guoqiang has given me great guidance and help in the writing and publication of this book. His esteemed academic contributions and leadership in the Urban Planning Department at both the University of Texas at Arlington and Zhejiang University, China, alongside his recognition as a distinguished national expert, were instrumental in the development

and publication of this work. I extend my profound appreciation for his mentorship. Additional acknowledgments are reserved for the “Acknowledgements” section.

It is my aspiration that this book will provide a fresh perspective on urban renewal and public participation in Macao. I aim to offer a valuable resource for researchers, participants, students, and governmental and non-governmental organizations engaged in urban planning, urban renewal, and public participation, as well as for laypersons interested in these fields.

Macao, China

Xiaoyi Yan
The Awakening of Insects in Macao

Acknowledgments

This book emerges from my doctoral dissertation, meticulously refined and revised for publication. Throughout the editing and revision process, I have been fortunate to receive the support of numerous individuals to whom I am profoundly grateful.

First of all, I would like to thank the Macao Foundation for its financial support for the publication of this book; the Grant number is MF2308. Their support made it possible for this book to be published.

I extend my deepest appreciation to my doctoral advisor, Prof. Shen Guoqiang. His invaluable assistance has been pivotal from the initial stages of my dissertation to the eventual publication of this book. Professor Shen's guidance was instrumental in all facets of my research—ranging from the research direction to the theoretical framework, methodologies, and the nuances of writing. His insights were crucial in enhancing the manuscript's content during the publication phase, providing substantial help with revisions and proofreading. Professor Shen's vast experience, gentle nature, exemplary character, and insightful perspectives have consistently illuminated my path through challenges, guiding me in my academic pursuits. To be his student is an honor that I cherish deeply.

Reflecting on three decades of learning, I am immensely thankful to my parents. Despite their modest education and eloquence, their love has been unwavering. Their support has been a constant through every phase of my life—from a faltering child to a determined adult. They have celebrated my achievements, buoyed me through adversity, and their virtues—kindness, resilience, diligence, and humility—have been my life's greatest lessons, shaping my core values. As I navigate mid-life, the enduring love and support of my family remain my sturdiest pillar and most comforting refuge.

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Lastly, I owe a debt of gratitude to myself. The doctoral dissertation journey is a rollercoaster of highs, where ideas surge and lead to nights filled with fervent writing, and lows, marked by confusion and daunting challenges. I am thankful for my resilience in the face of adversity, the courage to make significant life choices, and the perseverance through setbacks. From leaving my hometown of Liaoyuan, to the enriching years spent in Hangzhou for study and work, and finally settling in Macao for my Ph.D., my journey southward has been a quest for self-improvement.

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Chapter 1

Introduction



Abstract Public participation is an effective approach to resolving the benefits of various stakeholders in urban renewal. The implementation and quality evaluation of public participation are subject to local contexts. Thus, it is necessary to research on public participation in different contexts. In Macao, it has been a great challenge to carry out urban renewal, because of the special urban development process, political institution, and socio-cultural attributes in Macao. However, there is a good foundation for public participation in Macao where there are rich social capital and social network. Does public participation contribute to urban renewal in Macao? How is the quality of public participation activities? This book is based on the above research questions. In Sects. 1.1–1.3 of this introductory chapter we give an overview of the research background, motivation and significance. In Sect. 1.4 we give the research content, methodology and framework of this book. Section 1.5 describes the definitions of the core concept of this study.

Keywords Public participation · Urban renewal · Stakeholders · Associations · Macao

1.1 Background

Since its return to China, Macao has experienced broad economic growth, primarily fueled by the gaming industry, resulting in an unprecedented global economic miracle. The gross domestic product has surged, significantly raising residents' incomes. According to data from the Macao Statistics and Census Service website, in 2018, Macao's per capita GDP reached MOP 666,893 (approximately USD 83,000), ranking third globally. The per capita income of local residents reached 574,668 MOP (approximately 71,551 USD) (Macao Statistics and Census Service website). Alongside the rapid socio-economic development, the population density has continuously increased. However, the urban environment, crucial for residents' livelihoods, has not undergone corresponding development. The early-formed urban areas and

constructed buildings display varying degrees of aging and deterioration. Particularly on the Macao Peninsula, the growing number of aged buildings starkly contrasts with Macao's rapid economic development, indicating a severe lag. Therefore, urban renewal, primarily focused on improving the environment of old areas, has become a critical issue in Macao's urban development.

1.1.1 “Habitat III¹” and the “New Urban Agenda”

In 2016, the United Nations adopted the “New Urban Agenda”. Discussion of the initiative at the “Habitat III” conference centered on cooperation models for urban construction and renewal, particularly collaborative relationships established through public–private partnerships (PPP) and multi-stakeholder partnerships (MSP) involving government, enterprises, social organizations, and other relevant stakeholders [1]. This model must be followed throughout the entire urban development process, from policy formulation to planning, design, and implementation.

The imperative task of crafting an inclusive and equitable city, characterized by active multi-stakeholder involvement throughout the process, stands as a crucial manifestation of sustainable development principles and lays the essential groundwork for this study.

1.1.2 Current Situation and Challenges with Urban Renewal in Macao

The urban construction environment in Macao is notably antiquated. According to the most recent data from the Macao Statistics and Census Service website, as of 2016, around 35% of buildings in Macao were constructed prior to 1989, marking them as over thirty years old. This suggests that within the next five to ten years, nearly half of these structures will surpass 40 years in age. Media reports in recent years have consistently emphasized the pressing need to “promote urban renewal and enhance the aesthetic appeal of older city areas.”

In response, the SAR government, among others, have recognized the gravity and urgency of this issue, actively championing relevant urban renewal initiatives. In 2004, in a bid to ameliorate the deteriorating environment in the old city areas, the SAR government introduced the “Old Area Reorganization” plan. However, due to shifts in urban development ideologies, the government, in 2014, abandoned this plan and embraced the concept of “urban renewal.” This paradigm shift aimed to bring organic revitalization based on sustainable concepts to old urban areas, with a

¹ The Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (referred to as “Habitat III”).

focus on infusing new life into these areas beyond material improvements, ultimately enhancing residents' quality of life.

March 2014 marked the promulgation of a series of urban planning-related laws and regulations from the government: Law No. 10/2013 "Land Law," Law No. 12/2013 "Urban Planning Law", and Law No. 11/2013 "Cultural Heritage Protection Law" officially came into effect. These, alongside Administrative Regulation No. 5/2014 "Regulations for the Implementation of Urban Planning Law," laid down the legal foundation for urban construction and the reorganization of old areas.

In 2016, the Urban Renewal Committee was established to oversee all matters related to urban renewal. By the end of November 2019, the government concluded public consultation on the "Urban Renewal Legal System," and in May 2020, the summary report was published. The government's agenda for the 2021 fiscal year, formulated by the new government, represents a proactive push toward legislating the new legal system and implementing urban renewal.

Currently, urban renewal in Macao is in the stage of perfecting the legal system, and the formal initiation of government-led urban renewal is yet to commence. However, some instances of successful non-government-led urban renewal already exist. Since 2010, Macao has witnessed four cases where owners independently financed the reconstruction of buildings, some with the participation and coordination of business associations, facilitating smooth progress and project completion. Additionally, non-governmental organizations have undertaken spontaneous initiatives in participatory community renewal projects, leveraging Macao's community consciousness and achieving noteworthy successes.

The intricacies of urban renewal in Macao involve complex and diverse interests. Unlike new development, urban renewal typically targets the already built urban environment, particularly old communities. This entails navigating intricate vested interests and social issues, which can be the most challenging aspect of urban renewal. Macao, characterized by high density, limited land, and a rich historical and complex urban environment, faces diverse socio-cultural challenges. The coexistence of old and new legal systems under the "one country, two systems" framework post-handover introduces additional complexity, making Macao's urban renewal more challenging in terms of the representation of everyone's interests.

Therefore, a formidable challenge confronting urban renewal in Macao is the coordination of these varied interests and the resolution of conflicting agenda.

1.1.3 Macao's Strong Foundation for Public Participation

Before the handover of Macao, when it was under Portuguese rule with Portuguese as the official language, direct communication between the Macanese government and the Chinese population encountered substantial barriers. To articulate public demands to the government, various voluntary mutual aid associations emerged within the community, becoming intermediary channels for communication between the people

and the government. This phenomenon established the enduring tradition of forming business associations, steadily shaping Macao society [10].

Following the handover, marked by rapid economic development, there was a noticeable increase in civic awareness among citizens and a surge in demand for social participation. Consequently, the number of special interest groups exploded from 1722 before the handover to over 8000 by 2018. Professor Lou Shenghua's statistics, as of 2014, revealed that Macao's business association population density reached 110 per ten thousand people, a density comparable to many developed Western democracies [10]. Macao's associations, diverse in type and widely distributed, engage from various angles in public affairs, acting as a bridge between the government and the people, while also catering to public needs. In recent years, due to aging buildings and escalating housing and environmental issues, residents' awareness of civil rights is increasing. This has led to a rapid increase in community service-oriented associations, primarily falling into two categories: neighborhood organizations and building organizations (mainly composed of building owners). These associations have played a pivotal role in assisting residents with living issues, improving living environments, conveying residents' demands to the government, and supporting the government in serving the people.

Simultaneously, in response to the growing civic consciousness and social participation demands of the residents, the government has actively promoted the establishment of a public consultation system. On August 15, 2011, the Administrative Office of the Chief Executive of the Macao Special Administrative Region promulgated the "Normative Guidelines for Public Policy Consultation" (hereinafter referred to as the "Guidelines") [6]. This initiative provided people with opportunities and platforms to express demands and opinions, enabling citizens not only to voice opinions publicly through associations but also to directly participate in the policy-making process and express demands and suggestions directly to the government. Since the handover, while gradually advancing representative democracy, Macao has actively developed and practiced a model of urban governance characterized by participatory democracy that involves public participation in decision-making [9].

Since the implementation of the aforementioned "Guidelines," relevant government departments have organized several public consultation meetings and other types of public participation activities in the field of urban planning and urban renewal. These activities have garnered active participation from the general public, demonstrating impressive effectiveness. Among these activities, the active participation, coordination, and organization of association groups have played a pivotal role in connecting the people and the government, fostering the development of public participation in Macao. These efforts have laid a solid social foundation for the expansion of public participation activities in Macao.

After the handover of Macao, there has been a notable surge in democratic consciousness among the populace, leading to heightened demands for social involvement and a gradual increase in enthusiasm for public engagement. Macao boasts a dense network of associations actively organizing events, effectively

bridging communication between the government and the people. This creates favorable conditions for public participation in governmental decisions, highlighting the solid foundation within Macao society for fostering public engagement.

1.1.4 Current Situation and Issues with Public Engagement in Macao's Urban Renewal

Urban renewal involves complex interests and social issues, and effective public engagement can facilitate information exchange among stakeholders, reduce conflicts of interest, and significantly influence the decision-making quality and implementation methods of urban renewal. Therefore, effective public engagement plays a crucial role in promoting urban renewal [8].

In Macao, the foundation for public participation in urban planning is already established on a legal basis. The Macao government, in 2014, enacted the “Urban Planning Law,” specifically addressing the matter. Article 19, Sect. 1.2 of the legislation stipulates: “During the compilation process of the urban planning draft and before its approval, the Land, Public Works, and Transport Bureau must carry out promotion, exhibition, and public consultation of the draft to explain its content to the public and listen to public opinions and suggestions” [4]. This regulation clearly outlines the purpose, stages, and role of public participation in urban planning, thereby providing a solid legal foundation for public engagement. Since the implementation of this law, various government departments have conducted numerous practical activities involving public participation in urban planning. The types of public engagement activities employed are closely related, encompassing public consultations, discussions, exhibitions, media promotion, and others. According to the “Guidelines,” once the participation activities conclude, summary reports must be prepared and published. However, it’s worth noting that these reports do not currently include an assessment of the quality of public engagement, and there is limited research in Macao pertaining to this aspect.

Originally, the “Guidelines” legislation primarily focused on public policy consultations within the government’s administrative management. Public policy consultations typically revolved around policies or plans jointly formulated by the government and core experts. This approach adopted a top-down method of public participation, where the outcomes of public participation opinions were determined by an elite group consisting of government and expert representatives, based on a professional perspective. While this top-down approach is suitable for formulating and implementing policies that benefit the entire population, particularly in the early stages of public engagement development, considering varying levels of participation awareness and education among participants, it inherently reflects a government and expert-oriented system.

However, urban renewal projects and policies present distinctive features compared to general public policies. They involve more concentrated stakeholders,

and they have closer relations with the immediate interests of residents. Consequently, participants in urban renewal are closely connected, and there exists a stronger willingness to participate.

This prompts important questions: How is public participation unfolding in Macao's urban renewal process? Can the "Guidelines," initially designed for public policy consultations, effectively steer public participation in Macao's urban renewal projects? Are internationally recognized evaluation standards appropriate for assessing public participation in Macao's urban renewal? Given Macao's reputation for its associative society, what role do associations play in shaping public participation and influencing engagement in Macao? These queries serve as the focal points of our study.

1.2 Motivation and Objectives of the Study

1.2.1 Motivation

In recent years, the urban renewal challenges faced by Macao have become a focal point in government administration, drawing increased attention from various sectors of society. Since the handover, Macao's rapid economic development has elevated it to the ranks of the world's leading nations in terms of per capita income. While the newly constructed urban spaces showcase international design concepts and well-developed facilities, the same cannot be said for the construction environment of the old city areas, which has not yet undergone comprehensive renewal and development despite economic growth. This stark visible contrast in Macao has piqued my curiosity, prompting an exploration into the underlying reasons.

During my doctoral studies, I naturally gravitated towards the research of urban renewal and initiated data collection on Macao's urban renewal and development. Through investigation, I unraveled highly complex social reasons and vested interests that contribute to these challenges. To address these intricate problems, I recognized that, in addition to legal measures, aligning with related research in Western urban planning theories and coordinating the interests and demands of various stakeholders through public engagement is the most effective approach.

Macao's associations play a pivotal role in society, acting as a vital communication bridge between the public and the government. Particularly notable is the government's post-handover initiative to actively promote a democratic consensus model of urban governance, steadily increasing the public's enthusiasm for social participation. This lays a foundation for involving the public in urban renewal efforts. Consequently, an examination of the current state of public engagement in Macao's urban renewal, the adequacy of existing legal systems, the extent and quality of public participation, and the role of associations within this framework become essential considerations.

It is against this backdrop of questions and aspirations that I embarked on this research.

1.2.2 Research Objectives

The objective of this study is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the scope, varieties, and features of public participation in urban renewal. Building on this comprehension, the study aims to develop a framework for assessing the quality of public engagement in urban renewal projects in Macao, including the establishment of appropriate regulations. Through empirical research, the study seeks to put forth enhancements and recommendations. Its goal is to assess government-led public participation in urban renewal initiatives and provide suggestions to enhance the overall quality of involvement. The research endeavors to provide valuable references and insights for the benefit of Macao, enabling effective in-depth public participation with the government in urban renewal practices.

1.3 Significance of the Study

1.3.1 Theoretical Significance

Against the distinctive backdrop of Macao's urban and social environment, this research delves into the realm of public participation in urban renewal. Currently, studies in Macao predominantly center on public participation in public administration, with limited exploration into public engagement especially in the context of urban renewal. However, influenced by Macao's associative society, diverse forms of public participation have surfaced in the operational processes of certain urban renewal projects, contributing to a wealth of varied implementation experiences within the community. Despite this richness, there is a notable absence of locally contextualized theoretical frameworks.

To address this gap, the study embarks on a comprehensive review of the policies and developmental trajectory of urban renewal in Macao. It aims to distill the types and characteristics of public participation in Macao's urban renewal in the context of its highly associative society. This initial phase lays the foundational groundwork for theoretical research unique to Macao. Subsequently, the study delves into theoretical research on the quality assessment of public participation in urban renewal, furnishing theoretical support for the evaluation of public participation in Macao's urban renewal initiatives. By melding theoretical considerations with practical insights from Macao, the study proposes frameworks and standards tailored to environment of Macao for assessing the quality of participation. This contribution serves as a theoretical

underpinning for the nuanced evaluation of public participation in Macao's urban renewal.

Employing participatory observation and in-depth investigation into the current state of public participation in Macao's urban renewal, the study aims to intricately detail the implementation process of government-led public participation in urban renewal. Its objective is to evaluate the quality of this process, offering a localized empirical case study that enriches the foundational theoretical research of the urban renewal domain.

1.3.2 Practical Significance

As urban renewal unfolds in Macao, delving into the realm of public participation offers valuable assistance to scholars and professionals in the field. It furnishes practical references and insights crucial for the effective implementation and evaluation of public participation in future urban renewal initiatives. Additionally, it establishes theoretical foundations and experiential insights into achieving high-quality public participation in urban renewal, specifically tailored to the local circumstances in Macao. This contribution not only provides theoretical support but also imparts practical experiences, aligning with the overarching concept of sustainable urban development.

1.4 Research Content, Methods, and Framework

1.4.1 Research Content

This research will adhere to internationally recognized standards for assessing public participation in the field of public administration, with a specific focus on the efficacy of public participation in urban renewal.

The initial phase involves an in-depth exploration of public participation in Macao's urban renewal, meticulously analyzing the types and extent of participation at each historical developmental stage of urban renewal in Macao. Subsequently, the research will delve into the existing types of public participation in Macao concerning urban renewal. Given the characteristics, scope, and diverse leadership spearheading public participation in urban renewal, it will categorize urban renewal public participation into three types: government-led, association-led, and privately led public participation in urban renewal.

Recognizing the variations in implementation processes and evaluation criteria for different types of public participation, this study focuses on government-led public participation to assess the quality of public involvement in urban renewal. Following

the evaluation, the study engages proposes recommendations aimed at enhancing the quality of participation.

Furthermore, this research endeavors to refine and propose a set of evaluation standards for the process of public participation in urban renewal that better aligns with local circumstances, such as the characteristics of Macao's associative society. Building upon the features and scope of urban renewal, it seeks to augment existing standards in public administration for the evaluation of public participation.

1.4.2 Research Methods

This study employed a diverse array of research methods. Theoretical research primarily utilized Citespace literature analysis and comparative research methods. In terms of data collection, the study relied on case studies, participatory observation, questionnaire surveys, and semi-structured interviews. The research and analysis primarily involved empirical research and statistical data analysis.

(1) Case Studies:

Research on the types of public participation in Macao's urban renewal is scarce. Therefore, by collecting relevant local cases in Macao and analyzing their implementation processes and participation outcomes, this study aims to summarize the types and characteristics of public participation in Macao's urban renewal. This foundational research can contribute to constructing future evaluation frameworks.

(2) Participatory Observation:

This study engaged in participatory research focusing on extensive government-led public participation activities in Macao. Direct involvement in these initiatives facilitated close observation and meticulous recording of the implementation processes. Additionally, actively participating in discussions during these events provided first-hand experiences, enabling a thorough evaluation of the quality of participation. This method was instrumental in collecting primary data crucial for evaluating the processes involved in government-led public participation.

(3) Questionnaire Surveys:

To assess the effectiveness of government-led public participation, a questionnaire survey was conducted among participants actively involved in urban renewal activities led by the government. These surveys were administered on-site during the participation activities to gauge the level and impact of involvement.

(4) Semi-structured Interviews:

Furthermore, semi-structured interviews were conducted as a part of the evaluation process. Engaging with individuals who actively participated in speaking engagements during these events, these interviews aimed to delve deeper into the public's

attitudes towards participation, perception of the implementation process, and recommendations for improvement. Serving as a complementary approach to the questionnaire surveys, these interviews provided a more comprehensive basis for evaluating government-led public participation.

(5) Empirical Research:

Based on the proposed evaluation frameworks and methods, an assessment was conducted on government-led public participation in Macao’s urban renewal, specifically focusing on the “Macao Urban Renewal Legal System Public Consultation.” The assessment results were discussed, and policy recommendations for enhancing the quality of public participation were proposed.

(6) Statistical Data Analysis:

As part of the empirical research on public participation assessment, the collected data from the questionnaire surveys underwent SPSS statistical analysis. This included both descriptive analysis and cross-analysis, providing a thorough understanding of the gathered information.

1.4.3 Research Framework

See Fig. 1.1.

1.5 Concept Definitions

Urban Renewal

The definition of urban renewal varies across different countries and regions and evolves over time. It also differs in nomenclature, including terms such as Urban Renewal, Urban Reconstruction, Urban Revitalization, Urban Regeneration, Urban Redevelopment, Urban Renaissance, Sustainable City, and so on [2].

In Macao, the official statement refers to it as Urban Renewal,² previously termed as Old Area Reorganization.³ Presently, the legal framework for urban renewal is in the public consultation phase and hasn’t been formally legislated. Hence, this study refers to the government’s official “Consultation Procedure for Macao’s Urban

² On February 29, 2016, the Special Administrative Region Gazette published Administrative Regulation No. 5/2016, establishing the “Urban Renewal Committee” (Printing Bureau, Government Gazette number: 9/2016). This was the official proposal for the concept of “urban renewal”.

³ On November 7, 2005, the Special Administrative Region Gazette published Chief Executive Instruction No. 354/2005, establishing the “Consultative Committee for the Redevelopment of Macao’s Old District” (Printing Bureau, Government Gazette number: 45/2005). This was the formal proposal for the concept of “redevelopment of the old district”.