



Urban enclosure, neighbourhood commons, and community participation willingness: Evidence from Shanghai, China

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ABSTRACT

While the neighbourhood has been recognised as the basic unit for civic engagement and social cohesion, debates have emerged regarding the social and political implications of the territorial enclosure of urban neighbourhoods. In post-reform China, the tradition of urban enclosure has persisted, but its potential effects on community participation have not been fully studied. Using a household survey collected across different types of inner-city neighbourhoods in Shanghai, this study examines how enclosed neighbourhood commons provide physical, social, and institutional sources for residents' community participation. The findings show that neighbourhood commons play an important role in increasing residents' willingness to participate in collective decision-making and action-taking. However, the mechanism differs in some ways from both the common-ownership-based private governance and the bottom-up commoning actions. Instead, territorial enclosure of urban commons is a state strategy for effective urban governance. The case of Shanghai, therefore, offers an understanding of community participation in gated communities beyond common property rights and illustrates the importance of a context-dependent analysis of the multidimensional relationships between neighbourhood commons and participation.

1. Introduction

Urban scholars have long stressed the importance of the neighbourhood as the base for citizen participation (Hays & Kogel, 2007; Wallace, 2010). This has been reflected in the emerging trend of 'government through community', where the community has been mobilised to participate in managing itself (Rose, 1999). Community participation is regarded as an important way to promote social cohesion (Dekker & Van Kempen, 2009). While earlier studies recognised social capital as the major resource for neighbourhood engagement (Putnam, 2001; Bolland & McCallum, 2002), recent studies have highlighted the importance of place, i.e., the spatiality of the neighbourhood, in fostering community participation (Hays & Kogel, 2007; Stefaniak et al., 2017). Notably, the functioning and effects of spatiality vary across different social contexts (Marschall, 2001; Hrast & Dekker, 2009).

In Chinese cities, it is widely recognised that neighbourhood interactions have declined as a result of urbanisation and marketisation (Forrest & Yip 2007; Wu, 2022). However, recent studies have revealed that neighbourhood attachment has persisted in various kinds of

neighbourhoods (e.g., Hazelzet & Wissink, 2012; Zhu et al., 2012; Wu, 2012). Moreover, residents' involvement in managing neighbourhood affairs has not necessarily decreased (Read, 2003; Li & Li, 2014; Zhu, 2020). For example, the emergent homeowners have formed a new 'collective' that plays a role in neighbourhood governance (Cai & He, 2022; Tomba, 2014). Furthermore, the state has also made efforts to (re) build communities through various grassroots agencies (Bray, 2006; Huang, 2006; Tang, 2019; Wang et al., 2022).

In existing explanations of these trends, however, one element that has received relatively little attention is the dominant enclosed spatial forms of neighbourhoods and the potential effects on community participation. While the historical roots of urban enclaves can be traced back from the traditional courtyard housing and walled city to the socialist *danwei* (literally 'work-unit') compound (Xu & Yang, 2009; Bray, 2006), the physical enclosure of residential spaces persisted after the collapse of the work-unit system and the privatization of housing (He, 2013). Indeed, the provision and management of public facilities are still territorial-based. Moreover, while *shequ* (literally 'community') has replaced *danwei* as the root of the state (Read, 2003), it has also become

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the basic level of 'a new territorial order' in cities, providing the territorial logic of citizen participation (Hsing, 2010; Boland & Zhu, 2012). A few studies have shown that communal space within gated neighbourhoods could promote residents' civic engagement by increasing social capital and a sense of belonging (Lu et al., 2022; Fu, 2019). However, since these studies have largely treated communal space as a kind of physical environment, the profound implications of enclosure for community participation have not been fully understood.

Highlighting the territorial enclosure of urban commons as a means of urban governance in Chinese cities, this study examines the effects and mechanisms of enclosed neighbourhood commons on residents' willingness to participate in community affairs. The empirical analysis draws on a survey undertaken across different types of inner-city neighbourhoods in Shanghai. Here, urban commons are not confined to the definition based on property rights. From a relational view, they are resources collectively shared but also competed for by urban residents (Foster, 2011; Eizenberg, 2012). The practice of commoning, i.e., the dynamic, relational, social, and negotiated processes shaping these resources, can thus facilitate different degrees of collective action (Williams, 2018). In urban China, neighbourhood commons are created by the territorial enclosure of urban commons at the neighbourhood level (Lee & Webster, 2006). In fact, while the enclosure of common city spaces has become a global phenomenon, there is widespread interest in understanding its potential impacts on community formation and collective action in different places (Rosen & Walks, 2013; Egerer & Fairbairn, 2018). Since urban enclosure represents one enduring spatial feature in post-reform China, this study aims to deepen our understanding of the unique logic and mechanisms of urban governance in China and to contribute broadly to the international literature on the social and political implications of urban enclosure.

2. Literature review

2.1. Community participation in urban contexts

Community participation refers to residents' act of creating or taking part in an event of collective interest (Talò & Mannarini, 2015). It is a form of civic engagement, which is different from mutual care and support among neighbours and involvement in cultural and leisure-type activities. As early as the 1960s, the concept of 'ladder of citizen participation' was raised, emphasising the inclusion of disadvantaged citizens in shaping urban changes (Arnstein, 1969). Through the 1990s, community participation became the centre of urban policies (Raco, 2000). For instance, in urban regeneration programmes in American and European cities, community involvement is widely cited as a panacea for the complex problems faced by deprived neighbourhoods. These practices demonstrate a twofold aim for urban governance: the first aim is to encourage a greater level of involvement by local residents in regeneration, and the second is to urge for a better participatory system by local authorities (Brownill, 2009; Dekker, 2007). The former is witnessed by the planning objectives to promote citizen engagement, and the latter is seen by the upgrade of platforms, channels, and techniques to encourage participation.

Under such circumstances, the neighbourhood has been recognised as an important organisational base for civic engagement. Neighbourhood-based mobilization can turn geographical concentration into a source of collective action (Hays & Kogl, 2007). Neighbourhood-based participation brings together a wide range of urban residents into the public realm, which can lead to better decision-making, enhanced delivery of urban policy, and long-term sustainability. For example, the existing literature has documented many successful examples of urban regeneration where the neighbourhood has provided the basis to foster citizen participation in resolving common problems (Arthurson, 2010; Taylor, 2000). A vibrant participatory process enables incumbent residents, especially deprived social groups, to voice their problems and needs; meanwhile, it involves the gentrifiers in

establishing a sense of responsibility for regenerating neighbourhoods (Larsen et al., 2004; Power, 1996). Studies have further identified different forms of community participation, such as manifest participation and latent participation (Ekman & Amnå, 2012). While manifest participants lead the direction of the decision-making and then implement such decisions, those who are latent participants may keep an eye on neighbourhood affairs but have a weak motivation for action.

Residents' actual community participation is influenced by many factors, including not only whether they are willing to participate but also whether they are informed of opportunities to do so, and whether their personal circumstances, such as availability of time, job flexibility, etc., allow them to participate. This study focuses on the willingness regarding community participation. It is less related to situational and practical constraints, and thus better reflects the impacts of neighbourhood commons on subjective willingness. Based on the existing literature, at the neighbourhood level, willingness to participate in community affairs has multidimensional sources, which are manifested in the physical, social, and institutional dimensions. First, the physical dimension concentrates on the effects of the built environment (Shaykh-Baygloo, 2020). Through the daily experience of the community's physical environment, residents develop an emotional bond to their place of residence, known as neighbourhood attachment, which may translate into feelings of responsibility for the communities and therefore enhance their willingness to engage in public affairs (Stefaniak et al., 2017). Second, discussions on the social dimension have focused on community social capital, suggesting that place-based social networking generates collective social norms based on reciprocal benefits and mutual trust in the neighbourhood. Studies have emphasised neighbourly interaction as a form of 'bonding social capital' and have viewed connections beyond the members of the neighbourhood as a form of 'bridging social capital', both of which contribute to the individual's willingness and intention to intervene for the common good (Putnam 2001). Finally, the institutional dimension touches upon the presence of social organisations and governance agents, underlining the role of individuals' perceived efficacy of proxy agencies in a collective-action decision. For example, private governance organisations, such as homeowners' associations and property management companies, can work as a form of proxy control. They may incentivise or discourage residents' participation in community management, depending on whether they believe the proxy agents can help achieve better collective outcomes (Gordon, 2004; Yau, 2014).

2.2. Neighbourhood commons and the rise of gated communities

Commons can be defined as a resource that is collectively owned and/or managed by its members (Huron, 2015). The depletion of commons caused by overuse and free-rider problems has long been a critical topic following Garrett Hardin's (1968) classic work. The allocation of property rights through privatization and nationalization is recognised as a solution to the problem (Mansfield, 2004). Framing the commons as workable self-managed property regimes, many studies have investigated how secure property rights can be generative of efficiencies and public benefits (Quinn et al., 2010). However, recent studies take the commons as a sustainable way to manage collective resources (Monbiot, 1994). From a socio-political perspective, commoning through the collective governance of resources represents an important mechanism through which underprivileged groups can reclaim the commons and engage in local governance for a more just society (Blomley, 2005; Egerer & Fairbairn, 2018).

In the urban context, one focus of the discussion is the collective management of neighbourhood commons, which represents a practice of enclosing the urban commons for a more efficient economic, social, and environmental outcome. As suggested by Tiebout (1956), the consumption of public goods is conditioned to the actual accessibility and affordability, and thus public goods are beneficial to a small group of people in a certain location. With the rapid proliferation of gated

communities across the world, neighbourhood commons are conceptualised as a form of club goods¹ (Le Goix & Webster, 2008). Gated communities promote the shared property rights of neighbourhood commons among homeowners. In these enclosed territories, homeowners are club members who consume neighbourhood commons with low subtractability and high exclusivity, while the values and costs of neighbourhood commons are bundled into private properties (Webster, 2002). This collective ownership of club goods entitles gated communities the right to capture external benefits, thus preventing free-riders and delaying neighbourhood degradation.

However, there are many controversies around the implications of enclosed neighbourhood commons for community participation. Enclosure of the urban common leads to tensions between the protection of privileges and the values of civiness, and the privatisation of facilities versus the persistence of public goods (Blakely & Snyder, 1997; Wissink, 2013). From the perspective of institutional economics, when public facilities are provided and managed as a club commodity rather than through external management, residents have greater incentives to engage in community affairs (Webster, 2002; Gordon, 2004). On the contrary, other studies have found that there are specific thresholds for participation in community affairs in such communities, which may actually hinder inclusive participation (Low et al., 2012).

These tensions among enclosed commons and public/private goods deserve a more nuanced examination from the perspective of the residents' everyday practices in wider global contexts. As Chatterton (2016: 407) suggested, it is essential to look beyond the physical features of neighbourhood commons and investigate the implications 'through the practice of commoning'. Studies are needed to examine the relational nature of commons, i.e., how social and spatial relations interweave in decommodification, mutualism, and self-management, and how strangers collaboratively participate in the reclamation, resistance, and maintenance, rather than keeping to the traditional dichotomy between public and private (Huron, 2015; Chatterton, 2016; Williams, 2018).

3. Urban enclosure, territorial governance, and community participation in urban China

Different from Western cities, where gated communities did not become predominant until the 1990s, the historical and cultural roots of urban enclosure in Chinese cities can be traced back to the walled residential wards that emerged more than 3,000 years ago. Traditionally, enclosed courtyard housing not only separated the private living space from the public urban environment but also provided the territorial basis for social control (Xu & Yang, 2009).

In the socialist era, the dominant type of neighbourhoods was the work-unit compound. In these enclosed neighbourhoods, both housing and public facilities, which were exclusive to the employees as social welfare benefits, were developed and managed by work-units (Bray, 2005). How residents would access and utilise urban commons largely depended on the ranks and capabilities of their respective work-units. Workers and their families living in the same compounds shared various public spaces and facilities and exhibited high levels of neighbourhood interaction (Ma, 2002). The territorial management of urban commons was extended to traditional neighbourhoods, where city governments established a special subsidiary, known as the residents' committee, to organise populations not employed by work-units. Residents' committees performed functions similar to those of work-units. They served the state's purposes by facilitating administration on the one hand and providing a range of everyday services to ordinary residents within their jurisdictions on the other (Read, 2000). Consequently, in both types of neighbourhoods, urban commons were territorially managed. Neighbourhood governance was an integral part of state

socialism, where the state holistically organised the urban society through public ownership of production materials, planning control, and the organisation of collective consumption (Wu, 2002). Since the development of civic society was largely suppressed, residents rarely engaged in and influenced neighbourhood decisions; community development was limited to state-organised activities and neighbourly reciprocity (Wu, 2018).

Since China's economic reform, market forces not only have reinforced socio-spatial differentiation but also created various new forms of urban enclaves, such as commodity housing estates and migrant enclaves etc. (Li et al., 2012; Shen & Xiao, 2020; Lu et al., 2020). Meanwhile, following the end of the housing welfare system in 1998, work-units have been largely withdrawn from property management and neighbourhood services. The function of neighbourhoods as spaces for social relations among urban residents has also been dismantled because the commercialisation of neighbourhood public services has led to a reduction in familiarity and a weakening of reciprocal relationships among residents (Wu, 2018).

Notably, however, the enclosure of neighbourhoods and the territoriality of governance remains the prevalent form of urban neighbourhoods. The three major neighbourhood types in the post-reform era, i.e., previous work-unit compounds, gated commodity housing estates, and migrant villages, are all urban enclaves with tangible or intangible boundaries (He, 2013). Under China's property law, the common areas and facilities enclosed within gated and walled neighbourhoods are commons, which are collectively owned and exclusively managed by neighbourhood residents. But this does not indicate the retreat of the state. Instead, there are three territorial actors engaging in community affairs, i.e., the homeowners' association (the civil-society organisation), the property management company (the market provider of collective goods and services), and the residents' committee (the state agent), known as the trioka of community governance.

Although there are still debates about whether the new mode of governance would foster civil society in China, it does have profound implications for community participation. Much attention has been paid to emerging homeowners as a new 'collective' based on common property rights. This strand of the literature parallels urban enclosure in China with gated communities in the US, suggesting the territorial governance of urban commons follows the mechanism of the club economy. It is an efficient method where the privatised management of common properties could reduce the degradation of facilities caused by free riders (Webster et al., 2006; Hendrikx & Wissink, 2017). To a certain extent, homeowners' associations have become territorial civic organisations at the neighbourhood level (Read, 2003). Despite their relatively weak role in community governance due to residents' lack of awareness of partitioned property, the hidden costs of civic participation, and the lack of social capital, homeowners' associations still provide an important formal channel for residents' community participation (Fu & Lin, 2014; Wang & Clarke, 2021).

Nonetheless, unlike the privatised governance in Western gated communities, the enclosure of urban commons in Chinese cities is also a means for city governments to provide public services and strengthen social management. Previous literature has noted that the enclosure of neighbourhoods represents the persistence of state power and the collectivist culture (Huang, 2006; Shen & Wu, 2012). On the one hand, urban commons are enclosed and territorially managed to enhance governance effectiveness. In order to fill the administrative vacuum in the urban welfare system, the state managed to consolidate its power by reinforcing the role of the street office and the residents' committee in social management. Thus, both institutions have become the basic territorial state agencies for urban governance. With clear geographical jurisdictional boundaries, street offices and residents' committees are responsible for social management at the subdistrict and neighbourhood levels respectively. The provision and management of public facilities and services within their jurisdictions are one of their key responsibilities. For example, the *Urban Residential Area Planning and*

¹ Goods are general classified as private goods, club goods, common-pool goods, and public goods based on their traits of subtractability and exclusivity.

Design Standards (GB50180-2018) clearly stipulates the standards for the provision of services and facilities at the two scales. At the subdistrict scale, the living facilities and services that must be provided include schools, sports grounds, community hospitals, nursing homes, cultural centres, police stations, food markets, bank branches, telecommunication, and postal outlets, etc. At the neighbourhood scale, open green spaces, outdoor fitness facilities, children’s/elderly people’s recreational spaces etc. are essential elements.

On the other hand, as a spatial strategy of the ‘community building’ policy, the government also aims to make full use of neighbourhood communal space and facilities to engage with residents and to promote social cohesion, which may essentially make an impact on residents’ community participation (Wang et al., 2022). Although neighbourhood commons are the common property of residents, residents’ committees have managed to intervene in neighbourhood issues in various ways, such as building party branches, forming patron-client collaborations with homeowners’ associations etc. (Cai & He, 2022). Notably, the state adopts a ‘govern by category’ strategy. In commodity housing estates, the state supports and monitors the establishment of homeowners’ associations to accommodate the emerging middle-class demand for self-governance and to relieve the burdens of daily management (Tomba, 2014). In previous work-unit housing estates, the state resorted to market providers to provide community services to residents (Wu, 2018). In order to reduce the state’s heavy burden, the residents’ committees have to mobilise volunteers, mostly the elderly who used to be work-unit staff, to help with the day-to-day management. In resettlement housing estates, the state artfully exploits the common space to encourage community participation by rebuilding place-based social relations among newly arrived displaced residents (Wang, 2022; Shen et al., 2023).

In short, urban commons are still provided and managed in the form

of territorial enclosure in post-reform China. They have become not only the common property of the homeowners but also a spatial means whereby the state can build communities. In the following sections, we empirically examine the effects and mechanisms of territorial governance of urban commons on community participation willingness in Shanghai. Based on the above discussions, two working hypotheses are formulated. First, enclosed commons can enhance residents’ willingness to participate via physical, social, and institutional paths. Second, while the effects of community building through urban enclosure vary across different types of neighbourhoods, the state and its collective mobilization still play a prominent role in territorial governance.

4. Data and Methods

This research is based on a large-scale household survey conducted in Shanghai from November to December 2016. The study site – Tangqiao Subdistrict and Huamu Subdistrict in Pudong New Area – was located within the inner ring road and near Shanghai’s new CBD Lujiazui Financial Centre (see Fig. 1). In the 1980s, both subdistricts accommodated some residential developments in the form of work-unit housing estates, widely known as workers’ villages. Located alongside the development of Lujiazui Financial Centre since the early 1990s, these subdistricts witnessed the arrival of commodity housing estates. After nearly thirty years of development, they have evolved into mature residential areas equipped with a full range of living facilities and services. Residential neighbourhoods in the two subdistricts were built as enclosed neighbourhoods, covering various housing types, including work-unit housing estates, commodity housing estates, and resettlement housing estates. Specifically, Tangqiao is a subdistrict with a total area of 3.68 km² and a resident population of 78,817 in 2020. There are two types of housing estates, namely, work-unit housing estates and gated

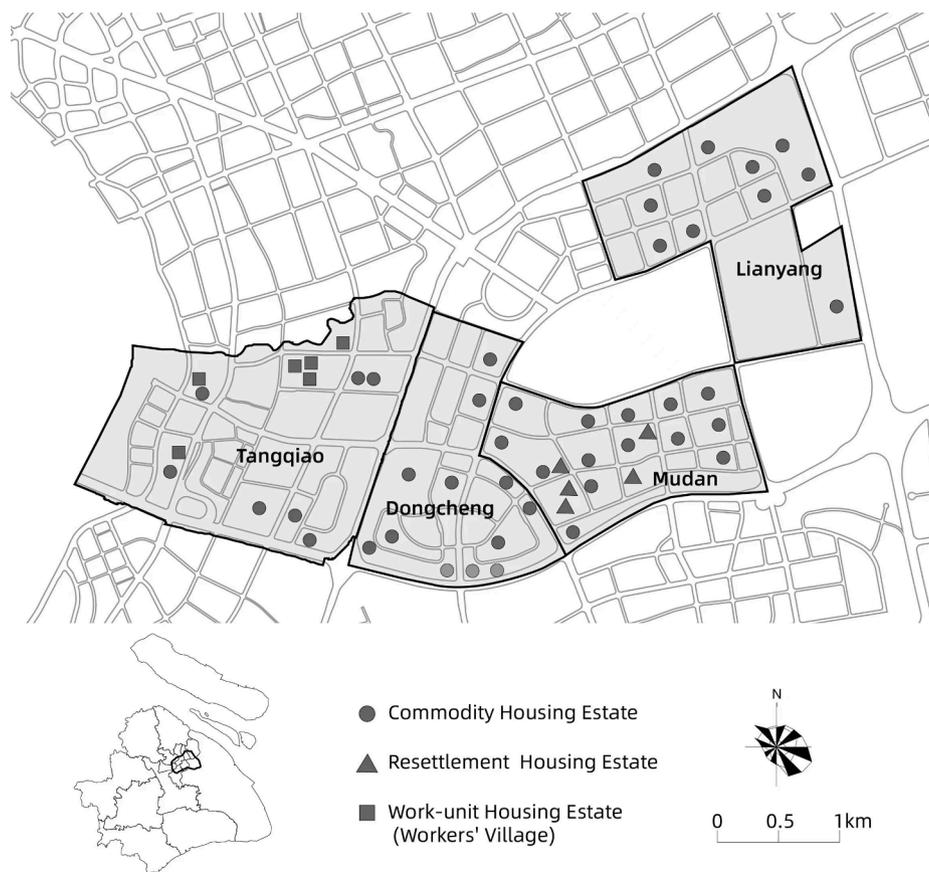


Fig. 1. The Location of the survey sites.

commodity estates. Huamu subdistrict covers an area of 20.93 km² and has a resident population of 241,090. Because of its enormous size, it is further spatially divided into six units (named *shequ*) to facilitate social management. The survey was conducted in three representative *shequs* in the subdistrict. Two of them were predominantly middle to high-end commodity housing estates, and the other one consisted of many resettlement housing estates that accommodated residents who were displaced during the construction of the financial centre.

While all three types of neighbourhoods in the area of study were enclosed by walls and gates, they featured different socio-economic groups and modalities of neighbourhood governance. Work-unit housing estates in the form of workers' villages used to be typical residences provided for government staff and workers of state-owned enterprises. Although many better-off families moved out after housing commodification, a large proportion of previous workers remained there. Commodity housing estates were built after the establishment of the housing market and were occupied predominantly by emerging middle-class homeowners. Residents in resettlement housing estates were mostly lower-middle-class local people who had moved in from elsewhere.

In order to compare the community participation willingness of residents in different types of neighbourhoods, the survey adopted the method of stratified sampling. The goal was to ensure the sample was representative of residents in each type of neighbourhood. First, Tangqiao subdistrict and the three *shequs* in Huamu subdistrict were identified as four survey units. In each unit, the number of neighbourhoods to be sampled was in proportion to the size of its resident population. Neighbourhoods were then selected based on the distribution of different neighbourhood types. Second, in each selected neighbourhood, the sample size was in proportion to the size of the resident population. Residents were sorted according to their age, gender, and *hukou* location, and then stratified sampling was applied to select individual respondents. This was to ensure that the structure of the sample was representative in these three terms. The survey was carried out with the help of the residents' committees. In total, 830 questionnaires were distributed in 54 neighbourhoods in 29 residential committees. After filtering out 65 invalid questionnaires, 765 valid questionnaires were used for the data analysis.

In order to account for the sampling design and nonresponse, post-stratification for each residents' committee was applied to calibrate the survey data. The weights were estimated according to the 2010 sixth census in Shanghai. *Hukou* location and educational attainment were used as categorical post-stratifying variables, which were cross-tabulated to create a twelve-group typology. We then calculated the percentage of the population from census data and the percentage of respondents for each category respectively. For each category, the ratio of the former to the latter was the weight applied to all cases in that category. Because *hukou* location and educational attainment represent the key attributes determining the socio-economic status of urban residents, the adjustment could result in more representative data in terms of the socioeconomic composition of the residents' committees.

Residents' willingness to participate in community affairs was measured in different scenarios. First, willingness to participate in the decision-making of daily affairs reflects a member's sense of empowerment and control over his/her community in everyday life (Kaplan, 1980). In this scenario, residents express their interests in and concerns about the community's daily management. Second, collective action is necessitated in scenarios where collective interests are at risk due to major or emergent events. Compared to the first scenario, the willingness to participate may be higher when collective action becomes more imperative. It also reflects residents' stronger commitment to collective success, as it requires participants to devote more time and resources (Ostrom 1990; Araral, 2009). Considering these two scenarios allowed for an understanding of different levels of willingness to participate under different circumstances. Specifically, respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with the following two statements: (1) 'I am willing to participate in making a decision on community affairs'; (2) 'I

am willing to participate in a collective action when community common interests are threatened'. Answers were provided using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'.

In order to examine the effects of the enclosure of urban commons and territorial governance, we empirically compared how residents' willingness to participate in community affairs varies with the usage of enclosed/unenclosed facilities and services. In the survey, with reference to *Urban Residential Area Planning and Design Standards*, we listed 45 types of living facilities and services. They were first classified into enclosed and unenclosed groups. The first category was facilities and services fully enclosed within the neighbourhood boundary, including green spaces, recreation centres, outdoor fitness equipment, self-service courier storage facilities, etc. They were developed for neighbours' collective usage and were governed by the three neighbourhood organisations. The unenclosed facilities were further classified into two categories. One referred to those provided or supervised by street offices, such as various public schools, community health centres, food markets etc. The other referred to those provided by market players, such as convenience stores, supermarkets, laundries, fitness centres, bank branches, etc. Residents' usage of publicly supplied or privately supplied facilities reflected the level of their capacity to break free from dependence on the community and therefore might influence their willingness to participate in neighbourhood affairs.

The impacts of neighbourhood commons on residents' willingness to participate in community affairs were analysed with regard to three mechanisms, i.e., the physical, social, and institutional paths. First, the physical dimension examined whether the usage of enclosed facilities was relevant. Dependence on neighbourhood facilities would not only lead to the practical need but also foster a sense of place, which would, in turn, generate motivations for neighbourhood engagement. Respondents were then asked whether they used different types of facilities on a weekly basis (use frequency), whether they had convenient access to these facilities (accessibility), and what facilities they would like to see added or improved in their neighbourhoods (demand).

The social path described the processes whereby neighbourhood communal areas provided the possibility of neighbourhood interaction and hence facilitated the development of community social capital. Respondents were asked 'How often do you communicate with your neighbours when you use neighbourhood facilities?', with provided answers ranging from 'never' to 'highly frequently'. The institutional dimension examined how neighbourhood commons functioned as an institutional infrastructure for community participation. In addition, we aimed to understand the different roles of organisations involved in the territorial governance of commons. This was examined by asking respondents which institutions they usually contacted regarding neighbourhood facilities. Numerous channels were listed as possible options, including residents' committees, homeowners' associations, property management companies, and other non-local institutions, such as the street office, press and media, internet etc.

Ordered logistic regression was adopted to test the independent effects of neighbourhood commons on residents' willingness to participate in community affairs. In addition to the above central explanatory variables, both individual attributes and neighbourhood types were used as control variables. Individual attributes included three demographic characteristics (age, gender, and marriage status) and four socioeconomic statuses (monthly household income per capita, employment status, *hukou* location, and homeownership).

5. Findings

5.1. Descriptive statistics

Table 1 presents residents' willingness to participate in the neighbourhood decision-making and in the neighbourhood collective action. The general observation showed that a much larger proportion of residents had a positive attitude to community participation than a negative

Table 1
Willingness of community participation by neighbourhood type.

	Description	Total	Commodity housing estate	Work-unit housing estate	Resettlement housing estate
<i>'I am willing to participate in making a decision on community affairs' (%)</i>	Strongly disagree	2.0	1.8	5.6	0.0
	Disagree	4.2	4.9	2.3	0.0
	Neutral	36.8	35.5	31.4	54.1
	Agree	40.5	42.5	33.8	31.0
	Strongly agree	16.5	15.4	26.8	14.9
<i>'I am willing to participate in a collective action when community common interests are threatened' (%)</i>	Strongly disagree	1.7	1.9	1.8	0.0
	Disagree	5.6	6.0	5.8	1.2
	Neutral	27.9	27.3	22.1	43.0
	Agree	37.5	40.1	20.8	27.8
	Strongly agree	27.3	24.7	49.5	18.0

attitude, and such a positive willingness was consistent with the facets of decision-making and action-taking. In terms of the willingness to participate in decision-making, more than half of the respondents claimed a positive attitude, with 16.5% of them expressing a strong willingness to join the decision-making of their neighbourhoods. The proportion of respondents answering negatively to such participation was low (i.e., 6.2%), including a proportion of 2.0% answering strongly negatively. The propensity for collective action was even higher, as 64.8% of respondents indicated a strong willingness (i.e., agree or strongly agree) to participate in neighbourhood collective action. Furthermore, residents in work-unit housing estates disclosed the highest level of willingness. Compared to the average, they were most likely to participate in the neighbourhood decision-making, as the proportion of residents answering 'strongly agree' with *willing to participate* was 11.4% and 11.9% higher than residents living in commodity housing estates and resettlement housing estates respectively. Their willingness to participate in neighbourhood collective action was 2 times and 2.8 times greater than that of residents from the other two types of neighbourhoods respectively. On the contrary, residents' willingness to participate in community affairs was weakest in the resettlement housing estates.

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics of residents' three-dimensional experiences related to the use of the facilities respectively, i.e., their usage of diverse types of facilities, their socialisation experiences, and the channels they usually resorted to for facility-related issues. First, residents' usage frequency, access to and demand for more facilities varied among the three types of neighbourhoods. Residents from commodity housing estates used private facilities outside the

neighbourhoods most, even though they also reported the highest level of accessibility to both enclosed and unenclosed public facilities. The usage frequency they reported was twice higher than that reported by respondents from resettlement housing estates. In other words, they tended to rely on living facilities and services provided by the market, which were more expensive but of better quality. Work-unit housing residents demonstrated a strong reliance on enclosed neighbourhood facilities. They not only used neighbourhood facilities most frequently but also indicated the greatest desire to have more facilities within the neighbourhoods. Residents from resettlement housing estates most commonly used public facilities. This could be largely due to the lack of facilities within their neighbourhoods, as the average score for accessibility to neighbourhood facilities was lower than the sample average.

Second, based on the statistics for residents' socialisation when they were using common facilities, neighbourhood facilities created the opportunity for neighbourhood interaction. In general, 75.2% of residents had conversations with neighbours sometimes, frequently, or highly frequently, when they used neighbourhood facilities. This result is in line with earlier findings on neighbourly interaction in Shanghai, suggesting that not only are residents not opposed to neighbourly interaction but instead, they do it on a regular basis (Wang et al., 2020). Comparing residents from commodity housing estates and work-unit housing estates, the tendency for neighbourly interaction was much lower in the former than in the latter, as the proportion of residents who never communicated with neighbours in commodity housing estates was nearly seven times higher than that in work-unit housing estates. Resettlement housing estates featured the highest proportions of residents who reported 'highly frequently' and 'never' regarding their

Table 2
Physical, social, and institutional experiences of neighbourhood facilities by neighbourhood type.

	Description	Total	Commodity housing estate	Work-unit housing estate	Resettlement housing estate
Physical dimension					
<i>Weekly usage of neighbourhood facilities (Mean, S.D.)</i>	Fully enclosed facilities	0.6 (0.8)	0.5 (0.7)	0.7 (0.6)	0.6 (1.2)
	Public facilities (unenclosed)	0.6 (0.9)	0.6 (0.9)	0.2(0.5)	0.7 (1.1)
	Private facilities (unenclosed)	0.7 (0.9)	0.8 (0.9)	0.5 (0.7)	0.4 (0.6)
<i>Perceived accessibility of neighbourhood facilities (Mean, S.D.)</i>	Fully enclosed facilities	1.0 (1.4)	1.1 (1.4)	0.9 (1.3)	0.9 (1.3)
	Public facilities (unenclosed)	1.4 (1.9)	1.5 (1.9)	1.2 (1.8)	1.5 (2.0)
	Private facilities (unenclosed)	1.1 (2.0)	1.1 (2.1)	0.8 (1.6)	1.3 (2.1)
<i>Demand of additional neighbourhood facilities (Mean, S.D.)</i>	Fully enclosed facilities	0.2 (0.5)	0.3 (0.5)	0.1 (0.3)	0.3 (0.5)
	Public facilities (unenclosed)	0.7 (0.9)	0.7 (0.9)	0.4 (0.6)	0.5 (1.0)
	Private facilities (unenclosed)	0.5 (0.8)	0.5 (0.8)	0.4 (0.9)	0.5 (0.8)
Social dimension					
<i>Frequency of socialising when using neighbourhood facilities (%)</i>	Never	6.2	6.7	0.9	8.2
	Seldom	18.6	18.0	15.7	28.1
	Sometimes	31.4	32.0	34.3	22.2
	Frequent	34.2	35.4	35.1	22.4
	Highly frequent	9.6	7.9	14.0	19.1
Institutional dimension					
<i>Organisations resorted to regarding neighbourhood facilities (%)</i>	Residents' committee	79.6	81.0	75.8	71.4
	Homeowners' association	37.0	43.2	24.9	6.8
	Property management company	67.9	75.1	40.8	50.4
	Others	43.4	38.8	69.0	46.3

frequency of neighbourly interaction. This reflects the social mixture of residents in these communities. On the one hand, relocated residents were keen to socialise with neighbours – these close relationships were probably the extension of former neighbourly relationships that had been established before they were relocated. On the other hand, new residents who bought into or rented in resettlement neighbourhoods might find it difficult to engage in the existing neighbourly social network. They would rather use neighbourhood facilities alone than interact with neighbours.

Finally, in terms of channels residents usually resorted to for facility-related issues, regardless of their neighbourhood types, they chose to contact residents' committees most frequently. The proportion accounted for 79.6%, which was twice higher than that for contacting the homeowners' association. This reflects the fact that, for most people, the residents' committee, as the state agent, remains the formal channel and also the most reliable and authoritative institution for problem fixing and conflict resolution. On the contrary, the homeowners' association is a relatively new self-governance organisation representing property owners' interests. Thus, their credibility has been far from well-established. In addition, residents usually had limited channels by which to contact homeowners' associations. Compared to those from the other two neighbourhood types, commodity housing estate residents were much more likely to form institutional interactions with both homeowners' associations and property management companies. The proportions of commodity housing estate residents who sought help from homeowners' associations were 18.3% and 36.4% higher than those in work-unit housing estates and resettlement housing estates respectively. In other words, the homeowners' association functioned less as an institutional channel for community participation for these non-commodity housing neighbourhoods. This might also be attributed to generational differences. The younger generation of middle-class

residents in commodity housing estates usually have a better awareness of and expertise about property rights, whereas those of older generations living in work-unit and resettlement housing estates are more accustomed to traditional methods, i.e., approaching the government for a solution.

5.2. Determinants of residents' willingness to participate in decision-making

Table 3 provides the ordered logistic modelling results of residents' willingness to participate in decision-making on community affairs. Model 1 tests the effects of residents' socio-economic attributes and neighbourhood types, and Model 2 examines the effects of social, physical, and institutional experiences related to neighbourhood facilities. The model has a strong significance level, and its robustness is checked in Model 3. The results demonstrated that the high-income social group comprised potentially active participants willing to make decisions for their neighbourhoods. This significant association between the attribute of monthly income level and the dependent variable hardly altered across the three models. The results support the existing literature in suggesting that relatively high socio-economic capabilities motivate residents to participate in making collective decisions (Larsen et al., 2004).

After controlling for the effects of individual attributes, residents' physical, social, and institutional experiences of neighbourhood facilities were found to overtly correlate with their participation willingness. In terms of the physical dimension, the routine usage of private facilities outside the neighbourhoods decreased the willingness to participate in collective decision-making. On the contrary, the more accessible the enclosed facilities were, the more willing residents were to participate in decision making. In the stepwise model, residents who thought public

Table 3
Ordered logistic regression results of residents' willingness to participate in decision-making on community affairs.

	Model 1 (control variables)		Model 2 (full model)		Model 3 (full model, stepwise)	
	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.
Age	0.007	0.009	-0.008	0.010		
Male	-0.089	0.184	-0.063	0.179		
Married	0.359	0.256	0.288	0.268		
Monthly income (logged)	0.497***	0.127	0.526***	0.126	0.509***	0.122
Employed	-0.303	0.238	-0.362	0.252	-0.304	0.187
Local hukou	-0.088	0.230	-0.181	0.209		
Owner	-0.099	0.191	-0.316	0.201		
<i>Neighbourhood type (reference = resettlement housing estate)</i>						
Commodity housing estate	0.225	0.339	0.142	0.286		
Work-unit housing estate	0.608	0.484	0.677	0.486		
<i>Weekly usage of neighbourhood facilities</i>						
Fully enclosed facilities			0.159	0.120		
Public facilities (unenclosed)			0.012	0.110		
Private facilities (unenclosed)			-0.178*	0.095	-0.186**	0.090
<i>Perceived accessibility of neighbourhood facilities</i>						
Fully enclosed facilities			0.135*	0.076	0.128***	0.049
Public facilities (unenclosed)			0.027	0.062		
Private facilities (unenclosed)			-0.046	0.045		
<i>Demand of additional neighbourhood facilities</i>						
Fully enclosed facilities			0.00	0.150		
Public facilities (unenclosed)			0.14	0.090	0.151*	0.085
Private facilities (unenclosed)			0.031	0.099		
<i>Frequency of socialisation when using neighbourhood facilities</i>						
Fully enclosed facilities			0.251***	0.090	0.26***	0.090
<i>Organisations resorted to regarding neighbourhood facilities (reference = others)</i>						
Residents' committee			-0.079	0.256		
Homeowners' association			0.690***	0.195	0.733***	0.184
Property management company			0.223	0.216		
N	724		703		703	
Wald chi-squared	28.30		81.35		59.42	
LR chi-squared	-704.44		-654.91		-660.87	
Pseudo R-squared	0.024***		0.063***		0.055***	

Note: * $\rho < 0.1$, ** $\rho < 0.05$, *** $\rho < 0.01$.

facilities outside the neighbourhoods did not meet their needs were also found to hold relatively positive attitudes toward community participation. It is therefore evident that communal space and facilities enclosed in the neighbourhoods do have positive effects on residents' participation willingness.

As for the social dimension, Model 2 shows that for each unit increase in residents' interaction frequency around neighbourhood facilities, the participation willingness level increased by 0.251 in the order log-odds scale ($\rho < 0.001$), providing the other variables were controlled. In other words, the more frequent interaction the individual had when using neighbourhood facilities, the higher was their willingness to participate in collective decision-making. Neighbourhood facilities might enhance residents' social connection and thus motivate positive attitudes toward neighbourhood engagement. This effect did not differ between the different types of neighbourhoods.

With regard to the role of different neighbourhood institutions, the analysis revealed there was a strongly significant association between contacting the homeowners' association and willingness to participate in collective decision-making. A one-unit increase in the possibility of contacting homeowners' associations would add 0.69 to the log odds of having a higher level of participation willingness ($\rho < 0.01$). This can be understood from the perspective of perceived proxy efficacies (Yau, 2014). Residents perceived the homeowners' association as a self-governance institution through which they would be able to express their views and demands and so be in charge of their communities.

5.3. Determinants of residents' willingness to participate in collective actions

Table 4 shows the results of the ordered logistic regression that tests the determinants of residents' willingness to participate in collective actions when community common interests were at risk. In terms of

individual attributes, senior and high-income respondents were found to be more positive about collective actions. For each one-year increase in a resident's age, the participation willingness level was expected to increase by 0.023 units in the order log-odds scale ($\rho < 0.05$). While this can be partially ascribed to their long period of residence, it also reflects the commonly active participation of older retirees in community events in Chinese cities. As per the literature, many of older residents are familiar with the collective mobilization in work-unit compounds and always respond quickly to community initiatives (Boland and Zhu, 2012). The high-income earners presented an affirmative consistency in decision-making and action-taking when it came to community participation. A one-unit increase in the logged personal monthly income would add 0.312 to the log odds of having a higher level of participation willingness in neighbourhood collective actions ($\rho < 0.01$). This is similar to the findings of earlier studies that more established residents are proactive in acting for neighbourhoods (Wu, 2012; Wang et al., 2020).

In contrast to the results for the first scenario, the neighbourhood type proved to be a significantly influential contextual factor in residents' willingness to participate in collective action. As shown in Model 3, compared to residents from commodity housing estates and resettlement housing estates, those in work-unit housing estates exhibited a significantly higher level of participation willingness. As descriptive analysis revealed, residents in work-unit housing estates were most dependent on enclosed facilities and services. They were likely to have the strongest sense of neighbourhood attachment and to possess place-based social capital, which further enhances their willingness to participate.

After controlling for the effects of individual attributes and neighbourhood types, the results of Model 2 reveal the positive role of enclosed facilities and the negative role of unenclosed private facilities to incentivise collective action. Specifically, when controlling for

Table 4
Ordered logistic regression results of residents' willingness to take actions for community common interests.

	Model 1 (control variables)		Model 2 (full model)		Model 3 (full model, stepwise)	
	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.
Age	0.023**	0.010	0.01	0.010		
Male	0.29	0.206	0.284	0.186	0.305	0.195
Married	-0.015	0.273	-0.033	0.291		
Monthly income (logged)	0.312***	0.118	0.358***	0.126	0.298***	0.115
Employed	0.01	0.253	0.014	0.239		
Local hukou	-0.238	0.330	-0.38	0.286	-0.375	0.291
Owner	-0.096	0.213	-0.185	0.211		
<i>Neighbourhood type (reference = resettlement housing estate)</i>						
Commodity housing estate	0.146	0.324	-0.006	0.320		
work-unit housing estate	1.016	0.621	0.864	0.600	0.894*	0.489
<i>Weekly usage of neighbourhood facilities</i>						
Fully enclosed facilities			0.306***	0.119	0.277**	0.115
Public facilities (unenclosed)			0.02	0.105		
Private facilities (unenclosed)			0.127	0.116		
<i>Perceived accessibility of neighbourhood facilities</i>						
Fully enclosed facilities			0.15**	0.076	0.155***	0.076
Public facilities (unenclosed)			0.053	0.078		
Private facilities (unenclosed)			-0.162***	0.054	-0.135***	0.046
<i>Demand of neighbourhood facilities</i>						
Fully enclosed facilities			-0.441***	0.157	-0.449***	0.149
Public facilities (unenclosed)			-0.129	0.109		
Private facilities (unenclosed)			-0.173**	0.096	-0.169*	0.094
<i>Frequency of socialisation when using neighbourhood facilities</i>						
Organisations resorted to regarding neighbourhood facilities (reference = others)			0.352***	0.096	0.383***	0.082
Residents' committee			-0.003	0.252		
Homeowners' association			0.726***	0.197	0.710***	0.193
Property management company			-0.083	0.227		
N	704		683		683	
Wald chi-squared	23.1		121.3		98.0	
LR chi-squared	-737.1		-670.0		-673.6	
Pseudo R-squared	0.026***		0.075***		0.070***	

Note: * $\rho < 0.1$, ** $\rho < 0.05$, *** $\rho < 0.01$.

residents' socio-demographic attributes, an individual's participation willingness was higher if he/she used enclosed facilities more often or when more types of facilities were accessible within the neighbourhoods. Moreover, residents who demanded fewer enclosed facilities were less willing to participate in community collective action. Therefore, enclosed facilities are a critical catalyst for residents' community participation. Conversely, correlations between private facilities and the dependent variable were significantly negative. Residents with preferences for market-provided facilities outside their neighbourhoods had weaker participation willingness regarding joint collective action.

Additionally, both social and institutional experiences related to enclosed facilities had a significant influence on the level of participation willingness. When using neighbourhood facilities, for each one-level increase in the neighbourly interaction frequency, a 0.352 increase was expected for the log odds of reporting a higher level of willingness to participate in neighbourhood collective action ($p < 0.01$). In terms of institutions residents resorted to for facility-related issues, a one-unit increase in the possibility of contacting homeowners' associations would add 0.726 to the log odds of having a higher level of participation willingness ($p < 0.01$). The result is consistent with the former analysis, confirming that neighbourhood facilities can provide the social and institutional paths for community participation.

6. Conclusion

Since China's economic reform, particularly after housing marketisation and the termination of the work-unit-based housing allocation system, the decline in neighbourhood social interaction and the potential challenges for social cohesion have given rise to burgeoning studies on neighbourhood social and governance changes in China (Forrest & Yip, 2007; Wu, 2022). This study contributes to this strand of literature by highlighting the enduring role of urban enclosure and territorial governance in collective mobilisation and social management. Using a survey of inner-city neighbourhoods in Shanghai, this study demonstrates that enclosed neighbourhood commons can have positive effects on community participation willingness. The more residents rely on and are satisfied with neighbourhood communal spaces and facilities, the higher is their level of participation willingness. The effects are also manifested in that the social interactions that occur when residents use neighbourhood commons enhance their willingness to participate in both scenarios. Last but not least, the presence of homeowners' associations incentivises residents to engage in community affairs. From the perspective of proxy efficacy (Yau, 2014), it implies that residents believe that better collective outcomes are more likely to be achieved via self-governing institutions.

Furthermore, while the enclosure of urban commons has played a critical role in shaping community formation, the major underlying mechanism shows no similarity to either the private governance of club goods or to the bottom-up practices of commoning in many other contexts (Webster, 2002; Egerer and Fairbairn, 2018). Instead, the preserved tradition of urban enclosure was rediscovered and appropriated by the state to achieve effective urban governance. First, the effects of enclosed commons vary in different types of neighbourhoods. What is surprising about the findings is that, after controlling for home ownership, the results show residents may have a low level of willingness to care for community affairs if they use communal facilities less and rely more on market-provided facilities beyond their neighbourhoods. This is particularly the case for commodity housing estates and resettlement housing estates. In other words, common property interests do not necessarily lead to collective action (Fu & Lin, 2014). On the contrary, the study reveals a high level of reliance on neighbourhood facilities and a strong participation willingness of residents in work-unit housing estates, where collectivist living still largely persists. Second, as far as the role of different agencies is concerned, it is evident that, regardless of the type of neighbourhood, residents most commonly resort to residents' committees for issues related to neighbourhood commons. Notably,

residents' committees do not significantly enhance their willingness to participate, as residents do not perceive them to be efficacious agencies. It is inferred that they turn to residents' committees because residents' committees have been recognised as authoritative management agencies. This can be ascribed to the state's long-term efforts to strengthen its power at the grassroots through the residents' committee system (Bray, 2006). Under such circumstances, enclosed commons are more than property, and additionally, they function as a means of territorial governance.

Further inquiries into the case of China will contribute to broader debates on the implications of urban enclosure. While there have long been alarmist views that urban enclosure of the commons creates new forms of socio-spatial exclusion, recent empirical research across different places has revealed that this type of enclosure does not necessarily lead to community decline but actually engenders varied forms of governance (Wissink, 2013; Lu et al., 2020). In China, one particularity is that the physical boundaries of neighbourhood enclosures are mostly permeable, but the administrative-territorial division is institutionalised. On the one hand, except for high-end gated communities, most neighbourhoods do not strictly deny entry to outsiders. In some cases, outsiders are even welcomed, as homeowners can charge fees for the use of internal facilities. On the other hand, although there might be tensions between self-governance and social management, the territorial form of governance has facilitated efficient service provision and effective collective mobilization. Having played a critical role in lockdown enforcement and testing-contact tracing, the territorial approach has been reinforced during the COVID-19 pandemic. The far-reaching and lasting impacts on urban governance and socio-spatial exclusion at the city level warrant more attention and research.

CRedit authorship contribution statement

Jie Shen: Conceptualization, Investigation, Methodology, Formal analysis, Funding acquisition, Writing – original draft. **Tingting Lu:** Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal analysis, Funding acquisition, Writing – original draft. **Xiang Luo:** Conceptualization, Investigation, Methodology, Visualization, Formal analysis.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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