

Grassroot Democracy is an Important Element in the Modernization of Grassroot Governance

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Abstract: The modernization of grassroot governance cannot be separated from the effective participation of the local people. In the process of modernizing grassroot governance, there is still a long way to go to achieve community level democracy and expand effective citizens' participation. The lack of grassroot governance capacity, problems such as "going through the motions" in local elections and the government crisis of trust stem from the lack of grassroot democracy in grassroot governance. In order to modernize grassroot governance, we must deepen reform of grassroot governance, improve systems, and provide citizens' awareness of "democracy."

Keywords: Democracy; Governance; Modernization

Publication date: September 2021; **Online publication:** September 30, 2021

1. Research Background

Grassroot democracy is the requirement of the new era. The people's awareness of human rights continues to improve, and more will increasingly demands for political participation. The public is a practitioner of grassroot life and a personal experience of grassroot life. It is not only the object of grassroot democracy and grassroot governance, but also should become the main body. Although the public does not have great power to solve the problem, because the public knows the grassroot problem best, expanding public participation can propose reasonable solutions as soon as possible and solve the problem in a targeted manner. To achieve the rule of law and modernization of national governance, the rule of law and modernization of grassroot governance.

The word democracy comes from the Greek word "demos," meaning the people. It is defined as a state system that jointly manages the affairs of the state based on equality and minority obedience to the majority. Grassroot democracy includes four aspects: democratic election, democratic decision-making, democratic management, and democratic supervision. Therefore, we should accurately understand and understand grassroot democracy. Achieving grassroot democracy is different from realizing grassroot autonomy.

2. Grassroot Democracy is Different from Grassroot Autonomy

To achieve community level democracy and improve the capacity of grassroot governance is not to implement grassroot self-governance.

(1) From 1928 to 1949, the Chinese government tried at grassroot autonomy, but they all failed. "On the authority of the central and grassroot governments, adopt equalitarianism. Where affairs are of national

consistency, they shall be assigned to the central government and those according to local conditions. Not for centralism or local decentralization ^[1].” During the Nationalist Government of Nanjing in 1929, the government promulgated the County Organization Law and the County Autonomous Law, which officially launched county autonomy, and then issued a series of laws and regulations to promote county autonomy, with the main purpose of consolidating political power and realizing democracy. The reason for the failure was the lack of political, economic and cultural soil of grassroots autonomy ^[2]. There are no ideas and theories of society independent from the state and gaining autonomy free from state intervention.

- (2) China’s system of regional autonomy locally among grassroots ethnic minorities. China’s administrative divisions include autonomous regions, autonomous counties, and Hong Kong and Macao administrative zones with high autonomy. The realization of grassroots democracy in these regions has nothing to do with whether they are the autonomous region.
- (3) In Chinese history, whether the failure of “joint provincial autonomy” or “grassroots autonomy” shows that citizens have no active and effective participation, and the system itself cannot bring benefits to citizens, but has become a means or tool to control and manage the people. In other words, to achieve grassroots democracy, it is necessary to conditionally expand citizens’ effective participation in the modern process of national policy formulation and governance.

3. Many Problems in Grassroot Governance with the Lack of Grassroot Democracy

There are many problems in grassroots governance lacking grassroots democracy, mainly manifested in the obvious lack of grassroots governance capacity, “going through local elections,” officials of deputies to the National People’s Congress, a crisis of trust, and corruption.

3.1. Significant lack of grassroots governance capacity

- (1) Grassroots financial capacity is inadequate. Many grassroots governments implement “land finance” or look for off-budgetary or non-institutional revenue to make up for fiscal deficiencies. The openness and transparency of grassroots fiscal revenue and expenditure is so low that the public cannot effectively participate in the formulation of grassroots fiscal policies. Therefore, in the process of grassroots fiscal policy formulation, we should increase citizens’ participation, achieve democracy, and protect citizens’ right to know to grassroots finance.
- (2) Local human power and financial power asymmetry. Grassroots financial and human powers are controlled by superiors, so the local freedom is very small, and the grassroots power is limited. How to lack the effective participation of financial power and authority how to realize grassroots democracy, how to modernize grassroots governance, how to make grassroots “management” reach the other side of “good governance.” Good governance is a positive and effective cooperation between the government and its citizens, and the key to the success of such cooperation is the power to participate in political management ^[3]. Therefore, we can take good governance as the goal, take the grassroots democracy as the means, reform the grassroots human authority, improve the grassroots governance capacity, and realize the modernization of governance.

3.2. Grassroots “going through the motions” in elections and “official” of deputies to the National People’s Congress ^[4]

First, during the election period, there was increasing pressure on officials at all levels to ensure their “organizational intention,” increasing efforts of artificial operation in the election, received “attention” to

the whole process, the election gradually became a “confirmed election,” and the sense of civic participation and political efficiency decreased. The proportion of deputies and committee members is growing. According to official Chinese statistics, there are 2,978 deputies, including 2,491 civil servants, or 83.6%.

Second, during the local two sessions, the people’s congress, NPC and CPPCC meetings according to the administrative affiliation group easy for control, the conference speech review speech, the two sessions increasingly administrative, the function of public opinion function shrinking. Representatives and members of the leadership and subordinate’s distinct grades, public opinion will become a work deployment meeting.

Third, the procedures and institutions of democratic elections and public opinion representatives, and legal citizen participation channels within the system. Lack of Tao, lack of democratic responsibility system. Justice localization, judges and grassroot party and government officials “wear crotch-backed pants,” rights and interests protection and relief are increasingly difficult. The winning rate of the plaintiff in the civil prosecution case is the low defeat rate of the defendant.

3.3. The Government faces a crisis of trust and breeds corruption

We can see from the “bright skyline,” a government project in 2018, that the introduction and implementation of a government policy are sometimes silent, but it will “cease” when we encounter strong doubts from the grassroot people. This act of government without effective public participation, no democratic talk, loses not only public trust, but corruption occurs in the process. Due to no transparency, no openness and no sunlight are the most prone to corruption. The loss from the process and consequences of “corruption,” the ultimate judicial punishment and compensation, are irreparable. There are many “bleeding cases” in China, which are enough to prove this. For example, in Nie Shubin’s case, the dereliction of duty of law enforcement officers, and the contempt for the public request to disclose the details of the case, eventually brought a fresh life away.

4. Realizing Grassroot Democracy, Deepening Reform, and Promoting the Modernization of Grassroot Governance

4.1. Reform the local personnel and financial system, expand citizens’ participation and right to know

The top leaders of many places in China are designated or assigned by their superiors in the past. They are not clear about the direction and formulation of local policies, so there will be illegal policies, lag, difficult to implement policies, failure and other phenomena. To this end, the people should let the people decide who is the real “leader” for their welfare.

China implements a “tax system,” and the main part taken by superiors is grassroot financial funds. Also, financial fund can be seen as the blood while grassroot government departments are the body. When finance is insufficient, how can grassroot government work on grassroot affairs? So, finance system requires the public participation in overseeing the flow of the capital as well as financial fund generating.

4.2. Ensuring community level democracy and improving the new model of grassroot governance

“Party committee leadership, government responsibility, social coordination, and public participation” is the main structure of grassroot social governance, and in this main structure, legal guarantee is a new model of grassroot governance, that is, “party committee leadership, government responsibility, social coordination, public participation, and the rule of law guarantee.” To put it simple, the party and government lead, absorb the elite and public opinion, and respond to the people’s demands. The diverse subjects of grassroot governance will achieve democracy, division of labor, mutual support, cooperation and joint governance within the scope of the constitution and laws, and ensure the harmony and stability, order and vitality, development and prosperity of grassroot regional social communities. Modernization of

governance is the last kilometer of the country's comprehensive modernization. Therefore, we should pay attention to the modernization of national governance.

4.3. Using scientific means to safeguard democracy and promote grassroots governance

Institutions is a rule of conduct involving social, political and economic behavior^[5]. System and technology are the two most important elements of improving and guaranteeing grassroots governance. For example, in the past, the system was backward or unreasonable, unscientific, blocked information, slow information transmission speed, high information collection cost, and the information technology was relatively backward. It was relatively difficult to truly achieve interconnection. Now, with the help of Internet technology, we can truly realize the network, flat, multi-centralized governance, improve the governance level and governance capacity. For the people to enjoy the low cost, high service, convenient and efficient government governance model, which will improve the credibility of the party and the government, the image and status of the party and the government in the public, as well as the legitimacy of the party's governance will also be strengthened.

Modernization of grassroots governance is by no means "modernization of grassroots governance." This formula can only show that our grassroots governments have made full use of Internet technology in the process of governance, which can establish e-government, improve the efficiency and level of governance. And it needs to be noted that if the place has the Internet technology, there is no scientific use, will also let the Internet technology kidnapped, cannot well reflect the role of the Internet, but the Internet has become a burden. Due to the development of information technology, social intermediary organizations can also take on part of grassroots governance and become an effective governance of public affairs.

4.4. Grassroot democracy cannot be ignored in the process of economic system reform

In all reforms, economic reform is the focus, and the relationship between the market is the core of economic reform and grassroots governance. From the planned economy to the market economy, China has great successful experience and many mistakes, mostly based on the lack of democratic consensus, such as the Great Leap Forward movement. On the road to realizing the modernization of governance, the increasing public participation and the realization of democracy will become important elements of the modernization of governance. As Xu Bangyou in the "four years of reform and opening up of grassroots governance system, based on the analysis of grassroots governance practice in Zhejiang province said" governance subject diversification, governance flattening, governance system network, governance process, governance behavior, governance method scientific and governance technology modernization, and from the historical perspective, reveals the national and social interaction, government and market interaction, officials and public interaction, upper and grassroots interaction, system and technology interaction logic. This withdraws the important elements of democracy everywhere.

4.5. Raising citizens' awareness of the role of "democracy"

"If the understanding of democracy cannot go deep into people's daily life, cause people to their own destiny and specific living state of deep thinking, the pursuit of democracy cannot be transformed into people's daily life of specific self requirements and goals, then, again laborious call and enlightenment, cannot be deeply rooted in the hearts of the people, democracy cannot achieve socialization^[6]."

Due to the lack of civic participation, the public policy formulated by the state lacks "public" and is an "authoritarian." Public policy that has no legitimacy is an invalid policy. What kind of policy effect will the invalid policy implementation of the administrative organs produce, and who will bear the tragedy of this policy effect? Therefore, officials should not have the "three photos" psychology when formulating public policies, but should set up a team of experts to expand citizens "participation and raise citizens"

awareness of the role of democracy.

4.6. Formulate and implementing scientific, effective and legal public policies

China is a popular proverb like “black head is not as good as red head, red head is not as good as white head, white head is not as oral,” so we should pay attention to the scientific nature, effectiveness and legality of the policy. Luo Ocai believes that the law is divided into soft and hard law, should have legal. Ensuring the scientific and effective legality of public policy can realize the modernization of grassroots governance, which is also an important part of democracy.

5. Summary

In summary, grassroots democracy is an important element in realizing the modernization of grassroots governance. The modernization of grassroots governance lacking grassroots democracy faces many challenges. First, it is difficult for a single governance subject to effectively deal with complex public affairs. Second, grassrootsism has influence and weakens governance. Many places ignore the development of democratic politics, increase conflicts between officials and the people, and vicious mass incidents have increased sharply. Third, the imbalance of powers and responsibilities leads to the imbalance of governance power, and it is difficult to form joint governance forces. The powers and responsibilities of grassroots governance are unequal, and grassroots governance cannot modernize grassroots governance. To achieve grassroots democracy is an effective way to achieve the equality of rights and responsibilities.

In order to meet the challenge, three paths can be established: the first is to build a consultative democratic governance structure, realize the modernization of governance structure; the second is to bid farewell to the power, decentralization and cooperation, achieve official cooperation and modernize the third is to make full use of modern technology to effectively encourage the public to participate in grassroots governance, improve the democratic awareness of citizens, and realize the modernization of grassroots governance means. In each path, ensuring the realization of grassroots democracy is the most important element of the modernization of grassroots governance.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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