

# Study on the Difficulties and Countermeasures Faced by Township Governments under the Background of Modernization of Rural Governance System

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**Abstract**— Rural governance is a key part of national governance, in which the township government is a key link in rural governance. As a grass-roots government, its task is not only to complete the various matters assigned by the superior, but also to understand the people's feelings and public opinions. Implementation is the key role of rural governance. In the context of the modernization of the rural governance system, this paper expounds what the task of the township government is, analyzes the current problems of the township government in the rural governance, and puts forward countermeasures to solve the difficulties in combination with the actual situation, so as to further promote the modernization of the rural governance system.

**Keywords**— Rural governance; Township government; Predicament.

## I. TASKS UNDERTAKEN BY TOWNSHIP GOVERNMENTS IN THE CONTEXT OF MODERNIZATION OF RURAL GOVERNANCE SYSTEM

As the most basic level government in the national governance system, the township government plays a vital role in rural governance. In the system of autonomy, rule of law and rule of virtue, the township government needs to play its role.

### (1) Orderly guide grass-roots autonomous organizations

In the countryside, the villagers' committee is a grass-roots mass autonomous organization, which is different from the state power organs. Article 5 of the Organic Law of Villagers' Committees clearly stipulates that "the people's governments of townships, nationality townships and towns shall provide guidance, support and assistance to the villagers' committees in their work, but shall not interfere in matters that are within the scope of villagers' autonomy according to law." It can be seen from this that the state has made provisions on the relationship between township governments and villagers' committees at the legal level. Township governments and villagers' committees should not be the relationship between superiors and subordinates, but the relationship between guidance and being guided. Township governments should give full play to their functional characteristics, give help to grass-roots autonomous organizations in all aspects, constantly promote the improvement of grass-roots autonomous organizations, and play the role of grass-roots autonomy.

### (2) Steadily promote the popularization of rural laws

In the No. 1 central document of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council on the implementation of the Rural Revitalization Strategy in 2018, it was proposed to "build a village ruled by law" and strengthen the authority of the law in maintaining rural justice and resolving rural social contradictions. In March 2020, the Central Committee for the Comprehensive Administration of the State by Law issued the Opinions on Strengthening the

Construction of the Rule of Law Countryside, stating that the rule of law countryside should be basically completed by 2035. This shows that the construction of the rule of law in rural areas is also a key part of rural governance. Since the legal concept of people in rural areas is still weak, the work of rule of law still has a long way to go. As a grass-roots government, the township government must complete the important task of promoting the popularization of rural laws. Township governments can go deep into the countryside to publicize and educate the rule of law, irregularly use various new media to publicize the rule of law, and carry out scientific lectures on legal knowledge; Secondly, we should strengthen the judicial guarantee in rural areas, safeguard the legitimate interests of farmers, and effectively crack down on the black and evil forces, illegal and criminal acts to create a harmonious rural atmosphere; Finally, we need to give farmers legal protection, rely on the grass-roots people's courts to mediate various conflicts in rural areas, and try to solve the conflicts at the most grass-roots level.

### (3) Vigorously publicize the good traditional rural morality

The rule of virtue is also an important part of the rural governance. The rule of virtue and morality are different from the mandatory constraints of law on people. The rule of virtue emphasizes standardizing people's behavior at the spiritual level and promoting and encouraging good behavior. Since most of the young and middle-aged people in rural areas now work in cities, and most of them are old, weak, sick and disabled, it is difficult to carry out the rule of virtue in villages and towns. This requires township governments to play their own characteristics and vigorously carry out the propaganda of the new era's rural style and civilization, and the rural traditional good morals. The township government can promote and publicize the culture of the sages, and can set a benchmark for the sages in the new era, invite them to give lectures and tell their stories, so that people can learn from them. Morality is different from the coercive force of law. There are no clear provisions on what can be done and what cannot be done. Therefore, we can specify documents such as moral

commitment according to our own customs in rural areas for publicity.

## II. THE DIFFICULTIES FACED BY THE TOWNSHIP GOVERNMENT UNDER THE BACKGROUND OF THE MODERNIZATION OF THE RURAL GOVERNANCE SYSTEM AND THE REASONS

At present, there are still some problems in rural governance, which hinder the development of rural areas. The emergence of some of these problems is inseparable from the township government. It is precisely because the work of the township government is not in place that they occur. It is necessary to analyze the characteristics of these problems and explore the underlying reasons.

### (1) Difficulties faced by township governments under the background of modernization of rural governance system

#### 1. The relationship between township governments and village committees is unclear

According to the foregoing, the legal provisions have clearly stipulated the relationship between the township government and the villagers' committee. It is the township government that guides the work of the villagers' committee. However, the actual work is not as stipulated in the legal provisions. The township government will mistakenly regard the village committee as its subordinate organization. As the current supervision system and the township government ideology have not changed, they always start from their own standard interests, making the village committee become a dependency of the township government. This has caused a series of chaos. For example, in some areas, in order to regulate the operation of grass-roots power and prevent the abuse of power by village cadres, the local government has received the village level official seal under the unified management of the township. In essence, the starting point of this behavior is good, but the behavior of "village seal and township management" violates the relevant laws and regulations. Some township governments manipulate the process of villagers' election, arbitrarily replacing and adjusting the cadres elected by villagers, which is not just an individual phenomenon. Some township governments interfere in village level financial management and control village finance through "village finance and township management" and "village account and township management". All these phenomena show that the township government has a vague understanding of the villagers' committee and has excessively interfered in the affairs of the grass-roots autonomous organizations.

#### 2. The concept of rule of law in grass-roots areas is still weak

In rural areas, the awareness of the rule of law has not been established in general, whether it is farmers or grass-roots cadres. Many grassroots cadres have a lot of one-sided understanding of the rule of law. They think that the rule of law is something that sounds lofty and has little to do with the grassroots. They only know about the law such as the Constitution and Criminal Law. They think that village rules and regulations do not belong to the scope of the law. They lack the awe of this "small law". He believes that governing the country according to law is the responsibility of judicial

departments and administrative law enforcement agencies, and generally considers that the rule of law is only law enforcement. Little did he know that the rule of law not only includes law enforcement, but also law-abiding is a key part of the rule of law. Some cadres believe that the rule of law does not play any role in rural economic construction, is not consistent with the actual situation in rural areas, has little significance, and sometimes restricts the behavior of some cadres. On the other hand, for ordinary farmers, their awareness of the rule of law is even weaker, which is limited by their cultural level. When they encounter some conflicts or disputes, the first thing they think of is not to resort to the legal department, the judicial organ, and use legal weapons to solve problems, but to see whether they can get through the relationship and talk about human feelings. This phenomenon is very common in rural areas.

### 3. Rural culture in the new era needs to be strengthened

With the modernization development of our country, the social form of our country's countryside is also changing, which also changes the original cultural and ideological value system of the countryside and impacts the spiritual world of the local residents. The blood relationship, clan and traditional ethics that previously maintained the rural areas were collided by modern ideas. With the change of the times, the rural style civilization is to be improved continuously, but the current countryside has not been completely transformed back. Due to the influence of urbanization and marketization, most of the rural labor force and elites have gathered in the city, leading to the hollowing out of the countryside. The collective leading rural progress, the village heroes, is declining, and the farmers have lost their backbone in an instant. On the other hand, due to the influence of the market economy, the social and cultural ecology of traditional rural areas tends to be more utilitarian, and individuals pay more attention to their own interests. They will only participate in rural public affairs under favorable conditions, and their sense of responsibility and belonging will be greatly reduced; Red and white weddings are one of the most important events in rural areas, but now they have become a form of mutual comparison and show off. The rich peasants have to do a lot of things, while the poor peasants have to do a lot of things to borrow money because of their face, increasing unnecessary pressure; Feudal superstition still remains in rural areas, which is seriously inconsistent with the core socialist values. Some farmers' spiritual world is very empty, indulging in gambling and drinking. All kinds of problems indicate that the construction of rural style civilization in the new era still has a long way to go.

### (2) Reasons for the Difficulties Faced by the Township Government under the Background of the Modernization of the Rural Governance System

#### 1. The theory of township government lags behind and the concept is old

The theoretical ideas held by township governments determine the direction of their actions. But concept of the township government has not been changed. One is the lag in theory. From the planned economy to the market economy, the township government is still an all powerful government. They adhere to the principle of taking everything in their own hands.

They have no details in carrying out their work. They manage more and more carefully. Local governments, from the perspective of regulators, are accustomed to managing grassroots social affairs in the form of administrative orders, lack the awareness of serving the public and society, and lack democratic consultation and communication mechanisms, which is particularly reflected in the relationship between township governments and village committees. Another is the old concept, which is reflected in the sense of service and the lack of subjective initiative. The governance goals of the township government are to meet the tasks assigned by the superior government, not to meet the actual needs of farmers, which leads to the work done by the township government can not solve the problems of the actual grass-roots level. On the surface, it is to complete the work, but actually not to serve the people. In the long run, rural governance problems will only become more and more serious, and the credibility of the government will also decline.

### *2. Inadequate ability of township cadres and rigid team*

The working ability of township cadres determines the governance ability of township governments. At present, the township cadres are lack of ability, the official oriented ideology is serious, and the people-oriented concept has not been established. On the one hand, the educational level is limited, and the general educational level of township cadres is not very high; On the one hand, they are generally older and slow to accept and learn new knowledge and ideas. It takes a long time to master a new skill; On the other hand, the daily work of township cadres is complicated and trivial, and they themselves lack the time and energy for learning, and there is no corresponding training and education mechanism to ensure that the ability is almost impossible to improve. The inflexibility of the township team is reflected in the serious brain drain. In recent decades, the replacement of the township cadre team has lagged behind. Only a small number of college students and village officials, civil servants who have been admitted to the township government, selected students and cadres transferred from the county are new to the township government. Moreover, due to poor treatment, difficult promotion and hard work in the villages and towns, these newcomers often take the villages and towns as the springboard and have no desire to do practical things for the grassroots. When they get the opportunity, they will participate in the selection, public examination or leave the villages and towns through transfer to work in the higher authorities. Due to the high mobility of talents, the township cadres have lacked the sustained vitality of fresh blood for many years, and are generally rigid.

### *3. Restriction of existing administrative system on township government governance*

The administrative system faced by most of the existing township governments is a pressure type administrative system. The so-called pressure type administrative system refers to a management method in which local governments at all levels quantitatively decompose tasks to lower level governments, accompanied by highly materialistic rewards and punishments. Under this system, the lower level does not need to know what responsibilities they should assume, but only needs to complete

the task according to the instructions of the higher level. At the end of each year, the superior government will assess the completion of the assigned indicators and tasks, which will serve as the main basis for the promotion and appointment of lower level cadres and the payment of bonuses. However, the reality is that due to the lack of research on rural areas by the higher level government, there is little in-depth understanding of the situation in grassroots rural areas, and the assessment of the tasks assigned will be different from the actual problems faced by the countryside. The township government is constrained by the administrative system, and has no motivation or intention to solve the actual problems of rural governance, because if it does not complete the indicator assessment of the higher level, the work of this year will be done in vain. Over time, township governments have also lost their subjective initiative and are unwilling to solve the fundamental problems in rural areas. They only need to solve the tasks assigned by their superiors step by step. In this way, the problems at the grassroots level will become more prominent.

## III. COUNTERMEASURES TO SOLVE THE DEVIATION OF TOWNSHIP GOVERNMENT'S ROLE ORIENTATION

### *(1) Abandon traditional concepts and establish a sense of service*

The township government should first abandon the omnipotent government approach, which takes on too many other tasks and cannot provide services for farmers. Township governments should establish the concept of "limited government", do something and do nothing, clarify their responsibilities, and apply the limited human, financial and material resources to public services and social management. Secondly, the township government should establish the concept of service-oriented government. The previous "official standard" and "bureaucracy" ideas still exist in the township cadre groups. On the contrary, the main body of rural governance is the majority of farmers, and the people who benefit are also farmers, not the township government. This requires the government departments to seriously study the Party's theory and policies, improve the theoretical level, improve their ideological understanding of farmers, and change from "official based" to "people based". Finally, township governments should cultivate farmers' subjective consciousness. Farmers are the main force of rural governance, and farmers have infinite wisdom. Township governments should strengthen the guidance of villagers' committees in accordance with the requirements of laws and regulations, dredge the channels for farmers to participate in social governance, encourage farmers to learn from the policies of the Party and the State, and improve farmers' enthusiasm and sense of responsibility to participate in social management.

### *(2) Pay attention to the construction of cadres and personnel training*

For the construction of the cadre team, the township government should first select high-level talents, raise the employment threshold, and recruit high-quality talents through written interview and other forms of assessment; In terms of the appointment of talents, we should make full use of our talents

to select suitable talents for different posts; The competitive employment mechanism shall be adopted to comprehensively measure the political awareness, overall situation awareness, responsibility awareness, moral quality, leadership ability and communication and coordination ability of the staff. Secondly, we should strengthen the training, take differentiated training for different personnel, take short-term training, regular learning, and other diversified ways to cultivate comprehensive talents. Township cadres are the national cadres closest to farmers, and directly serve grassroots farmers. Therefore, township cadres should regularly go to the countryside to learn, cultivate the ability to communicate with farmers, and learn agricultural knowledge, We will help farmers solve their difficulties in real life. Finally, we should improve the sense of belonging and pride of talents, encourage and praise competent and outstanding talents, stimulate their work enthusiasm, play an exemplary role and set an example for everyone. In the ordinary evaluation and award, we should actively recommend the personnel who are active in the front-line grassroots, give them honorary recognition and spiritual encouragement, stimulate the entrepreneurial spirit of the officers, so that they can also have a sense of pride and belonging in the grassroots work.

### *(3) Improve the existing pressure based institutional environment*

The premise for township governments to have independent power space to give full play to their subjective initiative is to straighten out the relationship between superiors and subordinates. For the relationship between township governments and their superiors, on the one hand, we should implement the power list system, clarify the terms of reference of the superior government and township governments, and assume their respective rights and obligations to prevent buck passing and wrangling. For matters not listed in the list, responsibilities shall be implemented according to the rule of "who assigns, who pays" to protect the power of township governments. On the one hand, township governments should be given the power to innovate rural governance. The way of government management should change with the change of

society, and must not stagnate. The township government and the grass-roots government close to the farmers need to innovate rural governance in the face of the implementation of the rural revitalization strategy. In view of the key issues in rural development, the superior government can appropriately delegate power, encourage township governments to make bold attempts, improve rural governance, and stimulate the subjective initiative of township governments. For lower level villagers' committees, the villagers' right to autonomy should be fully respected. The villagers' committee should not be subordinate to the township government. The villagers' autonomy should not be interfered with. The villagers' committee should be allowed to handle the villagers' autonomy on its own.

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