

Problems of the Current Rural Public Culture Construction in China and Corresponding Countermeasures

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Abstract

The rural public culture construction is one of the key content of socialist new countryside construction. In recent years, the CCP and the government have attached great importance to building it. And the rural public culture construction has achieved great development. While, there exist some issues, such as disconnect between supply and demand, the inferior quality, rigid management mechanism, restricting the comprehensive development of rural public culture construction. Therefore, the paper makes analysis from the perspective of insufficient funds, government-led pattern and the lack of systems and mechanisms, then take corresponding countermeasures to meet farmers' culture needs and protect their cultural rights and interests.

Key words: Public culture; Rural public culture; Problems and countermeasures

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INTRODUCTION

The 18th CPC National Congress Report focuses on improving the quality of citizens' morality and enriching individuals' spiritual life. Then a new target for culture

construction is put forward, that is, adhering to the basic level and servicing the masses. We should accelerate the key cultural projects that benefit the public. Meanwhile, increasing the support for the cultural construction in rural and underdeveloped areas is necessary. Also, public cultural service facilities free open to the public should be considered (Hu, 2012). Building the socialist new countryside and ensuring the harmonious development of rural society has become the era theme. In this context, it is necessary to strengthen the new rural public culture construction and protect the basic cultural rights and interests of farmers. In order to implementing the spirit of The 18th CPC National Congress Report, doing some research on the situation of rural public culture construction is our first priority. Then, it is vital to set up the rural public culture service system and solve the relevant problems.

1. THE RURAL PUBLIC CULTURE

The public culture is the sum of all kinds of nonprofit cultural institutions and services that protect the public basic cultural rights and interests. The specific forms are public cultural goods and public cultural service. The government dominates in this area along with social participation. Obviously, the public culture is useful for the popularization of culture and knowledge, as well as the spread of advanced culture. Also, it will meet the public demand for culture. The rural public cultural goods, of course, meet the definition of public goods. They are products own non-exclusive and non-competitive character, to be specific, including radio and television, movies, newspapers, books etc. The rural public cultural products meet the needs of the rural cultural construction and the demand for cultural rights of farmers. The rural public cultural service, namely, is the general term of institution and system that protect the farmers' basic cultural rights and provide basic public cultural service

to them. The rural public cultural service consists of public cultural service facilities, resources and specific services etc..

2. THE CURRENT ISSUES OF RURAL PUBLIC CULTURE CONSTRUCTION IN CHINA

From the present situation, coupling with the continuous improvement of living standards in rural areas, the farmers' demand for public culture gradually expand. While, the rural public cultural construction lags behind the economic and social development, mainly in public culture disjunction between supply and demand, the inferior quality, rigid management system etc.

2.1 The Disjunction Between Supply and Demand Concerning Public Culture

The rural public culture supply shortage is a universal phenomenon. A lack of cultural resources in rural areas is a major reason for it. While there is an ignored contradiction, that is, part of the public cultural goods and services are surplus and the other part of them are insufficient.

The contradiction results from the disjunction between supply and demand, namely, 'what you offer is not what I need.' The "Convey Culture to the Countryside Activity", from the government at higher levels, remains the same for a long time both in content and form. However, enormous changes have taken place in farmers' daily life, naturally leading to the disjunction phenomenon that the farmers' are keen on "Theatrical Performances" while the authorities send "Dragon and Lion Dance" (A form of Chinese traditional performance) to rural areas (Gu, 2009).

2.2 The Quality of Public Culture Is Inferior

The inferior quality of public culture is mainly in three aspects, that is, undesirable content, outdated facilities and single form. First of all, regarding the content, public cultural product species suit for farmers are in lack. Unfortunately, some pseudoscience books, low style movie and vulgar entertainment are prevalent among rural areas. Farmers have no choice but to accept them. Secondly, speaking of facilities, the culture activity rooms and playgrounds are inadequate. The size is not big enough and there are some aging facilities. In some less developed villages, the existing facilities are for other uses. The same situation appears in some villages own limited local financial resources. In the end, when it comes to the forms, most of the current culture supply forms are "Convey Culture to the Countryside Activity", ignoring developing and protecting the existing folk traditional culture.

2.3 The Public Culture Management System Is Rigid

The current culture management system was born in the planned economy period. Although some revolution

measures are conducted along with the establishment of market economic system, the extent and depth of the reform is not enough. So, the rigid management system came into being. It neither ensures the effective supply of public culture nor the provide right of public culture (Qi, 2012). This system has led to some adverse consequences. For instance, the public cultural construction is lack of lasting development mechanism (both in the innovation mechanism and incentive mechanism of public culture construction). Innovation in public cultural goods and service is very slow. And, the public cultural facilities can not play their due role. The rigid and inadequate management system, of course, cannot meet the basic demands for public cultural construction.

3. MAJOR CAUSES ACCOUNT FOR THE RURAL PUBLIC CULTURE CONSTRUCTION ISSUES IN CHINA

From the above analysis, the problems existing in the rural public culture construction have restricted the farmers' needs for spiritual fulfillment. Meanwhile, they have already hindered the process of the new socialist rural construction. Finding out the countermeasures should be on the premise of the analysis on relevant reasons. The following are some major causes accounting for the rural public culture construction issue in China.

3.1 The Public Culture Construction Funds Are in Sufficient.

In the process of the rural public culture construction, investment from the government do not adapt to the farmers' growing cultural demand, resulting in the disjunction between supply and demand. The government's financial investment is the key factor influencing the public cultural construction as they are the main body of public cultural construction. Since the tax system reform, the fiscal revenue of township government is rare. Thus, they have to rely on the financial allocation from superior government. It is no wonder that their financial situation is not satisfactory in the condition of developing economy as well as cultural undertakings. The short of capital investment and the structure deviation lead to the public cultural construction lacking motivation. Thus, both public cultural goods and public cultural service can not achieve the best effect. When the funds can only ensure the simple public culture supply, farmers' demand for public cultural goods naturally cannot be met. Also, it will be very hard to realize the construction of the new countryside public culture.

3.2 The Government is the Main Participant in Public Culture Construction

At the present, the government undertake major rural public culture construction task. The government-led mode is unable to guarantee the supply efficiency and

quality. It has caused some unavoidable problems. For one thing, the site is not enough, the cultural centers and township committee are usually merged together in many areas. So it will be very difficult to organize large-scale cultural events. For another thing, there are not specific public cultural service teams in most township committee and cultural centers. The members of the administrative department take the culture construction duty at the same time. The human resources in the rural public culture construction are inconspicuously inadequate. The government-led construction mode has brought about some adverse consequences, such as increasing the government burden, lowering the public cultural construction quality and so on.

3.3 The Lack of Public Culture Construction System and Mechanism

The lack of public culture construction system and mechanism is reflected in three aspects, including policies and regulations, management system and development mechanism. First of all, a set of scientific rural public culture construction system and mechanism has not formed at present. Some laws and regulations are still on the set. While some already formulated laws and regulations are lack of specific implementation details. So the process of public culture construction is in disorder. Secondly, the management mechanism is rigid both in form and content. Under the background, some in-depth research is necessary, while the reality is opposite. So the public cultural goods and service offered by government cannot meet farmers' needs. In the end, lacking long-term development mechanism is obvious in many areas. Many local cultural centers exist in name only, and many cultural activities become formalistic. The cultural units in rural areas can not play their due roles effectively (Shu, 2007).

4. THE COUNTERMEASURES AND SUGGESTIONS ON SOLVING THE RURAL PUBLIC CULTURE CONSTRUCTION PROBLEMS IN CHINA

According to the above analysis, we should set about taking some countermeasures to solve the rural public culture construction problem in China.

4.1 The Rural Public Culture Construction Capital Investment Should Be Increased

Lacking insufficient funds has always been the key issue in the process of the rural public culture construction. In western developed countries, public culture show a rapid development trend because of multi-channel financing means. The authorities, social groups combined with individuals offer great funds support for public culture development. By contrast, the government almost offers

all funds for the public culture construction, especially in rural areas in China. Although our government puts some investment to the public culture construction, the support on rural culture is far from enough. Thus the rural public culture develops at a rather slow speed, seriously lagging behind the city culture and economic development. Improving the rural public culture construction capital investment is the first thing for government and society to do. There are some steps to improve the situation. At first, the government should ensure the necessary input for rural public culture construction and consider reversing the tide that putting more money to cities rather than villages. The central and local governments should determine the proportion of the finance income, which is using for improve the public culture construction. Of course, they should consider the local reality in the process. On this basis, the gap between cities and villages will be narrowed. The authorities should give a lot support to the infrastructure construction in villages; especially those locate in remote areas. Secondly, some specialized funds administrative organization should be set up for supervising the rural public culture construction capital. They are responsible for raising and using the relevant funds, insuring them are used for its specified purpose only. Getting rid of the dilemma that carrying out economic construction in the name of cultural construction. Lastly, the central and local governments should establish special funds for rural public culture construction. They should make an alliance with social groups and individuals and urge them to play their due effect. Through forming a pattern that government dominates in this area and the social organizations and individual citizens as supplement, satisfying the money demands for rural public culture construction.

4.2 Ensuring Multiple Participants Take Part in Rural Public Culture Construction

As the main participant in the process of rural public culture construction, the government nearly bears all the related work. However, the government's capacity is always limited. With the farmers' growing demand for public cultural, the government effort alone is difficult to meet the farmers' needs for public cultural goods and service. Also, the government-led pattern is not conducive to the quality improvement of public cultural goods and the efficiency lift of public cultural service. So, it is necessary to build diversified subject network. Firstly, the government should play their leading role. The central and local governments should define their duty range and accomplish their daily work, such as setting up rural culture centers and video stations. At the same time, for those work that beyond their duty, the government should purchase the rural public culture goods and service from the market. For instance, the government can buy "The Film Project in Rural Areas", "Arranging Health Care in Villages" and so on. Thus, farmers' need for public

culture will be met. For those social groups taking active part in the rural public culture construction, such as “Amateur Cultural Team in Villages”, “Cultural Center Households among Farmers” and so on, the government should offer some proper policy support or rewards to stimulate their contribution for the rural public culture construction. Secondly, taking full advantage of social organizations is imperative. As everyone knows, social organizations are playing an increasingly important role in social governance. They have many advantages over than other participants, such as the diverse structure, all-round perspective and multi field antenna and so on. All these effectively make up for the deficiency of government in the rural public culture construction. Last but not the least, fostering the endogenous mechanism of rural culture is of great importance. The rural public culture construction in the past turned a blind eye to the local cultural resources in rural areas. The “input only but foster absent” cultural construction mode cannot meet the peasants rich cultural needs as well as ignoring their demand expression. Organizing unique local cultural resources in rural areas together and stimulating the farmers’ enthusiasm for cultural construction is a good way to make a supplement for the rural public culture construction.

4.3 The System and Mechanism of Rural Public Culture Construction Should Be Improved

Legalization, standardization and institutionalization of the rural public culture construction are the inevitable requirements to make the rural public culture construction make progress in efficient and orderly development. For one thing, making complete laws and policies should be on the government agenda. Complete laws and policies are the powerful guarantee for the fairness in the rural public culture construction. Making a set of scientific and reasonable system of rural public culture construction and straightening out the government obligation on the rural public culture construction are important. We should take measures curb the issues such as cross dislocation, main participants vacancy and function of chaos and so on. Meanwhile, we should ensure that each item for the rural public cultural construction project has detailed implementing rules and complete legal protection (Li, 2011). For another thing, we should set up flexible management mechanism to stimulate the rural public culture construction. Therefore, the central and local governments should fully understand the importance and urgency of rural public culture construction. Certainly, they should strengthen the leadership. At the same time, they should be clearly aware of the limitations of

government capacity. It is wise for the government to loosen the requirement for the relevant participants and involve more social organizations into the process of the rural public culture construction. Meanwhile, putting more attention to the cultivation of construction teams and talents, as well as some innovative changes in rural culture content and form are of great importance. For another thing, sustainable development mechanism should be established. To ensure the sustainable development of the rural public culture construction is the inherent requirement that the rural public cultural service system and the building of new socialist countryside should meet. The sustainable development mechanism relies on three main factors, including multi-channel funding, multi subject participation and multi-level evaluation mechanism. Thus, the government should make an overall planning and implement step by step according to the practical situation in rural areas. Only in this way, can we achieve the sustainable development of the rural public culture construction.

The key to develop the rural public culture is to build the public culture system in accordance with the direction of socialist advanced culture. Offering the public culture goods and service really conform the farmers’ requirements is the major concern. If we stick to the two rules, we would fix the current problems in the rural public culture construction. Only in this way, can we protect the basic cultural rights and interests of farmers as well as promote economic comprehensive development in rural areas.

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