On the Realize Path of Grass-Root Society Multiple Co-Governance in Chinese Context—Based on the Case of Baini, Sanshui, Foshan, Guangdong Province

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Abstract. The study is based on the single-case of Baini, Sanshui, Guangdong province. It involves the aspects of innovation of governance concept, feature of governance main body, public opinion expression mechanism, public issues choice mechanism and the relationship between government and society. Expanding on the previous research approach of grass-root society multiple co-governance in Chinese context, this study draw on the single-case which developed from certain political, economic, culture environment, to illustrate the pattern of the relationship between self-organization and other-organization in country.

Introduction

Baini is located in the south of Sanshui, Foshan, Guangdong province. It is the central land of the Pearl River Delta. And it’s less than 40 km to Guangzhou, 24 km to the center of Foshan. The town covers 66.46 sq.km and governs two village committees, one neighborhood committee and 66 natural villages. The population of the town is 23.8 thousand including 60 thousand foreign population. Most of them are Han. In 2012, the whole town’s output totaled 10.117 billion yuan. The gross industrial output is 31.325 billion yuan. The tax totaled 472 million yuan. The fixed asset investment is 7.1 billion yuan. Per farming capita income is 13268 yuan. Baini has a long exploitation history. It is the famous hometown of overseas Chinese in the Pearl River Delta. For a long time, the overseas villagers are eager to construct their homeland, which contributes much to the development of Baini.

The Government Avoids Strong Other-Organization to Make Space: Government and Society back to Seat for Co-Governance as the Innovation of Governance Concept

The governance theory firstly requires the existence of multiple governance subjects and the equal negotiation among them. But the implement of unit system and people's commune system after new China was founded[1,2] formed the most complete hierarchical system of vertical to the end, transverse to the edge. The government controlled everything by planned economy, which resulted in unsound growth of society. It is the challenge today’s China faces in the innovation of public administration. And it is also the root cause of the popularity grid management in China as grid management can be achieved by government without any other governance subjects. But the development of Chinese society is unbalanced. The 30 years’ opening and reform has cultivated multiple potential groups of society governance in China’s southeast coastal developed areas.

Baini, Sanshui is the places of historic figures and cultural heritage. It has abundant traditional cultural resources. And it is also the famous hometown of overseas Chinese and the developed industrial and commercial area. In Baini, there is more immigrant population than local population. There are also many overseas Chinese, entrepreneurs and authorities. People there are wealthy and
the structure of stakeholders is complicated. The social construction of Baini is the leading across the country. Under these social conditions, social governance has to face many new situations, new problems and new challenges.

The first is the failure of present grass-root society governance system. As the developed area, the social structure of villages administered by Baini is complicated. After merging the villages, the public affairs of the village became huge, complex and various. Although the structure of village-level organizations has been transformed to the unification of rural Party organization, village committee and the village public service station, it still couldn’t afford this heavy load. As the village-level governance object, the villagers assembly after the merging was overstaffed. The villagers’ representatives disagreed with each other’s interest. It was harder and harder to reach a consensus and the issue was more and more fragmented. These problems resulted in no response to the appeal, the discredit of government, the opposition between carders and the masses and finally the social disorder. At the same time, under the condition of the absence of grass-root governance framework, villagers tried to governance themselves and negotiate on public affairs such as security, education, environment, path and electricity by means of autonomic network. They summed up governance experience from raising issues, reaching consensus, aggregating resources and implementing resolutions. In this process, many folk authorities appeared. Formal governance organizations lost efficiency and folk self-governance functions appear. This was the situation Baini faced when reforming grass-root society governance.

Therefore, the leaders of Sanshui thought, according to the Third Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee, Baini should change the strong role of government, encourage and support the participation of society and realize the positive interaction of government, society and villagers. The government should make space for the emerging governance subjects, accept and cultivate social governance objects initiatively in order to make government and society back to seat for co-governance.

The Key of Constructing Multiple Co-Governance System is to Cultivate the Council and Designing Governance Path Subtly

Because the regulations about village committee and villagers assembly are tough according to The People’s Republic of China Organic Law on Villager Committees, the practice of village self-governance often became village official self-governance. Villagers only had the nominal right. The chief difficulty of grass-root society governance is making the villagers discussion work to make the villagers feel they have right and they’re the master of the village[3]. So the first step is to design an effective system in order to solve the difficulty of discussing and deciding on public affairs. The model of Baini, Sanshui simplifies the scale of villagers’ discussion and increases discussion efficiency. The model constructs the two-tier council of village and village groups based on the groups and the linkage of both[4]. The specific operation mechanism of the model is as follows:

The Generation of Village (Groups) Council. According to The People’s Republic of China Organic Law on Villager Committees, the village and village group councils of Baini, Sanshui is empowered by the village assembly and village group assembly. It is the standing institution to execute the power of decision-making, supervision and discussion on the village and village groups’ autonomic affairs. The council is responsible for the assembly and reported to it, accept the supervision from it. The assembly has the right to repeal or alter the improper resolution from the council.

There are no less than 15 members of village council including cadres of village committee and village Party branch, part of village representatives and representatives of Party members, local deputies of People’s Congress, Party representatives and members of Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference. The convener is village Party secretary. Over 1/3 of villager representatives can jointly put forward to remove the member of village council. And there are no less than 5 members of village group council including the group leader and the chief leader, member of Party branch or presentative of Party members, the village representative of group.
When there is vacancy of members of village group council, the by-election will be held by villagers who have the right to vote. The leader of village group council is also the convener. Over 1/3 of villager group representatives can jointly put forward to remove the member of village group council.

**The Discussing Procedure of Village Group.** The first is to spread the issues across the village and request for villagers’ suggestions. The issues should be published 3 days before the opening of village group council. The suggestions from villagers’ should be solicited widely before the meeting and reflected during the meeting. The second is to define the condition of opening the council. According to the regulations of the council, the village council should be held at least once a month and over 4/5 of members have to be present. The third is introducing the system of outside help attending. During the discussion, the problems that can be solved by village level should be decided directly by the council. As for the problems referring to the cooperation of relevant departments, the council introduces the system of inviting the relevant departments, enterprises and public institutions to attend the meeting and negotiate with the members and answer their questions.

**The Regulations of Decision-Making.** The decision-making of village group council has strict regulations. The first is that the results of discussion should be announced on the spot. The village council and village group council vote by secret ballot. The vote should be passed by over half of the members. The results of vote should be counted openly, announced on the spot and noticed on the bulletin board. The second is the system of afterwards remedy. When there is objection to the decision of village council, over 1/3 of village representatives can submit the issue to village council jointly. As for the decision of village group decision, over 1/10 adult villagers can submit the issue to village group council jointly. The village group council will discuss on the issue and make the decision. The third is to deliver the issues to village assembly according to the rule. For some major or problematic issues, if half of the present agree, the issue will be submitted to village council or village group council. The specific procedure of discussion is as Figure 1.

![Figure 1. The discussing procedure of Baini, Sanshui village (group) council.](image)

**References**


