

The Dilemma of Integrating Digital Technology into Rural Society from the Perspective of Subjective Consciousness Deviation

Yuxin Wang^{1*}

¹ Grammar School, Zhejiang A & F University, Hangzhou, Zhejiang, China

Email Address

17615352751@163.com (Yuxin Wang)

*Correspondence: 17615352751@163.com

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Abstract:

The deep integration of digital technology and agriculture and rural areas has become a trend of The Times. The construction of the digital platform was initiated by the government and implemented in the village, but why is the construction of the village digital platform stalled after the withdrawal of the external force of the government? This paper believes that the fundamental reason for the introduction of digital platform difficulties is that the governing body has not formed the ideology of digital governance. The process of rural governance is that the governing body uses means to build a governance system to maintain the order of the village, and ideology can influence the governing actions of the main body, and then have an impact on the construction of the rural governance system.

Keywords:

Digital Village, Digital Rural Governance, Digital Technology, Rural Governance

1. Introduction

With the rapid development of new generation digital technologies such as 5G, Internet of Things, big data, cloud computing and artificial intelligence, the deep integration of digital technology with agriculture and rural areas has become a trend of The Times. The application of digital technology can improve the efficiency of government governance and rural governance. Milakovich believes that the advantages of digital governance can be found in citizens enjoying more public services, generating higher citizen participation, integrating government operations, and reducing administrative costs [1]. VishanthWeerakkody also believes that the success of digital government lies in the fact that the use of digital government can reduce costs in the government administration process and provide better services to the public [2]. In 2022, the state jointly issued the Action Plan for the Development of Digital Villages (2022-2025), which fully deployed the work of digital villages. Local governments at provincial, city and county levels have also issued work plans for

digital village construction to provide guidance for the specific work of digital village construction. Under the trend of promoting digital reform across the country, various places have explored the specific content of digital village construction, and the digital construction of rural public service platform has become the due meaning of digital village construction. The construction of digital platform of rural public service is not only a process of technology introduction, but also a process of social integration of technology. But there are many problems along the way. Based on the investigation of the construction process of digital governance platform in case villages, this paper believes that the fundamental reason for the introduction of digital platforms is that the governing body has not formed the ideology of digital governance. The process of rural governance is that the governing body uses means to build a governance system to maintain the order of the village, and ideology can influence the governing actions of the main body, and then have an impact on the construction of the rural governance system.

2. Case Introduction: Lingxi Village Digital Governance Platform Construction Process

The deep integration of digital technology and all walks of life in China has made it an important force to promote China's economic growth, but the degree of integration of digital technology and all walks of life in rural areas is still lacking. Based on the social trend of the integration of digital technology and rural society, the central government has formulated a policy system for the construction of digital countryside in view of the defects of the integration of digital technology and rural society, and has better guided the construction of digital countryside in various regions by improving the top-level design. Subsequently, each local government formulated macro-policies with local characteristics to guide the construction of digital countryside in each region according to the instructions of the policy spirit of the superior government.

The Lingxi Village digital governance platform has been built and put into use under the background of the government's promotion of the construction of digital villages. When the external environment of the village plays a role, that is, when the township government promotes the construction of the platform, the village obtains the opportunity to pilot the construction of the digital platform by virtue of its own conditions. Through the efficient execution of village work carried out by village cadres and the support of villagers for the platform construction work, the digital platform achieves the work objectives stipulated by the government. However, at the end of 2022, due to the local government stopping the promotion of the construction of digital platforms, and the lack of mechanisms within the village that can maintain the villagers' use of the platform, the construction of digital platforms has stalled, which is mainly reflected in the three aspects of the digital platform construction work stopping assessment, digital platform stopping operation and maintenance, and villagers no longer using the platform. When the author went to the research again in 2023, the villagers said that they had not been used for a long time.

3. The Dilemma of Digital Platform Integration from Subjective Consciousness Deviation

The integration of digital technology and rural society can not only promote the high-quality development of rural society, but also have a certain negative impact on

rural society. Robert K. Merton points out in the theoretical framework of functional analysis that social or cultural events have different functional outcomes, requiring consideration of the different consequences, functions and negative functions of particular events for individuals, for subgroups, and for broader social structures and cultures. Among them, negative functions are those observed to impair the adaptation of the system. Digital technology also has two sides, and its negative function will weaken the effect of rural governance [3]. This paper believes that the fundamental reason for the introduction of digital platform difficulties is that the governing body has not formed the ideology of digital governance. The process of rural governance is that the governing body uses means to build a governance system to maintain the order of the village, and ideology can influence the governing actions of the main body, and then have an impact on the construction of the rural governance system.

3.1. The Governance Subject Has a Cognitive Deviation in the Consciousness of Digital Governance

The purpose of digital governance by township governments is to gain the attention of higher authorities. After the township government took the lead in completing the construction of the digital platform, it achieved excellent achievements in the special work, made up for the short board of insufficient economic development, and was conducive to the direct promotion and career development of officials. At the same time, it can also strive for more development projects and other social resources to tilt to the township, so as to promote the development of the township, and ultimately help the promotion of officials. Under the influence of this purpose, it is easy to lead to the formation of formalistic work. After the higher level government stopped the assessment of the platform, the township government no longer carried out the platform construction work.

Village cadres carry out digital governance activities based on the purpose of obtaining economic and social benefits. The government is equipped with special funds for the construction of digital platforms, and village cadres who carry out platform construction work can obtain 5 million “digital village construction project” project funds, which can not only solve the funding problem of digital platform development, but also improve the infrastructure construction of villages accordingly, and strive for more welfare for villagers. In addition, for the village cadres themselves, the digital platform construction work is included in the assessment system, which will have an impact on the salary of village cadres. In terms of obtaining social benefits, through the high-quality completion of the construction work of the digital platform, village cadres can also obtain the respect of others, as well as the expressive benefits brought by good interpersonal relationships, such as pleasure, face, sense of decency, feeling of self-realization, and achievement of political aspirations. However, village cadres only regard digital governance as a routine task, and even think that digital platform work is an image project to be done for superiors, and most governance activities are still carried out in the old form. Field research has learned that when it comes to door-to-door propaganda tasks such as holding villagers’ congresses, village cadres still promote news through team leaders, rather than issuing notices through digital platforms. After the township government stopped the assessment of the work of the digital platform, the village cadres also stopped the operation and maintenance of the digital platform, the content of the platform interface was not updated, and the points were stopped.

Villagers use digital platforms to participate in governance based on the purpose of obtaining village resources. On the one hand, villagers can obtain village social resources such as human feelings and face by cooperating with the promotion work of digital platforms; On the other hand, villagers can use the platform function to earn points, which can be redeemed for goods and services at village cooperative shops such as supermarkets and barbershops, meeting the villagers' daily needs for material goods. However, in most cases, the villagers still participate in the village governance activities with the old ways and habits. After the digital platform ceased to operate, the villagers could not meet the purpose of obtaining resources, and no longer used the platform to participate in village governance.

3.2. The Deviation of Consciousness Leads to Insufficient Digital Governance Ability of the Subject

As the leader of the government, it is difficult for departments to coordinate [4,5]. The construction of digital platforms involves many departments, which requires the coordination and linkage of governments at all levels and relevant functional departments. However, in the process of promotion, due to the different demand for information technology, different levels of government and different functional departments show different enthusiasm and action when participating in the construction, and it is difficult to form a construction force. In the field investigation, it was found that the back-end data of Lingxi Village digital platform was updated slowly, and the platform staff said that the changes of the interface data of the digital system needed to be passed through the county Agriculture and Rural Bureau, and the village did not have the authority to modify the data. For a long time, rural grassroots governments and grassroots self-governing organizations have more and more implemented the "single governance" model of social management, and the government's behavioral dynamic mechanism and responsibility constraint mechanism are mainly established under the top-down administrative pressure [6]. The digital platform has been extended to other administrative villages in towns and townships, and the data modification of all villages has undoubtedly increased the work pressure for the staff of the Bureau of Agriculture and Rural Affairs. Moreover, the Bureau of Agriculture and Rural Affairs is not only responsible for the work of the digital platform, and the staff will prioritize the work after weighing the importance of each work. The assessment task is one of the criteria for the staff to judge the importance of the task. Before the assessment system of digital platform is not perfect, the importance of digital platform data update will give way to other work, hindering the efficiency of digital platform construction and causing difficulties for departmental collaboration.

As an important part of digital governance work, the digital governance ability of village cadres is low. The application of digital governance platforms requires digital literacy for governance subjects, but there are differences in digital literacy among different groups, resulting in a "digital divide" [7]. Seifert Alexander et al. argue that because many older people do not use the Internet, lack the necessary equipment and network conditions, or do not have the experience to use relevant technologies, they become the object of multiple social exclusion, including digital exclusion, especially elderly people who have been in a state of care for a long time [8]. KalendaSo a et al also focused on disadvantaged children, and they studied the use of digital technology in social work with disadvantaged children and their families through questionnaires and interviews [9]. The work related to the digital platform requires the staff to have

certain digital literacy, but most of the village cadres in Lingxi Village do not have the ability to operate the platform, which prevents them from participating in the work of the digital platform. On the one hand, the current village cadres are generally older and cannot participate in the relevant work of digital platforms. This part of village cadres cannot use digital platforms, nor can they give opinions and suggestions on the use of them. This part of village cadres have certain difficulties in participating in digital governance work. On the other hand, the villagers with high digital literacy cannot enter the team of village cadres, and the digital literacy of the team of village cadres is difficult to improve. The village leadership team has limited ability to absorb talents with high digital literacy. The number of cadres in Lingxi Village has been full, and it is impossible to absorb people with high digital literacy into the village leadership team, while the village cadres with low digital literacy have not reached the age of retirement, so the digital ability of people participating in digital governance is insufficient, and it is difficult for people with high digital ability to enter the digital governance team.

As an important component of digital governance work, villagers are not very active in participating in digital governance. First, older people with low digital literacy are less motivated to participate. Compared with the young, the elderly have obvious shortcomings in learning ability and acceptance of new things, and there is a gap in the use of digital technologies such as the Internet. According to the survey, most elderly people over the age of 60 in Lingxi Village cannot meet the requirements for the use of digital platforms. Some of the elderly over 60 years old in the village have smart phones, but they are limited to basic operations such as making phone calls, and other functional applications can be completed to a large extent with the assistance of their young children. Since most of the young children work during the day or do not live with the elderly, the communication between the elderly and their children is limited, which has a negative impact on the elderly's use of digital platforms. Hindering the participation of older groups in digital governance. Second, compared with the elderly, young and middle-aged villagers have higher digital literacy, but their participation enthusiasm is not high. Villagers pay little attention to village affairs in daily life, and the use of digital platforms is also a part of village governance, which some villagers no longer use after the on-site registration of extension workers. Some villagers who have close contact with the construction staff of the digital platform will use it only when the village needs to receive and inspect it, and will be entrusted by the village cadre on the brush activity.

4. Conclusions

This paper mainly analyzes the dilemma of digital platform running stagnation. The first is the process of introducing the digital platform from outside the village into the village. When the external environment of the village changes, that is, when the township government promotes the construction of the platform, the village obtains the opportunity to pilot the construction of the digital platform by virtue of its own conditions. The digital platform work ultimately needs to be implemented to the installation and use of villagers, involving door-to-door household promotion work, only relying on village cadres to do door-to-door work takes a lot of time. Village cadres use the power of village internal organizations to complete the household extension work. The final implementation of the platform is also inseparable from the cooperation of the villagers. The initiative of villagers to cooperate with each other is driven by benefits such as technical convenience and access to village resources.

Through the above process, the platform can be introduced from the outside of the village to the inside of the village, completing the installation and use of 1,300 villagers.

But why after the withdrawal of the external force of the government, the construction of the village digital platform has stalled. The author believes that due to the deviation of the main body's consciousness of digital governance, the village has not formed the ideology of digital governance, so it has not built a stable structure to ensure the smooth operation of digital governance. Specifically, the governance subject first has a biased cognition of digital governance, which leads to the fact that the content of the digital platform designed by the governance body for carrying out digital governance work does not meet the actual needs of the village, thus leading to the insufficiency of the digital governance ability of the main body. Finally, when the digital governance habit conflicts with the original governance habit, the villagers choose the original governance habit to maintain the operation of the village.

Try to further explore how to make digital governance run smoothly in rural areas. In view of the above analysis, the author believes that we should first start from the change of ideology. Jin Guantao proposed the "super stable structure" [10,11] when he analyzed the reasons behind the Chinese feudal society lasting for two thousand years. He pointed out that the interaction between the political structure, landlord economy and Confucian ideology in Chinese feudal society maintained the stable development of feudal society. After the impact of Western civilization, a new super-stable structure was formed by the fusion of three subsystems: new ideology, political organization and economic structure. From the perspective of the introduction of digital platform in Lingxi Village, the arrival of digital platform is an attempt to break the original village governance structure as a new ideology and create a new village governance structure belonging to digital governance. However, under the impact of the new ideology of digital governance, the village governance structure has not changed. Specifically, the village governance structure before the development of the digital platform is regarded as a super-stable structure composed of various subsystems such as the governance body. The super-stable structure itself has certain adjustment ability and can resist certain external interference. In the process of digital platforms entering rural society, there are differences between the subjects applicable to digital governance and the original governance subjects of villages. However, since the ideology of digital governance has not had enough impact on the main body of village governance, the main body of village governance is still dominated by the old main body of governance, the ability of digital governance has not been improved, and the village governance structure suitable for the development of digital governance has not been created, so the digital governance brought about by the introduction of digital platforms has not been able to run stably.

To sum up, it can be concluded that in order to make digital governance run smoothly, the ideology of the governing body needs to be completely changed. Consciousness can guide people's actions, and the governing body can actively transform the village governance system and establish an integrated structure belonging to digital governance after it has the consciousness of digital governance. Only in this way can digital governance run smoothly in the village.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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