Digital Community Public Sphere: New Path of Rural Integration–Based on the Field Survey in the Countryside of China †

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Abstract: Based on the mini-public theory, this paper examines the mobile Internet public platform in the countryside of western China, and sees it as the public sphere of digital community. The research considers that the public sphere of this kind of digital community transforms the "Half acquaintance society" into "acquaintances society" and constructs the rural endogenous order. Its essence is the new media empower the village elite outside the system to form a social-media-based alliance, and with the village idle staff, left-behind women and other people to form the media self-organizing, become a new village endogenous power. The elite alliance of outside institutions, through express in the public sphere, media mobilization, public action, and so on, connected the scattered in different space of "atomic" villagers, promote the development of rural society. With the change of the village power structure, the elite alliance of the outside system and the village of the state agent have formed a competitive relationship, temporarily formed a relatively balanced cooperative governance model. The public sphere of the digital community makes villages from the nominal villager autonomy to the autonomy mode of "self-management, self-education and self-service" through the public participation of the villagers.

Keywords: mini-public; digital community public sphere: community integration

1. Introduction

With the profound influence of modernity on countryside, villages face "hollow" and "atomized" dilemma, and the village public space gradually declined. In this paper, a western country through the mobile Internet public platform to revive the village public space, villagers through the network to achieve "common presence", re-play public opinion role, initiate public action, the construction of rural endogenous order.

2. The Theoretical Perspective of Mini-Public

The concept of mini-public was originally proposed by the American political scientist Robert Dall (Robert Alan Dahl) in the Book of democracy and its critics, which was conceived on the basis of a critique of Western representative democracy in a small public sphere. The mini-public mainly focuses on small groups such as grassroots, community, small gatherings, and tries to incorporate all stakeholders into the deliberative democracy. The mini-public focuses on collaborative solutions, civic education and political participation, policy assessments, providing opportunities for vulnerable groups, and so on. The mini-public has the following important characteristics: The

number of participants is relatively limited, direct negotiation and dialogue, voluntary participation in the discussion, common settlement of public affairs and so on.

3. Case Selection and Research Methods

The field is located in a rural northwest China, due to urbanization, marketization, the village has a larger social problem. In 2014, the village introduced a mobile Internet public platform, villagers can freely Interaction. This paper adopts the research method combining the online participation observation and field investigation.

4. Structure: The Internal and External Forces in Community Public Sphere

4.1. Media Self-Organization Based on the Public Sphere of Digital Community

The village digital community is a public sphere of "organizing" or institutional. The Village mobile Internet practice has formed the media self-organization, namely the participant based on the socialized media constructs the open, the sharing interactive mode, finally forms the cooperative network system. The villager formed the virtual organization structure around the mobile internet platform, which is the new endogenous power of the village elite outside the system, which is an important organization of the village to carry out the common sense mobilization and public action, and constitutes the internal structure of the public sphere of the digital community.

The village constructs different hierarchical virtual organizations with the use of digital community public sphere, and forms the management decision logic of "the person responsible, collective consultation and public participation". Media from the public sphere of digital communities has become an important "intermediate organization" for initiating rural public action and conducting public affairs, it is the important force of integrating the "atomized" villager into the "organic solidarity" community, they will have been excluded from the rural governance of ordinary villagers into the governance system, which is obviously conducive to the realization of grassroots democracy and grassroots democracy.

4.2. The New and Old Authoritative Compete in the Public Sphere of Digital Community

The essence of Community public sphere is to promote the development of rural society. Villagers in the community public sphere through discourse expression and public action formed an important community endogenous power. When the elite-dominated media grassroots team formed a coalition, it formed a competitive relationship with the state power Agent Village committee. Grassroots team with the village committee after Cooperation, Division, cooperation, and then split, temporarily in the process of synergy. This is in fact media empowerment of the elite village outside the system, with the help of Community public sphere to obtain a higher authority, the village power structure change, the new and old authoritative power launched the compete game.

5. Representation: The Representation of Farmers' Subjectivity and the Construction of Rural Common Consciousness

This section will analyse the representation dimension of the village digital community in the public sphere from who expresses, expresses what, expresses inclination 3 aspects. Reveal the multiplicity of participants in the public sphere of the village's digital community, agenda setting and content bias.

5.1. Participation of Rural Pluralistic Subjects in the Public Sphere of Digital Communities

In the era of mobile network, the new media of "openness, equality, interaction, collaboration and sharing" promoted the channel of public opinion, and thus brought about the transformation of social communication relationship and status. The media feature of the mobile network's public platform determines the information production mode of by the People, for people. The

commonality and openness of mobile network platform makes the different status, stratum and preference of the village can participate in the public sphere of digital community.

5.2. Presentation of Rural Endogenous Discourse in the Public Sphere of Digital Community

5.2.1. Discussion on Village Public Issues

After the creation of the mobile network public platform, villagers have more space to participate in the village affairs.

5.2.2. Rebuilding Village Rules

The public sphere of digital community is the field of rural public opinion production, and also the place of village rules revival.

5.2.3. The Production of Rural Community News

Through the mobile network platform, the villagers entered the "everyone has a microphone", "Everyone has cameras", the era of the national reporter. Every day mobile network platform will have villagers release community news.

6. Interactional: Network Interaction Strengthens Social Relations

The villagers through the digital community public sphere not only strengthens the daily line on-line interaction, but also launches the public action on the platform.

7. Conclusions

The structural dimension shows that the public sphere of digital communities has been connected to diverse participants so as to make the governance of multiple participants possible. The representational dimension indicates that the public sphere of digital communities can produce a common consciousness via internal discourse so as to build community identity. The interactional dimension proves that the public sphere of digital communities acts as a platform for interactions between the government and villagers, between villagers themselves, and between the internal villages and the external surroundings.

Accordingly, the public sphere of digital communities has been a new approach to the integration of rural communities with regard to central and western villages.

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