

Exploration and Practice of Third-Party Evaluation of Government affairs openness -- Take Shandong Province as an Example

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Abstract. Government affairs openness is an inevitable requirement for building an open government, a law-based government, an innovative government, a clean government and a service-oriented government. Over the years, Shandong province has been continuously promoting the work of government affairs openness and achieved great results. Taking government affairs openness in Shandong province as an example, and taking the 2017 government website as the benchmark, this paper made a professional evaluation of provincial departments, municipal governments and county-level governments in the province from the perspective of a third party. Combined with the evaluation results of some cities in 2018, the paper also elaborates on the highlights and existing problems of current government affairs openness in Shandong province, finds out the root causes of the problems, and puts forward suggestions for improvement.

1. Preface

In recent years, China has been constantly practicing and implementing the work of government affairs openness. Especially with the continuous popularization of electronic information technology, government affairs openness has gradually developed into the most direct channel and mode of communication between the government and the masses [1]. Compared with western countries, the work of government affairs openness started late in China. However, with the arrival of the era of big data, the work of government affairs openness has developed by leaps and bounds in the past decade. The government affairs openness represented by Shanghai, Shandong and Jiangsu provinces has achieved in-depth and sustainable development. By the end of 2018, Shandong provincial government has won the "Golden Weight Award" for two consecutive terms, and the government affairs openness has been continuously promoted vertically. Taking Shandong province's government affairs openness work as an example, this paper mainly analyzes the problems of government affairs openness from the aspects of administrative power operation disclosure, information disclosure in key areas, disclosure according to application, policy interpretation and response to concerns, platform mechanism guarantee construction and so on, makes an in-depth evaluation of the province's government affairs openness work based on the evaluation index of Shandong province's government affairs openness, and puts forward the development countermeasures of government affairs disclosure.

2. Evaluation principle

The third-party evaluation on the government affairs openness adheres to the principles of democracy and justice, objective quantification, pragmatic effectiveness and work promotion. Democratic and justice means to unify the assessment content and criteria, to conduct the assessment impartially and objectively, and to open the assessment process and results to the public. Objective quantification refers to the scientific formulation of evaluation methods and contents, the reasonable set of evaluation indexes and scores, the adoption of quantitative and qualitative methods, the formulation

of specific quantitative criteria, the objective and fair evaluation, to ensure that the evaluation results are real and reliable. Pragmatic evaluation refers to the implementation of evaluation in strict accordance with evaluation standards and requirements, strict evaluation discipline, standardized evaluation procedures, simplified evaluation process, and improved evaluation effectiveness. Work promotion means to mobilize the enthusiasm, initiative and creativity of departments at all levels in their work, to promote the comprehensive development of government affairs openness in Shandong province, with encourage advancement and stimulate motivation as the purpose.

3. Highlights in the government affairs openness in Shandong province

3.1 The normalized promotion has become one of the highlights of the work of government affairs openness in Shandong province

Through the evaluation, it is found that all regions and departments in Shandong province attach great importance to the government affairs openness, and constantly strengthen the awareness of government affairs openness through standardization pilot, work supervision and revision of government websites. Municipal governments have also gradually carried out assessment and third-party evaluation of municipal government affairs disclosure. The municipal government's government affairs openness work has been included in the province's comprehensive assessment system for scientific development. With the development of the standardization and normalization pilot work of grassroots government affairs disclosure in Shandong province, relying on the pilot work at the grassroots level, the county-level governments are committed to opening up the "last kilometer" of government affairs services. The ability and awareness of government affairs openness are also continuously improved. The work of government affairs openness of the whole province has entered the stage of normal promotion.

3.2 Open work of administrative power operation shows good posture

In accordance with the "Openness is the norm and non-openness is the exception" principle, the regional various departments actively promote administrative power information dynamic management, further improve and perfect the system of open government work mechanism, full and timely disclosure of information on the operation of administrative power to the public according to law, promote transparency in decision-making, execution and results. Use institutional arrangements to make government affairs openness throughout the whole process of running government affairs, wherever power is exercised, openness and oversight extend.

3.3 Information openness in key areas was deepened in an orderly manner and continued to be promoted

The average score of specific indicators of Shandong provincial government departments, municipal governments and county governments is about 90%. Governments at all levels have fully implemented the important arrangements made by the party central committee and the state council for comprehensively promoting government affairs openness, and continued to promote information disclosure in key areas that are of great concern to the society and involve the vital interests of the people, including fiscal budgets and final accounts, major construction projects, allocation of public resources and development of public welfare undertakings. In terms of vertical deepening, the establishment and improvement of such systems as "Shandong province public resource trading network", "Shandong province open platform for budget and final accounts" and "Shandong province open inquiry system for land expropriation information" have also provided a solid platform foundation for orderly deepening of information disclosure in key areas.

3.4 Openness upon application basically unimpeded and the reply is timely

Each unit is normative ceaselessly its work of openness upon application, smooth the acceptance channel, improves and perfects its work norms, and is able to respond strictly in accordance with the statutory time limit. The evaluation results show that the overall unblocked rate of letter channel and online channel is above 90%, and the response rate on time is above 80%.

3.5 Policy interpretations and responses to concerns have diversified

In accordance with the policy interpretation of the "three synchronization" mechanism, various departments in different regions have further strengthened the interpretation of policies and measures in the fields of poverty alleviation, tax reduction and fee reduction, entrepreneurship and innovation, social assistance, special needs of compulsory education, financial market and real estate market. The interpretation content is more grounded, and the forms are constantly enriched. While interpretation materials are comprehensive, accurate, scientific and authoritative, they should be understood, trusted and used by the public. In response to concerns, all units actively responded to public opinion hotspots through multiple channels, such as government websites, Weibo, WeChat and news media. In addition to releasing information, they were able to timely understand public demands and respond to public questions, forming a benign interactive relationship.

3.6 The working mechanism is basically sound and the platform construction is steadily advancing.

Shandong provincial government departments and municipal governments can basically integrate decision-making, execution, management, service and results into the process of the affairs of literature and meetings, and establish a dynamic expansion mechanism of open content. Governments at all levels have set up leading groups for the government affairs openness at the corresponding levels to coordinate the implementation of the tasks of the government affairs openness in various regions and departments, and strengthen supervision and inspection, continuing to strengthen the role of government websites as the primary platform for making government affairs public. Many units have re-edited and upgraded government websites and actively broadened the open channels. All units attached great importance to the construction of new media for government affairs, constantly improved the service level of new media for government affairs and made government affairs more open, and truly realized the "last mile" between the government and the grassroots.

4. Analysis of the problems existing in government affairs openness

4.1 Implementation of important administrative decision procedures in some units is imperfect

According to the "Provisional regulations on the procedures of major administrative decisions (draft for soliciting opinions)", public participation, expert evaluation, risk assessment, legitimacy review and collective discussion and decision will become the legal procedures of major administrative decisions, and the links of public participation will be highlighted [2]. The evaluation found that some units published the draft of opinions in notices, announcements, work trends and other columns, and did not establish a special unified release; some units made public the collection states of opinions, while did not detailed public opinion adopted and the reasons for not to adopt. In addition, the solicitation of opinions by county-level governments shows a low level of public participation, and the feedback of most public opinions is "no opinions or suggestions have been received". In terms of meeting opening, there are many meetings such as the symposium, discussion meeting, BBS and joint meeting organized by its own unit, while the government standing meeting and department general meeting are not open enough. Moreover, the association and interpretation of the items agreed at the meeting are generally not comprehensive enough, and the relevant documents or draft adopted at the meeting are not released in time.

4.2 Inadequate integration of information disclosure in some key areas

The information disclosed in some key areas is fragmented and unsystematic. For example, Spot check situation is related to the results of random sampling. However, some units disclose the annual random sampling by means of notification and publicity, while the results of random sampling are placed in the same catalog as the information of administrative penalties. The validity labeling of normative documents is not accurate enough, and some documents are not marked with validity or are marked incorrectly. "Double publicity" information, prices of agricultural products, grain acquisition

progress in summer and autumn, air quality status, water environment quality status, social assistance information and other information with clear time limit requirements, some units focus on the annual release, the timeliness of relevant information disclosure is seriously affected.

4.3 The standardization of reply of openness upon application still needs to be improved

The evaluation found that 29.59 percent of the units failed to respond to the applications submitted through the letter channel within the prescribed time limit, and 31.12 percent failed to respond to the applications submitted through the online channel within the prescribed time limit. There are some problems such as wrong words, inadequate legal basis and lack of relief channels in the reply of some units.

4.4 The development of new media of government affairs shows disordered management

The development of new media of government affairs in various units is characterized by disordered management, and such phenomena as "emphasizing construction over management", "emphasizing release over interaction" still exist. For example, some government weibo are named after the full name of the institution, some are named after the abbreviation, some are named after the local name plus local characteristics, some are not obviously related to the name of the institution, and do not provide relevant links on the government website, which is extremely inconvenient for the public to find. The development of government affairs WeChat also shows the trend of homogenization with government affairs weibo, the different characteristics of microblog and WeChat are not fully utilized to realize the mutual integration and development.

4.5 The level of government affairs openness at the grassroots level is extremely uneven

The evaluation results showed that 12 of the county-level governments scored more than 90 points in total, but 21 of them scored less than 60 points and were in the failing level. In general, the development of the level of government affairs disclosure of grassroots governments was extremely uneven, showing a relatively obvious phenomenon of polarization. Parts grass-roots government affairs public awareness is relatively weak, has not set up specialized agencies responsible for government affairs openness, even if there is a specialized agency, there is also the problem of large mobility of full-time or no full-time personnel, and they are not familiar with the related business of government affairs openness, which will affect the effectiveness of disclosure. For example, the "power list" is shown as the "right list" on the homepage of a county government portal.

5. Countermeasures to promote government affairs openness in Shandong province

5.1 Improving feedback mechanism of public participation and implementing major administrative decision-making procedures

Continuously promote the integration of decision-making, execution, management, service and results into the procedures of the affairs of literature and meetings, implement the management of major administrative decision-making items, and clarify the scope of major administrative decision-making items [3]. Use mechanism systems like sound big decisions in advance public, invite stakeholders and other stakeholders to attend relevant government meetings, public participation feedback, feedback to a public opinion article by article, adoption status, reasons for not adoption, etc. Ensure that participation must have a response and feedback. Strictly implement the provisions of major administrative decision-making procedures, earnestly incorporate public participation, expert demonstration, risk assessment, legitimacy review and collective discussion into the legal procedures of major administrative decision-making, promote scientific, democratic and legal administrative decision-making, ensure the quality of decision-making, and improve the credibility and execution of government decision-making [4].

5.2 Comprehensively review the active public directory and refine the standards for disclosure in key areas

On the basis of the newly revised regulations on the openness of government information, the "three definitions" plan, the list of powers and responsibilities, and the main points of annual work, start the work of compiling the goal of active publicity in an all-round way, further clarify the main body, content, time limit and mode of the "five publicity" in various fields, and maintain dynamic updates to form an active publicity mode of "comprehensive carding of basic catalogues and dynamic updating of open content". Start formulating the negative list of government affairs openness according to law, refine and clarify the scope of non-publicity, and bring into the negative list management of matters endangering national security, economic security, public security and social stability after publication, and timely adjust and update it. We should continue to deepen information disclosure in key areas, refine relevant standards and requirements, give prominence to information disclosure in areas such as rural revitalization, financial budgets and final accounts, approval and implementation of major construction projects, allocation of public resources, and development of public welfare undertakings, and promote the formation of a linkage effect of information disclosure, release and interpretation in key areas.

5.3 Strengthen the daily monitoring of government affairs openness and playing the promoting role of evaluation

Make overall arrangements for the evaluation work, and completely hand over the evaluation of projects suitable to the third party, so as to realize the seamless connection between the government assessment and the assessment of the third party, so as to make the assessment more efficient and accurate. Strengthen the combination of daily monitoring and year-end evaluation, for projects with strong timeliness, such as policy interpretation and response to social concerns, the third party shall strengthen daily monitoring with the help of professional monitoring work, so as to realize all-round, real-time, objective and fair evaluation and assessment of the government affairs openness of all levels and departments. Avoid the occurrence of surprise work in individual units to cope with assessment, not timely daily update, or provide false or invalid information phenomenon.

5.4 Deepening the grass-roots government openness and promoting the balanced development of grass-roots government

Taking the pilot project of standardization and normalization of grass-roots government affairs as an opportunity, deepen publicity of government affairs at the grass-roots level, strengthen training, guidance, supervision and acceptance of pilot programs, and ensure that Shandong standards that can be copied and promoted are in place. In 2018, the progress and completion of the pilot program will be included in the assessment of government affairs. After the completion of the pilot work, the pilot work experience of standardization and normalization of grassroots government affairs openness will be further expanded in Shandong province to further expand the results of the pilot work.

5.5 Straighten out the organizational structure of government affairs openness and strengthen the training of full-time personnel

We should straighten out the three-level relationship between provinces, cities, and counties, set up special government agencies, allocate full-time personnel, unify centralized management, and improve the level of full-time and professional government openness. Continue to strengthen the norms and guidance for openness upon applications, implement the newly revised "Regulations on Government Information Disclosure". Intensify training for all levels and departments, formulate business training plans, explore various training methods, ensure the realization of the task goal of rotating training for provincial government affairs openness staff, and effectively improve the understanding of government affairs disclosure work.

6. Conclusion

Government affairs openness is of great significance for enhancing the credibility and execution of the government and safeguarding the people's right to know, participate, express and supervise [5]. From the perspective of a third party, takes Shandong province's government affairs openness work as the evaluation object, and combines the "five openness" requirements in government affairs openness to make an in-depth elaboration on the highlights in the government affairs disclosure work. Mainly includes normalized promotion has become the theme keynote of Shandong province's government affairs openness, the open operation of administrative power shows a good trend, information disclosure in key areas has been continuously promoted, channels of openness upon application is basically smooth, the platform construction is basically sound. At the same time, of course, there are also some problems such as uneven openness level of grassroots government affairs, new media of government affairs need to further strengthen the management, the standardization of the content of the response of openness upon application needs to be further strengthened, information in key areas is not classified and graded, etc. Specific to the problems, the paper puts forward specific development countermeasures from the aspects of public feedback, refining standards, strengthening monitoring, improving grassroots work, and increasing training, which has important guiding significance for further strengthening the actual work of government affairs disclosure in Shandong province.

Conflicts of Interests

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests regarding the publication of this paper.

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