



Research on the Realistic Dilemma and Optimization Path of “Internet + Government Service” —— Based on the Perspective of New Public Service Theory

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Abstract. In recent years, the “Internet + Government Service” has been an important way to build a service-oriented government in China. Current research is focusing on how to integrate Internet and government services and promote the transformation of government functions. Combining with the new public service theory, this paper analyzed the achievements and deficiencies in the “Internet + Government Internet Service” practice in Shandong province. The optimal path is analyzed from the aspects of public demand, system construction, and the sharing of government information resources. This research also offers a reference for the construction of “Internet + Government Service” in other regions.

Keywords: Internet + Government Service · New public service theory · Optimization path

1 Introduction

Contemporary governments are facing unprecedented challenges in national governance. The challenges are mainly manifested in that the demand of citizens has changed from passively accepting government management to actively putting forward higher government service requirements, such as democracy, openness, transparency, and so on. The rapid development of information technology helps the government to narrow the gap between citizens’ expectations and the government’s service capacity. The government service, which is based on the Internet, namely “Internet + Government Service”, has effectively strengthened the interaction between the government and the public and fully embodies the innovation of the concept of government service. “Internet + Government Service” is a new driving force for the modernization of government and a new path to

create a smart government, which can make important breakthrough in the transformation of government functions, and innovate the government service mode [1]. The 14th 5-Year Plan and 2035 Long-Range Objectives pointed out that the government should deepen the efficiency of digital government services and promote the digitization and intelligence of government operation modes, business processes, and service modes. In order to provide better and reliable services, the government must formulate an integrated digital route in line with the current environment and trend, and promote the digital transformation.

“Internet + Government Service” belongs to the research field of E-government. Some researchers have carried out multi-perspective research on the government’s service capacity from three aspects: service evaluation, service value, and influencing factors. For example, Lee-Geiller and Lee constructed the evaluation model of government portal websites from different dimensions to evaluate the service efficiency and service quality of government portal websites [2]. In terms of service value, researchers not only conducted theoretical research on government service values (such as democracy, trust, and transparency), but also analyzed the realization mechanism of government service values [3]. Some researchers focused on the influencing factors in the process of realizing government service value. They put forward a theory model based on driving factors and obstructive factors, which clarifies that big data can accelerate the transformation of government work modes by improving the efficiency and effectiveness of service provision. At present, the researches on “Internet + Government Service” in China focused on the definition and practice exploration. In terms of concept definition, some scholars point out that “Internet + Government Service” means providing public service by integrating public service resources and building a convenient, efficient, high-quality government service platform [4]. In terms of practical exploration, based on the investigation of the provincial government service platform, some researchers indicated that government services can be optimized in three directions: online top-level design, regional cooperation, and online-offline integrated development.

Since the end of the 20th century, China has actively promoted government reform and local pilot practice supported by information technology [5]. Under the guidance of policies, local governments have successively carried out the integration of government information systems and the construction of government service platforms. In recent years, the construction of “Internet + Government Service” in Shandong province has achieved significant results. In the survey and evaluation report of the provincial government and key city integrated government service capability (2021) released by the China National School of Administration, the overall index of Shandong government service capability is “high”. The analysis of the construction of “Internet + Government Service” in Shandong province is of great significance to other local governments to improve government service. In addition, with the advancement of the practice of public administration reform, the new public service theory proposes to pay more attention to democratic values and public interests, which is more in line with the needs of modern social development and public management practice, and has important reference value for the construction of service-oriented government. Therefore, based on the new public service theory, this paper analyzed the achievements and difficulties of “Internet

+ Government Service” in Shandong province and explored the optimization path of government services in the construction of service-oriented government.

2 Connotation and Theoretical Basis

2.1 The Connotation of “Internet + Government Service”

“Internet + Government Service” is a new concept that China has proposed to promote the transformation of government functions, which first appeared in the Report on the Work of the Government in 2016. The concept of “Internet + Government Service” is a new concept that China has proposed to promote the transformation of government functions, which first appeared in the Report on the Work of the Government in 2016. The concept of “Internet + Government Service” is similar to E-government service and E-Public-Service in that it integrates the two meanings of “Internet” and “Government Service”. It is not simply government service, but government business integration and process reengineering with the help of Internet thinking. It can improve the quality of service through innovative government service modes, so as to better meet public demand. Therefore, the connotation of “Internet + Government Service” is similar to that of E-government, that is, to meet the public demand and innovate the government service mode with the help of big data, artificial intelligence, and other information technology.

2.2 The Theoretical Basis of “Internet + Government Service”

2.2.1 New Public Service Theory

The new public service theory is a supplement and improvement to the new public management theory. While recognizing the people-centered governance mode in the new public management theory, it is put forward that it is important to pay more attention to the cultivation of civic consciousness and the protection of civil rights. There are two breakthroughs in the new public service theory in governance consciousness and governance concept. Firstly, in the role of governance, it indicates that the main function of the government is not to manage, but to provide social services. The government should mediate the contradictions in the role of mediator or intermediary, organize and coordinate all social groups to play their respective functions and build a better society. Secondly, in terms of governance concepts, compared with the “customer” centered view of the new public management theory, the new public service theory indicates that citizens are not just “customers” pursuing personal interests but individuals with civic awareness and civil rights. The government should face up to the management role of citizens in social governance. The best governance effect can be achieved only when the government forms a good interactive and cooperative relationship with the citizens.

2.2.2 Characteristics of “Internet + Government Service” Under the New Public Service Theory

Based on the innovation of new public service theory in governance roles and governance concepts, “Internet + Government Service” embodies three main characteristics.

Firstly, it is people-centered. The government is not only the manager of policy-making but also the provider of public services. With the increasing willingness and channels of citizens to participate in social governance, the government must adapt to the new situation and respond to citizens' demands with an open attitude. This governance concept also meets the requirements of the socialist core values of China (political democracy, social equality, and people-oriented).

Secondly, the digital and intelligent development of government services. "Internet + Government Service" significantly improves the level of the digitalization and intellectualization of government services through diversified Internet channels such as government portal websites, APPs, and micro-blogs.

Thirdly, cooperative governance. The transformation of the concept of government governance from "control" to "service" has created a space that can promote the free development of all social groups. The wide application of information technology provides equal opportunities for dialogue between social groups and the government, which enhances the sense of trust of social groups in the government and forms a cooperative governance mode of mutual trust, mutual cooperation, and shared responsibility.

3 The Achievements of "Internet + Government Service" in Shandong Province

3.1 Digital Infrastructure

Shandong Province has comprehensively promoted the "new infrastructure". The intensive construction of public infrastructure is being promoted gradually, and the operation efficiency and service capacity of digital infrastructure have been significantly improved. The government's cloud service system covering the whole province has been built. More than 97% of the provincial government's information systems have been migrated to the cloud service system.

The IPv6 transformation of the e-government network has been completed. And the e-government network already covered four administrative levels of government (provincial government, municipal government, country government, and town government). The development pattern of "one network and one cloud" (the unified e-government network and government cloud service of the whole province) has been fully formed, which provides solid support for the development of "Internet + Government Service."

3.2 Government Information Resource

Shandong province built a provincial integrated big data platform system that covers government information resources at all levels and departments. The "Four in One" data resource system of basic database, special database, theme database, and general office database has been basically formed. These practices are beneficial to the aggregation, sharing, and opening of data resources. As of July 2021, the integrated big data platform of Shandong province has gathered more than 22 billion pieces of data, and the provincial sharing platform has provided services more than 4.43 billion times, realizing the application of government information resources across levels, regions, departments, and businesses.

4 The Realistic Dilemma of “Internet + Government Service” in Shandong Province

4.1 The Online Rate and Service Process of Government Service Need to Be Improved

Through the actual investigation of government affairs service websites at all levels, we found that the government service online rate of some departments is low. Individual departments have an online rate of less than 50%. Some services that could have been provided online are still unavailable, and citizens must visit the government service center to obtain them. In addition, there are some non-standard problems in the process of online government services. For example, some uncorrelated webpages occur in the process of a few online government services. On the whole, the online government service of Shandong province still needs to be refined and improved.

4.2 The Insufficient Integration and Sharing of Government Information Resources

There are still some problems in the integration and sharing of government information resources. For example, there is a significant disparity in departments' attention to government information resource integration, as well as a low level of information sharing and exchange across departmental and regional boundaries. The integration of government information resources should not be limited to the collection and induction but also be guided by public demand. The government should make efficient use of data and better perform service functions. However, the utilization of government information resources by some departments still stays in data collection and statistical query. The value mining of the government's information resources is insufficient, limiting support for decision-making analysis and the ability to provide more targeted services to citizens.

4.3 The Mobile Government Service is Immature

In order to deepen the “Internet + Government Service” and accelerate the construction of an online government service platform, Shandong province launched the “Ai Shandong” mobile government service APP in 2019. “Ai Shandong” has linked to medical insurance, social security, transportation service, market supervision, and other services related to the citizen's daily life, with the goal of “doing everything on one APP.” However, compared with the mobile government service APPs launched in Guangdong, Zhejiang, Shanghai, and other local governments, the focus of the “Ai Shandong” APP on service functions is not enough. The maturity and availability of some service functions are not enough, resulting in weak user adhesion. Some citizens still take the offline government service hall as their primary choice to deal with daily business.

5 The Optimization Path of “Internet + Government Service”

5.1 Strengthen Government Service Based on Public Demands

The fundamental reason for the insufficient online government service is the dislocation between the construction of “Internet + Government Service” and the changing demands

of citizens, resulting in the supply dilemma of government service. The online government service can be improved by three steps. To begin, the government should accelerate the process of reengineering and innovating the service mode, removing obstacles to the online service experience and allowing citizens to experience the convenience provided by information technology. Secondly, the government should grasp the change in citizen demands through various channels (such as micro-blog, WeChat official account, etc.). They gradually improve the online service flow and quality after fully understanding citizens' confusion and suggestions about government services.

5.2 Optimize the Construction of “Internet + Government Service” System

At present, the “Internet + Government Service” system from all administrative departments has been basically completed, but the integrity, standardization, and fineness of service still need to be improved. Taking Shandong Province as an example, the government should further strengthen the arrangement and coordination of “Internet + Government Service”. Firstly, standardize the government service items and form a unified government service directory for management. Secondly, enrich the content of “Internet + Government Service” and expand the scope of online services on the basis of the service directory. Thirdly, optimize the process of online government services, reduce the approval process, and promote the electronicization of supporting documents. Fourth, innovate the mode of operation of mobile government services APP. Third-party Internet platforms such as WeChat and Alipay can be used to enhance the actual usage rate of mobile government services.

5.3 Deepen the Integration and Sharing of Government Information Resource

The government masters a large number of information resources related to the daily lives of citizens. How to promote the development and utilization of information resources is a problem that the government must face in the process of improving social governance. Based on the current development of government information resources in Shandong province, this paper puts forward the following suggestions. Firstly, refining the standards for the integration and sharing of government information resources. Secondly, promoting the development of education, medical services, and other livelihood services through information technology. Thirdly, giving play to the role of evaluation. Relevant responsible departments should carry out daily supervision of the integration and sharing of government information resources, ensuring that all departments complete the sharing of information on time and quality.

6 Conclusions

This paper discussed the characteristics of “Internet + Government Service” under the new public service theory, including people-centered government and the intellectualization of government service, which provided theoretical support for the construction of service-oriented government. In the case study, this paper takes the “Internet + Government Service” practice in Shandong province as an example. Some suggestions are

made after the analysis of the achievements and dilemmas of the “Internet + Government Service” in Shandong province. This paper has a theoretical reference value for the construction of “Internet + Government Service” in Shandong province, and it can also provide a reference for other local governments to enhance the level of government service.

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