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Government Information Publicity in the Internet Plus Background: The Perspective of the National Governance Modernization

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Abstract

In the background of the Chinese government trying to enhance the governance capacity and governance system modernization, the government information publicity is a necessary condition for the modernization of national governance. Internet Plus is a new development strategy in the new era, which is closely related to the government information publicity. We can promote the modernization of the national governance capacities by promoting the government information publicity. This article regards the government information publicity as a base point; through analyzing the relationship between the Internet Plus and the modernization of the national governance capacity, this article presents the mechanism of the “Internet Plus the government information publicity” in the perspective of the national governance modernization and also the schematic view of both of them and proposes the flow model of the government information in the background of the Internet Plus. In this model, the government information changes from the traditional one-way flow to the full range of multi-directional flow, presenting the disruptive changes of the information flow in the Internet Plus background.

Key words: Internet plus; Government governance; Information publicity; Big Data; National governance modernization

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INTRODUCTION

In March 2015, the Prime Minister Li Keqiang attended the third session of the 12th National People’s Congress and stated in the government work report that formulate the Internet Plus action plan, in which the Internet Plus was first mentioned in the government’s regulatory documents. In June of the same year, *The Guidance on Actively Promoting the Internet Plus Action by the State Council* was issued. From the level and the time interval of the two government documents, we can realize that the Chinese government regards the Internet Plus as an important strategic opportunity for national development, and urges the rapid integration of the “Internet Plus all walks of life” to become a new engine for the economic development. With the government information publicity being the important part of the governance, we hold great concerns about the results of the “Internet Plus Government Information Publicity”. So, what’s the relationship between the Internet Plus and the government information publicity? And what is the future trend of them? These have become the focus of this article.

The Information technology has brought tremendous changes to the economic and social development; especially in the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, a new round of rapid development of Internet technology has brought a new strategic opportunity period to build a moderately prosperous society. Based on this, the prime minister Li Keqiang made reports at the third session of the 12th National People’s Congress, proposed that we should formulate the Internet Plus action plan and urged the deep

integration and collaborative innovation between the Internet Plus and all walks of life. The modernization of government governance capacity requires to rely on the Big Data to provide the technical support and apply the new technologies to management innovation, promote scientific decision-making through data aggregation, promote meticulous management through the flat network and then bring the sunlight to the national governance through the data development (Chen, 2015).

1. INTERNET PLUS AND THE GOVERNMENT INFORMATION PUBLICITY

1.1 Connotation of the Internet Plus

From being proposed for the first time, the Internet Plus experienced four key events before it was settled as a national strategy. The first event is that the Internet Plus was proposed by Yu Yang in 2012. The second event is that in 2014 the prime minister Li Keqiang put forward that the internet is a new tool for “public entrepreneurship, public innovation”, which is the important theme of the government’s work report and was called the “new engine” to upgrade the quality and efficiency of China’s economy. The third event is during the National People’s Congress and the Chinese Political Consultative Conference in March of 2015, the representative Ma Huateng submitted a proposal named “Recommendations on the Internet Plus to promote the innovative development of the economy and the society of China”. He hoped that such a strategy should be adopted by the government and become a national strategy. The fourth event is on March 5 of 2015, at the third session of the 12th National People’s Congress the prime minister Li Keqiang proposed the Internet Plus in the government’s work report for the first time. Li Keqiang suggested that

make the Internet Plus action plan to promote the Mobile Internet, Cloud Computing, Big Data and Internet of Things combined with the modern manufacturing, to facilitate the healthy development of the electronic commerce, industrial internet and internet banking, to guide the internet enterprises to expand the international market. (Li, 2015)

It has experienced a short period of three years for Internet Plus from being proposed for the first time to becoming a national strategy, of which there are both the initial combined practice between the Internet and the traditional industries, and the far-sighted vision of the state leaders. So what exactly is the Internet Plus, as well as the exact relation with the government information publicity? This is the focus of this article content. Internet Plus essentially means “Internet Plus the traditional industries”, which means that applying the Mobile Internet, Internet of Things, Big Data, Cloud Computing and other information and communication technologies to traditional industries, so that both of them can be integrated to produce collaborative innovation and to generate new

economic form and develop a new engine for economic growth. The deep integration of the Internet Plus and the government information publicity could not only be conducive to building the “China Information”, but also do good to build a democratic government and enhancing the transparency of the Chinese government. Playing a great role of “Internet Plus Government Information Publicity” should firstly establish the internet thinking, learn to observe the integration point of the Government Information Publicity and the Internet technology, and promote the deep integration of both of them, and develop a new government innovation. Secondly, formulate the Internet Plus action plan which will combine the ideas and actions together, promote the “Internet Plus Government Information Publicity” integrate deeply step by step.

1.2 Relationship Between the Internet Plus and the National Governance Capacity Modernization

Communist Party of China Central Committee on Deepening Overall Reform of a Certain Number of Major Issues was passed in the Third Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and presented that the overall objective of deepening the reform comprehensively is to improve and develop the socialist system with Chinese characteristics and promote the national governance system and governance modernization. Obviously, the modernization of the national governance system and governance capacity is an important strategic objective in the current condition as well as after a long period of the reform and development of the Chinese economy and society. The connotation of the modernization of the national governance system and governance capacity includes a very important point: Which is a modern way of governance—from one-way command aptitude to the two-way interactive aptitude. Internet Plus which is a new national development strategy has a close relation with the goal of the national governance system and governance capacity modernization; the specific performance is that the Internet Plus for its large number of data, fast transmission speed and efficient two-way communication mode do good to improve the way of the national governance modernization.

2. CURRENT STATUS AND PROBLEMS OF THE GOVERNMENT INFORMATION PUBLICITY

2.1 Status of the Government Information Publicity

The government information publicity, also known as the openness in government affairs refers to one kind of policy during the process of governance which means the government should open the laws and regulations and the policy documents of the relative

public services to the public, as well as the procedures, the staffs and the service results. Government has an obligation to open the information to the public, which is not only an important manifestation of democracy, but also an important feature of modern government. The government information publicity of China has experienced different stages of development. The two documents below are more influential: One document is implemented since May 1st 2008 and called *Regulations on the Government Information Publicity of the People's Republic of China*; The other document is called *Opinions on Deepening the Government Information Publicity to Strengthen E-government Service* which was issued by the General Office of the State Council in June 8th 2011 and set the accuracy, timeliness and richness on opening the government information, so that the government information publicity has the normative documents to rely on (Fu, Xu, & Zhang 2015). In addition to the types of documents issued by the government, the government information publicity has also made some substantial progress in practice; the specific performance are as follows: (a) Various government organizations are able to realize the importance of the government information publicity, and actively open its government information related to their public affairs. (b) The government organizations to open their information in the longitudinal direction are from the central government at the township level. (c) The media to open the information includes the network, micro-blogs, Wechat and other new media apart from the traditional media like newspapers and television. The government treats the information publicity as a "mission" rather than an "obligation"; therefore accordingly, we can not guarantee the quality of the government information publicity, which mainly involves the timeliness, the effectiveness and the continuity of the information publicity. The lawful rights of citizens can not be effectively guaranteed for the lack of supervising.

2.2 Problems of the Government Information Publicity

After a long period of development, the government information publicity shows some new problems and the specific performance are as follows.

2.2.1 Emphasizing the One-Way Openness, Neglecting the Interactive Response

The current government information publicity is mostly about that the government open the current condition to the public of one certain policy or one certain event. This kind of publicity is one-way straightly from the government to the public which means the public have less chance to response against the policy results and form the interactive effect with the government. Therefore, this kind of publicity is just open such information that the government has already made the decision. That is to say, the government does not expect to get feedback

from the public, or turn a blind eye to the feedback. However, participation has become a core element of Internet Governance, selectively participating becomes the net citizens' freedom not the government's rights. The transparency during the process of participation is becoming a common will of both the government and the net citizens (Zhu, 2015).

2.2.2 Emphasizing the Increase of Number, Neglecting the Promotion of Connotation

The current media of the government information publicity presents a trend of diversification. In the year of 2014, the General Office of the State Council declared explicitly in the *Government Information Publicity Work Points of 2014* that

Strengthen the construction of the spokesman system and government websites, government micro-blogs, Wechat and other information platforms, give full play to the effects of the role of radio, television, newspapers, news websites, commercial websites and other media, so that the mainstream sound and authoritative and accurate government information could spread widely in the network area and the dissemination system. (The General Office of the Central People's Government, 2014)

From the *Government Information Publicity Work Points of 2014*, we could easily find that the media of the government information publicity have experienced a great expansion: from the initial spokesperson system, government websites to the emerging media like the micro-blogs and Wechat, etc.. The media of the government information publicity increase in great number, and spread from the provincial to the township level of hierarchy and diffuse from the government to the National People's Congress. But meanwhile we also notice that the number of government information publicity media in recent years has increased rapidly, but the quality of service is unsatisfactory; for example, in Tianjin bombings event, the new media don't play a substantial role at all.

2.2.3 Emphasizing Opening the Results, Neglecting Supervising the Process

The current government information publicity focuses on restating the established fact on the government websites, to make the public learn a policy or work processes; which does not bring substantial convenience for the public service in the strict sense. When some certain government information was posted on the government website, even if the public feel like "not satisfied, do not agree, do not support", which is still no effective official channels to express the demands of the public.

3. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE INTERNET PLUS AND THE GOVERNMENT INFORMATION PUBLICITY

This paper will set forth the relationship between the Internet Plus and the government information publicity by

the following three points. Firstly, both of them share the similar media and platforms. Before the Internet Plus idea generates, the “Internet” itself has a close relation with the government information publicity; the government posts its information on the website via the internet, but at that time, the government information publicity stays in the stage of informing the public. After entering the Internet Plus era, the government information publicity and the Internet will enter into a deep integration phase, to create a good information environment through a combination of both and provide substantial convenience for the public. Secondly, on the content both of them have the inter-operable data and information. In the background of the Internet Plus era, the big data, internet of things or other technologies will be widely applied. The information being collected and used by the internet or the government has interconnection properties. Thirdly, the two concepts of both are data sharing and collaborative innovation. The internet and the government information publicity hope to realize the deep integration and collaborative innovation of the “Internet Plus all walks of life” through the interconnected data (Zhou & Lü, 2015). The relation of the Internet Plus and the government information publicity is shown in Figure 1.

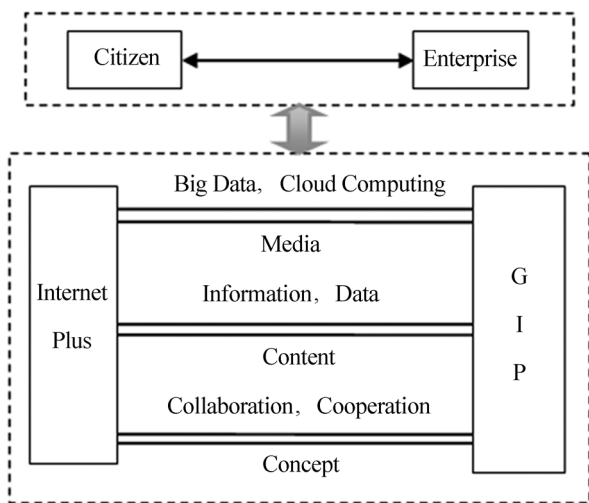


Figure 1
Representation of the Relationship Between the “Internet Plus” and the “GIP”

4. PROSPECTS OF THE “INTERNET PLUS GOVERNMENT INFORMATION PUBLICITY”

Modern society is one kind of society with rapid advances in information technology and in which the globalization of information gradually formed. We are increasingly concerned about electronization, automation and networking issues of government work (Xia & Song, 2014). After introducing the relationship between the Internet Plus and the government information publicity,

we could clearly predict a good prospect with the combination of both of them. Combining the Internet, Big Data, Cloud Computing with the Government Information Publicity could form a good response mechanism and create opportunities for the public to participate in the generation, propagation and regeneration of government information. Based on the traditional development of the relationship between the Internet Plus and the government information publicity, Figure 2 is shown as a flow model of government information in the background of the Internet Plus.

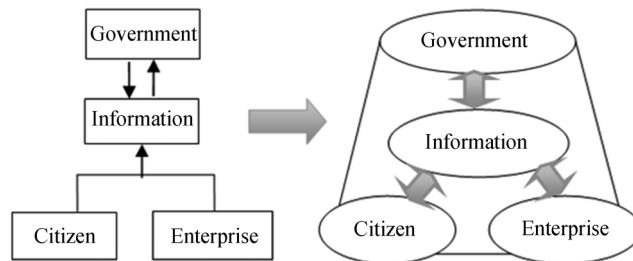


Figure 2
The Flow Model of the Government Information in the Background of the “Internet Plus”

The model depicts how the information flows among the government, citizens and enterprises, forming a virtuous cycle, and constituting a type of information flow in the background of the Big Data. In the background of the Internet Plus the flow of information is no longer simply a form, but an effective tool to achieve collaborative innovation among the government, citizens and the enterprises. The effect is that the citizens and the enterprises can enjoy a variety of services provided by the government no matter it is on line or off-line. The efficiency has been greatly improved, which greatly facilitate the lives of the people and become a new engine of the economic development. We can realize from Figure 1 that the citizens and enterprises, the Internet Plus and the government information publicity form two relatively closed system: For the system of citizens and enterprises it has the two-way interaction effect; for the other system of the Internet Plus and the government information publicity, it is closely linked by three media. At the same time, the two relatively closed systems have produced a flow of information to each other.

CONCLUSION

This article analyze the relationship between the Internet Plus and the government information publicity in the background of the national governance modernization and propose the schematic view of both of them and the flow model of the government information in the background of the Internet Plus. These two figures vividly indicate the great changes in the information flow model brought by

the Internet Plus in the near future. We also expect that the government could achieve the paperless office, and the citizens and companies could easily enjoy a variety of services provided by the Government. Meanwhile, changes in the government information flow patterns will further push the China's government to become more transparent, open and democratic.

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