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Inclusive Development: The Mode of Equalization of Basic Public Cultural Service in Chinese Urban and Rural Areas

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Abstract

This paper selects the perspective of urban and rural culture as a starting point to make the research of basic public service equalization. It builds a theoretical framework to analyze inclusive development as the mode of equality of basic public cultural service in Chinese urban and rural areas. Public cultural service refers to the use of public power and resources to protect the cultural rights of citizens, meet the citizens' basic needs of public culture service. As to perfecting public cultural services, it's Chinese important subject for cultural mechanism reform and essential aim for cultural construction. Currently there are many questions in constructing public culture service system, for examples, the poor consciousness, imperfect system, insufficient funds investment, old cultural infrastructure and the lagged market. Therefore, we should share the light of local conditions to build a new system of public cultural services in gradually. Inclusive development as the design and effective implementation of public policies and actions that bring about socio-economic and human development, in a way that promotes the capacities and equal opportunities and rights of all people in sustainable harmony with the environment, regardless of his social condition, gender, age, physical or mental condition, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, etc.. Inclusive development is benefit to soften social contradictions and

handle human livelihood, and for building a harmonious society. Through the expansion of poverty-stricken areas of infrastructure and investment in cultural resource development, people can own their equal opportunities to raise their own culture training and quality.

Key words: Inclusive development; Equality; Public cultural service; Chinese urban and rural areas; Government

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INTRODUCTION

During the past ten years, China's delivery of cultural services has accomplished a great leap-forward. A cultural service system has been set up, covering both cities and the countryside. Meanwhile, more cultural products and services have been delivered directly to the homes of Chinese people. Constructing public cultural service system is the necessary measure to secure citizens cultural right. The government should adopt the multi-dimensional ways to provide public cultural services on the foundation which plans the city and countryside, promotes basic: unit government culture administration pattern's modern reformation and is the fundamental path realizes public cultural service mechanism innovation. The equalization of basic public cultural services is very necessary for improving the quality of life of all of our citizens. We believe that public cultural services offer unique opportunities to deal with social exclusion. So, the government should encourage non-profit cultural groups to play a key role while mobilizing cultural resources from the market to assist in building a "shared, competitive and diversified" public cultural service system. The

development of such services has not only benefited the common people but also narrowed the gap between rural and urban areas. Especially, the equalization of basic public cultural services will be realized gradually through inclusive development.

1. THE BASIC CONNOTATION OF THE CORE CONCEPT

1.1 The Equalization of Basic Public Cultural Service

Public services may have previously been considered as services paid for by the taxpayer and delivered by government employees to members of the public. However, as services are increasingly contracted out and provided by private and third sector employees, it is clear that this definition no longer applies. Public services must be defined in terms of their intrinsic nature, rather than how they are delivered.

Cultural services—including arts, sports, libraries, museums, heritage, parks, tourism and much more besides—have an increasingly pivotal role to play in the development of our local communities, and these services make significant contributions to the delivery of the Council’s priorities. Cultural services have significant potential for “joined up” working with other public and voluntary agencies seeking to address issues of social inclusion. For example, arts, sports and play can be vehicles for health promotion; libraries, museums, sport and fitness can contribute to education; parks, sports, arts and tourism can play a role in urban regeneration. Each service has its specific strengths, but all can make some contribution to combating social exclusion and developing communities.

Public cultural service refers to the floorboard of public production and service behavior, provided by public sector or quasi-public sector, in order to meet the people’s basic cultural need for the purpose, improving the public cultural quality and life level, namely, providing the public with the basic spiritual and cultural enjoyment, maintaining cultural environment and conditions necessary for the social survival and development (Chen, 2006). In short, the public cultural service is under the guidance of the government, offering the cultural products and services for the public. It is an important responsibility of the government (Li, 2007). Specifically speaking, there are several major institutions to provide public cultural service such as public libraries, museums, cultural centers, art galleries, theaters, concert halls and cultural stations. The main contents include reading a book, newspaper, watching TV, movies, theatre, and sports activities of public cultural appreciation, cultural quality training and mass recreational activities.

1.2 The Basic Features of the Equalization of Basic Public Cultural Service

The basic connotation of public cultural service system refers to meeting citizens’ needs of public culture, and establishing the production and service system to protect citizens’ basic cultural rights in the public culture. The basic system of public cultural services provides non-excludability and non-rivalry public products and services for the society and people. The public culture has distinct characteristics: one is equal, the public cultural service resources public cultural service resources should be jointly owned by all members of society, and every citizen can equally enjoy equal service; the second is the fundamental, to meet the basic cultural needs of all citizens; the third is the nonprofit, public cultural service is not for profit, free or low-cost; the fourth is convenient, the space service radius and ways of the public cultural services can be easily implemented by citizens.

Equalization of basic public cultural services every citizen should be equitable, universal access to minimum standards of basic public cultural services regardless of race, income and status differences. The connotation of equalization of basic public cultural services can be understood from three aspects:

First, equal rights. Equal rights mean that there should be no geographical, rural, ethnicity and identity discrimination when people enjoy the basic public cultural services. Although people have different talent, capability and resources, they should enjoy the basic rights of public cultural services roughly equally to ensure all members of society have fair starting points.

Second, certain standard equalization. Due to the historical, traditional, geographical, economic, cultural, and political factors, the basic public cultural services cannot be entire uniformization all over the country. Therefore, the equalization of basic public cultural services is bottom-line services, in principle, guarantee full equality in minimum standards. That is not capped, next to Paul at the end.

Third, dynamic develop character. Determining the scope and standards of basic public cultural services shall conform to a country’s historical and cultural traditions and realistic national conditions and strength. It changes with the change of time and place. It not only guarantees citizens’ basic requirements of public cultural services, but also avoids unrealistic fantasy. The equalization of basic public cultural service implementation will be a gradual process. It should be put forward steadily from small to large (geographical scope), from low to high (implementation level), easy to difficult (achieve the degree of difficulty).

Equalization represents a level of social development at that time. The equalization of public cultural services provided by the public sector has two implications: on the one hand, achieving justices of the system in static dimension. Static equalization should ensure every citizen’s equality and freedom

in the context of the same historical conditions. The normative and long-term institutional arrangements should follow the principles of fairness and justice; On the other hand, pursuing the gradual equalization in the dynamic dimension. The government must adjust the difference in cultural resource allocation and narrow the gap in the whole society. Therefore, the departmental boundaries of cultural resources should be broken and merged.

In a word, equalization is the purpose of the development of public cultural services, and it can measure validly an actual level in an area of public cultural services.

Table 1
The National Basic Standards of Public Cultural Services During “Twelfth Five Year Plan” Period

Service project	Service objective	Security standards	Expenditure responsibility	Coverage levels
Public reading service	Urban and rural residents	Establish the rural farm library house in every administrative village with no less than 1,500 books, newspapers and periodicals 20-30 species, at least 100 kinds of electronic audio-visual products, and timely updates; set up public reading showcase at populated places such as main street, universities and colleges and residential communities to promptly provide various news and information.	Central and local governments share the burden	There are farm reading houses in every administrative village and additional 100 thousand public reading showcases. The national comprehensive reading rate accounts for 80%.
Publishing dubbed	Minorities with text	Commonly used books and electronic audio and video products with minority language publishing and suitable price can be obtained, and the government gives publishing fund.	Central and local governments share the burden	Select no less than 800 kinds of outstanding domestic and foreign books and periodicals, electronic audio and video products translated into the languages of ethnic minorities annually.
Braille publishing	The blind	The Braille publications with suitable price can be obtained, and the government gives publishing fund.	Central and local governments share the burden	Annual production of Braille books reach to 1600 kinds, 7million brochures

According to the plan, more efforts will be made to make art collections and digitalized cultural works more accessible for speakers of minority languages. In order to realize these goals, the government will procure quality cultural products and services from private groups and encourage private entities to participate in the operation of cultural projects through a bidding procedure. Construction of public cultural service system in China can promote the harmonious development of civilized society.

2. THE PRINCIPAL PROBLEMS OF THE EQUALIZATION OF BASIC PUBLIC CULTURAL SERVICE

Although the achievements have been made in public cultural service system in China, compared with the demands of public nowadays, there is still a big gap in equalization for natural, historical and realistic reasons. During the construction of basic public cultural service system in China, there are many difficulties over a long time: section monopoly, barrier for market excess and decrease in public welfare, etc.

1.3 The Strategic Objectives of the Equalization of Basic Public Cultural Service

National basic public service system “Twelfth Five Year Plan” in China put forward definitely, the government should establish the public cultural service system to guarantee rights and interests of people, such as watching TV, listening to the radio, reading books and newspapers, public cultural appreciation, and participating in the cultural activities. The national basic standards of public cultural services during “Twelfth Five Year Plan” period are the following.

2.1 Huge Gaps and Unevenly Distributed in Public Cultural Service

The huge gaps of public cultural services exist in many aspects characterized by unbalanced development. Unbalanced development means uneven development between urban and rural areas, between different regions, between economic and social development and between different social groups. The differential structure of urban and rural and binary economy are as follow: development of western regions obviously lagged behind the advancement of eastern regions; the rural culture lag in the city; the marginal tendency of the poverty culture has arisen. Meanwhile, the public cultural service in coordinating urban-rural development is non-equalization. The public culture services between urban and rural appear fault phenomenon: some of the urban are superfluous, but some of the rural are critical shortage. Especially in the winter, there is almost no public service and cultural venues but TV in many rural regions.

2.2 Lag of Hardware Construction, Many Serious Aging Equipment

Because the shortage of funds, infrastructure investment of public cultural services is limited, the quantity of necessary cultural facilities, equipment and infrastructure

is rare, such as libraries, museums, cultural centers, science and technology centers, archives and other public cultural establishments. For the low coverage and uneven distribution, many cultural activities basically stay in the spontaneous, scattered, disordered state. Beyond that many cultural facilities and equipment are comparatively old. There is any hidden safety problem in the aging infrastructure, and such hidden problem may cause hazards to social safety. Public cultural service functions especial in grassroots are too weak to meet people's cultural demands.

2.3 The Failure of Government-Led and Absent Citizen Participation

Because public cultural services have the characteristics of public and non-profit, the government holds the power as the dominant to public cultural services for a long time. Many of public cultural services are official but less private. Therefore, citizens can only passive participation in the public cultural activities and lack of initiative. There are lots of obvious differences in cultural participation such as cultural background, educated level, social status of people and regional differences. The cultural rights of vulnerable groups such as poor and migrant workers cannot be fully guaranteed. Currently, the cultural life of overwhelming majority of migrant workers is still tedious, and a considerable number of migrant workers rarely participate in cultural activities. The cultural rights of migrant workers achieve the lower forecasts. Moreover, some migrant workers will be excluded from the public cultural service system in some places. Cultural barriers and cultural exclusion have formed between rural and urban. Besides of these, the outdate ways of cultural services are only understood as watching a ply, movies, books or newspapers. The grassroots service personnel consider the public cultural services as tasks assigned by the superiors not their spiritual pursuit. The absence and non-equalization coexistence affect the equalization of public cultural services development.

3. ANALYSIS ON THE CAUSES OF THE EQUALIZATION OF BASIC PUBLIC CULTURAL SERVICE

3.1 Weak Consciousness of Public Cultural Service, Low Quality of Service Personnel

In the past a long period of time, due to insufficient attention to top-level design of public cultural services, some local leaders did not get together on matter of ideology. In order to construct socialistic harmonious society, we must attach importance to harmonious culture construction. However, cultural workers lack the patience to work on a long-term assignment and fail to think strategically, the cultural services appear many problems. For example, the cultural front is gradually lost;

the danger of foreign forces using culture and ideology to "westernize and divide" China becomes large; the mainstream virtues are increasing distorted. Beyond those most cultural institutions personnel structure is irrational, professional ratio is too low, the proportion of professional and non-professional improperly influence the overall quality culture. Many cultural institutions lack intellectuals, professional knowledge of aging, the overall quality lower, difficult to organize the masses to carry out a variety of cultural activities, seriously affecting the citizens to participate in the initiative.

3.2 Serious Shortages of Financial Investment, Funds Skewed Toward the City

Because of the harsh natural, climate and living conditions, the cost of basic public services in the rural is higher than in the urban. In fact, the central government invests the public cultural services insufficiently, and the local government matches funds or administrative support inadequately. Moreover, the funds mainly skew toward the urban, the rural can obtain few support to develop the public cultural service. In the result, the city is getting better and better, more and more difference in rural areas. Chinese society is now in the process of transforming, she needs a bigger public cultural services and activities to better present the country to the world. But severe financial funds shortage makes the cultural service low quality. Some of public cultural departments have fallen into paralyzation for the poor operation, worn equipment, inadequate funding and invalid management mechanism. Consequently, how to promote the construction of service system for rural public culture is a key task in building new socialism countryside.

3.3 Monotonous Form of Official Culture and A Shrinking Tendency of Folk Culture

Folk culture, compared with orthodox culture with the official representative and elite culture with intellectuals represented is not completely isolated. Folk culture is like a boundless expanse of fertile soil, it deeply nourishes orthodox culture and elite culture. While the decline orthodox culture and elite culture are cast away on the folk like the withered leaves, they can enrich its soil. A folk culture created spontaneously by civilian is from the social internal bottom, and it is based on the specific background of people's production and livelihood. Because folk culture has the features of spontaneity, inheritance and popularity, it has a strong vitality and is popular with people. However, the official public cultural service with criterion, homogenization and monotony is lack of fresh characteristics and vitality. At present, the traditional cultural activities gradually fade out of people's lives while folk culture deteriorated severely. If we do not carry out the equal access to basic public cultural service as soon as possible, mainstream social values would be probably hurt most.

4. INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT: THE NEW PATH OF EQUALIZATION OF BASIC PUBLIC CULTURAL SERVICE IN CHINESE URBAN AND RURAL AREAS

Building public cultural service system with totally new ideas-inclusive development- is a very important thing right now. Inclusive development refers to raise individual development and social development with economic development simultaneously. The final aim of inclusive development should be achieving inclusion between people and nature, people and social, people and people on the basis of economic growth. Inclusion is not only the Conditions of economic development, but also the purpose of economic development. The fruits of economic development can be shared throughout society, whether individual or whole society can be developed amply. The essence of inclusive development is sharing the development opportunities and achieving mutual benefit. Inclusive development lays emphasis on the compatibility of development mechanism, sharing in the fruit of development and sustainability of development requirements. Chinese culture is an inclusive culture, and it emphasizes the social integration, inclusion, equality and sustainability.

Most of the problems we face in the present are the urban and rural cultural development separation and the low level of rural public cultural service. The study found that basic Public cultural service in China is not equal, the Public unsatisfactory the basic Public cultural service Provide by the government. We need to take a number of measures to Promote equalization of basic Public cultural service in China. Therefore, modern culture service is universal coverage but not high level, the inclusive development means that public cultural service should meet the standard with universal coverage, high level and high quality. Achieving the equalization of basic public cultural services is a crucial element to improve the current public services system, an important measure in building a service-oriented government, and an effective means of meeting the cultural needs of citizens, as well.

4.1 Transcend the Regional Differences of Public Cultural Services, and Strive to Achieve the Equalization of Public Cultural Services

As stated above, there are several non-equalization performances of public cultural services, between urban and rural areas, different regions and different social groups. We should transcend the differences to achieve the equalization. The barriers created by administrative means have blocked the formation of market competition, which is beneficial to the public cultural services advancement. Therefore, each area needs to go beyond cultural differences, through regional cooperation and division of labor to reduce friction, the formation

mechanism of the cooperative development and common development. We must call for government investment in many aspects to construct public cultural service system: narrow the gap between urban and rural areas for public cultural infrastructure by expanding and rebuilding; accelerate talents squad construction of public cultural services by training and cultivating; decrease the public cultural service difference in different social strata by stewing toward vulnerable groups and migrating rapidly, and so on.

4.2 Realize the Regional Public Cultural Service Governance, and Balance the Fundamental Interests of Multicultural Subjects

Inclusive development of public cultural services in urban and rural areas needs to be realized through the improvement of regional governance. We can find the combination of individual requirement for the development and the common interests of the regional development by cooperation of regional governance. Regional Governance is first and foremost a definition for a modern form of regional cultural service policy which stands out due to the following factors: a) Increase of the importance of the region as cultural political coordination level to balance the fundamental interests of multicultural subjects; b) Replacement of the territorial principle by the functional principle to reorganize and integrate cultural resources; c) Intersectional cooperation through weakly institutionalized regional networks and partnerships to share the public cultural resources; d) Hierarchical steering of incentives through various means and forms to activate the initiative of personnel of public cultural service.

4.3 Develop the Public Cultural Industries Vigorously, and Decipher Puzzles and Rich the Forms of Public Cultural Service

China's leaders have been building cultural industries, including news media, publishing and education-related businesses, while seeking new engines for economic growth. Expand economy of the cultural industry region that can provide funding to improve the poor present situation of cultural infrastructure. We should adopt many measures to develop the public cultural industries from the following aspects. Firstly, the guiding and planning function of government should be exerted by announcing total design and detailed plan of development of cultural industry. Secondly, cultural industry zone and cultural industry base, as the trump of regional government to promote the upgrade of industry structure and boost up the regional core-competition, should be built vigorously to construct industry cluster create a complete chain of cultural industry. Thirdly, provide training that allows cultural workers to link with local cultural industries to improve their global competitions with imagination, innovation and creativity.

And cultural industry transformation and upgrading the industrial structure will be implemented simultaneously. Additionally, we will promote added value of high-end products with excellent service; build the brand culture enterprises and brand products; integrate the cultural industry and high-tech industry.

4.4 Implement Public Cultural Service Equalization Target Step by Step, and Realize the Integration of Urban and Rural Public Cultural Services

Because Chinese economy grows a level to have bigger otherness and the difference of governments finances, the supply of public cultural services are unfair between rural and urban. Therefore, we need to grasp some key points as following to realize the goal of public cultural service equalization: a) "one size fits all" rules can't be implemented in the equalization of basic public cultural service. We should treat each region on its merits according to actual situation. But different treatment is unequal to unequal treatment. b) It is an important strategic measure to favor the rural especial the central and western regions in China. d) Non-state capital should be guided to invest in non-profit public causes in various ways to promote the diversification and socialization of public cultural services. d) We will quickly improve the public cultural service system with full coverage for all, and comprehensively improve our ability to provide basic public cultural services, so that the people will share in the benefits of cultural development.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Nowadays, as the fresh target of reconstructing culture, constructing the public cultural service system has the extremely vital significance for safeguarding the realization of the citizen culture right. Inclusive development can also be part of a strategy to empower the most vulnerable groups, tackling inequalities to make growth more inclusive. It can play a central role in building cohesive societies, and more broadly in reinforcing the state-citizen compact, with the state's legitimacy bolstered by its ability to deliver on its side of the social contract. It can thus contribute to the sustainability of growth in China by reinforcing social stability and political accountability.

The construction of a non-profit cultural service system has made significant progress in China. A nationwide public cultural service system has begun to take shape across the country. Currently, nearly 85 percent of the counties in China have public libraries and 98 percent of the villages have cultural service facilities for people to learn and enjoy. However, there is still a gap between demand and supply of public cultural products and services. In order to bridge the gap, China must push forward the establishment of a public cultural service

system, which will cover both rural and urban areas. Moreover, the Chinese government should set up a long-term funding system to ensure the smooth and healthy development of the sector. Public cultural service shall carry out the principles of general planning advancement, investment corpus diversification, social services diversity and equalization, management socialization and scientification. We will improve our ability to provide public cultural products and services, concentrate on strengthening cultural infrastructure in the central and western regions and urban and rural communities, and continue to implement cultural projects that benefit the people. The system for public cultural services of rural and urban areas dominated by government, supported by competition and extensively participated by public shall be established.

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