

The influence of Non-Governmental Organization Involvement in Community Education Based on Governance Theory

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Abstract – Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) plays an essential role in the development of community education as an emerging power. To enhance its further development and satisfy residents with the diversity of education demands, this study examines the influence of NGOs on local people perceptions, making analysis on the feasibility and dilemma of NGO participating in community education based on the perspective of governance theory. Consequently, some countermeasures are put forward as straightening the relationship with government, exploring management mode and constructing its own. The study indicates that cooperation is generally more beneficial for both the community and NGO.

Keywords – Governance theory; Non-Governmental Organizations; Community education

1. Introduction

With the acceleration of China urbanization process, community education has basically formed management pattern of “classification management and the local as a whole, government dominance and social participation”, along with transmission of the concept “small government, big society”, the emergence of NGOs as the third sector with government and enterprises, its influence on community education is increasingly prominent.

The basic meaning of governance is to use authority to maintain order and meet needs of the public in a given context. Governance theory, as a new public management method, is generated from practices in the developed countries to the government, civil society and the market and the government’s reform, which seeks cooperation and interaction with the government, society and market, belongs to a social system by mobilizing all sorts of power and resources to achieve good governance.

NGO is an abbreviation for Non-Governmental Organizations, refers to the piece of system space between the government and private enterprise. NGOs have the characteristics of folk, autonomy, voluntary, non-profit and legitimacy. Since the reform and opening up, with the reform objectives “small government, big society” established, the social life are more organized, furthermore, non-governmental organization also presented the vigorous development momentum.

Community education is a comprehensive, universal and lifelong education that combined life with education in a certain social area, for the common development of community. With the change from unit system to community system, the functions of the government are corresponding changed that a lot of the original by the government

for their social functions return to society, leaving the development of NGOs a vast space.

2. Feasibility analysis on NGO involvement

(1) Offset the insufficient of the government and market

Economist Burton A. Weisbrod thought that the government, market, and NGO are the means of meeting the individual needs which possesses mutual alternative at the aspect of meeting the individual needs. It is precisely that the government and market have limitations in providing public goods, thereby led to the function requirement of non-governmental organizations. It can make up for the market and government in providing public goods deficiency, especially in the community education such a monopoly product, which is provided with more efficiency advantage. This is the main reason for the existing of NGOs.

(2) Promote interaction between the government and residents and improve participation

Community participation is an important symbol whether community construction is mature or not. However, current situation showed that the whole community participation is not high. The main reason is that the members and community did not have a clear or close relationship of interests and the obstructed channel. The clear value concept, service tenet and unimpeded channel of participating of NGOs just can make this vacancy. On the one hand, NGOs represent interests and aspirations of their organization members or related groups, and close to the residents, with effective information feedback system, can timely collect residents’ proposal for government then input to the government, both for government decision-making reference and an external constraints to government act.

(3) Expand the employment channels of residents

Providing employment opportunities for residents are one of functions of the non-governmental organization, there are numerous new jobs created in the process of the development of community education. Based on the community, on this account, people are familiar with the actual needs. Some scaled or effective NGOs have formed a set of relatively complete system, which can provide a stable salary and alleviate various social conflicts.

(4) Satisfy residents with the diversity and multilevel of education demands

The modern society is a pluralistic society due to people's interests and values are highly diverse, the government actions have universality and its service tend to consistency as a result of facing all the members of the society. The generation of NGO is the outcome of social needs and diversification of interests, embodying the value of freedom and pluralism as well as satisfies the pursuit of particular interest group requirements. In the past some hot potatoes for government can be handed over to NGOs. NGOs carry out in-depth skills, entertainment type, health training and activities, so as to meet resident's diverse and multilevel education needs.

3. Dilemma of NGOs Participation

NGO plays a positive role in community education but there are still problems in a fuzzy orientation, function conflict, lack of specifications and resources and undesirable effect.

(1) The relationship between the government and NGO has not yet been qualitative.

In current management of community education, the government is primarily as a leading role, the government and NGO's mission are different, and therefore the behavior strategies are absolutely different. NGOs for the dependence of the government also makes greatly influences on its relative independence, going against non-governmental organizations to begin the work in accordance with their mission, which will lead to the relationship between NGO and government becomes not harmonious, so that affects the functions of NGOs in community education.

(2) The service provided by NGO is inapplicable with resident's demand.

Most non-governmental organizations display a strong official color at aspects of personnel, funds, offices and other basic resources. With respect to the supply of community education, the supply of top-down due to lack of mass base and research practice often will only pay attention to complete the task and ignore the actual and long-term effect. At the same time, a lot of community NGOs cannot meet the growing dynamic diverse demand of residents because of restrictions of professional talent, management, funds and places.

(3) Inadequate cognition on the NGO.

At present, China's non-governmental organization due to various reasons, social performance is not high. On the one hand, the government and society have no enough recognition and cooperation to NGOs. On the other hand, there are some problems, for instance, value orientation dislocation, short-sighted, low efficiency and service lack of continuity, which seriously affect the cooperation and identity of the government. From the community resident's point of view, as traditional ideas, the working nature of most public nongovernmental organizations is not known to them. What's more, a lack of trust which affects the community member's participation with initiative thereby forms a vicious circle. This makes the development of non-governmental organizations in the community face many challenges.

(4) Hard survival conditions of NGOs.

First of all, Legal status dilemma finds expression in double management system of the NGO, namely register management departments and the competent business unit of the double responsible for system. This greatly restricts the increase in the number of NGOs and weakens nonprofit autonomy as well as raises the threshold, consequently, goes against the development of the disadvantaged groups.

Secondly, Specialized level is not high, the lack of full-time personnel. Because of low status of NGOs, many people who do not wish to take part in non-governmental organizations result in lack of professional personnel in the organization and cannot provide effective services for specific projects.

Thirdly, financing source of NGO is more complex with its non-profit; many projects have to midway bankrupt or forced to deviate from its mission result from lack of money. A series of problems will not happen until shortage of capital is solved, such as work, office support and activity funds problem.

At last, in term of NGO's management, the organization establishment, personnel allocation and strategic planning must be improved.

4. Route choices of promoting NGOs involvement

(1) Build nice partnership between NGO and government

To correctly handle the relationship between the government and NGO, scientifically define their boundary in community education, so that their relationships based on solid basis. Through using the legal system and the system design, make clear in community governance both sides of the right, responsibility and obligation, make rational division of labor, establish institutionalized channel of communication and exchange mechanism.

(2) Expand the influence power of NGO and enhance the social sympathy

Through the means of government buying services and tax breaks, widely absorbs and utilizes private

capital, talent and technology, emphasizing on the development of non-governmental organization, forming the pattern of multielement governance in community education. We should actively explore the realization ways of the government function change, let NGO to be the government's capable assistants and become the important undertaker of community service; pay special attention to the NGO community education backbones of the training, stimulate enthusiasm participating in community education as well as activate the talented elements; we will increase support cultivation, establish key support project and foster a number of the influential non-governmental organizations; timely announcement of importance of NGOs is required.

(3) Explore the mode of NGOs management and create good environment for NGOs

First improve the system of dual control. Therefore shall establish and perfect the legal system of the non-governmental organization; lower threshold, strengthen supervision and realize efficiency management. The government should implement NGO classified management. Second, reduce the administrative intervention. The business department is in charge of making the relevant established standards and examining the qualifications. Again, change management way and simplify administrative procedures, from a single NGO management into indirect flexible management.

(4) Reinforce self building of NGOs

NGOs must strengthen internal management, being aware of the mission and the service object, setting up the human-oriented idea, legal operation, strengthening self-discipline, establishing democratic management mechanism and enhancing credibility. At the same time, in order to adapt to the trend of the modern information and democracy, keep democracy style and energetic working team, maintain independence, give full play to the potential of organization and improve the efficiency of NGOs. At present, NGO self ability is still low. Non-governmental organizations should add strength and polish image. Some measures include boosting business level; improving financing and management level, training community volunteers and improving the ability of independent innovation are carried out.

5. Conclusions

In this paper, we have shown that the Government-NGO relationship can be pivotal in defining responsibilities of NGO. Based on an examination of NGOs' given the potential importance of community education in broadening the definition of corporate responsibility, the paper demonstrates that there is a need for further research into the Government-NGO relationship, the unique roles of NGOs with special attention to the changing socio-political contexts of NGOs in terms of their partnerships. Community education gradually is provided by NGOs where the

public sector has failed to provide them. But local NGOs are institutionally weak, and their activities are poorly coordinated with other regional service providers. There are some negative perceptions of NGOs involvement in community education movements by those who believe that NGOs should do everything themselves emphasized that reforming NGOs governance, such as the inclusiveness and diversity of board members, became prominent agenda for NGOs.

Community education plays an important role in the construction of life-long education system. Under the background of diversification, as long as give a proper guidance, non-governmental organization will be flourishing in this platform, for lifelong learning, NGO can provide residents with convenient and good service so as to make contribution to construct a harmonious community.

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