

Problems and Countermeasures in Digital Government Performance Evaluation

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Abstract: Digital government performance assessment is an important link to test the development level of digital government, discover the deficiencies in digital governance, and clarify the direction of future development. Starting from the importance of digital government performance assessment, the article argues that at present, the assessment of digital government performance in China suffers from the relative lack of performance assessment system norms, the performance assessment system to be improved, and the underutilization of the performance assessment results, and gives corresponding countermeasures and suggestions.

1. Introduction

In November 2022, The State Council issued the Guidelines for the Construction of the National Integrated Government Big Data System, deepening the construction of digital government is the general trend. Digital government performance evaluation refers to the objective, fair and accurate evaluation of the input, output and benefits of digital government construction based on the development status of digital government, in accordance with certain rules and regulations and following a unified index system ^[1]. This paper expounds the importance of digital government performance evaluation, analyzes the existing problems in the current digital government performance evaluation in our country, and puts forward relevant suggestion.

2. The importance of performance evaluation in digital government governance

2.1 An effective way to test the development level of digital government

The construction of digital government is an important part of the construction of network power and digital China, so the performance assessment of digital government governance is the right thing to do. Based on massive data and information, the scientific and pragmatic results of digital government performance assessment can effectively reflect the government's digital governance, and making full use of the results of government performance assessment for decision-making can greatly improve the accuracy of government decision-making. Evaluating the performance of digital government governance is conducive to the government's formulation of appropriate digital

government development strategies, and promotes the sustainable and healthy development of digital government.

2.2 A powerful tool to guide the better development of digital government

By evaluating the website construction, input and output, efficiency and effectiveness of the digital government, it is helpful to find the deviation of the digital government governance policy in the implementation, adjust the formulation and implementation of relevant policies in a timely manner, clarify the direction of the future development of the digital government, and guide the digital government to develop at a higher level and with higher quality.

3. Problems in the process of assessing digital government performance

3.1 Relative lack of performance evaluation system norms

China's digital government construction started late and is still in the initial stage, with imperfect top-level design, imperfect development of relevant systems and policies, and relative lack of performance assessment system on digital government^[2]. In addition, due to the different development situations in various regions, the establishment of integrated data platforms and the construction of government service platforms are different, so there is a lack of unified performance assessment standards in various regions, and in some regions, there are evaluation indicators in the process of digital government performance assessment that are rough, operationally weak, and formality, and there are even some regions that are completely blank in the performance assessment system of the digital government. The lack of a unified digital government performance evaluation system will lead to a lack of rules and regulations for performance evaluation, resulting in distorted evaluation results, which cannot effectively guide the direction of the future development of digital government, and will also result in a waste of human and material resources and funds.

3.2 Performance evaluation system to be improved

At present, China has not established a unified digital government performance evaluation system, evaluation indicators, evaluation content and evaluation of the main body will directly affect the results of the performance evaluation, China's performance evaluation system is still to be improved. First, the assessment indicators need to be improved. Performance assessment of the digital government must design reasonable, comprehensive and operational evaluation indicators. Many organizations in the design of digital government performance evaluation indicators will pay more attention to quantitative indicators and ignore the qualitative indicators, they pay more attention to the explicit data on the growth results, while ignoring the implicit public satisfaction and other aspects of the effectiveness of the evaluation indicators. Many government officials believe that the digital governance of the government is only a "technical" issue, ignoring the public values of governance such as residents' emotions, fairness and justice in the process of government governance^[3]. It is true that the application of digital technology is extremely useful for the accurate provision of public services and clarifying the complex scenarios of social governance, but ignoring the public value of the performance evaluation indicators will cause distortion of the performance evaluation results, which will lead to problems such as the digital divide and the inequality of interests between the majority and the minority.

Second, the assessment content is lacking. Many people interpret the performance of digital government as the construction of government platforms and the degree of openness of government information and data, and blindly pursue the "technicality" of digital construction, considering the

ranking mechanism of each organization as the result of performance assessment. Although the construction of websites is part of digital government construction, it is not the whole story; what is more important is the convenience of the public in utilizing the Internet to handle government affairs. Many local governments are obviously caught in this misunderstanding, only the pursuit of digital government website construction, optimize the configuration of digital government system hardware and software, without considering the needs of the masses for the government website, the masses from the previous search for a place to find a person to find the function to find the application, and a lot of online applications are just a formality, and the masses still need to rely on the offline government personnel to handle them. In this form, many performance evaluation will focus on the assessment of the website construction, ignoring the public satisfaction, public participation and other assessment content, which results in the assessment results do not truly reflect the construction of digital government, and easy to mislead the government's digital governance.

Third, the main body of the assessment is relatively single. The best e-government selection in the United States and Europe in recent years has involved expert evaluation committees as well as the participation of the public, and they pay more attention to the evaluation opinions and the public's opinions in the assessment of the performance of the digital government. However, at present, the main body of the assessment of China's digital government performance is mainly the government, and the form of assessment mainly includes: the assessment of superiors to subordinates, and the self-assessment of the unit^[4]. Such assessment methods are difficult to ensure the authenticity and scientificity of the assessment results, and the assessment results are not extensive due to the limitations of their own class, knowledge and position. Both assessment methods are prone to distortion of the assessment results and cannot meet the expectations of the government and society for performance assessment work.

3.3 Insufficient utilization of performance assessment results

Many governments have a lack of understanding of the role of performance assessment results, and only consider the performance assessment results as a necessity for completing the task, and only consider it as a tool for praise or criticism, and a working summary of the digital construction situation over a period of time. The results of performance assessment have not been fully utilized. The results of digital government performance assessment should be a reference guide for the direction and planning of the next stage of digital construction development, and have a guiding role in improving the government's digital governance.

4. Countermeasures to improve the quality of digital government performance assessment

4.1 Establishing a sound performance assessment system for digital government governance

The completion of any government work requires corresponding systems and regulations, and so does the performance assessment of digital government. The central government should absorb the experience of developed countries at home and abroad in the process of digital governance performance assessment, establish a sound digital government governance performance assessment system, standardize the criteria for digital government governance performance assessment, and pay attention to the important role of performance assessment in digital government governance. Governments at all levels should, on the basis of the relevant system and in the light of local specificities, explore a performance assessment system suitable for the development of local digital government, issue a charter for the performance assessment and ensure that the performance assessment of digital government is regulated by rules and regulations and has a law to follow. In addition, the relevant institutional system should be adjusted in a timely manner to adapt to social

development.

4.2 Improve the performance evaluation system

The current performance assessment system of digital government governance in China still has many defects, so it should be improved in the following three aspects. First, improve the performance assessment indicators. When evaluating the performance of digital government governance, institutions should pay more attention to the needs and expectations of the public for digital government governance, such as the degree of public participation, satisfaction and other indicators. In addition, the indicators should include multiple dimensions, such as the completeness of relevant policies and regulations, social fairness and justice, tolerance and cooperation, so as to ensure that the evaluation indicators are comprehensive, detailed and operable. In addition, it is necessary to pay attention to the proportion of quantitative and qualitative indicators. If the proportion of quantitative indicators is too high, it will result in the consequences of focusing too much on efficiency and ignoring the value of governance, and if the proportion of qualitative indicators is too heavy, it will result in the lack of scientific quality of the performance evaluation results, both of which will result in the distortion of the evaluation results. Therefore, it is necessary to formulate reasonable performance assessment indicators.

Secondly, improve the assessment content. When determining the content of performance assessment, it is necessary to take the needs of the masses as the starting point, focus on the realization of the public value of governance at the same time as technological empowerment, understand the changes in the needs of the masses in a timely manner and communicate with them to ensure a comprehensive assessment of the performance in digital governance.

Thirdly, enrich the main body of evaluation. Introducing third-party organizations and the opinions of the public to assess the government's digital governance in various aspects. Online open network voting channels, while offline publicity, invite the public to evaluate the government's digital governance, so that the public to participate in the process of government governance, to ensure the exercise of their right to know, the exercise of the right to supervise, and invite third-party agencies and experts and scholars to assess the performance of the government's digital governance. Finally, the government's internal assessment and the calculation of the assessment results are carried out, giving different weights to each group and comprehensively assessing the performance of the government's digital governance. Simultaneous internal and external supervision and assessment can ensure the scientific nature and coverage of the assessment results.

4.3 Making full use of performance assessment results

At present, the results of China's digital performance assessment have not yet been linked to the rewards and punishments of officials, and the results of the performance assessment have not fully guided the next stage of the government's digital governance plan. The disconnect between the assessment results and the rewards and punishments of officials may lead to the government's digital governance performance assessment into "formalism" and "false and nice appearance", and cannot truly reflect the construction of digital government. In addition, it is necessary to pay attention to the supervision of the performance evaluation process to prevent irresponsible behaviors such as "falsification" of the evaluation subject. Therefore, it is necessary to establish an appropriate linkage between the results of digital government performance assessment and the results of rewards and punishments for officials, to prevent misalignment and overstepping of functions, to ensure the authenticity of the results of performance assessment, and to improve the prudence of administrative decision-making.

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