

The Practical Exploration on the Openness of Government-Affairs With Chinese Characteristics: Taking Chongqing Municipal as an Example

CHEN Xiuping^{[a],*}

^[a]School of Politics Science and Public Administration, Southwest University, Chongqing, China.

*Corresponding author.

Received 25 September 2015; accepted 5 November 2015
Published online 26 December 2015

Abstract

Open and transparency is of the value idea that the administrative departments has been pursued over the years, as Chinese government spared no effort to further promote the administration according to law and accelerated the construction of government ruled by law, the openness of government-affairs become a key point for the deeper political system reform. There are new requirements for the openness of government-affairs in the new period and new stage and it has become an inexorable tendency to explore the openness of government-affairs with Chinese characteristics. This paper takes Chongqing municipal as an example to explore the new pathway and promote the upgrade of the openness of government-affairs.

Key words: Openness of government-affairs; Chongqing municipal; Countermeasures

Chen, X. P. (2015). The Practical Exploration on the Openness of Government-Affairs With Chinese Characteristics: Taking Chongqing Municipal as an Example. *Higher Education of Social Science*, 9(6), 1-9. Available from: URL:<http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/hess/article/view/7990> DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/7990>

INTRODUCTION

The practice of Chinese government promoting the openness of government-affairs was from the period of reform and opening when was more than 30 years before present. The system of Chinese openness of government-affairs has undergone comprehensive and profound reforms from the personnel appointment and

removal of party and government offices and decision making of major issues in the normally government information publicity which involved the vital interests. The practice of promoting the development of openness of government-affairs is still going on and it is inevitable demand of the times to develop openness of government-affairs with Chinese characteristics, and there is not only profound historical experience but also abundant practical experience for us to reference. The new period of openness of government-affairs system of China is not only different from the Chinese previous system and practice exploration of openness of government-affairs but also different from other countries' theory, system and practice of security right to know and construction of transparency. It is a new pattern of openness of government-affairs with new period characteristics and distinctive Chinese features and it's not only new but also special (Hou, 2015). To promote the openness of government-affairs with Chinese characteristics, it's necessary to be based on national conditions and proceed from the reality and gradually complete the comprehensive openness of government-affairs from the local government to the central government. In this paper, we would take Chongqing municipal openness of government-affairs as an example to explore the development of openness of government-affairs with Chinese characteristics in the new period.

1. THE MOTIVATION ANALYSIS OF FURTHER PROMOTED OPENNESS OF GOVERNMENT-AFFAIRS IN NEW PERIOD

In new period, the party and the state government attached great importance to the development of the openness of government-affairs with Chinese characteristics and the Forth Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee of the

CPC had put forward that China would comprehensively promote the openness of government-affairs, with the principle of open for normal and don't open for an exception, persist in decision-making publicity, implementation publicity, management publicity, service publicity and the results publicity and puts forward new demands on the openness of government-affairs. The government work report in 2015 also made a promise that Chinese government would fully put into practice transparency in government affairs and promote the use of e-government and online administration. The openness of government-affairs with Chinese characteristics is of great significance for the realizing the Four Comprehensive and the socialist democratic politics.

1.1 A Basic Requirement of the Nature and Functions of Our Government

China is a country of the people's democratic dictatorship, people as the masters of their own country and the government is the administrative authority of the country. The nature of the state determines that Chinese government is the executor of people's will and the defender of people's interests, the openness of government-affairs guaranteed the right to know, right to participate, right of supervision of citizen, legal person and other organizations, which expanded the political participation of citizens, developed people's democratic and comprehensively implemented the mass line of the Chinese Communist Party. The Third Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee of the CPC had put forward that it is so pressing to comprehensively deepen reform, transform the government's functions and to construct the service-oriented government. Deepen the openness of government-affairs, public administration and public services and so forth and public the relevant issues involved in the interests of citizens, which make the government become the public government which serve their own people.

1.2 An Important Part of Promoting the Modernization of National Governance System and Governance Capacity

The government, through the openness of government-affairs, becomes a transparent government, to some extent it is a kind of progress of self-development of letting the authority run under the sun. On one hand, the mass can obtain information involving their own interests, on the other hand we can strengthen the supervision of government work, the governmental information disclosure is conducive to the realization of the interests of the public and also can promote the realization of the government administrative goals, gathering the forces of all parties to cooperate in the governance and consolidating the ruling foundation, finally promote the modernization of national governance system and governance capacity.

1.3 The Strategic Measures of Chinese Government to Follow The Developing Trend of Times

In 2015, the economy of China continues to keeping the situation of steady development while facing some new challenges. China economy ranks second while the GDP per capita ranks 86th in the world which still in the backward level. But at about the same time, the speed of Chinese economic growth gradually fell back. The economy was in a depressed state. China's economic development has entered a new normal, meaning we must actively and steadily boost municipal reformation of the political system and economic framework. And the openness of government-affairs have become the starting point of double system reform, only with the flow and transparent of government information the public and main market players can obtain the correct and full of government affairs information and the social wealth operation speed and efficiency be enhanced and finally the cost of the economic development be reduced. In recent years, the main point of the world administrative reform was the openness of government-affairs, which represented the future development directions of world government affairs and the openness of government-affairs was also the strategic measures to adapt the development of economic and political of contemporary era.

2. THE PRESENT SITUATION OF OPENNESS OF GOVERNMENT-AFFAIRS IN CHONGQING

According to deploy of the Party Central Committee, the Chongqing Municipal People's government paid high attention to the openness of government-affairs. On the basis of *Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Government Information Disclosure*, *Opinions of Chongqing Municipal People's Government to Implement "Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Government Information Disclosure"* and *Notice of General Office of Chongqing Municipal People's Government on the Effective Government Information Disclosure*, Chongqing government has been focused on deepening the openness of government-affairs, constantly explored new ways to change the functions of government and improved the efficiency of government work and the quality of service for the people, which formed system of openness of government-affairs that suits the realities in the region and a sunlight government will be forged up with the operation of governmental power be more and more transparent.

2.1 Plan as a Whole of the Construction of Service Architecture of Openness of Government-Affairs

Abided by the *Opinions on Deepening Openness of government-Affairs and Strengthening Government*

Services printed and distributed by China's State Council and the requirements of construction of service government, Chongqing government and its departments bring government affairs service system construction into the basic public service system construction, perfect relevant policies and management measures, integrate government service resources and provide high quality governmental information which would satisfy the masses (The Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China, 2007). With the good usage of the Internet, Chongqing municipal government created Government Information, Professional Services and Interactive Communications columns including more than 10 E-government services such as Education Service, Social Security Service, Employment Service, Traffic Service, Certificate Management Service, Business Start-up Service, Qualification Cognizance Service, Administrative Examination and Approval Hall and so forth which largely enhanced the efficiency of government services. In addition to the online offices, the municipal departments and districts and counties government set up administrative service hall and assigned administrative staffs to solve the problem of the masses which provided convenient, high quality and efficient services for the masses.

2.2 Speed Up the Platform Construction of Openness of Government-Affairs

Chongqing municipal government took the Internet as carrier and speeded up the platform construction of openness of government-affairs. Each district and county of Chongqing city created government information public web pages on the home page of their own government

websites which can actively, timely and exactly disclosure government administrative information such as government budgets and final accounts, the approval and implementation of major construction projects and the construction of social public welfare undertakings and so on.

To reflect the general situation of government website information disclosure of each district and county of Chongqing city, we took the government websites of 23 municipal districts and 15 counties as the investigation object and surveyed the general situation of information publicity column on government website of all levels of government in Chongqing municipal. The survey results are shown in Table 1 and Table 2. From which we can see that the Chongqing municipal public information platform has been completed and all can access to the government information on any district and county of Chongqing municipal, nevertheless, there are defects existed. The normative content of openness of government-affairs is comprehensive but the social supervision information is comparatively backward which being the key to openness of government-affairs. But most amounted to less than 90% the openness of government-affairs and less than 50% projects and plans of government of departments at the county level is open and the quality level of openness of government-affairs also on the low level, which demonstrate that there still severe problems in the openness of government-affairs. In general, the government information publicity site had greatly improved than before and the basic information platform construction is mainly completed.

Table 1
The Content of Openness of Government-Affairs

Categories	Normative information							Information under public supervision						
	Disclosure system	Public categories	Application disclosure	Disclosure guidance	Annual report	Regulatory documents	E-government dynamic	Personnel information	Capital information	Emergency management	Statistical information	Site topics	Plans and programs	
Government website of district level (23)	22	22	22	22	19	23	20	20	20	18	16	6	19	
Percent (%)	96	96	96	96	83	100	87	87	87	78	70	26	83	
Government website of country level (15)	11	13	12	13	6	13	12	14	12	12	13	6	7	
Percent (%)	73	87	80	87	40	87	80	93	80	80	87	40	47	
total (38)	33	35	34	35	25	36	32	34	32	30	29	21	26	

Table 2
The Quality Level of Openness of Government-Affairs

Categories	Service guide		Provide information retrieval	Provide file query
	Citizens	Company		
Government website of district level	23	23	12	11
Government website of country level	11	12	2	3
Total (38)	34	35	14	14

2.3 Improve and Perfect the Mechanism Construction of the Openness of Government-Affairs

To provide system guarantee to deepen the openness of government-affairs and strengthen the government affairs service, Chongqing government established and improved systems which include the standard of administrative discretion, strengthened the corrupted risk prevention and control, improved the procedures of openness of government-affairs, standardized the operation of service institution and reviewed the quality of e-government services (Zeng, 2014). In order to do well the work of openness of government-affairs, Chongqing municipal government issued documents includes *Opinions of Chongqing Municipal People's Government to Implement "Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Government Information Disclosure"* and *Notice of General Office of Chongqing Municipal People's Government on the Effective Government Information Disclosure* and so on and established three levels of the government spokesman mechanism and the system of government press conference, which guaranteed the openness of government-affairs carry out in a deep-going way.

3. COUNTERMEASURES ANALYSIS ON COMPREHENSIVELY PROMOTING THE OPENNESS OF CHONGQING GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS WITH CHONGQING CHARACTERISTICS

With the arrival of information age, the openness of government-affairs is playing a more and more important role in the government's public management and the management of enterprises and institutions. In recent years, Chongqing municipal government gradually realized the important theory value and practical value of openness of government-affairs. However, there is still something weak and restraining factors existed in the practice of openness of government-affairs. To promote openness of government-affairs roundly with Chongqing characteristics needs laws and regulations guarantee, expands the channel with spirit of innovation, be realistic and pragmatic enforced in normal and public participation to strengthen the mechanism.

3.1 With Laws and Regulations to Guarantee the Implementation of Openness of Government-Affairs

The top priority of promoting the openness of government-affairs roundly is to improve and perfect the law and regulations of openness of government-affairs. Though the openness of government-affairs increasingly becomes an important channel for the government to

innovate the methods and means of management, the regulatory and legal system for openness of government-affairs in Chongqing is not well established at present. Therefore, Chongqing municipal government is supposed to enact the regulations of Chongqing municipal government information in line with the actual conditions of districts and counties on the basis of *Regulations of China on Freedom of Information*, which should be made materialized and explicit. Take Beibei district as an example, the Beibei district government enacted the *Implementation Measures for the Openness of Government Information*, in which the specific contents were not clearly defined and the description is too broad. Only though the contents of active openness, highlighted openness and unopened detailed, then we can get the smooth progress in the actual operation. Another function of law is to punishment. Someone should bear corresponding legal responsibility if do not pay attention or released false information or reveals non-public information.

3.2 Widen the Channel of the Openness of Government-Affairs With Spirit of Innovation

The pathway of openness of government-affairs mainly refer to the methods and means of administrative information publicity and the common open channel of governmental information include press conference, government official news websites, government comprehensive archives and so forth and there are advantages and disadvantages of each channel and though complementary advantages and integration of each mean we can achieve a good effect. First, government construct the network platform of openness of government information which can cover the whole city and gradually set up various kinds of regional, multilevel and distributed archive databases on a national wide scale, so as to strength the utilization degree of information technology. Secondly, the government is supposed to construct a unified information retrieval window and centralized searching platform that can access to the open government information with just one stop, which provided the effective guide services of government information. It is unserviceable to promote the openness of government-affairs with archaic management concept, pattern and thinking, it is the courage to reform and spirit of innovation that works.

3.3 Implement the Openness of Government-Affairs Normality With the Attitude of Realistic and Pragmatic

Based on the principle that open for normal and don't open for an exception, our government comprehensively promote the openness of government-affairs and the government-information-publicity's main body to change their concept and foster a sense of scientific and reasonable openness of government information.

Because of thousands of years of feudal tradition in our country, it is gradually fostered the management concept that all government information shall be owned by the state and open for an exception and don't open for normal, (Li, 2004) which do not conform to the practice of current social management. We can conclude from the investigation performed by Chongqing municipal government that you can't see about normative information from several government websites of country level, which made the openness of government-affairs remain in name only. To make sure the truly openness of government-affairs with scientific and reasonable and keep it maintains strength and vitality, it is of great importance to treat openness of government-affairs with objective and correct attitude of realistic and pragmatic.

3.4 Strengthen the Anti-Driving Mechanism of Openness of Government-Affairs With the Masses Participated in

The chief of environment protect bureau of Shandong province has pointed out that the openness of government-affairs is one kind of anti-driving mechanism and the system can force government to improving the quality and efficiency of their service, which resolved the social conflicts (Liu, Wang, Gong, & Zhou, 2015). The goal of openness of government-affairs is to make the government truly serve for the masses and accept supervisions and only with the masses participated in can be the significance of openness be realized. Especially the officers from the departments of country level government be supposed to maintain close ties with the masses and make the masses to participate in the every aspect include the decision, execution, management, service and consequence, only with this can the operation of administrative power under the supervision of the masses and operated transparent and come up to science decision, perform well, convenient in management, effective service and transparent results.

CONCLUSION

In general, the Chongqing municipal government has made outstanding achievements in the fields of openness of government affairs though along with many deficiencies. The government is supposed to seize the opportunity of China deepening the reform and make solid progress in openness of government affairs with more realistic and pragmatic attitude. With laws and regulations to guarantee, with spirit of innovation to widen the channel, with the attitude of realistic and pragmatic to implement and with the masses participated in to strengthen the anti-driving mechanism of openness of government-affairs, only with this countermeasures be well implemented can the openness of government affairs be well promoted and can make government keep the purpose in mind and serve for the people heart and soul.

REFERENCES

- Hou, X. D. (2015). Basic problem discussion on the openness of government-affairs with Chinese characteristics. *Administration Reform*, (5)
- Li, Y. F. (2004). Disclosure system of information of the masses participate in the environmental impact assessment. *Jianghai Academic Journal*, (1), 126-132.
- Liu, X., Wang, Y. Y., Gong, L., & Zhou, H. S. (2015). Promote the openness of government-affairs and forge a sunshine government—comprehensively promote the openness of government-affairs. *Guangming Daily*, p.5.
- The Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China. (2007, April 24). *Regulation of government information disclosure of People's Republic of China*. Retrieved from http://www.gov.cn/zwgk/2007-04/24/content_592937.htm
- Zeng, X. X. (2014). Problems and countermeasures in the openness of government-affairs of Chongqing municipal. *Chongqing Administration*, 15(1), 30-31