

Study on Construction of Villager's Self-government in Rural China:

A Viewpoint of New Institutionalism and Its Limitation

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Abstract

The article aims at using the analytical approach of new institutionalism to discuss the strategic alternatives toward villager's self-government of actors between state and society in rural china. The application of new institutionalism theory supply the new viewpoint of villager's self-government, but exists some restrictions of explanation, including difficult in assessing benefit/cost of the operation of institution, benefit/cost of state, local cadre and peasant will not be fully estimated by quantitative analysis, even will not be seriously discussing by qualitative analysis, the application of the path-independence concept will be criticized and regarded as inappropriate and lacking of more advanced field study. The article points out that many actors between state and society select various strategy of implementation of villager's self-government, determining the achievement of institution implementation. Villager's self-government will be put into effect by support from state, local government and peasants. According to the decision-making process of villager's self-government construction, owing to the various benefit/cost estimation of three actors, so they cannot reach the consensus, their differences will exist in the long run. Although peasants have strong yearn for villager's self-government, yet cannot lead to institutional change. If villager's self-government lacks of support and recognition from state, it will not be healthy developed. For state, implementing grass-root democracy is an intelligent strategic alternative, but the less level in the hierarchy of administration, the more resistance for implementing villager's

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self-government, especially for town/township government.

**Keywords : villager's self-government; villager's committee; new institutionalism;
institution change; path-independence**

中國農村村民自治制度之形成：

新制度主義的觀點與侷限

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摘 要

本文試圖採取新制度主義的分析途徑與觀點，探討中國國家與社會內的行動主體對實施村民自治的策略選擇。在理論應用上，新制度主義對村民自治制度形成，雖提供新的解釋視角，但仍存在若干解釋限制，這包括：難以探討制度運作中的行為主體其成本與效益分析，國家、幹部與農民各自的成本與效益難以定量分析，即使定性分析缺乏嚴密細緻的討論；理論應用常流於「事後解釋」、「後見之明」；缺乏將法律、制度與菁英加以聯繫而進行更深入分析；「路徑依賴」概念的應用被批評流於泛論與套用，欠缺深入到田野調查研究。本文的研究指出，國家與社會內行動主體對村民自治實施策略的選擇，共同決定制度實施的績效，能否有效實行村民自治制度，其基礎在於同時需要中央政府、地方政府與農民的大力支持，三者缺一不可。然而分析村民自治制度形成的決策過程，農民、基層地方政府及中央政府共識仍未一致，分歧仍在，上中下三層的磨合仍將長期存在。國家、基層政府、村幹部、村民各有其成本和收益計算，雖然村民對村民自治有其迫切需求，但實際上難以誘發制度變遷，若缺少國家的承認與促進則難以發展。儘管在鄉村推行村民自治是中共國家明智的戰略選擇，但在整體國家內部組織的層級結構序列中，層次越低的組織對村民自治構成的阻力越大，特別是鄉鎮基層政權。

關鍵字：村民自治制度、村民委員會、新制度主義、制度變遷、路徑依賴

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