

## Exploration on the Effective Path of Rural Governance from the Perspective of Complex Coordination Logic

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**Keywords:** Rural revitalization, Rural grass-roots governance, Unit reorganization governance, Efficiency compound-coordination logic

**Abstract:** As the base for final realization of Rural Revitalization Strategy, “Governance Efficiency” has put forward new requirements for the effective-governance forms of rural governance units. By taking specific practices for “Agricultural Comprehensive Reform” launched by Qingyuan City of Guangdong Province as examples, this paper explored the roles of separating rural autonomous units with administrative units played in realizing practical implementations of villagers' autonomy, optimizing public-service supplies, improving public-administration efficiency and promoting benign development of grass-roots governance system under the guidance of compound coordination logic. Besides that, it further analyzed the significances of promotions of final coordinated development of the two major functional units, namely autonomous unit and administration one, under the whole-new historical condition aiming to realize “Governance Efficiency” with the connotations of “Autonomy Efficiency”, “Administration Efficiency” and “System Efficiency” in straightening out the governance relationship and activating the governance system.

### 1. Introduction

“Prosperous industry, livable ecology, civilized rural style, effective governance, and affluent life” are the general requirements for rural revitalization and the general tone of rural work in the new era. Among them, “effective governance” is the basis for realizing rural revitalization and plays a vital supporting role in the entire strategy.

From a practical point of view, Hunan, Hubei, Guangdong and other places started from the orientation of reforming the deep logic of rural governance and overcoming the shortcomings of traditional forms of governance, and took the reorganization of rural grassroots governance units as a breakthrough to optimize the governance pattern, forming a number of distinctive reorganizations. The path provides an important practical example and empirical basis for exploring effective forms of grassroots governance across the country and achieving good governance at the grassroots level. Among them, the “unit coordination” path that focuses on the unit level and function is a prominent representative.

Answering the governance propositions of the new era requires theoretical and practical innovations, exploring the theoretical implications of the “unit coordination” reorganization path and the “complex coordination logic” behind it, summarizing the commonalities of relevant cases and surpassing the characteristics of individual practices, so as to govern the grassroots governance system in my country. The purpose of this article is to provide a valuable general reference for capacity modernization.

### 2. Theoretical Implications of Compound Coordination Logic

The reorganization of governance units is essentially a problem of governance logic. Behind the different reorganization paths in different regions are the division of governance logic and the differences in governance forms. The unit reorganization logic hidden in the reorganization path of “unit coordination” is the core and practice of this type of reorganization. The essential. Based on the research results of related scholars such as Li Huayin, Deng Dacai, etc., it should be

summarized as a “complex coordination” reorganization logic.

As the fundamental guidance and orientation support for the reorganization of “unit coordination” at the rural grassroots level, “complex coordination logic” is a method that aims to take into account the sound development of various functional units (especially autonomous units and administrative units) by promoting their proper separation. Reorganization logic that leaves sufficient space for the effective development of related functions. Its basic consideration is to facilitate government services on the basis of “facilitating the autonomy of the masses, autonomy is the foothold, and service efficiency is the guarantee” [2], and defines larger units such as communities, districts, and administrative villages as administrative units to reflect In addition to the large-scale effects of administrative work and public services in large units, the autonomous units are submerged in small units close to villagers, such as natural villages, village groups, and villages, so as to give full play to the endowment of governance resources such as acquaintances, society, and interests. The benefits of good governance at the grassroots level enable the entire grassroots governance to have both a reasonable system and healthy interaction.

In the context of urbanization and industrialization, many developed countries have already undergone several mergers and reorganizations of basic rural governance units, and the merger wave is still ongoing [3]. As far as my country’s actual situation is concerned, nationwide governance units have been merged at the beginning of this century and in recent years. The former is driven by the need for tax and fee reform and the strengthening of the country’s influence at the grassroots level, while the latter is driven by rural revitalization as a call for intensive development. Based on the requirements of marketization, urbanization, and industrialization, in recent years, there has even been a shift from “combining villages and regrouping” to “reconstructing villages and building houses” to promote farmers to “wash their feet upstairs”.

Under such a general trend of development, in a sense, what needs to be considered at present is “not whether to merge or reorganize, but to study forward-looking how to merge and transcend mergers” [3]. Under the guidance of compound coordination logic, the unit coordination and reorganization path that goes beyond the upward or downward movement of a single governance unit has shown unique governance effectiveness in the practice in Guangdong and other places. It is worthwhile for researchers to scientifically refine the relevant experience. The empirical analysis and objective evaluation based on the complex coordination logic of its philosophy and logic core is a feasible way of thinking.

### **3. Practice of “Agricultural Comprehensive Reform” in Qingyuan, Guangdong**

The problem of reorganization logic is always a practical problem, and its life is also developing in corresponding practice. Empirical cases of unit coordination under the guidance of compound coordination logic are distributed in Zhejiang, Hunan, Fujian, Guangdong and other places, among which the “agricultural comprehensive reform” case in Qingyuan City, Guangdong Province is particularly typical.

#### **3.1 Regional Overview and Reorganization Background**

Although Qingyuan City is close to the economically developed Pearl River Delta, its overall development level is not high due to its rugged terrain and inconvenient transportation. In recent years, with the acceleration of the development of developed cities in the region and the gradual advancement of its own urbanization, the city’s rural areas have gradually faced severe village development problems such as the rapid outflow of labor resources and the large-scale desertion of rural land, which has seriously affected the healthy development of the region [4].

Not only that, but the local rural grassroots governance has gradually emerged in terms of unit scale and governance structure. First, as far as autonomous units are concerned, the size of the administrative village organization unit resulting from the merger of multiple villages is too large, and it is difficult to form effective governance synergies under the influence of factors such as “unborn faces”, “lack of trust”, and “complex interests”; Second, as far as the administrative unit is concerned, as the country’s statutory organizational unit, the more than a hundred powers conferred

by the administrative village have brought administrative pressure on the “one-line one-thousand needles”, and there is a lack of service efficiency construction; In other words, because more than 90% of the local collective assets (including land, etc.) are attached to the natural village group, and the autonomous legal unit is in the administrative village, the separation of “property” and “ruling power” makes it difficult to achieve unity of the originally fragmented interest structure[5 ].

Under the two major dilemmas of regional development and governance, on November 26, 2012, the Qingyuan Municipal Party Committee and Government issued the “Opinions of the Qingyuan Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China and Qingyuan Municipal People’s Government on Improving the Construction of Village-level Grassroots Organizations and Promoting Comprehensive Rural Reform (for Trial Implementation) “(Hereinafter referred to as the “Opinions”), formally kicked off the practice process of coordinated reorganization of grassroots governance units and complex optimization of governance patterns.

### 3.2 Brief Description of Practice

Since January 2013, Qingyuan City has designated Xiniu Town in Yingde City, Jiupi Town in Lianzhou City, and Shijiao Town in Fogang County as pilot towns for the “agricultural comprehensive reform” policy, hoping to test the effectiveness of the policy through partial trials . After achieving certain reform effects in the three pilot towns, Qingyuan City fully implemented the unit reorganization reform.

The main orientation of Qingyuan City’s promotion of unit reorganization is “sinking of autonomous units and moving up of administrative units”. Under the condition that the administrative village organization system remains basically unchanged, it will “adjust the existing' township-village-village groups to townships -District-village (original villager group or natural village)' grassroots governance model”[6] to reshape the structure of grassroots governance unit, specifically expressed in the following aspects:

The “Opinions” require the establishment of village committees in natural village groups, the autonomous unit will be changed from administrative villages to natural villages, the scale of autonomous units will be reduced, the freedom of natural villages and village groups in the practice of autonomy will be increased, and governance activities will be implemented around the villagers. In order to promote the effective realization of the “Four Selfs” function, the reform also requires the establishment of a government work access mechanism and a “one matter, one discussion” funding mechanism for rewards and subsidies. The principle gives corresponding powers and special funds to ensure the benign operation of natural village group autonomy [6]. In addition, the “Opinions” also encourage villages to formulate village rules and people's agreements that meet governance needs and meet local realities in accordance with their own actual conditions, in order to provide an effective institutional basis for village-level governance centered on villager autonomy.

The “Agricultural Comprehensive Reform” of Qingyuan City regards the improvement of the service capacity of the grassroots governance system as one of the focal points of coordination and reorganization. It is based on the regional area, population distribution, and geographical characteristics under the township division, and in the larger administrative village or multiple small administrative villages. The combination of the establishment of a number of areas and supporting “party and government public service stations” as the town's dispatched agencies, to undertake various administrative tasks assigned by the grassroots government and undertake public services such as party and government affairs agency for the masses. At the same time, the district service system will be connected with the village committee to promote large-scale service efficiency to truly benefit the grassroots.

In addition to the main content of the above two aspects, the compound coordination logic practice of Qingyuan City will also build strong rural grassroots party organizations, village-level economic organizations and security, collective economic development, optimization of “three-capital management”, clarification of property rights and other “industrial prosperity” The relevant content of the government is incorporated into the consideration of the coordination and

reorganization of the grassroots governance unit, and the optimization of the governance structure is used to promote regional development and consolidate a sustainable economic foundation for the foundation of grassroots governance.

### **3.3 Analysis and Evaluation of Restructuring Effectiveness**

In April 2014, the success of the “Agricultural Comprehensive Reform” in Qingyuan City was affirmed by visiting experts. In November of the same year, Qingyuan City became the second batch of rural reform pilot areas in the country. The achievements of Qingyuan Reform in deepening the reform of rural governance structure and exploring the effective orientation of grassroots governance are mainly reflected in the three aspects of “effectiveness of autonomy”, “effectiveness of administration” and “effectiveness of the system”.

The key to effective rural grassroots governance lies in whether autonomy is effective. For a long time, Qingyuan's local villagers' self-government practices have been “weak administrative villages and active natural village groups”, and forms of “grassroots autonomy” and “small and micro autonomy” have shown active development. The Qingyuan reform started from the essential law of villager autonomy relying on the realization of smaller units. The autonomy unit was submerged from the previous administrative village to the natural village group, which fully adapted to the reality of the implementation of villager autonomy and the combination of governance and property rights, and made full use of the widespread existence of rural areas in South China. The governance foundation of the clan culture and acquaintance society promotes the governance of small units, realizing the effective autonomy.

From a data perspective, in the first “two committees” elections after the sinking of the autonomous unit, the villagers' participation rate increased from 91.5% in the previous election to 96.7%. Many young and middle-aged migrant workers return to their hometowns to participate in the “two committees” hoping to contribute to the village. In the past, talented villagers who were unwilling to participate in village governance have also actively participated in the handling of village-level affairs. Many villages have not changed their teams for several years. It turned out to be “new” [1]. The emergence of these phenomena proves that the villagers' enthusiasm for participating in governance has been mobilized, laying a solid foundation for “everyone's affairs to be handled by everyone” and improving the satisfaction of villagers' autonomy.

Qingyuan City has promoted the transformation of local governance from the “village committee core” to the “village core” by shifting the focus of autonomy downwards, reducing the scale of villagers' autonomy, “maximizing the role of grassroots autonomy, and achieving autonomy again.” Promote the effectiveness of the autonomy level [7].

From the perspective of administrative efficiency, the effectiveness of Qingyuan's reform is reflected in two aspects: service supply optimization and administrative efficiency improvement.

From the perspective of public service supply, “enhancing the serviceability of grassroots and local governance can better meet the needs of the people for improved services”[8] is the requirement and trend of grassroots governance development, and its implementation level It determines the realization of the fundamental interests of the grassroots.

From the perspective of convenient services for the people, Qingyuan City takes the “difficulty in handling affairs” of the people under the past “township-administrative village” pattern as the starting point for reform, and takes into account the size of the division and the density of population and other factors in the division of administrative units. Each party and government public service station is located in the most accessible location in the area, greatly reducing the time cost of the masses. In addition, the introduction of a number of convenient service measures such as “three-level network processing, decentralization of approval powers, and implementation of an agency system” has greatly reduced the energy cost of the handlers, and also facilitated the ability of villagers (especially the elderly) who are not familiar with the procedures. Doing things well will enable local party members to truly feel the benefits of optimizing public service supply.

On the other hand, the efficiency of public administration is embodied in the effect of administrative scale. As we all know, there is a very close connection between the township-level

government and the village-level unit in the apportionment of administrative affairs. Data statistics, policy implementation, transfer payments, and spiritual communication are the most common. These tasks exist for larger administrative villages. Difficulties in organization and implementation.

In response to this situation, Qingyuan City, by means of approving the number of personnel, appointing professionals, and establishing an office system, makes overall arrangements and unified management of the various tasks of the party and government public service stations, so that the rationalization of the division of labor, institutionalization and other tools can be brought into full play., Which effectively improves the processing efficiency of transactional work and the practical optimization of working methods.

## 4. Summary and Enlightenment

### 4.1 Effective Governance is Closely Related to Unit Reorganization

Grassroots governance is the governance of the governance unit, and the governance unit is the organizational support for governance activities. The setting of the governance unit is closely linked to the realization of governance effects. In terms of the actual situation in Qingyuan, the excessively large and functionally unbalanced unit structure before the reform has brought about the governance problem of “inefficient administration and suspension of autonomy”. After the “Taishi Village Incident”, “Wukan Incident”, “Lufeng Incident” and other grassroots governance chaos occurred, the local government seized the opportunity to advance reforms, starting from the perspective of changing the size and structure of functional units, and focused on the “district-village” The governance structure of “Natural Village Groups” fully shifts the focus of autonomy down, and at the same time takes service-focused grass-roots administration as the main function of the district level, shifts the focus of service down, and effectively promotes effective governance from the perspective of the unit, and recognizes the problem of the unit. The close connection with governance issues, this experience is worthy of reference from relevant practices in other places.

### 4.2 Effective Unit Reorganization Relies on Effective Reorganization Logic

The reorganization path is the practical support of the reorganization logic, and the reorganization logic is the theoretical foundation of the reorganization path. But fundamentally speaking, the latter, as an abstract expression of unit reorganization, determines the specific form of the former and answers the question of “why”. Without a scientific concept rooted in the nature of rural grassroots governance and extensive investigations, it is naturally impossible to use it as a guide to carry out effective unit reorganization. The successful success of the “Agricultural Comprehensive Reform” in Qingyuan City is the best example. As an “opinion” that runs through the effective logic, this policy document of only 5,046 words, which was led by the municipal party committee secretary Ge Changwei to investigate 85 towns and more than 200 villages in the city, took nearly a year from research and drafting to the final document issuance. [9] The theoretical guidance formed by the solid work in the early stage laid the foundation for the subsequent reforms to achieve great results. From this point of view, the practice of promoting effective reorganization in other ways must rely on in-depth grassroots investigations to form a reorganization logic suitable for local governance soil and serving effective governance.

### 4.3 Governance Resource Endowment Has a Significant Impact on Governance Forms

The success of the unit reorganization in Qingyuan City is of course the effectiveness of the unit reorganization under the guidance of compound coordination logic, but the sufficient local governance resource endowment is also an important impetus for effective governance. As an area where traditional villages are widely developed in South China, the villages under the jurisdiction of Qingyuan City have the characteristics of a high degree of integration between natural villages and blood-related clan [10]. In addition to the fine topography of the place, the villages in this area maintain the form of small-scale settlements and exist. The long-term separation of autonomous units and administrative units has made it necessary for Qingyuan's rural governance to adopt a

governance form of “small-unit autonomy, large-unit administration, and separation of the two units” and make full use of the various types of social capital remaining in the countryside. Effective governance is one of the key elements of the coordinated reorganization of the site. Therefore, in the process of reorganizing governance units and reforming forms, all localities must closely follow the local intellectual resource endowments and govern social capital, and adapt measures to local conditions in practice.

## 5. Acknowledgment

Sichuan Agricultural University Research Interest Cultivation Program Project “Research on effective rural governance under the background of rural revitalization-based on the perspective of unit reorganization” (Proj. No.: 2020740).

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