

Introspection and Transcendence: the Dilemma and Path of College Students' Participation in School Management

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Abstract: With the internationalization and modernization of Chinese higher education, college students' participation in school management has become the requirement of China's higher education reform and the inevitable trend of the development of higher education in the world. College administrators also gradually realize that if schools want to survive and develop in the fierce competition, they must change the traditional "material-oriented" view, and transform the students' roles at the school education level from "outsiders" to "insiders". Through summarizing the previous researches, this paper summarizes the dilemma of Chinese college students' participation in school management, reflects from three parties including the government, schools, and students, and provides the targeted countermeasures.

1. Introduction

"World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty-first Century: Vision and Action" explicitly pointed out: "Government and college administrators should regard students as participants in higher education reform. College students should participate in the discussion, evaluation, management and decision-making of higher education issues [1] College students' participation in school management refers to the activity process in which college students share part of the management power from the formal organization of the school as a main member of the school. In this process of activity, college students follow the objectives of school management, undertake the responsibility of school management, actively participate in school management decisions and coordinate school management objectives and student personal development objectives.

2. College Students' Participation: Dilemmas and Causes Coexist

2.1. The general indifference of students' participation attitude

Almond, a famous sociologist and management scientist, believes that compared with the West, Chinese culture has its own characteristics with prominent "participation" and "submission". Under this cultural background, there are some contradictions in students' attitudes towards school management. On the one hand, they show strong interest in school management, but their enthusiasm for participation is not high on the whole; on the other hand, students are dissatisfied with and question the school's monopolization of administrative resources, but they often take a resigned attitude towards the dominant position the school's senior management maintain in school management. The survey of existing studies found that half of the students said that participation in school management was very important or relatively important, but most of the students showed general indifferent and formalism attitude towards participation in school management. Their participation was often passive acceptance and low level, which often did not have practical influence on school decision-making. In terms of the content of participation, students seldom participate in the proposal of major events of the school, and only participate to a higher degree in the issues that have vital interests with themselves. From the perspectives of philosophy and economics, as a result of the existence of "rational man", the students based on the rational consideration are often not willing to spend your time cost in the process of the participation in

school management, but they are more willing to make the choice of the “free rider”. Let people exercise their rights, and they just share their success, lacking the due responsibility and consciousness of the rule of law and expressing less concerns about the school affairs unrelated to their own interests. This “free rider” results in students' indifference and passive attitude towards participation in school management and also encourages the government and school management officials to monopolize the power and resources of school management.

2.2. The severe shortage of students' participation qualification

Whether students can participate in school management smoothly often involves the question of students' participation qualification. The participation qualification of students in school management activities refers to the ability of students to feel public rights and obligations, which refers to the sense of rights and responsibilities we often said. In the process in which students release their own interests to achieve the value goal of school public interests, students, they only legally enjoys the rights to know and impeach and the right of supervision. Students' sharing of the right to know, the right of supervision and other rights does not represent their effective exercise of such rights, while students' qualification is the important guarantee to ensure that students exercise their rights actively. Through sorting out the existing researches, this paper found that the qualification of students to participate in school management is seriously deficient, few students can really participate in school management, and the deeper channels of rights protection are even more rare. Students' lacking of their own sense of qualification is not only unfavourable to the realization of democratic management in colleges and universities, but even impairs it. In addition, college students' perception of public responsibility in the process of participating in social management cannot be discussed at all, and even can be said to be blind. Compared with active participation in school management, college students tend to hitchhike and cannot play the role of “gatekeeper” in the process of school management. When dealing with school problems involving public interests, they often rely on the schools and the government to solve the problems and act as “gatekeepers” only when they have to or the problems have something to do with their own interests.

2.3. The extensive limitations on students' participation ability

The highly capable and active student group is one of the basic assumptions for students to participate in school management. The ideal state for students to participate in school management is that most students can participate in school management that involves their own interests and aims at the public interests. That is to say, students should not only have the willingness or awareness to participate in school management, but also have the ability to effectively achieve management objectives to a certain extent. With the continuous progress of school reform, on the one hand, the complexity of school problems increases the difficulty of school management, and on the other hand, the realization of scientific school management and decision-making puts forward higher requirements for decision-making tools. In this context, although students as an intellectual, but because of the limitation of their professionalism, often have the limited management ability in school management. Through sorting out the existing researches, I found that most college students thought they didn't have the ability to participate in the management of school affairs, and many students met difficulties in the process of participating in school management. Due to the particularity and complexity of school problems, students not only have the initiative to participate in school management, but also face the embarrassing situation of insufficient management ability and limited management ability. Students are most required to participate in college management affairs, such as scholarship and grant evaluation, canteen management, student assessment, safety supervision and etc.. However, students lack the ability to participate in them, even lack the basic quality and the intuitive feelings for their own rights and obligations.

Therefore, in similar affairs, students often choose the form of “the third party”, that is, the school or other institutions provide such services. To some extent, students can be said to grant the full delegation to the “third party”, leading to the failure of realization of students' role and behavior of “participants” in school management activities.

2.4. The immaturity of students' participation organization

Mature and democratic student organizations are important carriers for students' effective participation. Emergence and development of Chinese colleges and universities is promoted by the government and the department in charge of education. Their growth can't be separated from the support of government and the department in charge of education and they enjoy a lot of resources provided by the government, that is to say, Chinese colleges and universities themselves don't develop with economic and social development, and student organizations of Chinese colleges and universities have not become mature yet, which mainly manifest as: firstly, college students lack independence. The environment of Chinese colleges and universities is deeply restricted by the state management system, and student organizations and groups are not independent. Therefore, college student organizations that regard party and government organizations as the competent departments cannot get rid of the influence of official color of the government fundamentally. Especially at present, China's colleges and universities mainly rely on financial allocation as their resources of funding, the organization funds of college students' participating in school management mainly come from schools, and the funding is seriously insufficient, which also reflects the immaturity of college students' organizations. Secondly, the development of student organization in colleges and universities is not perfect. Compared with the western countries, student organizations in Chinese colleges and universities have large quantities and few types, and their capacities of organization and action are very weak, coupled with the imperfect organizational system and democratic governance mechanism. As the common institutions have few types, and institution setting is unreasonable, they do not play a substantive role. Thirdly, the development of student groups in colleges and universities is not balanced. The ideal development mode of student groups is from the bottom up and its power source lies in the students, while the development of student groups in colleges and universities is different, most of which are established from the top down and led by the school, and a few are established from the bottom up. Therefore, different student organizations have different resources and positions and have different influences.

3. Participation of College Students: Introspection and Transcendence Go Together

University management is a combination of multiple stakeholders, influenced by various parties and factors. The path for college students to effectively participate in school management needs to reflect on the difficulties in reality and give the targeted suggestions beyond the reality.

3.1. The government: reflecting on the management concepts and improving the policies and regulations on college students' participation in management

Locke, in his book *Two Treatises on Government*, put forward the point of view "limited government theory": that people transfer the natural right to form a government is "the motive for individuals in order to better protect their and others' freedom and property"[2]. The college students' participation in school management is obstructed by the government's excessive intervention or ignorance to a great extent, resulting in that the students' rights cannot be realized effectively. The government should transform its role from "steering and rowing" to "steering without rowing", and make appropriate adjustment on the degree of intervention in or attention to colleges and universities.

On the one hand, the management concepts of government departments should be changed. The rights of the government are not unlimited. When they are applied in the schools, the government should delegate power to the schools and the society, realize the multi-centralization of rights, delegate power to the universities, and encourage the autonomy of the universities. A university is a union composed of university students and staff. The management and related systems of a university should not harm the rights and interests of students. Therefore, in order to better achieve the interests of stakeholders, the government should establish people-oriented management concept, public management concept and management concept of right standard, thoroughly change the traditional thinking and cognition that government leads the management of colleges and

universities, respect and give full play to the students' role of self-management, self-education and self-service, encourage college students to participate in the college management activities to maintain their dominant position and rights. On the other hand, it is necessary to strengthen the policy and legal researches on college students' participation in school management. The government can realize the effective participation of college students in school management by formulating, implementing, evaluating and supervising the policies and laws on college students' participation in school management. At present, China's policy and law construction about college students' participation in school management is not sound enough and the implementation of the specific measures for students to manage the schools is not in place, so the government should strengthen the supervision and evaluation of policy implementation, should make the resources which should be configured and can be configured in place in place and in time. Reasonable use of resources can promote college students to participated in school management effectively.

3.2. Schools: reflecting on management concepts and improving the environment in which college students participate in management

“In an intensive organization, management is a collective act that takes place at work and leadership power should be assigned to the members of each organization.”[3] Sergiovanni once pointed out that the core of management is “serving” and educated managers should serve the needs of the schools and embody “serving” by serving college students.[4] Therefore, schools should give resources, guidance and honors, transform their role from management personnel to learning to delegate powers, focus on enhancing the vitality, motivation and enthusiasm of teachers to participate in school management, strengthen the school's own guidance and service functions, and allow more college students to participate in the school management. College administrators should have a clear understanding of that students are an important part of the school and the basis for the survival and development of the school, the management and decision-making of the school have certain relations with the students, and only by creating a good environment and system for the students, can their enthusiasm and initiative of participating in school management be fully aroused.

On the one hand, colleges and universities should improve the specific systems for college students to participate in school management. Firstly, the schools can establish a referendum system for college students to participate in school management. The student referendum system is a system of making decisions on complicated or important issues in schools by the means of student voting. This system enables each student to have the right to participate in the decision-making of the college or university, and at the same time cultivates college students' democratic consciousness and sense of responsibility. Secondly, colleges and universities should improve the hearing system for students to participate in school management. Hearings are held as required. For example, administrative hearings can be held when the internal management of the school involves the interests of students; Development hearings can be held when the major measures such as procurement and setting of school infrastructure construction are related to the interests of students; When the school carries on the internal punishment management, punishment hearing can be held. Thirdly, the school should improve the student union system, student congress system, student principal assistant system and other organizational systems, through which college students participate in the school management. Through these organizations, students participate in the daily management of the school, reflecting their needs and suggestions. These organizations guide college students to actively participate in school management. Fourthly, colleges and universities should improve the right protection system for college students to participate in school management. The right protection system includes college students' complaint system, appeal system, petition system, prosecution system and accusation system. For example, Peking University has established the student appeal system, and has pointed out the specific responsibilities of the board of appeal, institutional settings, working procedures and some relevant matters needing attention. This practice provides the specific and feasible regulations and procedures for college students to participate in school management, which is more conducive to the realization of students' participation in school management. Finally, colleges and universities should strengthen the network communication

system for college students to participate in college management, for example, “principal online”, principal mailbox, BBS, message board and so on. Network communication system is an emerging system for students to participate in school management. It can react and deal with problems quickly and effectively and has certain safety.

On the other hand, colleges and universities should create the good campus culture for students to participate in school management. Firstly, colleges and universities should strive to create an atmosphere of democracy and freedom. The democratic atmosphere requires the school to follow the principle of equality and the principle that the minority is subordinate to the majority. The free atmosphere requires that every student in a university should have the self-control power. Each college student should arrange their activities freely, learn about relevant information and express their demands freely without violating the principles. Secondly, colleges and universities should strive to create an atmosphere of unity and cooperation. All members of the school should work together for the same goal, cooperate with each other in the management process, give full play to their advantages and strengths, and promote the progress of the school together. Thirdly, the school should create a fair and equal campus culture. Managers are not the dictators in high position, and students are not obscure executors bowing their heads. Everyone has the right to express their own opinions, and as long as they are meaningful opinions and opinions, they can be paid attention to. Only when they are recognized and concerned, can college students better exert their initiative.

4. Students: Reflecting on Their Sense of Participation and Improving Their Ability to Participate in Management

The willingness of students is the key factor to improve the college students’ participation in school management. On the one hand, students can change their own participation roles. When the participants are considered as “participants” instead of “outsiders”, their enthusiasm of participation will burst. Therefore, if college students want to participate in the school management effectively, they must transform their roles from the decision-making recipients to the decision-making participants, from the supporting role to the protagonists in class, from the storage accepting knowledge to the knowledge developers, and from the messengers to the information communicators. On the other hand, college students should improve their participation ability. The ability to participate in management is not acquired in a short time, but needs students to learn and accumulate gradually in the process of participation. On the one hand, college students can learn about relevant management theories through textbooks and consciously participate in relevant management training. College students should actively participate in relevant management training or lectures organized by the school or the society, and draw on the opinions and suggestions from experts. On the other hand, college students can also participate in practical activities to improve their management experience and ability. The improvement of participation ability can not only optimize the way of participation, but also improve their quality in various aspects.

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