
Exploration of the Path to Improve the New Media Literacy of Grassroots Civil Servants

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Abstract: As the new media era continues to evolve, new media literacy has become an essential competency for professionals in today's society. Civil servants, as representatives of government authority, shoulder the critical mission of social service and governance. Enhancing new media literacy among grassroots civil servants is therefore imperative. This paper analyzes approaches to improve their new media literacy, examines its significance, and proposes practical recommendations to address existing challenges in current new media literacy development. The ultimate goal is to comprehensively enhance the overall capabilities of grassroots civil servants, enabling them to better fulfill their social service and governance responsibilities.

Keywords: grassroots civil servants; new media literacy; pathways

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1. Introduction

The advent of the new media era has propelled socio-economic development while injecting fresh momentum into enhancing social governance and public service quality. In today's context, government policy announcements, public awareness campaigns, and public service information all require dissemination through new media platforms, which have become the primary channel for information exchange in contemporary society. The new media literacy of grassroots civil servants directly impacts the quality of their public service delivery. With strong new media literacy, civil servants can navigate daily tasks with ease and better fulfill their mission of wholeheartedly serving the people.

2. The significance of improving the new media literacy of grassroots civil servants

2.1. It is conducive to meeting the new requirements of the civil servants in the development of the times

The core mission of grassroots civil servants is to serve the public and bolster social stability, which inherently demands contemporary relevance. Their work requires tailored approaches to social governance and public services, adapted to the evolving socio-economic landscape. In the digital era, digital literacy has become a critical competency indicator. Enhancing this skillset enables civil servants to navigate modern challenges, efficiently gather and disseminate information,

and meet the evolving demands of the times.

2.2. It helps to enhance the influence of policy promotion.

Civil servants serve as vital bridges between the government and the public, acting as the primary force in policy dissemination. In the new media era, their digital literacy directly impacts the effectiveness of policy communication. Enhancing grassroots civil servants' digital literacy enables them to accurately grasp policy essentials and deliver them to the public through engaging and accessible new media platforms. This approach not only boosts policy appeal and engagement but also expands its reach and influence. Moreover, improved digital literacy lays a solid foundation for developing their comprehensive capabilities, enhancing their social service and management skills, and better fulfilling their professional responsibilities.

2.3. It is conducive to establishing and maintaining the government's public image.

Maintaining the government's public image and building a positive reputation are core responsibilities for grassroots civil servants. As direct representatives of governmental authority, their online conduct profoundly shapes public perception and evaluation of the administration. Enhancing digital literacy enables these officials to use social media tools more professionally, accurately convey official messages, and proactively address public concerns—effectively fostering a credible government image. Moreover, improved digital literacy equips grassroots officials to handle media crises with greater composure, effectively steer public discourse, prevent misinformation and misunderstandings, and ultimately safeguard the government's credibility and authority.

3. Problems in the process of improving the new media literacy of grassroots civil servants

3.1. Insufficient attention to enhancing civil servants' new media literacy

New media literacy has become an essential competency for professionals in today's evolving society, with proficiency in new media being a key criterion for evaluating modern talent. As the bridge between government and the public, grassroots civil servants' new media literacy directly impacts their work efficiency and service quality, making its enhancement an urgent priority. However, in practice, some organizations still prioritize traditional work methods and performance metrics over new media literacy, overlooking its critical role in grassroots civil service. This outdated mindset has led to a scarcity of training resources and educational materials, leaving grassroots civil servants without effective guidance or support in developing new media literacy.

3.2. Lack of assessment on civil servants' new media literacy

Enhancing new media literacy among grassroots civil servants is a systematic and comprehensive initiative requiring both leadership recognition and active participation from civil servants themselves. Elevating new media literacy should be regarded as a critical dimension for continuous professional development. However, current efforts often lack sufficient emphasis on this aspect, primarily because some organizations have not incorporated this dimension into civil servant performance evaluations. This oversight makes it difficult to accurately assess civil servants' practical capabilities in new media applications. Even in organizations that have integrated new media competencies into evaluations, assessments tend to focus on theoretical knowledge while neglecting practical operational skills and problem-solving abilities in complex new media environments. The absence of effective evaluation mechanisms results in insufficient motivation and urgency for grassroots civil servants to improve their new media literacy, ultimately hindering overall progress in this area.

3.3. The single method of improving and cultivating new media literacy

Enhancing grassroots civil servants' digital literacy requires robust training systems and institutional frameworks. To stay

current with the evolving digital era, training programs must remain innovative. However, many organizations still rely on outdated methods, often focusing narrowly on basic new media applications without incorporating practical exercises or case studies. This one-size-fits-all approach fails to engage civil servants effectively. Moreover, the absence of tailored training plans for different roles and positions leaves grassroots staff unable to gain practical skills relevant to their work, ultimately undermining the effectiveness of digital literacy development across the civil service.

4. Pathways to enhance the new media literacy of grassroots civil servants

4.1. Change the concept and build a new media literacy training mechanism

The improvement of new media literacy of civil servants has become an effective way to strengthen the ability of civil servants.

First, we must transform the traditional concept of civil servant quality enhancement based on the characteristics of the times, actively meet the new demands placed on grassroots civil servants in the new media era, and fully recognize the importance of new media literacy for grassroots civil servants to fulfill their duties and serve the public in the current digital age. On one hand, unit leaders should attach great importance to cultivating new media literacy among grassroots civil servants, making it a regular priority task. A top-down culture of valuing new media literacy should be established within the organization. Leaders should take the lead in learning new media knowledge, understanding its development trends and application techniques, and setting an example for grassroots civil servants. On the other hand, we need to increase resource investment in new media literacy training. Special funds should be allocated to support training activities, purchase relevant learning materials and equipment, and assign professionals to organize and implement new media literacy training, ensuring the smooth and efficient execution of these initiatives.

Secondly, a systematic and scientific training plan should be developed based on the characteristics of the organization and its positions. On one hand, clear training objectives must be established to enhance civil servants' new media literacy through regular diversified training. These objectives should closely align with the practical work needs of grassroots civil servants, specifying concrete standards for new media literacy at different positions and levels. The training content should cover fundamental new media knowledge, application skills, and public opinion response strategies. On the other hand, innovative training formats should be adopted. Traditional training methods such as meetings and lectures should be replaced with a combination of online and offline approaches, including simulation exercises, to improve relevance and effectiveness. Online training can utilize digital platforms to provide diverse new media course resources, while offline sessions can organize face-to-face lectures to facilitate in-depth discussions on practical new media applications. Simulation exercises, by creating realistic new media work scenarios, enable civil servants to practice and enhance their application skills and adaptability, thereby genuinely improving their new media literacy.

Furthermore, establishing a training evaluation mechanism with dynamic adjustments is essential. The evaluation system should conduct regular assessments and outcome reviews of training content to ensure practical effectiveness. Periodic evaluations of new media literacy knowledge can comprehensively assess grassroots civil servants' mastery and application capabilities in this field. Given the rapid evolution of new media, training content must be dynamically updated to maintain relevance. It is crucial to stay abreast of technological trends, incorporating the latest media formats, communication methods, and operational models into training programs. This enables civil servants to acquire cutting-edge new media knowledge and skills, ensuring that training content consistently aligns with practical job requirements and genuinely serves their professional roles ^[1].

4.2. Innovative assessment: incorporating new media literacy into civil servant evaluations

In order to further strengthen the importance of the new media literacy of the grass-roots civil servants, we should innovate the assessment methods of the grass-roots civil servants, and integrate the new media literacy into the comprehensive assessment of civil servants, and link it with the promotion of civil servants and their personal interests, so as to promote

the new media literacy of the grass-roots civil servants.

First, innovative evaluation methods for civil servants should be developed based on the unit's actual conditions. A scientific and reasonable assessment framework for new media literacy should be established, clearly defining specific content and standards. The evaluation can be divided into two dimensions: theoretical knowledge mastery and practical operation, ensuring comprehensiveness and relevance. The theoretical assessment primarily evaluates civil servants' grasp of fundamental new media theories, while the practical assessment focuses on their ability to utilize new media tools for information dissemination and interactive communication. Through simulated work scenarios, the evaluation tests civil servants' adaptability and operational proficiency in new media environments. Additionally, emphasis should be placed on feedback and application of assessment results, using them as key criteria for career advancement and merit-based awards. This approach effectively motivates grassroots civil servants to proactively enhance their new media literacy.

Secondly, it is essential to continuously innovate assessment methods. Beyond theoretical and practical evaluations, emphasis should be placed on civil servants' ability to flexibly utilize new media. For instance, in handling sudden public opinion incidents, simulated scenarios could be designed to assess their capacity to swiftly guide public discourse and effectively address public concerns through new media platforms. This assessment approach holds significant practical value and serves as a key objective in enhancing grassroots civil servants' new media literacy. It enables evaluation of whether civil servants can adaptively employ new media tools to adopt appropriate strategies and measures when facing complex and volatile online public sentiment, thereby safeguarding government image and credibility. Additionally, a tripartite evaluation mechanism could be introduced, inviting experts or institutions in the new media field to objectively assess civil servants' new media literacy, ensuring the fairness and authority of the assessment results.

Furthermore, enhancing grassroots civil servants' new media literacy requires continuous improvement in practical effectiveness and targeted approaches. Tailored training and evaluation programs should be implemented based on different positions and levels within organizations. Taking administrative and operational roles as examples, new media literacy training for administrative positions primarily focuses on daily operation and management capabilities of government new media platforms, ensuring administrative staff can skillfully utilize new media tools to improve the efficiency and quality of government services. Operational roles, on the other hand, emphasize the application and innovation of new media in business operations to enhance transparency and influence. Through such position-specific and tiered personalized training and evaluation, grassroots civil servants' new media literacy can be more precisely enhanced to meet the practical needs of different positions, effectively improving their new media literacy and strengthening the management level of social public services^[2].

4.3. Innovation of the training methods of civil servants' new media literacy

The promotion of new media literacy for grassroots civil servants is a task of great timeliness, which requires timely adjustment of training methods according to the development and changes of the new media era, and continuous improvement of the pertinence and advancement of the cultivation of new media literacy for grassroots civil servants, so as to ensure that grassroots civil servants can master the latest new media application ability and better meet the new needs of posts and work.

First, when developing new media literacy training programs for grassroots civil servants, the curriculum should be designed based on their actual job responsibilities to ensure alignment with practical work requirements. Taking township-level civil servants as an example, training should focus on rural work scenarios and needs. This includes training on using new media platforms for rural policy promotion, agricultural product marketing, and effective communication with villagers. The content should integrate local specialty industries and cultural elements to help civil servants leverage new media to showcase rural charm and attract external resources for development. Additionally, emphasis should be placed on enhancing rural civil servants' ability to solve practical problems through new media. This involves collecting villagers' feedback via online channels, addressing issues promptly, and improving work efficiency and service quality.

Secondly, the adage "Interest is the best teacher" remains valid in new media literacy training for grassroots civil

servants. Tailored programs should align with their personal interests to ignite their passion and intrinsic motivation. By designing diverse new media application scenarios, participants can experience the fun and practicality of digital tools firsthand. Interactive teaching methods should be incorporated to enhance engagement, enabling civil servants to improve their new media literacy in a relaxed and enjoyable environment. Additionally, an incentive system should be established to recognize and reward outstanding performers in new media literacy development, further motivating their learning drive.

Furthermore, enhancing grassroots civil servants' new media literacy aims to strengthen their public service capabilities and overall competence. Therefore, practical training should outweigh theoretical instruction in the training process. A project-based approach can be adopted to conduct practical training, incorporating real-world scenarios and case studies from civil servants' actual work to demonstrate new media applications. For instance, organizing new media editing and publishing campaigns for specific policy promotion allows civil servants to master new media tools through hands-on experience. Additionally, involving civil servants in the planning and execution of new media projects—from topic selection to implementation and feedback—can improve their new media application skills and project management capabilities. Simultaneously, establishing practical training bases for grassroots civil servants' new media literacy can provide a long-term, stable platform for continuous experience accumulation and skill enhancement in new media applications^[3].

5. Conclusion

As the face of the nation and government, grassroots civil servants operate in an era where new media has become the primary channel for information dissemination. Their digital literacy directly impacts public service delivery and social governance capabilities. Therefore, enhancing new media literacy among grassroots civil servants has become a crucial component of civil servant team development. Moving forward, it is essential to align with contemporary trends, continuously upgrade the professionalism of civil servants, and establish a solid talent foundation to elevate the quality of social services and governance.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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