

How Do Government Policies Influence Citizens' Fulfillment of Social Responsibilities? — A Comparative Study of Fertility Policies from the Perspective of the Welfare Regime

Lok Cheng

Abstract: This study adopts a welfare regime theory perspective to compare the fertility policies of three typical welfare state countries: the United States, Sweden, and Germany. It aims to explore the impact of different policy models on fertility rates and provide references for optimizing Macao's fertility policy. The research reveals that low fertility has become a global challenge, with influencing factors spanning social, cultural, and economic dimensions. In response, various countries have developed distinct fertility policy models based on their respective welfare regimes. The liberal welfare regime emphasizes market forces and individual responsibility; the social democratic welfare regime emphasizes universality and equality; and the conservative welfare regime emphasizes family and occupational stratification. The study points out that work-life balance is a core determinant of fertility intentions, and simply expanding childcare supply or increasing economic incentives is insufficient to reverse the trend of low birth rates. The research recommends that Macao draw on international experiences, implementing systemic innovation across multiple dimensions, including institutions, culture, values, and gender equality, to establish a government-led, multi-stakeholder co-responsibility mechanism to address the challenge of low fertility.

Keywords: Welfare Regime; Fertility Policy; Work-family Balance; Child Care; Economic Incentives

An Analysis of the Disclosure of Government Procurement Information in the Macao Special Administrative Region

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Abstract: In 2021, the Macao SAR Government officially issued internal guidelines requiring all public departments and institutions to establish

dedicated pages on their websites to disclose information about their procurement projects. This article examines the disclosed information from three perspectives: the names of the dedicated pages established by each public department and institution, the classification of procurement information on the pages, and the disclosure of the stages of ongoing and completed procurement procedures, analysing and explaining the current situation.

To improve the management of publicly disclosed procurement information, enhance transparency, and strengthen both the public's right to information and social oversight, this article proposes seven recommendations: (1) establishing a standardized mechanism for publicly disclosed procurement information; (2) formulating legally binding specifications for publicly disclosed procurement information; (3) defining the operational principles to be followed by this mechanism; (4) creating an authority for publicly disclosed procurement information; (5) establishing a unified application system for publicly disclosed procurement information; (6) eliminating barriers to disclosing information; and (7) ensuring timely updates of disclosed information

If effectively implemented, these recommendations would enable the Macao SAR Government to deepen the scope and quality of procurement-related data, rendering it more comprehensive and complete, thereby facilitating the formulation of public policies related to government procurement.

Keywords: Government Procurement; Disclosure of Procurement Information; Information Disclosure; Macao

Resolving the Accountability Paradox: A Study on Factors Shaping Civil Servants' Responsibility-Avoidance Behaviors

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Abstract: Accountability is a core issue in public administration and personnel management, yet it may also induce responsibility-avoidance behaviors. This study examines how external oversight, internal supervision, and reward-punishment mechanisms influence two types of avoidance behaviors among Macao civil servants: shirking and bureaucratic rigidity. Survey analysis reveals that external oversight significantly increases shirking; internal

supervision demonstrates a dual effect: reduces shirking but reinforces bureaucratic rigidity; and reward-punishment mechanism has no significant effect on shirking but help reduce bureaucratic rigidity. These findings confirm the existence of the “accountability paradox” and highlight the differentiated effects of accountability mechanisms. Building on this, the study proposes a “Accountability Source × Task Orientation” framework, combining external/internal with procedural/innovative orientations to explain how different accountability configurations trigger distinct behavioral responses. The framework offers a new perspective for understanding the accountability paradox and provides practical guidance: procedural tasks should emphasize “discipline-maintenance” and “external-commitment” accountability, while innovative tasks require “internal-improvement” and “public-oriented” accountability, complemented by fairness, incentives, tolerance for errors, and results-based approaches to balance discipline and innovation.

Keywords: Accountability Paradox; Responsibility Avoidance; Incentive Mechanisms; Accountability Types; Macao Civil Servants

Outlook on Macao’s Public Service Quality and Optimization Mechanisms

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Abstract: *With the development of society and the improvement of governmental governance capacity, new opportunities and challenges have emerged in the field of public services. Macao, with its unique international status and institutional advantages, faces the important task of optimizing public service quality to meet public expectations. Based on relevant literature and theories, this study explores the current situation of public service quality in Macao, identifies existing problems and public demands, and analyzes their causes. From a macro-governance perspective, it proposes an interactive mechanism among the government, social organizations, and citizens, and provides specific suggestions for improving the quality of public services in Macao.*

Keywords: Macao; Public Services; Quality Optimization; Interaction Mechanism; Public Participation

Youth Participation in Social Governance: An Empirical Study on the Motivations and Participation of Macao Youth in Volunteer Services

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Abstract: Macao youth face pressing contemporary challenges, including the NEET phenomenon, employment displacement due to Artificial Intelligence (AI) and social fragmentation caused by declining birth rates, resulting in a “high-intention, low-action” paradox in civic engagement. This study, based on 192 survey responses using a Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI), investigates the motivational structure of youth volunteerism and its relation to social participation. Exploratory factor analysis reveals a two-factor structure—personal development motivation and social engagement-driven motivation—overturning the traditional six-dimensional model. The former emphasizes skill acquisition and psychological fulfillment, while the latter reflects social capital accumulation and career orientation. Variance and correlation analyses indicate that prior association participation enhances motivation, organizational type exerts a selection effect, and motivational level positively correlates with participation duration and number of held positions. The findings highlight the localized characteristics of volunteer motivation among Macao youth, reflecting their decision-making logic within a context of high association density, political instrumentalization, and credential-driven competition. Policy implications suggest leveraging digital tools and stratified mechanisms to optimize the translation of motivation into social participation, thereby fostering sustained youth capacity in public governance.

Keywords: Volunteer Motivation; Social Participation; Associational Society; Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI)

Urban Festival Activities as a Public Governance Platform: The Macao Experience and the Advancement of Chinese Modernization

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Abstract: This paper reconceptualizes urban festival activities as a public governance platform, applying this perspective to examine the efficacy of Macau's related activities in advancing Chinese modernization. The study outlines the development of Macau's festival activities from folk traditions to strategic governance platforms, and analyzes current governance bottlenecks such as fragmented collaboration, unidirectional participation, and a one-sided evaluation system. These challenges constrain the achievement of goals related to social co-governance, cultural identity, and green development. Accordingly, this paper proposes systematic optimization pathways centered on "Creative Empowerment," "Green Governance," and "Open Collaboration," aiming to enhance the public governance efficacy of festival activities for the Macau SAR government and to provide academic reference and policy insights for the practice of Chinese modernization in Macau.

Keywords: Public Governance; Urban Festival Activities; Macao; Chinese Modernization; Cultural and Tourism Integration

Exploring the Development Direction of Performance Appraisal for Macao Public Officials from the Perspective of Management by Objectives

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Abstract: This paper examines the performance appraisal system for public officials in the Macao Special Administrative Region, integrating theories of New Public Management, Management by Objectives, and the PDCA cycle. Through a literature review, it systematically outlines the evolution of Macao's performance management since 2004 and analyzes the design features of its appraisal system, identifying its practical alignment with modern public management and areas for improvement. The study reveals that although the

system has established a comprehensive framework of “laws + administrative regulations + supporting policies” and incorporates a PDCA-aligned process design, it still faces three major challenges in practice: (1) insufficient awareness among appraisees regarding organizational objectives, leading to a weak link between individual work and departmental strategy; (2) formalistic appraisal processes, resulting in a phenomenon of “consistently high ratings” that undermines the system’s ability to differentiate performance and provide motivation; and (3) a disconnect between appraisal outcomes and the training system, failing to establish a closed loop for capacity improvement. To address these issues, this paper proposes a dual-path optimization approach at both the institutional and operational levels. At the institutional level, it recommends refining the “layered and categorized” indicator system, implementing a scoring mechanism that combines “gradient distribution” and “behavioral evidence,” and strengthening the linkage between organizational performance and individual appraisal. At the operational level, it emphasizes improving the quality of appraisal communication, enhancing the participation of appraisees, and leveraging digital platforms such as “GovHub” to facilitate the integration of appraisal data with the training system. Ultimately, this study aims to promote the transformation of performance appraisal from a compliance-oriented exercise into a strategic tool for talent development, providing theoretical insights and practical guidance for enhancing the professionalism of public services and the effectiveness of governance in Macao.

Keywords: Macao Government; Performance Management; Personnel Appraisal; New Public Management; Management by Objectives; PDCA Cycle

Analyzing the Development of E-Government in Macao from the Perspective of Legislative Council Members' Written Inquiries

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Abstract: Based on a systematic analysis of 69 written inquiries regarding e-government submitted by members of the Legislative Council of Macao from the second session of the 6th Legislative Council to the third session of the 7th Legislative Council, and combined with the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) framework, this paper reveals three structural contradictions currently faced in the development of e-government in Macao. The study finds that: First, there is insufficient collaboration among government departments in Macao. Although interdepartmental interoperability has been partially achieved, there remains room for improvement, and the operational burden on users has not been alleviated. Second, cross-border e-government services in Macao remain limited to the geographical extension of existing functions, with features such as mutual recognition of data within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao region yet to be fully realized. Regional coordination is still constrained by the absence of rules governing cross-border data flow. Finally, a balance between public value and administrative efficiency has not been established, reflecting a systemic lack of guiding values. The study proposes overcoming these challenges through a four-dimensional UTAUT pathway: First, adopt a user-oriented approach by consolidating inefficient mobile applications and establishing a quantitative performance evaluation system for e-government. Second, enhance interdepartmental collaboration and optimize relevant legislation. Third, innovate cross-border governance mechanisms to address regulatory coordination issues within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao region. Lastly, strike a balance between public value and administrative efficiency in the development of e-government.

Keywords: E-Government; One Account; Written Inquiries; Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT)