

Research on the dilemma and improvement of public participation in public crisis management

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Abstract: *Public crisis governance is an important part of the modernization of national governance. Public participation in public crisis governance is a concrete manifestation of civil rights. Its value lies in safeguarding the legitimate rights and interests of individuals while realizing social public interests. When public crisis management occurs, the government should pay attention to public participation and promote the improvement of social governance system. Public participation in public crisis governance is embodied in the constraints of laws and regulations and social responsibilities, as well as the action logic of citizens ' conscious responsibility for public crisis governance. However, the current public participation in public crisis management in China still has weak awareness of citizen participation and low participation ability. Information asymmetry in public crisis governance; the government 's guidance on public participation is not enough. Based on this, the article strengthens public participation in public crisis management education and enhances citizens ' awareness of participation ; improve the information disclosure system ; strengthen the government 's guidance to the public in three aspects to further improve the public crisis management system, in order to improve the government 's ability to manage public crises.*

Keywords: *public participation; public crisis management; action logic*

1. Question Raising and Literature Review

The report of the 20th National People 's Congress of the Communist Party of China pointed out that national security is the foundation of national rejuvenation, and social stability is the premise of national prosperity. It is necessary to improve the national emergency management system and improve the ability of disaster prevention and mitigation, disaster relief and emergency public emergency handling. At present, China is in a critical period of economic development. The rapid development of economic construction has not only brought positive effects to its society, but also brought huge risks and challenges. In this context, how the public crisis will be effectively dealt with has become a major issue facing the government. Under the traditional concept, people usually habitually attribute the responsibility of public crisis management to the government, believing that the government has not fulfilled the responsibility of crisis early warning and has not done a good job in post-crisis management. However, in fact, it is unlikely that the government will do these things alone. With the advancement of the modernization of the national social governance system and governance capacity, public participation in public crisis governance has increasingly become an important governance path, and social forces such as the public play an important role in various crisis governance. Public participation originated from direct democracy in ancient Greece, which refers to all activities that citizens influence public policies and participate in public life. Public participation originated from the ' direct democracy ' in ancient Greece. It is a kind of ' citizen participation ' in a general sense. It is a process of intervening in national decision-making and social affairs. Cai Dingjian defines public participation as the category of administration. He believes that ' public participation ' refers to ' the process in which the public determines public affairs and participates in public governance through direct interaction with the government or other public organizations '. It mainly includes legislation, public policy formulation, public affairs management and grassroots governance. Public participation mainly refers to the two-way communication and consultation between decision makers and stakeholders affected by decision-making, and follows the basic criteria of ' openness, interaction, inclusiveness, and respect for public opinion[1].

Public crisis governance is not only an important part of social governance, but also includes the modernization of national governance. Therefore, public crisis management needs to be highly valued,

not only involving the control after the crisis, good crisis management should be able to warn and control before the crisis. Once a public crisis occurs, it will inevitably affect individuals, society and the country. Therefore, the governance subjects of public crisis should also be pluralistic. At present, scholars have carried out many studies on the main body of public crisis governance. Wang Ying and Jin Zixin make social organizations play a greater role in the collaborative governance of urban public crisis from the aspects of promoting social organizations to participate in the collaborative governance of urban public crisis, accelerating the linkage and cooperation among social organizations, strengthening the crisis management ability of social organizations, and improving the professional quality of social organizations[2]. Lan Xiaocheng believes that public crisis management is not only the responsibility of the government, but also the responsibility of the society. It requires the participation of various forces and the joint responsibility. While advocating that the government leads the crisis management, the media and the public have the responsibility to participate in the whole process and work together to solve the crisis[3]. Chen Baosheng and Feng Hao studied the case of State Grid Zhejiang Electric Power Co., Ltd. participating in the prevention and control of COVID-19 epidemic, and examined where the practice of state-owned enterprises participating in public crisis governance should be oriented and its logic. The author puts forward four logics to elaborate, including market, society, politics and public logic[4]. Zhang Yulei takes the actor network theory as the explanatory framework, and believes that the multiple actors have different roles in the governance of cross-border public crisis. The government is the ultimate bearer of responsibility, the army is the raider in the catastrophe response, the enterprise is the provider of emergency products, the social organization is an important supplement, and the citizen is the key supporter[5]. Previous studies rarely take the public as the main body of participation for in-depth analysis. The key to the effective development of public crisis governance lies in whether the public crisis can be transformed into an opportunity for public participation. Therefore, public participation in public crisis governance reflects the level of social governance and the trust between the government and the public to a certain extent, but at the same time, there are also some problems in public participation. Therefore, this paper analyzes the logic and problems of public participation in public crisis governance, and further proposes solutions.

2. The action logic of public participation in public crisis governance

2.1 The constraints of laws and regulations and the social responsibility of citizens

The time and place of public crisis are uncertain, and the harm it brings is unpredictable. However, when the public crisis is in the incubation period and has not yet erupted, if there are various risk factors superimposed to cause the risk to change and accumulate to a certain extent, it will largely lead to the outbreak of public crisis. At this time, if the signs of public crisis can be found in time and a certain crisis response can be taken, then the public crisis, which is still in its infancy, will be effectively contained in the cradle. Therefore, governments will take crisis prevention as the focus of crisis management, so as to control the loss in the minimum range. Governments will specify the corresponding crisis management plan. As a part of crisis management, citizens may become unstable factors after the crisis. Therefore, citizens' participation in public crisis management is sometimes not voluntary, but subject to legal or moral constraints. In the face of public crisis, the public often appear as two kinds of characters, one is the bystander, the other is the authorities. No matter what kind of identity, citizens have the obligation to fulfill their own responsibilities given by the society, and actively cooperate with the relevant departments before and after the event.

2.2 Consciously assume the civic responsibility of public crisis governance

For a long period of time, the government has been the primary role in dealing with public crisis and the main responsibility of public crisis management. However, it is not enough for the government itself to truly fulfill this responsibility, and it is necessary for citizens to consciously and rationally assume this responsibility. First of all, citizen responsibility can support public crisis governance and achieve effective governance effects. Public crisis management is a complex and difficult system engineering, only rely on the government power and responsibility to solve, not only can not achieve effective management, but also deviate from its governance purposes. Although governance is a concept at the government level, it is not limited to the government's command and use of authority. In the management of public affairs, there are also other management methods and means. Among them, citizens are an important force in public crisis management. The commitment of this responsibility can not only strengthen the legitimacy of public crisis management, but also encourage the government to

actively respond to people's personal and property safety requirements. At the same time, it can also urge the government to manage social and public affairs according to law, improve the openness and transparency of the government, and form a cooperative and interactive relationship between the government and citizens. Secondly, citizens' responsibility can promote social management and harmony. The relationship between modern society and individual citizens, in essence, is a dynamic process of mutual construction. The two influence each other and promote each other. In the public crisis, the responsibility of citizens is to make citizens aware of this mutual construction between themselves and society.

2.3 Citizens' choice based on the balance of interests

According to the point of view of classical economic theory, each individual citizen is a rational economic man, with the pursuit of self-interest maximization as the guide to action. Each person has a scale in his heart. In the face of choice, he chooses the party with the most sense of gain and benefit maximization by weighing the advantages and disadvantages. Therefore, when participating in public crisis governance, citizens will naturally choose the most beneficial action plan for themselves. From the perspective of personal short-term interests, it is necessary for citizens to pay a certain time cost, economic cost and human cost to participate in cross-border public crisis governance, and citizens will inevitably conduct cost-benefit analysis to weigh whether they choose to participate. If the expected cost of participation may exceed the return, citizens will not choose to actively participate.^[5]

3. The realistic dilemma of public participation in public crisis governance

3.1 The citizen participation consciousness is weak, the participation ability is low

Public active participation is the basis of democratization of urban public crisis governance^[6]. Many people are influenced by traditional ideas such as small-scale peasant thought and official standard thought, and still put forward the attitude of 'regardless of oneself, hanging high' to deal with sudden public crisis events. They think that this is the responsibility and obligation of the government, lack of attention and understanding of public crisis management, do not understand the functions of the government in public crisis management, think that the government is the main body of management, and it is only a tool to implement laws and regulations, which eventually leads to weak citizen participation consciousness and low participation ability^[7]. This concept has seriously hindered citizens' understanding and awareness of the functions of government and public crisis management. Public participation in public crisis governance can alleviate the government's financial pressure to a certain extent. The government's function is to provide public services for the public, with the public interest as the goal, and public crisis events occur suddenly and damage the public interest. Therefore, the government needs to play its own administrative leadership in dealing with public crises, attach great importance to and invest a certain amount of energy to carry out emergency management after the crisis. Public participation has reduced the government's mobilization costs and reduced the government's fiscal expenditure.

3.2 Information asymmetry between the public and the government in public crisis governance

The problem of information asymmetry is the source of most problems. No matter in which situation, as long as the two sides or multiple parties cannot obtain all the information, they will cause deviations in the solution of the problem. Under the public crisis, the public and the government are in an unequal position, and the information transmission between the two is often unequal. Due to the problem of information asymmetry between the government and the public, and the government is often in a strong position in the process of public crisis governance, it is often difficult for the public to obtain accurate information. Especially after a major public crisis, it is difficult for the government to publish relevant information in a timely, comprehensive and accurate manner, making it difficult for the public to understand the relevant situation. This kind of information asymmetry will lead to information distortion and make the public misunderstand the government's behavior. The higher the public's expectations and trust in the government, the more they will actively seek to participate in the government's governance of public crises^[8]. In addition, the public's psychology is complex and changeable. Due to the misleading of some bad public opinions, it will have a negative impact on the government's crisis management work. Moreover, because our country is a multi-ethnic country, there are conflicts and contradictions in interests between ethnic regions and between ethnic groups and

ethnic minorities. There are also conflicts and contradictions in interests between ethnic regions and between ethnic minorities and Han people. These factors may cause many adverse effects in the process of public crisis governance.

3.3 The government 's guidance of public participation is not enough

In the process of dealing with crisis events, the government often bears the responsibility of guiding the public participation, which will lead to low willingness and low participation of the public. Specifically, on the one hand, after the occurrence of public crisis events, the government does not attach importance to communication and interaction with the public in the process of dealing with public crisis events, and lacks guidance for public participation. Once a public crisis occurs, the public often do not know that the crisis is coming, or know that they can not make the right response. The public do not understand their rights and obligations, do not know how to participate in crisis management, how to cooperate with the government before, during and after the crisis, and lack the necessary understanding of crisis management ;On the other hand, the public 's self-help activities carried out by the public under the organization of the government often do not receive a corresponding response. After the crisis, citizens often need to carry out self-help activities through social organizations. The government 's organization of social self-help activities is intended to enable everyone to make self-help actions in the face of public crisis through the emergency management knowledge learned, and gradually improve their own protection ability in daily life, and then reduce the government 's crisis control cost when the crisis comes. But in fact, the daily participation of the public is not a real sense of self-help, partly out of the government 's mandatory requirements, and there is no actual test after learning, it is difficult to improve their own crisis response capabilities.

3.4 Public participation lacks institutionalized and organized guarantee

As a huge social group, the public can play numerous roles. When a public crisis occurs, the public can be the manager of the crisis or the undertaker of the crisis, but no matter which role, the public participates in the public crisis as a participant. Orderly and effective public participation plays a role in public crisis management through various social groups and organizations. For example, in the event of an epidemic, schools, communities, companies and other organizations will carry out unified management. If there is any disobedience to managers, which leads to the spread of the epidemic, the government will take compulsory measures to control it. In this case, citizens will hinder the authority of the government to obey departments and community managers, and reduce the opportunities for individuals to participate in crisis management, which not only prevents the further spread of the crisis. However, at present, public participation lacks certain institutionalized and organized guarantees. That is to say, public participation in public crisis management lacks corresponding legal regulations to regulate, and also lacks corresponding specialized departments to form public organizations. This reduces the frequency of public participation in public crisis governance to a certain extent. Public participation in public crisis governance can alleviate the government 's ' failure ' problem and urge the government to solve major governance problems more actively.

4. The promotion path of public participation in public crisis governance

4.1 Strengthen public participation in public crisis management education, enhance the awareness of citizen participation

First of all, appropriately change the concept of public crisis education. As we all know, the focus of public crisis management is not to manage public crisis but to prevent the occurrence of public crisis. Therefore, governments at all levels should combine the actual situation of the region, emphasize the risk of public crisis to the public in the region, and improve their crisis awareness. This is an important prerequisite for enhancing the enthusiasm of the public to accept crisis management education and participate in crisis management-related work. The premise of crisis management education is that everyone should be prepared for danger in peace, have crisis awareness and be willing to make changes. Only in this way can we further improve the public 's awareness and ability to participate in public crisis management. Secondly, to improve China 's public crisis education system. At the same time, the content of public crisis education has been appropriately adjusted. For example, for the actual needs before, during and after the crisis, the public is educated in the identification of crisis symptoms, self-rescue ability of crisis and self-psychological counseling. Finally, it is necessary to closely

combine with the current multimedia era background, so that the public can better carry out public crisis education. In addition to the traditional propaganda media such as brochures and posters, we should also expand the propaganda and education means of media such as radio, television and network to improve the public's sensitivity to crisis education from many aspects[9].

4.2 Improve the information disclosure system

It is the obligation of local governments to ensure information disclosure. In response to public crisis events, timely and accurate disclosure of relevant information by local governments is the need to respect citizens' right to know. It is also conducive to mobilizing social forces to respond to crises in a timely manner and effectively control public opinion. It can better solve the problem of information asymmetry between the government and the public. First of all, increase the publicity of the media, reduce the distorted facts and biased reports. The media is the bridge and link between the public and the government information. It should be neutral, represent the objective and true, and actively promote the solution of the crisis, rather than intensify the contradiction between the public and the government, and take the public interest as the fundamental starting point to report the crisis in a timely and objective manner[10]. At present, the speed of media transmission is very fast, and the public lacks the ability to distinguish media statements and is easily misled by the media. Therefore, the media with publicity and objective authenticity has a positive solution to crisis events. Secondly, establish a two-way information exchange mechanism and strengthen public participation. Information disclosure is not only to make the public aware of the relevant situation, but also to attract the public to actively respond to crisis events with the government, so that the public can participate in decision-making, obtain public support and trust, and enhance the credibility of the government. The two-way information exchange mechanism enables the public to timely feedback public opinion, and the government can also solve it in time.

5. Conclusions

At present, China's public crisis has the characteristics of suddenness, uncertainty, rapidity and complexity, and its response and governance require the use of systematic thinking. In the main body of social governance in our country, it is to implement the system of governance in the end, that is, 'strengthen the leadership of the party committee, give full play to the leading role of the government, encourage and support the participation of all sectors of society, so that the government's governance and social self-discipline, the positive interaction of residents' autonomy'. The government should strengthen the guidance of the public, communicate and interact with the public in a timely manner, and help the public improve their ability to participate in crisis management. The best result is that the public can respond to the crisis when it occurs. Generally speaking, the advent of public crisis events is sudden, even if there may be an early warning mechanism in advance, but it can only be estimated roughly. Therefore, the ability to grasp information in a timely and accurate manner and respond quickly is the key to determining crisis prevention and control.

In view of the lack of organized and institutionalized guarantee for public participation in public crisis management, relevant departments should respond in a timely manner, improve the legal system of public crisis management, and clearly and in detail stipulate the necessity of government crisis management, the scope of participation, the procedure of participation, the way of participation, the supervision and restriction of participation, so as to ensure that the public's right to participate can be effectively implemented. At the same time, in crisis situations, in order to control the crisis situation and restore social order, the government must restrict some rights and freedoms of citizens to a certain extent. At the same time, social forces should be integrated into public crisis management. To construct a social power system that can effectively intervene in public crisis, so that it can play a greater role in public crisis.

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