Survey and Analysis on Current Status of Social Mobilization with Chinese Characteristics—Based on COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract: *China's social mobilization has played a crucial role in public health crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, demonstrating distinct Chinese characteristics. It is necessary to deeply explore and analyze the current status and intrinsic motivations of this social mobilization in order to better harness its potential. Grounded in the motivation-behavior-outcome (goal) incentive process theory, this study takes social mobilization during the COVID-19 pandemic as the research object and employs survey questionnaires to investigate the current status of motivations, behaviors, and outcomes. By integrating the connotations of Chinese culture and values, the study aims to reveal the fundamental drivers behind social mobilization, which point out that the ideology of "self-improvement, family harmony, governing the country, and achieving world peace" and " integration of nation and family" are basic Chinese characteristic of social mobilization .Subsequently suggestions are provided to address the challenges faced in the social mobilization of crises and enhance its overall efficiency and effectiveness.*

Keywords: *Social Mobilization, Chinese Characteristics, Motivation, Chinese Culture and Values*

1. Introduction

After the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, in addition to the political mobilization by the Communist Party of China and the Chinese government, various sectors of Chinese society actively mobilized, and the public also actively responded to the mobilization process. As a result, the COVID-19 pandemic was quickly and effectively contained, the people's right to life and health was protected, and the economy and society quickly resumed normal order. China's crisis mobilization with distinctive Chinese characteristics played an important role. The entire society has reached an unprecedented level of mobilization and solidarity since the SARS epidemic crisis in 2003 and the Wenchuan earthquake in 2008. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the current status of China's crisis mobilization with Chinese characteristics, explore and analyze its intrinsic motivations, identify problems, and propose countermeasures.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Foundation

In crisis mobilization studies, there are generally two categories: political mobilization and social mobilization, distinguished by their initiators. Political mobilization, initiated and led by the government, utilizes the political resources owned by the ruling party or government, employing a top-down approach. On the other hand, social mobilization is initiated by members of society themselves. It primarily manifests as a conscious public behavior, where the public senses the need for societal development and takes spontaneous action. This process is bottom-up in nature (Lin Shangzhi, 1989)[1]. Social mobilization, due to its widespread nature, rapidity, and low cost, has been widely applied in crisis mobilization, significantly compensating for the shortcomings of political mobilization (Yu Yongqing)[2]. Regarding the effectiveness of social mobilization, Tian Jiao and Huang Yunhui (2021) pointed out its challenges[3], while Wang Qingxi (2020) highlighted that not all social mobilizations can effectively respond to public crises. Therefore, successful social mobilization requires prerequisites and specific mechanisms[4].

Thus, the question arises of how to guide members of society to actively participate in mobilization,

thereby achieving the objectives of mobilization. Motives or incentives become the basis of research, with motivational theories providing theoretical foundations. Incentives typically refer to how to stimulate and guide the behavior of members towards ultimately achieving the goals of an organization or individual. In the Western context, motivation falls within the realm of psychology, encompassing the "psychological process of sustaining motivation." Key theories in this regard include Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs," Herzberg's "Two-Factor Theory," and McClelland's "Need for Achievement," all of which are based on an individualistic perspective, i.e., the assumption of economic man.

However, in traditional Chinese cultural theory, particularly concerning the need for self-actualization, the focus tends to be on collective and national foundations. Hofstede's survey of cultural values across nations revealed that Chinese culture exhibits a high degree of collectivism, nationalism, and long-term orientation. Concepts such as "Confucius not drinking from stolen waters, beggars not eating from sorrowful meals," "self-cultivation, family harmony, country governance, and world peace," and "the rise and fall of the nation is the responsibility of every individual" [5]underscore the intertwined nature of personal and national aspirations, concepts not fully encompassed by Western incentive theories.

The innovative aspect of this research lies in its perspective grounded in Chinese culture and values, and its utilization of the incentive process theory of motive-behavior-outcome to investigate social mobilization. It aims to comprehensively and authentically depict the Chinese characteristics of social mobilization in crisis situations. Unlike previous theoretical studies, it employs a questionnaire survey method to better present the current state of social mobilization, thus providing empirical evidence for theoretical research. Through this approach, a more accurate understanding of the motives, behaviors, and outcomes of societal involvement in mobilization can be obtained, thereby offering deeper theoretical support for future crisis management and social mobilization strategies.

3. Survey on the Current Status of China's Characteristic Social Mobilization

3.1. Basic Characteristics Description)

As shown in Table 1, from gender distribution among the survey respondents, females accounted for 52.47% of the sample. Regarding age distribution, individuals aged 18-25 represented more than half of the respondents. In terms of occupation, students comprised over half of the sample, while politically, the majority identified as Communist Party members (including probationary members), which could be attributed to the distribution channels of the questionnaire. There were more respondents from low-risk regions, mainly because the survey was conducted in April 2021 when there were fewer areas categorized as medium to high risk, and they were relatively concentrated in low-risk regions.

Table 1: Basic Characteristics Description

Options	Frequency	Percent
Male	183	47.53
Female	202	52.47
0-18years old	1	0.26
18-25years old	228	59.22
25-40years old	88	22.86
40-60years old	66	17.14
Over 60 years old	2	0.52
Student	205	53.25
Government employee	20	5.19
Public institution employee	46	11.95
Enterprise employee	73	18.96
Urban migrant worker	3	0.78
Farmer	4	1.04
Other	34	8.83
Communist Party member (including probationary members) or Communist Youth League member	277	71.95
Member of democratic parties or independent	6	1.56
Masses	102	26.49
High risk	13	3.38
Medium risk	18	4.68
Low risk	354	91.95
Total	385	100

3.2. Impact of the Pandemic Crisis

According to Table 2, it can be shown that the pandemic has had some impact on people's work and lives. However, because the survey was conducted in 2021, while the Wuhan outbreak essentially over by the second half of 2020 and normalcy returning to most areas by the first half of 2021. Therefore, most respondents may have perceived the impact to be relatively moderate, as reflected by the prevalence of responses falling into the middle options in Table 2.

Table 2: Impact of the Pandemic Crisis

Question /option/frequency	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
This COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on your life.	24	82	158	83	38
	6.23%	21.30%	41.04%	21.56%	9.87%
This COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on your work.	28	79	165	78	35
	7.27%	20.52%	42.86%	20.26%	9.09%

3.3. Channels of Social Mobilization

From Table 3, it's evident that propaganda from various media sources has played a significant role. Information regarding the pandemic and related mobilization efforts isn't solely sourced from mainstream media; community initiatives and self-media also contribute significantly. Additionally, comprehensive coverage is apparent, encompassing not only media but also interpersonal communication, highlighting its crucial role in disseminating information.

Table 3: Channels of Social Mobilization

Question	Frequency	Percent of responses	Percent of case
Mainstream media such as television and radio broadcasting	369	30.96	95.84
Community workers' promotion efforts	278	23.32	72.21
Promotion through social media platforms such as Douyin (TikTok), Weibo, and WeChat.	276	23.15	71.69
Information spread by neighbors, friends, and relatives	266	22.32	69.09
Other sources	3	0.25	0.78
Total	1192	100	309.61

3.4. Attitude and Behavior of People on Mobilization

Table 4: Attitude and Behavior of People on Mobilization

Question /Option/Frequency	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am willing to participate in volunteer work to combat the epidemic	2	4	105	117	157
	0.52%	1.04%	27.27%	30.39%	40.78%
there are many people around me participating in volunteer work related to the epidemic	14	45	188	87	51
	3.64%	11.69%	48.83%	22.60%	13.25%
I believe the public's response to the epidemic crisis this time has been rapid and effective	0	1	53	141	190
	0.00%	0.26%	13.77%	36.62%	49.35%
I believe the public's mobilization ability in response to the epidemic crisis this time has been rapid and effective	1	3	44	138	199
	0.26%	0.78%	11.43%	35.84%	51.69%
I believe I have actively responded to the epidemic mobilization calls	0	2	31	112	240
	0.00%	0.52%	8.05%	29.09%	62.34%
I have actively implemented epidemic prevention and control measures	0	1	30	111	243
	0.00%	0.26%	7.79%	28.83%	63.12%
I believe people around me have actively responded to the epidemic mobilization calls	0	3	52	132	198
	0.00%	0.78%	13.51%	34.29%	51.43%
I believe people around me have actively implemented epidemic prevention and control measures	1	4	55	134	192
	0.26%	1.04%	14.29%	34.81%	49.87%

From Table 4, it's evident that over half of the individuals responded actively to mobilization calls

(attitude) and participated in volunteer activities (behavior). People's response speed and mobilization speed towards the pandemic were both rapid and effective. Table 5 indicates that in terms of specific behaviors, over 89.09% practiced self-isolation at home, while donating money or goods, engaging in community volunteering, and front line support also had high participation rates. At the very least, providing online support was adopted by over half of the respondents.

Table 5: Specific Behaviors of Participating in Epidemic Mobilization

Question	Frequency	Percent of responses	Percent of case
Donations of money or goods	136	15.6	35.32
Community volunteers	97	11.12	25.19
Front line efforts in combating the epidemic (in hospitals or transporting supplies)	56	6.42	14.55
Online support	236	27.06	61.3
Practicing self-isolation and self-protection at home	343	39.33	89.09
none	4	0.46	1.04
Total	872	100	226.49

3.5. Effect of Social Mobilization

Table 6 manifests that 94.03% of Chinese people feel more safe in china and 96.37% of Chinese people are confident of our own future about epidemic situation, therefore social mobilization produces a huge and effective effect.

Table 6: Effect of Social Mobilization

Question /option/frequency	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
You believe that body and healthy are more safe in china contrast to foreign epidemic prevention and control measures	0	1	22	81	281
	0.00%	0.26%	5.71%	21.04%	72.99%
You are full of confidence on the future facing local epidemic bounce after 2020's epidemic situation	0	0	14	86	285
	0.00%	0.00%	3.64%	22.34%	74.03%

4. Analysis of the Causes of Social Mobilization with Chinese Characteristics

4.1. Fundamental Analysis of Participation in Social Mobilization

Table 7: The Motivations for Implementing Epidemic Prevention and Control Measures

Question	Frequency	Percent of responses	Percent of case
Out of concern for one's own life and health safety	370	29.07	96.1
Out of concern for the life and health safety of others	319	25.06	82.86
Out of concern for national public safety	324	25.45	84.16
The notion that everyone is responsible for the rise and fall of the country	234	18.38	60.78
Going along with the majority	26	2.04	6.75
other	0	0	0
Total	1273	100	330.65

From Table 7, it can be seen that 96% of people participate in social mobilization out of consideration for their own health and safety. Starting from one's own safety is the most basic human need, with Maslow's "hierarchy of needs" placing safety needs second only to basic survival needs. While some may view this as selfishness in traditional Chinese culture, Confucianism emphasizes safety as the second choice based on material foundation, which is culturally rational. 82.86% of people participate in mobilization out of consideration for the health and safety of others. This may be difficult to define in Western culture. But in China, altruism is seen as the way of the gentleman. The concept of national security and the idea of "the rise and fall of the nation concerns every individual" are deeply

ingrained in people's minds. "The foundation of the world lies in the country, the foundation of the country lies in the family, and the foundation of the family lies in the individual" as stated in the "Mencius"[6]. This signifies the inseparable connection between individuals, families, nations, and the world, forming the concept of "unity of family and country" and "family and national sentiment".

4.2. Self-Discipline and Fearlessness of the Brave

Self-discipline is an important concept in traditional Chinese culture, which is reflected in the "Great Learning": "In order to achieve great virtue in the world, one must first govern the country; in order to, one must first harmonize one's family; in order to harmonize one's family, one must first cultivate oneself". This means that self-cultivation is the basis for achieving harmony in family and country, governing the country, and ultimately achieving peace in the world. At the same time, the spirit of fearlessness of the brave is also a common characteristic of people in the face of crisis, facing difficulties and challenges with courage, which stems from a sense of responsibility and sentiment towards family, country, and even the world.

Table 8 discusses people's reactions when they see others not wearing masks. 37% of individuals chose to mind their own business, while another 37% opted to feel angry but not intervene, and 25% chose to tell the other person to wear a mask. This indicates that the majority of people are restraining their own behavior and are able to remind others when necessary, reflecting the spirit of Confucianism, "Govern oneself before governing others; do not impose on others what you yourself do not desire." At the same time, while some chose to feel angry but not intervene, and others chose to tell the other person to wear a mask, this demonstrates the fearless spirit of courage. Fearlessness implies not backing down even in the face of difficulties and dangers, as Confucius said, "The brave are fearless," and emphasized, "Without seeing what is right, one lacks courage.[7]" This spirit is manifested in promptly stopping unreasonable behavior and showing responsibility and patriotism when the nation faces challenges and crises.

Table 8: Your Reaction When You Wear a Mask and See Others not Wearing Masks During the Epidemic

Option	Frequency	Percent
Get very angry and tell them they should wear a mask	95	24.68
Get very angry but don't interfere with the other person	142	36.88
Indifferent; as long as I manage myself well	144	37.4
Realize that not wearing a mask is also acceptable.	4	1.04
If I had known earlier, I wouldn't have worn a mask either	0	
Total	385	100

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Through surveys conducted during social mobilization amid the pandemic, it was found that the public demonstrated extensive and strong willingness and actions to participate, showing confidence in combating the epidemic. Whether based on considerations of personal health and safety, concern for others, or national security, the ideology of "self-improvement, family harmony, governing the country, and achieving world peace" has profoundly influenced the public. All these are Chinese characteristic of social mobilization.

With the increasing probability of various crises due to environmental changes, besides public health crises, natural disasters, political-military crises, and others may occur. Facing these crises, social mobilization exhibits very high efficiency and low mobilization costs. Therefore, attention should be paid to social mobilization, and efforts to improve its efficiency and effectiveness should be made in the following aspects:

First, strengthening traditional cultural education and enhance the cohesion of the Chinese nation and cultural confidence:

These are from continuous learning and lifelong education; strengthen the study of Chinese traditional culture to. This can be achieved through various channels, including family and school education, as well as learning in daily work and life.

Second, guiding and motivating the mobilization behavior of the public:

Leveraging the concept of "considering oneself as well as others and country" from Chinese

traditional culture guide and motivate the public to pay attention to crises and take proactive actions. This requires providing channels for participation and encouraging people to participate in crisis response efforts.

Finally, recognizing the important role of media in crisis mobilization and regulating the content of self-media propaganda to improve efficiency of social mobilization:

Media play an important roll in crisis mobilization, especially with the rapid development of self-media. Therefore, it is necessary to highly value and regulate the content of self-media propaganda to exert positive impacts and avoid negative impacts on the effectiveness of social mobilization.

6. Shortcomings of the Study

The questionnaire survey was conducted in 2021, during a period when the Wuhan epidemic had ended and the national epidemic situation was relatively stable, subsequent outbreaks occurred in some areas, leading to an increase in risk zones, which may have resulted in incomplete survey results. Questionnaire design can't cover all related Motivation and behavior. Nevertheless, social mobilization played an undeniable role during the COVID-19 crisis overall. Therefore, the survey still provides valuable insights and references for social mobilization in future crises.

Acknowledgements

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