

The Structure, Development and Influence of Girls' Protecting in China

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ABSTRACT

The problem of child sexual abuse is becoming more and more serious. With an increasing number of victims in recent years, the emergency of Girls' Protecting helps solve some realistic issues in China. Understanding how this organization makes development can provide more practical suggestions and useful strategies for other NGOs' developments and children welfare. This paper uses the snowball sampling as my sampling method and make interviews with voluntary teachers. The main research method is interview, and I use the random sampling as my sampling method. Based on my research, it was found that Girls' Protecting has developed by making propaganda, recruiting volunteers, and raising funds. Besides, Girls' Protecting has a strict selection and assessment mechanism for volunteers. Ultimately, Girls' Protecting has promoted the further development of NGOs and child welfare in China.

Keywords: *Girls' Protecting, NGO, Child Sexual Abuse*

1. BACKGROUND

Child sexual abuse is a very serious issue around the world, and it is a gross violation of children's rights. The World Health Organization defines child sexual abuse as "the involvement of a sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend and is not able to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared, or else that violate the laws or social taboos of society" [1]. Sexual abuse includes "force to children engage in any unlawful sexual activity and the exploitative use of a child in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices, and the exploitative use of children in pornographic performance and materials" [1], so sexual exploitation is also a part of child sexual abuse (World Health Organization 2003). The UNICEF estimated that over 120 million children endured sexual abuse, representing the highest number of victims in 2014 [2].

In China, this issue is more serious due to the tradition sexual awareness and lack of sexual education [3]. Based on the official data from the Girls' Protecting, there are 778 victims below 14-years-old and 433 cases in 2016 [4]. In 2017, the number of victims are decreased, and there are 606 victims below 14-years-old and 378 cases [5]. However, there are more than 750 victims below 18 and 317 cases in 2018 [6]. According to the official data in 2018, more than 90% of victims are girls, and there is the highest rate of sexual violence incidents for children at the age of 12 to 14 [6]. Additionally, almost 70% of victims are abused by people they know. Based on the statistical report from 2016-2018, the number of cases and victims are decreased. It is mainly due to the matters of statistical ways. For example, there are some typical cases reported by local court, and the media reports just mentioned the name of cases without describing the specific information of these

cases. Girls' Protecting does not collect these cases in the statistical report in 2018. Also, the floating of media reports is very common, because it will be affected by the particularity of cases, social awareness, propagation rule and so on.

Additionally, we cannot ignore that these official reports probably underrepresent the incidence of sexual assaults because these younger victims incline to underreport these events to Law enforcement and other official agencies [7]. Therefore, protecting children against sexual abuse is very significant and no time to delay. In China, there are many factors to cause these things happened again and again. Most parents think it is very shameful and embarrassing to talk about sex, and school system does little to access the subject. Some universities prepare some depth sexual courses to help these student keep health when these students are sexually active [3]. Yuan supposes that government cannot provide enough helps to prevent children from abusing sexual assault. The rules of children welfare is also not completed, and it cannot provide enough protections and helps for children [8]. The various factors aggregates the issue of child sexual abuse and creates a series of negative influences for children and the whole society. The evidences illustrate that children endured sexual violence may have long-term and short-term physical, social, and psychological effects not only for children themselves, but also for their parents and communities. The negative consequences include that children increased risk factors for illness, psychology distress, discrimination or difficulties in school, and even unwanted pregnancy [2]. Therefore, the Chinese government, other nongovernment organizations and even scholars should pay close attention to this issue and think about how to decrease the number of cases of child sexual abuse. Some nongovernment organizations are devote themselves to help these young victims out of difficulty and

arrange the courses for both parents and children, which cover the shortage of sexual education at home and school. Girls' Protecting, one of the nongovernment organizations, has made a lot of achievements over these years. Girls' Protecting was sponsored by a hundred of female reporters in 2013, and it has recruited over 10,000 volunteers and offer courses of sexual education for more than 1.4 million students and 0.3 million parents over 28 provinces of China [5]. It also provides the standard training for local teachers and improves the coverage areas of the courses. Furthermore, Girls' Protecting is endeavor to complete the rules and laws by collaborating with nation people's congress. In this paper, I want to perceive how the Girls' Protecting carry out different activities and courses about sexual education and recruit more volunteers. What way they like to make fundraising and how they construct a complete management system. What kinds of effects and contributions the Girls' Protecting can make, and even provide more useful strategies for Chinese child Welfare to improve their action and approach. For this reason, this research is worthwhile for every victim out of trouble and builds the protection wall for all of children. It even provides more reasonable suggestions and strategies for the advancements of other NGOs, and drives progress for Chinese child welfare.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The phrase "nongovernment organization" came into popular use with the establishment of the United Nations Organization in 1945. People in western countries are also called "the Third Sector, Non-profit Organizations, Medicate Organizations, and Civil Society Organization". The differences in political background, socio-economic background and culture of different regions indicate that the definition, theories, and practice of NGOs are diverse. However, the concepts, theories, and practice of NGOs are all originated from the theory of civil society.

2.1. Civil Society Theory

The theory of civil society was formed and popularized from 17th century to the first half of 19th century. Based on the relation of the state and society, Hegel supposed that Civil society is the "outer state – a state based on need and reason" [9], in which the "citizens of this state are private persons, having their own interest for their purpose" [9]. Marx agreed the idea of the separation between the society and state from Hegel, but he focused on the productive force and the relation of production in the economic perspectives. He emphasized that the civil society is the communication relationship between the private individuals and it is a private field of activity which is opposed to the political society [9]. For the difference between the theory of Hegel and Marx, Hegel supposed that civil society is organized from the private persons only for their own

interest. Marx thought the civil society is a communication media between citizen and government.

Until 19th century, Tocqueville extended the research perspectives and think deeply about the civil society in different points of view. The society he said is a diverse society, and it is different from the political nation. Neutral media opinion, free news, independent newspapers, free associations, voluntary organizations, religion, spirit of law and theory can all imbalance and suppress the effect on the political state [9]. He attaches particular importance to the free association and voluntary organizations, and freedom of association has become a necessary guarantee against most autocracies. Later 1990s, the definition of civil society based on the three-part-model became the mainstream, and most scholars have agreed this viewpoint.

One of the famous research is from Jurgen Habermas, and he believed that the public sphere is an area between the private domain and public power. It is an unofficial public sphere, and people are able to criticize any kinds of public authority or concerns [9]. At recent years, the number of NGOs around the world has increased rapidly, which people's civil consciousness become more energetic and rejuvenated. More citizen participation will accelerate the development of civil society.

2.2. The Definition and Compare of NGO between West and China

The definition of NGO in west is mainly from the aspects of characteristics, service subjects, etc. Based on the characteristics of non-government organizations, Salamon and Anheier believed that organizations satisfying the five points are nongovernment organizations. These five points are *formal, private, voluntary, self-governing, and nonprofit distributing* [10]. Generally, the organization which is covered these five characteristics is definitely called NGO. According to the different categories to define NGO, Turner and Hulme presumed "NGOs are generally registered organizations, community groups, trade unions, professional associations, and cooperate charity organizations whose aim is to improve the wellbeing of their members and of these areas in which they exists" [11]. In a functional perspective, Lewis supposed NGO behaves different kinds of services and humanitarian functions, which include monitor governmental policies, bring citizens' interest to government and encourage political participation at the community level [12].

One of the definition is based on the governmental official standard, and it has three categories to define NGO in China. The first one is non-governmental organizations, and these are officially recognized by government. Secondly, organizations that are not registered in the Civil Administration department but meet the definition of nongovernment organization are generally spontaneously formed by the private sector, and it cannot acquire the corporate capacity in the Civil Administration department for different reasons. Thirdly, it includes some transnational public institutions. Due to some historical factors, some

mass organizations and the organizations which are evaluated by the State establishment department are exempted from registration based on the law. On the opposite, Jia xijin and Wang ming have a different perspective to define NGO. They think there are five categories to define NGO based on their different functions. These are *social associations, economic organization, foundations, public service institutions, and unregistered or re-registered groups*"[13].

There are several differences on the development of NGO in west and China. Firstly, western countries are binary system, which means the state and society are separate. However, China is a centralized state, and people would like to depend on the state to implement various activities [14]. Secondly, most NGOs in the west have developed in the struggle with government, and it has the obvious advantage in claiming for rights and safeguarding its own interests and rights [14]. On the opposite, most NGOs in China are transformed from the traditional government-run associations. At last, western NGOs have great development capabilities because of their good consciousness, harmonious relationship with the government, and complete institutional mechanisms [14]. However, many NGOs in China have not strengthened their own capacity building, management building and talent cultivation.

Based on this, it is obvious that there are four problems in the development process of Chinese NGOs. Firstly, most NGOs in China still depend on the government in multiple sides due to the lack of the independence and autonomy [14]. Secondly, China doesn't have an consolidated and completed law of NOG. Just depend on some scattered administrative policies to manage the social organizations. In an addition, one of the inner difficulties is that most NGOs have the economic issues, and their main funding is from the governmental financial contributions and the membership fees [14]. Lastly, lack of professional social workers is also a serious issue [14]. Therefore, the development of NGO still faces a lot of difficulties and challenges.

2.3. Child Welfare and the Difficulties of Girls Welfare in China

Social welfare is a government program which is designed to protect citizens from the economic risks and insecurities of life. Child welfare is an important embodiment of social welfare. From different point views to identify children welfare, it is divided in broad and narrow sense. In a narrow viewpoint, it refers that some specific form of organizations provide special services for the particular group of children [15]. Such as disabled children, life-behind children, single-parent children, and street children. American scholar Kadushin and Martin supposed social workers provide direct or indirect professional services by using supplemented and supportive ways to help children and their families [16]. This definition is to emphasize the functions of family and improve the perfect development of

children. In a broad perspective, the system of child welfare provides services for all family and children. It mainly indicates that every family should acquire support from the society, and the society has responsibilities for every child [15].

In the society, girls always face many kinds of risks and dangers from the society, like the low level of educational popularization, gender discrimination, domestic violence, sexual assault, bully, and even child trafficking and sexual abuse, etc. Furthermore, there are less number of NGOs only for children, and a handful of NGOs involved in girls' welfare. It is very necessary to make the connections between the NGOs and the girls' welfare, which can fill the blank of the girls' welfare. Therefore, the reason why I want to make this research based on the Girls' Protecting is the realistic meaning for girls and make the contributions for child welfare. Also, approaching a new development form is also a great way to offer some realistic experience for other NGOs.

One of the most difficulties is that girls still face the threat of all forms of violence as they grow up. Some girls in the rural areas are also less educated, and the government should complete the policies for children salvation. To improve the cooperation and coordinate resources between the governmental departments, NGOs, and international organizations are very necessary. More scholars should pay more attention to the research of children welfare and make more realistic meaning for the society.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

In this paper, I use the interview to acquire more available information to make a profound research from Girls' Protecting. I decide to use the snowball sampling as my sample method, because it is very convenient for me to contact more interviewees by their referrals. I can ask for help from these interviewees who are able to recommend his/her friends in the Girls' Protecting so that I have more chances to connect some people to obtain useful information. Firstly, I use Weibo to find some information of Girls' Protecting, and follow in its account. Then, I joined the QQ group chat, because many volunteers are like to share information and ideas by joining the QQ group. Besides, I acquire some interview materials by contacting with some volunteers. Moreover, I also download some online materials which are published on their WeChat official accounts. As for interviewees, I chose the voluntary teachers who joined the Girls' Protecting before as my interviewees, and I knew about them from the QQ chat and Weibo.

4. ANALYSIS BASED ON INTERVIEW AND ONLINE INFORMATION

Based on the rapid development of the Girls' Protecting, I find there are three ways to scale up. The first one is to make use of the three innovative market models to improve the

social exposure and popularity of the Girls' Protecting, and these are traditional media, internet media, and social media. Firstly, Sun Xuemei and volunteer go on some famous traditional TV-programs to make the propaganda of Girl's Protecting. One famous CCTV-program, Langduzhe, is a good chance for audiences to know the Girls' Protecting. This kind of traditional media is able to attract all ages of people, but less number of young audiences watch TV right now. Therefore, the internet media is a good chance to attract more young audiences. For example, Sun Xuemei participated the online program, Qipashuo, to expand the popularity of the Girls' Protecting. Based on this, the more exposure on traditional and internet media, more people will know the organization and know importance of popularizing sexual education. Moreover, using social media to expand their influences is also one of their marketing form. They would like to release their basic information, statistical reports, voluntary experiences, current news and any related information by the official accounts on Weibo and WeChat. Some celebrities make the endorsements and provide supports for the Girls' Protecting. For instance, Zhang Junning, a famous actor, attended the class and taught these children some basic knowledges to perceive how to protect themselves by releasing a video by Weibo. This traditional media creates the powerful influences and attracts more volunteers' participating by combining with internet media and social media. The other one is the Girls' Protecting build the enterprise cooperation with different enterprises so that they can obtain the long-term and stable model of fund movement. Not only are they able to obtain the fundraising, but also they can get their own profits to make development. Lastly, the Girls' Protecting has a stable development, and it is because of the localized and vertical management. The head office of Girls' Protecting in Beijing has six departments, and these are the department of teaching and research, brand department, cooperative development department, fundraising development, and legal department. The headquarter is responsible for the general major issues of these six department and manage the local teams in different cities. The local teams need to get the approval from the headquarter if they has some requirements. Moreover, the Girls' Protecting makes some cooperation between the local Women's Federation, schools, and communities, and then they are able to build the social acquaintance and connections to obtain more chances for voluntary teachers to attend classes in different schools. Therefore, the two form of management model accompanied with strong social resources and interpersonal connection can explain why the Girls' Protecting is developing so fast.

Being a voluntary teacher is not easy in the Girls' Protecting, so the amendable course content, strict teacher estimation, and double interaction model make it develop better. At the beginning, they studied some western materials about sexual education, and wanted to form the Chinese localized sexual education. Based on the Chinese social circumstance, these staffs and scholars spend half of year to prepare these course materials, and try their best to amend these materials if they find some troubles on the trial

classes. The course materials are not only for voluntary teachers, but also provide instructions for parents to interact with their children. Secondly, this teacher estimation is very rigorous and normalized. An increasing number of volunteers are based on the expand exposure of the Girls' Protecting, and more people are able to make the application by their instructions on the WeChat or Weibo. The teacher estimation has several steps, which are trial class, exam, interview, group discussion, etc. The teaching quality, communication skills, management skills, and problem-solving ability are all part of the assessment. Only applies get score above 90 are able to be a voluntary teacher. The strict standard indicates that the Girls' Protecting hopes to present a perfect course and they know each of the word and behavior will influence children in the future. Thirdly, parents are able to take these classes so that they will know how to do the sexual education by interacting with their children at homes. On the parental class, these parents are able to make reflections by communicating with these voluntary teachers. Both two sides will know their own problems, and they are able to settle them promptly. The participation of parents and voluntary teachers will promote the teaching quality and effect of the Girls' Protecting.

Essentially, developing the NGOs has a series of realistic meaning and value for the whole society. Firstly, it is able to fill the blank of the government and market, and make the promotion for civil society in China. People's consciousness of civil society is being rouse and developed rapidly, so the emergency of Girls' Protecting is able to alleviate social problems. Such as Chinese children lack of the sexual education, have no idea how to protect themselves, parents feel too shame to talk about sex, and even school are delayed to offer courses about sexual education. Secondly, Girls' Protecting as a NGO can push the improvements of policies and regulations which are beneficial for the children under the age of 14. It drives the legislature to protect these girls' rights and interests when more proposals are being put forward in the National People's Congress. By the effort of Girls' Protecting, the crime of prostituting girls under the age of 14 is abolished and merged into the offence of rape. Thirdly, the Girls' Protecting creates the new changes on the development of child welfare, and one of the available change is to provide specific helps for girls by considering about the gender particularities. Only if the child welfare considers all potential risk factors of children, it will be developed a lot.

5. CONCLUSION

The emergency of the Girls' Protecting not only brings the realistic value for the development of NGO in China, but also creates the new path of academic research. Since 2013, the development model of the Girls' Protecting is unparalleled on the innovative marketing model, enterprise cooperation model, double management model, preparation of course materials, and rigorous teacher estimation. The multiple sides of the development model bring a rapid promotion over the years. Especially, it overcomes some regular difficulties of NGO. Lack of professional skills is

the one of the problems for the most NGOs, but professional skills of voluntary teachers on the Girls' Protecting should be approved by passing the strict teacher estimation. Also, it is able to make the fundraising and cooperated with other enterprises to make developments, so lack of funding is not a problem for the Girls' Protecting. Moreover, the development of Girls' Protecting doesn't need to depend on the government supports too much, so the independent development model will be going to a long way. Based on this, Girls' Protecting can fill the blanks of the NGOs, and provide more development strategies for other NGOs. To push the perfection of legislation and child welfare are also part of the significant value. Most researchers focus on the research fields of child welfare and NGOs, so the development of the Girls' Protecting is able to attract more researchers' interests. Therefore, the development of the Girls' Protecting not only can solve more realistic issues for the whole society, but also it can create the practical values for the NGOs' development and the field of academic research.

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