

Research on the Dilemma of COVID-19 Governance

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ABSTRACT

The risks and hazards of the COVID-19 outbreak at the end of 2019 have seriously affected the normal production and living order around the world, and have had a significant impact on the economies and politics of various countries. Objectively understanding major public health emergencies and examining and thinking about the threat of disease facing mankind have always been the core issues of international public governance, especially when COVID-19 is still raging. As a global public health emergency, COVID-19 has become a public health crisis that the international community urgently needs to deal with, which requires the international community to be better committed to building a universally safe community with a shared future for mankind. The paper selects the dimension of technical governance of the public health crisis, summarizes and sorts out the epidemic prevention measures taken by major countries in the world in response to the development characteristics of the COVID-19 epidemic, analyzes the existing difficulties, and refines the technical governance path of the international public health crisis, so as to optimize the coordinated governance of international public health by the international community capacity for crisis. This paper finds that there are many reasons for the predicament. Through interdisciplinary research, it is concluded that the main causes are the lack of mutual trust between countries, the imbalance in supply and demand of global public goods, the obstruction of self-interested ideas, and the tension in international relations, which seriously affect the development process of global public health governance at this stage. Global public health governance is a long-term task that is related to the peace and development of the entire world and is an unavoidable issue for all countries in the world.

Keywords: COVID-19, dilemma, coordinated governance, public health crisis, crisis governance tech path

1. INTRODUCTION

The risks and hazards of the COVID-19 epidemic that broke out at the end of 2019 have severely affected the normal order of production and life in the world, and have had a major impact on the economies and politics of all countries. Objectively understanding major public health emergencies and examining and thinking about the threat of human diseases has always been the core issue of international public governance, especially as the current COVID-19 is still raging. As a global public health emergency, COVID-19 has become a public health crisis that the international community urgently needs to deal with. This requires the international community to be better committed to building a universally safe community with a shared future for mankind. However, how to resolve COVID-19 has always been controversial. Some scholars believe that it is necessary to compulsorily isolate patients and prohibit large-scale social activities. However, some scholars have criticized this approach as

a threat to sustainable economic development. So, how to better manage COVID-19?

In the wake of the outbreak of the new crown epidemic in the world, in the process of global anti-epidemic cooperation, some countries proceeded from realism and domestic politics, ignoring the threat posed by the epidemic to people's lives and health, adopted loose policies in the face of the epidemic, and attempted to incite populism, provoking international disputes and other ways to divert the attention of the domestic public. For example, U.S. President Trump rejected and withdrew the WHO's anti-epidemic cooperation, and at the UN Security Council and the G20 meeting, he tried to shift the responsibility of the outbreak to China, and tried to write the relevant provisions into the resolution. State opposition was unsuccessful. The United Kingdom pursued herd immunity at the beginning of the epidemic and claimed losses from the epidemic to China. It has slowed down the anti-epidemic process and caused heated discussions among domestic and foreign scholars on global public health governance. Some other countries

called for anti-epidemic cooperation to actively explore the path of global public health governance. Andrey Timofeev, an associate professor at the People's Friendship University of Russia, said that all countries in the world must work together to deal with the global challenge of the new crown epidemic. [1]

Looking at the discussions of domestic and foreign researchers on global public health governance issues, it is found that they are different in many aspects, such as research directions, perspectives, and attitudes. Foreign research on global public health governance can be roughly divided into two main lines in terms of content: one is philosophical reflection research that focuses on theory, and the other is practical areas that focus on specific issues. The former is mainly based on a macro perspective and has achieved a series of achievements in the construction of international relations theory, while the latter has put forward pertinent opinions on the governance of global public health issues. Foreign researchers have focused on the relevant theories of global public health governance and conducted in-depth research, but little research has been done on governance dilemmas; and they have ignored China's role in maintaining world peace and promoting the development of the global governance system. Judging from the

current research situation in China, some scholars have discussed global public health governance and achieved certain results, but their research is mainly focused on theoretical connotations and practical research methods, lacking macro and different perspectives and methods.

This paper combines the latest reported data and social impact analysis to comprehensively consider effective solutions for COVID-19. The paper selects the dimension of technical governance of the public health crisis, summarizes and sorts out the epidemic prevention measures taken by major countries in the world in response to the development characteristics of the COVID-19 epidemic, analyzes the existing difficulties, and refines the technical governance path of the international public health crisis, so as to optimize the coordinated governance of international public health by the international community capacity for crisis. It hopes that the paper will contribute to the development of the theory of global governance and enrich the development of international political theories represented by realism and liberalism.

2. THE DIFFICULTIES FACED BY COUNTRIES UNDER COVID-19

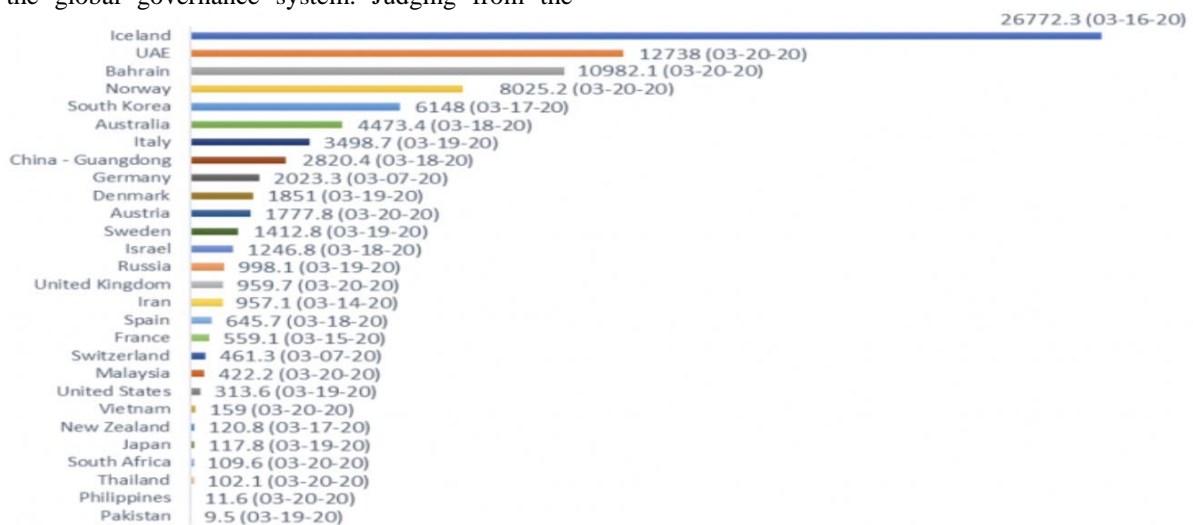


Figure 1 Covid-19 testing case per million people

The rapid spread of COVID-19, the wide range of infections, and the difficulty of prevention and control have posed serious challenges to governments around the world in responding to this major public health emergency. Although governments have adopted various levels of prevention and control measures, the epidemic has spread to every corner of the world in just a few months. As of October 1, 2020, the number of confirmed cases worldwide has exceeded 7.6 million, and the death toll has exceeded 1 million [2]. The whole world is paying a heavy price for this pandemic. The public health crisis includes all events that affect the public health of society, such as major infectious diseases and mass diseases of unknown cause. With the modern and

convenient transportation and movement of people, breaking geographical restrictions, the public health crisis has also evolved into an international public health crisis. Many scholars point out that there are still many shortcomings in current global public health governance, such as backward concepts, weak systems, insufficient supply of public goods, lack of coordination and cooperation mechanisms between countries, and WHO governance crises. This major COVID-19 has been declared by the World Health Organization as a public health emergency of international concern based on the gradual increase in the number of infected people in China and the emergence of epidemics in many countries. This also proves that the epidemic crisis is unpredictable

and unpredictable and is accompanied by strong physical destructive power and psychological impact, causing huge losses of social wealth, material resources, and spiritual wealth. These dilemmas will inevitably exacerbate the global health crisis. The outbreak of the new crown epidemic is a major test of the global health governance system, exposing the current problems in the global health governance system. This paper believes that an international public health crisis refers to an unusual event that poses a public health risk to other countries through the international spread of disease and may require coordinated international response measures.

3. GLOBAL GOVERNANCE UNDER COVID-19

The concept of global governance can be understood as a theoretical development derived from the combination of global issues and governance theories. The basic connotation of governance is: the use of authority to maintain order within a given scope to meet the needs of the public. The main body of authority here is different from the domestic governance authority. The latter usually refers to the government of a country, and the former includes various international organizations, multinational companies, and citizen groups in addition to the government.

3.1. Compulsory patient isolation and coordinated international response measures

First, compulsory patient isolation and coordinated international response measures can fundamentally

reduce the number of patients. If you only rely on the current international health regulations and do not take coercive measures, the effectiveness of those measures will be greatly reduced. Scholars represented by Perris discovered the problem of the insufficient effectiveness of international regulations. In his research, he pointed out that the International Health Regulations are currently the only international law generally accepted by most countries in the world to prevent the international spread of infectious diseases, but the epidemic has exposed many problems in their application. It limits the operation of the global health governance system. (Peiris 3) Before the World Health Organization identified the epidemic as a "public health emergency of international concern," most countries were still waiting and seeing and did not impose strict travel or trade restrictions. When Dr. Zumla inspected the effectiveness of China's quarantine policy, he found that infectious diseases have no borders.[3] For public health emergency security reasons, countries should strengthen prevention and control measures. Blocking patients from the root causes can greatly reduce the number of international patients and promote the restoration of global economic order at an early date.

3.2. Mandatory isolation and international cooperation

Second, due to the limited capacity of global medical reserves, mandatory isolation and international cooperation can effectively alleviate the lack of medical resources.



Figure 2 Drive-through Testing facilities

Currently, countries have insufficient capacity to respond to the epidemic. The limited capacity of medical reserves in various countries has had a serious impact on the medical system. After evaluating the news reports from various countries, Professor Stoll pointed out that the medical and health systems of various countries cannot cope with the outbreak of the pandemic, and the

global health system needs to be further strengthened. [4] Developed countries such as the United Kingdom are facing serious shortages of medical infrastructure, insufficient testing capabilities, and an inability to treat patients. The death rate of confirmed patients in Italy exceeds 10%, and the government is unable to provide medical staff with necessary supplies such as masks. In

low- and middle-income countries with weak medical and health systems, the epidemic may completely paralyze their health systems. Therefore, only global cooperation and the use of stronger methods can effectively help patients in various countries tide over the difficulties. In addition, the epidemic poses a challenge to the current medical community. Since the outbreak, the exact source of the virus has not been found, and no safe and effective treatment has been found. Diagnosis and treatment methods have yet to be explored. Therefore, through international cooperation, data can also be better shared, helping mankind find effective medical solutions as soon as possible.

3.3. Expansion of the scale of collaborative governance

Third, if international means of cooperation are not adopted, countries will also be caught in a conflict of interests, and this will slow down the speed of air defense against the epidemic. Scholars represented by Dr. Zaki criticized the imperfect international cooperation mechanism for major epidemics. The current multi-party conflicts in global health governance, especially the dispute over the interests of sovereign states, have exacerbated the dilemma of collective action. [5] On the one hand, due to the complexity and uncertainty of the epidemic, governments of different ideologies and values cannot reach a clear consensus on the epidemic itself and its prevention and control methods. Theoretically, the expansion of the scale of collaborative governance should be guaranteed by a clear division of responsibilities, accountability, and incentive systems. As the main body of collaborative governance, local governments should not be afraid of pressure and responsibility and should not work passively. However, if there is no clear division of powers and responsibilities and no efficient administrative system, formal coordination will cause local governments to be burdened by their powers. Therefore, the expansion of governance scale will have a cost. For example, some countries, such as China and Singapore, were aware of the seriousness of the epidemic from the beginning and implemented strict quarantine measures, while other countries, such as the United Kingdom, did not emphasize the importance of masks to everyone. The UK pays more attention to personal freedom. The differences in these basic concepts and the judgment of the priority of freedom and security have led to differences in the ways that countries respond to the epidemic, and have also led to slow progress in global epidemic prevention and control. As the epidemic spreads to all parts of the world, relations between countries have become complicated. For example, China and the United States have not only failed to effectively cooperate in combating this public health incident, but they have also criticized each other's response and prevention measures.[6] Therefore, if you want to effectively control

the spread of the epidemic, all countries must unite and cooperate, and abandon the concept of competing for short-term interests.

Some scholars believe that a more moderate method can be used to control the epidemic in combination with the 'International Health Regulations'. However, this kind of non-mandatory regulation is difficult to produce. Professor Gorbalenya analyzed the ineffectiveness of this mechanism in conjunction with the International Health Regulations. The International Health Regulations tried to establish a global public health event monitoring, notification, and information sharing mechanism, but this mechanism did not play a role in the new crown epidemic. [7] As the core institution of the global health governance system, the World Health Organization should have provided more timely and effective information to prompt the international community to coordinate a response to the epidemic, but the results were not as expected. Compared with the timely response of China, South Korea, and Singapore, Europe and the United Kingdom were slow to respond and failed to properly respond. After the epidemic was basically contained in China, large-scale outbreaks in Europe, the United States, and other countries occurred. The current global public health event early warning system has failed to play an effective role, and the international coordination mechanism is seriously inadequate. Therefore, all countries should adopt a strong, cooperative and unified plan to prevent the exponential spread of the epidemic.

4. SUGGESTIONS

Based on the above analysis, each country should adopt strong policies to promote global cooperation and forcefully control the COVID-19. Through the compulsory isolation of patients and the sharing of data, cooperation between countries in the medical system is promoted. With the globalization of public health issues, the traditional governance system centered on the sovereign government health department and the World Health Organization is developing into a diversified governance system. When a public health emergency occurs, governments and countries should provide assistance to the country where the epidemic occurred and improve the ability to cooperate in responding to public health emergencies. For example, during the outbreak of the new crown epidemic, various countries provided China with masks and other material assistance. After China initially controlled the epidemic, it also donated materials and dispatched medical teams to other countries. With the raging epidemic in Italy and the overwhelming health system, Germany's admission of severely ill patients to Italy is also a good example of international health assistance.

The governance of COVID-19 requires global cooperation. Public health emergencies last a long time,

involve a wide range of areas, and consume huge social resources. The government alone can not afford it. In responding to the global public health crisis, the importance of non-governmental organizations should also be recognized. When the government responds to public health emergencies, it is not omniscient and omnipotent. In areas hard to reach by the government, the support of social forces is needed. Judging from foreign experience, active social organizations are often a strong backbone for the government when it encounters unexpected problems. Non-governmental organizations play a vital role in investing in public health infrastructure, vaccines, and drug research and development. Non-governmental organizations have no political constraints, are more flexible, and have sufficient funds to make up for the deficiencies of governments and international organizations in the field of public health. Governance gap. At present, many NGOs have played an important role in responding to global public health incidents, and the governance space of NGOs in the global health governance system can be increased accordingly.

Finally, global public health affairs should be governed by all countries, and international health laws and regulations should be jointly formulated by all countries. The global public health problem is no longer a word. Emerging economies should also enjoy greater representation and voice in the global health governance system to make the global health governance system more balanced. Today, the COVID-19 incident urgently requires every citizen to re-examine one-sided thinking ways and behaviors, taking actions that harm nature as an insurmountable bottom line, and rethink the value proposition that "man and nature are a community of destiny." People need self-improvement and self-transcendence in the cooperative relationship of "nature-society-man". In this way, it is possible to construct a self-education or self-cultivation method for co-members of society with the goal of co-existence.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the paper finds that the main causes of existing difficulties in response to the COVID-19 epidemic are the lack of mutual trust between countries, the imbalance between supply and demand of global public goods, the obstruction of self-interested ideas, and the tension in international relations, which seriously affect the development process of global public health governance at this stage. Global public health governance is a long-term task that is related to the peace and development of the entire world, and is an unavoidable issue for all countries in the world. Based on China's anti-epidemic practice, China has proposed measures such as enhancing political mutual trust, improving a fair and reasonable benefit-sharing mechanism, promoting the consensus of a community on human health, and building

a new type of state-to-state relationship to ensure the sustainable and healthy development of global public health governance, which work effectively in the current situation.

In addition, this paper should be further improved in the following two aspects: First, detailed case analysis. There are many cases in the global fight against the new crown epidemic, and the epidemic situation has not ended by the deadline for the paper. It is inevitable that selected cases are not the best representative in the research process. In the next step, we should systematically sort out various global anti-epidemic cases for in-depth analysis and research, and try to sum up a structural research framework, so as to provide the basic guarantee for the construction of practical cases for theoretical research. The second is in-depth policy research. This paper takes into account both theoretical and policy aspects. Due to the limitation of space and the author's knowledge level, research and analysis of some specific policies are still insufficient. The next step should be to strengthen theoretical research and quantitative analysis of related cases, so as to better serve the policy enlightenment more intuitively and effectively.

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