

Analysis and Thoughts on China's Public Crisis Management and Government Responsibility in the Transitional Period

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Abstract. A society in its development will face numerous pressure and challenges which would cause social disorder, hinder social development and progress if these problems are underappreciated and remain unsolved. China has gone through the great reform of opening up and the society changes in various manners. Currently, China is under the significant transitional period in terms of politics, economy, culture and science and technology. Transition would lead to instability and reduce China's self-relief capability. For any country, public crisis would influence social order and for China under transition, public crisis would cause more hinder for its development. Government's attitude and ability are key to solving public crisis. If the government shoulders its responsibility, the crisis-causing loss would be reduced the minimum standard or even prohibited from the beginning. The paper aims to analyze the reasons that causing public crisis and point out the present situation of our government in managing public crisis and propose some suggestions on improving government's public crisis management ability.

Analysis on the REASONS that Cause China's Public Crisis during the Transitional Period

Before analyzing the reasons that leading to public crisis, it is a necessity to explain the concept of public crisis: it refers to critical incidents that might harm public interests and public security, and the incidents are caused by natural disasters or social disorder. Public crisis is different from the usual accidental crisis since it often happens suddenly in front of social public groups. For example, natural disasters, terrorist attacks, infectious diseases, malignant criminal cases and so on are several kinds of public crisis. Whenever it happens, many people's interests and safety would be threatened, social order disturbed, and social panic caused, thus it is vital for government to improve its problem solving ability and perfect the method of solving problems in order to guardian government's image and exert its function.

Natural Factors that Cause Public Crisis

Uncontrollable natural disasters such as flood, typhoon, drought, earthquake, tsunami and so on would cause public crisis. Wenchuan earthquake happened in 2008 brought us inestimable losses including both personnel casualties and huge economic loss. In 2016, a frost disaster happened in the southern France destroyed numerous vineyards and emptied farmers' efforts and sweat of that year. In addition, the transmission of diseases causes public crisis. The transmission of diseases, from the ancient times, have been harming people's life. In 2003, SARS swept China taking numerous people's life and it made people insecure and affected people's daily life. Also, environmental pollution caused by social development would trigger public crisis and it is not like the rapidly transmission diseases because it only brings potential damages, thus it is often ignored by people. However, recent years in China, environmental pollution caused by social development becomes more serious and some cities in China lead the world in terms of pm2.5. It is hard to see blue sky in Beijing and it is a necessity for people in Chengdu to prepare dusk-proof masks.

Economic factors that trigger public crisis

Economic foundation determines upper construction. Many social problems are caused by the

relatively underdeveloped economy. China is in the period of transition and many problems remain to be solved. The first problem is social social equity. Our country has vast land area but there is evident regional difference. The economic development level in costal areas is evidently higher than that inland. Eastern and western people's life qualities are largely different, and the different development levels between rural and urban areas as well as different regions deepen residents' income levels. In 2002, China has been included in the list of severe resident income gap which would certainly cause new social contradictions. What's more, the market economy of our country starts relatively late, and China conducts socialist market economy which has never been carried out by any country in the world, thus we have no one to learn from. At the same time, many problems are exposed, for example, the deep-rooted egoism in the market make people profit-driven and do illegal and immoral things which would harm the steady development of economy. Employment problem has always been a hard task in our country. There are large number of unemployed population while limited jobs. If the employment problem is not solved, it would panic people and reduce people's happiness. Also, since China has entered WTO, our economy has related closely to the western developed countries which means once the western world's economy is under turbulence, China would be involved and its economy would be even damaged.

An Analysis of China's Government Public Crisis Management Capability in the Transitional Period

Low Efficiency in Handling Public Crisis Problems. Our government's operational mechanism is hierarchical and it is a scientific mechanism which can deal with problems according to their degree of emergency, and the clear-cut division of responsibility accelerate the government's work efficiency and improve the scientificity of government work. However, this mechanism also has disadvantages when dealing with emergent accidents especially public crisis. The hierarchical principle leads to a pyramid-like division of work inside the government institutions, therefore, one institution has to acquire the higher level' agree before doing anything and this process consumes time and reduce work efficiency. In addition, different levels of institutions have different aspects of information and different degrees of understanding of a thing, thus it needs coordination of different institutions to complete a task. This is also the reason that reduce government's work efficiency.

Unsound Laws and Regulations

Public crisis is not a 21 century issue, and it can be found in the ancient time. Our country has issued relative laws and regulations to tackle with public crisis. However, public crisis is uncontrollable and unpredictable, so it cannot be solved depended on the existing laws since the laws are general explanations without detailed interpretation. When problems occur, it is difficult for government to solve them based on laws and regulations. Detailed division of responsibilities of government institutions has not been conducted, and this would cause disorder in front of crisis.

Imperfect Social Security Mechanism in Handling Public Crisis

Taking preventive measure is the best way to deal with crisis and it is wiser than taking afterword method. An important tool to measure a government's work competence is whether it can predict crisis and whether it can take good countermeasures. Statistics show that currently our government has not established good social security mechanism and handling measure to deal with natural disasters, transmission of diseases, terrorist attacks. Thus, when public crisis happens, it is unable to timely initiate proper mechanism to prohibit the enlargement of losses.

How to Improve Government's Capability to Tackle with Public Crisis during the Transitional Period

To Perfect Crisis Management Laws and Regulations. Government's work should be conducted under the guidance of law. Ruling by law wins people's hearts. Currently, our constitution has not provided measures to solve public crisis and no laws have provided crisis management methods, so government department would be cornered by concerning about exceeding its power on the one hand and afraid of enlarging losses because of management absence. Therefore, constitution should have sufficient regulations on government's work about public crisis and government should publish specialized public crisis management law to regulate the emergency mechanism, secure people's right and improve government's work competence.

To Establish Open Communication Channel and Secure People's Right to Know

Once public crisis occurs, some people would spread rumors because of lacking the knowledge of the reason of crisis and lacking recognition of the outcomes of crisis. They would demonize the crisis and enlarge the losses which would lead to social disorder and people's concern. Thus, an open and transparent communication channel is necessary and government departments should publish the reasons that trigger crisis and the newest information of research, also, government should let people know the losses and consequence of crisis to secure people's right to know and reduce harms.

To Actively Deal with Aftermath and Safeguard Government's Image

Crisis brings people's inestimable losses that make people doubt government's work ability or even hate the government. The positive moods would trigger more social contradictions if not well controlled. The end of crisis does not mean the end of government's work, on the contrary, government should try its best to mend people's losses and apologize for its deficiencies. At the same time, government should establish confidence to improve its work, help to restore people's hope for government and enhance its image.

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