

Analysis of Influencing Factors of Public Participation in Social and Public Affairs Discussion in Network Environment

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Abstract: With the development of information technology, information media has penetrated deeply into the work and life of the public. The rapid development of digital government is promoted by the enhancement of information technology, which provides the public with a more convenient platform to participate in the management of public affairs and accelerates the process of social democratization, and also helps to improve the efficiency of the government's public administration and make its work more convenient for the public. This paper uses questionnaires to collect the attitudes of different social groups towards participation in public affairs through the Internet, analyses the relevance of different factors on citizens' participation in public affairs, and proposes relevant suggestions for optimising each influencing factor.


1 INTRODUCTION


Public participation in public affairs through the internet refers to the public's access to information and expression of opinions on public affairs through third-party platforms such as WeChat and Weibo, as well as their monitoring of the work carried out by public administration subjects through the internet and their expression of will to influence the direction of their decisions. Social affairs is often defined as public affairs, including government social administration and public service social affairs, and involves the work of social welfare, social assistance, and other social service organisations. It covers social and public services in science and technology, education, culture, health and sports, and many other aspects of the public's daily life.

The use of network media affects the behavior of the public to participate in social public affair. (Fang 2013) Compared to the public's participation in the management of public affairs online, the lack of access to offline channels for the public to express their views on public affairs and the limited ways in which they can be discussed have to a certain extent affected the public's initiative to participate in public affairs through the Internet. The availability of a large

number of professionals, the rapid development of online information technology and the strengthening of the popularity of social networks have not only greatly affected the public's daily life and access to information, but have also provided an efficient platform and equal opportunities for the public to participate in national public administration. This has greatly reduced the barriers to and costs of public participation in public administration, making it increasingly easy for the public to participate in the management of social and public affairs. As a result, the internet has become an important means of dialogue and information exchange between the public and the government, greatly increasing the level of public participation in public affairs and improving the efficiency of government management and the quality of public services.

Although the rapid development of online technology has provided the public with convenient opportunities to discuss public affairs, the level of public participation still varies greatly. The quality and efficiency of overall public administration is affected by the public's ability to participate actively in public affairs through the Internet, and it is therefore important to analyse the factors that influence public participation in public affairs discussions in the online environment.

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2 STUDY DESIGN

The data for this paper was collected through questionnaires, designed on the Questionnaire Star platform and formally placed through the WeChat platform, with a total of 437 questionnaires, of which 437 were valid. A research model of the factors influencing public participation in social and public affairs through the Internet was constructed from four dimensions: public willingness to participate, subjective norms, perceived ease of use and information sources. The model examines the correlation between the above four dimensions and the themes in the process of public participation through the Internet for different levels of society.

Willingness to participate --- refers to the public's driven behaviour to participate in public affairs discussions via the Internet, including the subjective tendency to browse relevant policy news, actively participate in current affairs discussions, and participate in the evaluation and monitoring of public affairs in the community.

Subjective norms - refer to whether the public is influenced by other aspects of public affairs

participation through the internet, such as whether acquaintances, friends or the frequency of information posted online motivate the public to participate in public affairs.

Perceived ease of use - refers to the convenience of the website and the ease of access to information, such as the popularity of the website, as perceived by the public in the process of participating in public affairs via the internet.

Source of information - refers to the extent to which the public's judgement of the credibility of the source of information, etc., influences their behaviour in the process of participating in public affairs via the internet.

3 ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

3.1 Basic Information About the Sample

The software uses spss version 24.0 to implement the frequency analysis process.

Table 1: Frequency analysis of demographic variables.

Variables	Options	Number of times	Percentage	Average	Standard deviation
Gender	Male	115	26%	1.74	0.44
	Female	322	74%		
Age	18-29	119	27%	2.37	1.06
	30-39	114	26%		
	40-49	130	30%		
	50-65	74	17%		
Education	Lower secondary and below	75	17%	3.05	1.25
	High School	72	17%		
	Specialties	77	18%		
	Undergraduate	182	42%		
	Postgraduate students	31	7%		
Living Cities	Mega City	78	18%	2.95	1.13
	Big Cities	43	10%		
	Medium-sized cities	149	34%		
	Small towns	156	36%		
	Rural areas	11	3%		
Political affiliation	Communist Party member	121	28%	2.95	1.27
	Group members	96	22%		
	The Crowd	220	50%		

The numerical characteristics of the demographic variables can be seen based on the results of the above analysis, reflecting the distribution of the respondents to this survey. Based on the results of the frequency analysis of each variable it can be seen that the questionnaire contains different strata of social groups and that the distribution basically meets the requirements of the sample.

The number of valid questionnaires for this research was 437, 115 (26%) for men and 322 (74%) for women. (As shown in the table above)

In terms of age distribution, according to the actual questionnaire, the number of participating members of the public was 119 (27%) for young people, 114 (26%) for middle-aged people, 130 (30%) for middle-aged people and 74 (17%) for middle-aged and elderly people.

In terms of educational distribution, according to the actual situation of the questionnaire, among the public who participated in the research, the number of junior high school and below was 75, accounting for 17%; the number of high school (including secondary school and technical school) was 72, accounting for 17%; the number of specialist was 77, accounting for 18%; the number of undergraduate was 182, accounting for 42%; and the number of postgraduate was 31, accounting for 7%.

In terms of the distribution of the cities in which they live, according to the actual questionnaire, 78 people 18% participated in the study, 78 in mega-cities, 43 in large cities 10%, 149 in medium-sized cities 34%, 156 in small towns 36% and 11 in rural areas 3%.

In terms of the distribution of different political profiles, according to the actual situation of the questionnaire, the number of publics participating in the research was 121 (28%) who were members of the Communist Party, 96 (22%) who were members of the league, and 220 (50%) who were members of the public.

3.2 Reliability and Validity Analysis

3.2.1 Reliability Test

Reliability analysis, also known as reliability analysis, refers to the consistency of the results obtained when the same method is used to measure the reliability of the sample's responses, i.e. whether the sample has truly answered the scale type questions. This paper uses SPSS 24.0 to analyse the reliability of the questionnaire data, using the Cronbach's Alpha (α) coefficient, which is commonly used in academic research, as an indicator of reliability, with a

reliability coefficient preferably above 0.7, indicating that the scale data are usable, and if the Cronbach's alpha coefficient is below 0.6, a new questionnaire should be considered.

The reliability analysis of the questionnaire in this paper was carried out through spss 24.0 version:

Table 2: Questionnaire Standardised Reliability Analysis Form.

Variables	Observed variables	Alpha
Willingness to participate	Questions 6-10	0.934
Subjective norms	Questions 11-14	0.916
Perceived ease of use	Questions 15-17	0.742
Information sources	Questions 18-20	0.813
Summary table		0.941

The analysis table shows that the alpha values for all dimensional variables are all greater than 0.7 or more, indicating a high degree of internal uniformity in the structural scalar. The standardised reliability coefficient of the total scale is 0.941. The range of the reliability coefficient is between 0 and 1, and the closer it is to 1, the higher the reliability. The results of the analysis of this scale are 0.941, and the reliability coefficient is very reliable.

3.2.2 Validity Analysis

Validity analysis is used to measure the validity and correctness of data. A higher validity indicates that the results of the questionnaire are true and valid. The validity analysis mainly adopts factor analysis, which is divided into exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis. This model mainly adopts exploratory factor analysis (EFA), which is mainly to find out the number of factors affecting the observed variables and the degree of correlation between each factor and each observed variable, so as to reveal the internal structure of a relatively large set of variables. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test and Bartlett's test of sphericity are the two main indicators used for validity analysis.

The validity analysis of the questionnaire in this paper was achieved through spss version 24.0, an exploratory factor analysis approach to the testing process.

Table 3: KMO values and Bartlett's sphericity test.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test for sampling suitability		.931
Bartlett	The last square card read	5460.089
	df	136
Significance		.000

Based on the results of the above exploratory factor analysis, it can be seen that the coefficient result of the KMO test is 0.931. The coefficient of the KMO test takes values in the range of 0-1, and the closer to 1 means that the validity of the questionnaire is better.

Based on the significance of the sphericity test it is also evident that the significance of this test is infinitely close to 0, reaching the level of significance and rejecting the original hypothesis. This indicates that the sample data of the study is highly correlated and that the data of the observed variables in the questionnaire have high validity.

3.2.3 Relevance Analysis

Table 4: Correlation analysis between dimensions.

Variables	Relevance	Willingness to participate	Subjective norms	Perceived ease of use	Information sources
Willingness to participate	Pearson	1			
Subjective norms	Pearson	.812**	1		
Perceived ease of use	Pearson	.461**	.600**	1	
Information sources	Pearson	.540**	.626**	.584*	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed).

Based on the results of the correlation analysis above, it can be seen that each variable is significantly correlated at the 99% significance level and the correlation coefficients are all greater than zero, so they are all positively correlated.

For example, the correlation coefficient between subjective norms and willingness to participate is 0.812, which is a positive correlation. By analogy this can explain the correlation between all other variables.

4 CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Based on the above experimental hypothesis, it is concluded that the public's willingness to participate, subjective norms, perceived ease of use and information sources are positively related to each other and to the public's participation in public affairs through the Internet, Therefore, it is proved that these variables are closely related to each other, and

reasonable planning of the above factors can effectively guide the public to participate in social affairs through reasonable channels. By improving the four relevant dimensions of the questionnaire survey (participation intention, subjective norms, perceived ease of use, and information sources), the enthusiasm and initiative of citizens to participate in public policies through the network can be optimized and the following optimization path is proposed based on the results of the model analysis.

4.1 Increase Public Willingness to Participate and Promote Active Public Participation

Public participation in the management and discussion of public affairs is positively correlated with the public's willingness to participate, indicating that the public's willingness to participate in public affairs through the Internet is influenced by the process of participation. At this stage, the number of citizens who can voluntarily and actively participate in the discussion and management of public affairs via the internet is low, including some who participate blindly. In the current context, the overall effectiveness of public participation will be influenced by the values and qualities of those who are in charge of public administration (Gao 2021). The public's awareness of public participation in public affairs is weak, and the influence of the government's role in traditional public management has not yet been eliminated, with most of the public holding a wait-and-see attitude towards public affairs, believing that whether or not they participate in public affairs will have no significant impact on their own interests. Muhammad et al. demonstrate that behavioural attitudes and perceived behavioural control have a positive impact on behavioural intentions, and that behavioural intentions have a positive impact on actual behaviour, based on rational behaviour theory (Muhammad 2011).

In order to increase the public's willingness to participate and to guide the public to participate in the management of public affairs in society, it is necessary to enhance the public's understanding of their rights, responsibilities and obligations, and to raise the citizens' awareness of participation. Community public activities can strengthen public participation and make the public understand that the operation of public affairs is related to the citizens' own interests. For example, the public has the right to demand that the government ensure that relevant prices are stable and reasonable, the public has the right to demand that the government provide

guarantees for the soundness of public facilities, the public has the right to demand that the government protect the public environment, etc. In addition to strengthening the efficiency of the government, it is also conducive to safeguarding the fundamental interests of the broad masses of the people and strengthening citizens' awareness of exercising their own rights and interests. Therefore, we must extensively mobilize and rely on the masses to raise citizens' awareness of participation and expand residents' participation so as to gather the wisdom and strength of the whole society.

4.2 Increase Social and Cultural Awareness and Improve the Impact of the Community Atmosphere

Public participation in the management and discussion of public affairs is positively correlated with the subjective norms of the public, indicating that the process of public participation in public affairs through the Internet will be influenced by its aspects, such as the social environment, network environment, school education, etc. Due to the influence of individual factors of social members, there are certain differences in the quality of information, understanding ability and the realization of policy goals. As a result, the actual ability of citizens to participate in public management is inconsistent with the participation standards, and the participation efficiency is relatively low. On this basis, the influence of the environment of citizens on their participation in public affairs plays a very important role. If the community where citizens live does not pay attention to such events, and there are behaviors such as inadequate political publicity, inadequate establishment of community political activities, and opaque and open community activities involving the political field, the enthusiasm of citizens to participate in public affairs will be greatly affected.

To give full play to the supporting role of science and technology and to make good use of the new generation of information technology represented by the Internet, big data and artificial intelligence, etc., to continuously strengthen and innovate social governance should strengthen the social environment. The community can strengthen citizens' awareness of public morality and ethics through lectures and seminars, build a good social environment, strengthen the general social environment for the public's independent behaviour, use advanced social governance models to improve the public's enthusiasm and initiative to participate in the management of public affairs, and lead by example,

constantly promote reform in the field of social public governance, so as to improve the effectiveness of public participation in the management of public affairs. Master the basic skills of using the Internet, learn to collect social opinion on the Internet, understand the thoughts and expectations of netizens, and let social governance in the Internet era resonate with the concerns of netizens.

4.3 Improve the Information Transmission Mechanism and Build a Bridge for Citizen Participation

Public participation in the management and discussion of public affairs is positively correlated with perceived ease of use, indicating that public participation in public affairs via the internet is influenced by the ease of use of websites and the extent of information coverage on the internet. The construction of government information network not only greatly improves the efficiency and effectiveness of government work, but also provides good services for the society and plays a good role in the network release of government information. However, the function of the information released by some government websites is still not fully developed, the content of the government website is limited, the long-term update is not updated, has lost the function of the information carrier. The fact that some members of the public are willing to participate in public affairs and activities, but do not have access to such content, suggests that there are currently poor online information delivery channels and inconvenient access to online information for public participation.

Firstly, residents should be made fully aware of the channels for participating in online public affairs. For example, community bulletin boards, community public numbers and community WeChat groups can be used to publish information on digital government APPs, relevant public numbers and websites in order to improve the channels for public participation in online public affairs, so that residents can understand how to participate and how to take part in online public affairs discussions. The government website is the window for the government to face the society and the channel for the public to interact with the government. It is of great significance for promoting the openness of government affairs, accepting public supervision and fully performing government functions. We will strive to make government websites an important window for the openness of government affairs and an important platform for

government service and efficiency. It is also important to strengthen the design of online platforms so that older public groups have access to more concise and easy-to-understand online platforms, thereby strengthening the initiative of public online participation in public affairs for all age groups.

4.4 Strengthening the Regulation of the Online Environment and Optimising the Sources of Information on Government Affairs

Public participation in the management and discussion of public affairs is positively correlated with the source of information, suggesting that the credibility of information sources in the process of public affairs through the internet can have an impact on public participation. With the rapid development of online information technology, users are often troubled by unofficial websites pushing untrue information in the current state of the internet. This makes it impossible for the public to distinguish the authenticity of information provided by real websites, thus reducing the public's motivation to participate in online information discussions.

Therefore, public management subjects need to provide a safe and reliable official online platform to the public to eliminate information distortion caused by the secondary transmission of information. When Fang Fujian et al. studied the behaviour of internet users in online public opinion, they believed that one-sided information or one-sided understanding of information would have a negative impact on the public's public opinion participation behaviour (Fang 2010). Publish official government-run websites and evaluate and screen information on the online environment. From the perspective of government information construction leadership, the government should coordinate and promote the sharing of government data at the open level of government affairs, strive to break the old concept of "private departments" of government affairs data, establish the new concept of "public" and "shared value-added" of government affairs data, and continue to strengthen the learning and publicity of relevant policies on the sharing and application of government affairs big data. We will guide all departments to fully understand the purpose and significance of this work, include the sharing and application of government big data in the government performance assessment, hold "inaction" accountable, and form a mechanism to effectively enhance cross-departmental and cross-level collaboration. Strengthen and improve laws and

regulations on online governance to effectively punish the act of distributing false information. Strengthen the self-regulatory management of the media industry, and improve the professional ethics and social responsibility of relevant editors through the unified management of relevant industry associations. In order to increase citizens' enthusiasm for participating in public administration activities, the public sector should, in addition to safeguarding the interests of the public and the public. The public sector should not only reduce interference in citizens' participation under the normal order of its own management, but also start from the perspective of the public masses' interests, comprehensively deal with various problems in the public masses' participation in public management, and actively respond to the ideas and opinions put forward by the public masses and implement them one by one (Huang 2021). Optimise the sources of information on citizens' participation in public affairs through the above means, so as to increase the public's The initiative to participate in public affairs through the network channel.

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