A study on the "excessive" emergency behavior of local governments in the context of the covid-19 epidemic – Based on the perspective of phenomenological sociology

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Abstract. The "excessive" emergency behavior of local governments at all levels in China has caused adverse social impacts during the covid-19 epidemic prevention and control period. From the perspective of phenomenological sociology, this paper uses the method of case study to analyze the motivation of "excessive" emergency behavior in the process of local government epidemic prevention, and understand the "real cause motivation" and "purpose motivation" behind such behaviors. The study found that the "excessive" emergency behavior of local governments is more caused by irrational factors from personal, social risks and local fiscal capacity.

1 Introduction

As of March 2023, under the leadership of the Party Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at the core, China has achieved a major and decisive victory in the prevention and control of the covid-19 epidemic. However, in the process of epidemic prevention and control in the past three years, various "excessive" emergency behaviors such as "one-size-fits-all" and "layer-by-layer" adopted by local governments at all levels, hospitals, communities and other epidemic prevention entities have hindered the implementation of the decisions of the Party Central Committee, resulting in adverse social impacts, and have repeatedly attracted public attention.

Among these epidemic prevention subjects, hospitals, neighborhood offices, communities, villages and towns and other grassroots subjects are greatly affected by irrational factors such as public sentiment, staff social relations, special environment, and individual emotions due to direct contact with the general public, and behavioral choices are highly flexible, flexible and uncertain, and research is difficult and conclusions are difficult to generalize. In contrast, the behavior of local governments at all levels causes a wider range of effects and affects a larger number of people, so their behaviors are inherently rational, impersonal, and stylized, and are easier to study. Therefore, this paper identifies the research object as the "excessive" emergency response behavior of local governments at all levels.

When analyzing the "excessive" emergency behavior of local governments at all levels, the researchers found that under the same laws, political systems, and government agencies, only some local governments had "excessive" emergency behaviors in the process of implementing prevention and control policies. And in areas with different levels of development, material resources and infrastructure conditions, there are "excessive" emergency incidents of some local governments. From these facts, it can be concluded that the reasons why local governments choose "excessive" emergency behavior are complex and may affect a variety of factors. Therefore, it is not appropriate to choose a theoretical model analysis with a single indicator and a single variable.

Therefore, from the perspective of phenomenological sociology, this paper adopts the method of case study to understand the meaning and motivation of the "excessive" emergency behavior of local governments at all levels during the epidemic prevention and control period.

2 Literature Review

Max Weber, in his Sociology of Domination, pointed out the "tangible" and "impersonal" characteristics of modern bureaucracy - that is, "according to the rules that can be calculated, affairs are handled "regardless of who the object is" [1] (48 pages). The result of this characteristic was that all "status and honor" from feudal society were leveled, and officials in bureaucratic organizations had only "official loyalty" and no obligations to any specific individual. This theory gives the premise of "excessive" emergency behavior of local governments in China, and "excessive" implementation behavior in the normal field, that is, the bureaucratic organization on which modern administration relies is difficult to pay enough attention to individual differences and complex specific situations, but can only provide rational and computable policies and rules.
Current domestic research on the "excessive" implementation of policies by local governments under normal conditions suggests that the institutional roots of local governments' "excessive" implementation of policies lie in the fact that China's high-level governments have centralized and strong personnel and financial control over local governments at all levels without effective administrative supervision, which on the one hand relies heavily on higher-level policy directives, personnel appointments and dismissals, and financial support, but on the other hand has sufficient autonomy. [2] (Kou Haoning and Li Pingju, 2017). Under this "pressure-type system", in order to complete the tasks of their superiors, local governments will adopt a working mechanism derived from "increasing the quantity, reducing the time limit, and raising the standard" around "layer by layer" [3] (Zhou Zhenchao and Zhang Jincheng, 2018). At this level, the choice of local governments to "excessively" implement policies is actually a helpless move to complete the tasks of their superiors.

On the other hand, local governments have their own interests due to their own interests, which mainly include the interests of local governments, government departments and the personal interests of government officials. For example, according to Li Weiquan and Huang Yang in their research on stereotypes in policy implementation, although the government uses discretion in the process of policy implementation to simplify or even "one-size-fits-all" treatment of the problems encountered, resulting in policy implementation deviations and reduced service quality. However, this treatment is the most economical and efficient way to accelerate the progress of public policy [4] (2019). However, if local governments pursue narrow departmental interests and individual officials' interests, and implement such interests in the implementation of policies, they are likely to harm the public interest and the overall interest (He Xiuling and Kong Xiangli, 2011). [5] From this perspective, the "excessive" implementation of policies by local governments may be a manifestation of their lazy and neglectful administration and even opportunistic mentality [6] (He Yongsong, 2021).

In the study of the "excessive" emergency behavior of local governments in the context of public health emergencies, Ding Huang and Zhang Shaofei pointed out from the perspective of structural functionalism that local governments are subjected to the "triple squeeze" of higher level governments, governments at the same level and external subjects in the implementation of prevention and control policies, and choose to adopt "excessive" emergency behaviors such as "one-size-fits-all" and "layer by layer" [7] under the combination. Zhang Weijing and Zhou Mi started from China's emergency management system, pointing out that the shortcomings of the incentive mechanism in China's current emergency management system make local government officials tend to take responsibility avoidance as the starting point of policy implementation, resulting in two strategies of "procedural performance" and "layer by layer" [8]. In addition, Sun Yufei and Yang Xuedong pointed out that whether local governments choose "excessive" emergency response is related to their "capacity space" [9]. The stronger the governance capacity, the larger the "capacity space", and the less likely it is to choose "layer by layer".

As mentioned above, at present, sufficient attention has been paid to the research on "excessive" executive behavior in the field of normalization and "excessive" emergency behavior in the scene of public health emergencies represented by the covid-19 pneumonia epidemic, and fruitful results have been achieved.

First, in terms of research subjects, the above studies lack a more precise division of "excessive" performance or "excessive" emergency behaviors, and do not note that there are many types of these behaviors, such as "one-size-fits-all" and "layer-by-layer", and the causes of these different types may be different and must be analyzed separately.

Based on the research perspective and theory, the above research basically follows the logic of structural functionalism to understand "excessive" emergency behavior, treating local government officials at all levels as absolute rational actors, and their behavior choices are based on a set of behavioral norms provided by their "status-role". In other words, these studies ultimately equate the "motivations" derived from the elements of the social system directly to the real motives of local governments at all levels in each specific situation, so that their behavior cannot be truly understood. However, Li Mingxia and Chen Lin pointed out in their research on the "persuasion" announcements issued by local governments at all levels during the epidemic that these "excessive" emergency announcements have loopholes in the legality of the subject of the persuasion announcement, the legality of the procedure, and the legality of the content. In other words, local government officials are influenced by their personal education level and awareness of the rule of law, and do not have a clear understanding of the systems and rules of the social system in which they live, so their behavior choices are more likely to come from various irrational motives, rather than highly calculable and predictable motives such as "weak responsibility" motives, "profit-seeking" motives and "stability maintenance" motives.

In terms of research methodology, the above studies also have their flaws. They all conduct motivation analysis from the institutional framework and authoritative theoretical model of China's reality, and only use empirical materials as proof of theoretical models, and lack the understanding and motivation analysis of individual cases of "local governments" as "actors" in the process of policy implementation at specific times and places. So these studies eventually return to theoretical speculation, reasoning and deduction. The disregard for empirical material has led these studies to provide only theoretical possibilities for the occurrence of "excessive" emergency behavior by local governments, but not to fully explain any specific phenomenon that actually occurs.

Therefore, this study chooses to start from individual cases, that is, from the specific events of "excessive" emergency behavior of local governments at all levels...
during the prevention and control of the covid-19 pneumonia epidemic to carry out meaning understanding and motivation analysis, so as to make up for the shortcomings of previous research.

3 Theoretical perspective and conceptual definition

3.1 Theoretical perspective: Schutz's phenomenological sociology

The German sociologist Schütz continued the tradition of Max Weber's sociology in his major work "The Composition of Meaning in the Social World", arguing that the purpose of sociology is to provide an interpretive understanding, or meaning understanding, of various social actions. To compensate for Weber's ambiguity in his definition of "meaning", Schütz drew on Bergson's "philosophy of life" and Husserl's phenomenological theory to define "meaning" as "intentional achievement"—"the 'meaning' of an experience is nothing more than a self-interpretation of that experience starting from a new experience[10]." (96 pages). And a distinction is made between two types of motivation that influence the behavioral choices of social actors - the "real cause motivation" and the "purpose motive". The former mainly refers to the personal and social factors that cause the actor's behavioral choices but are not fully aware of the actor, such as family background, class status, etc., while the latter is a clear goal set by the actor in the form of "future completion". These two concepts are also the two that will be mainly utilized in this article.

When discussing the problem of "others", Schütz analyzes two tools for "understanding" others—"indicators" without informing function and "marks" with informing functions. The former mainly includes actions, sounds, and words with fixed meaning, while the latter refers to those words that have an informative function and must be understood in specific situations. After a detailed analysis of these two tools, Schütz distinguishes between "objective meaning" and "subjective meaning", thus laying the foundation for the discussion of "ideal type" later.

3.2 Conceptual definition

From the perspective of "management is decision-making" in public policy theory, Ding Huang and Zhang Shaofei define "excessive" emergency behavior as "expanded" implementation behavior of emergency policy, that is, emergency policy implementation behavior that exceeds the original policy requirements in terms of policy interpretation and means selection, and deviates from the original policy objectives. The flaw of this definition is that it is defined from structural functionalism and public policy theory, limiting "excessive" emergency behavior to "wrong decisions" and ignoring the holistic and multifaceted nature of "behavior".

Schütz, on the other hand, defines "behavior" through a phenomenological perspective as "the conscious experience that gives meaning through spontaneous initiative" (p. 66), and it is "marked by the original intentionality of spontaneous activity preserved in all intentional variations within the 'general experience'" (p. 67). In other words, "act" is not a rational planning towards a particular goal and the decisions made therefrom, but refers to an experience that can be considered subordinate, served, and therefore "meaningful" when a completed act is reviewed.

According to this theory of Schütz, I define "excessive" emergency behavior as all words and deeds of the policy implementation subject that deviate from the original policy in the process of implementing the emergency policy, such as policy issuance, implementation means, relevant remarks of leading cadres responsible for implementation, and some body actions. This definition provides a more comprehensive examination of the behavior of policy implementers and an analysis of their motivations.

"Excessive" emergency behavior can be further divided into three types: "restriction of return", "excessive control", and "charging in isolation places". Among them, "restricting the return to their hometowns" refers to taking other compulsory measures such as unreasonable persuasion to return to their hometowns; "excessive control" refers to the epidemic prevention behavior of local governments exceeding the necessary limits and interfering with the normal production and life of the masses; and "charging fees for quarantine places" refers to local governments collecting fees from people who have been forcibly quarantined in the mainland. It should be noted that local government actions related to "restricting return" are often accompanied by "over-control" behavior, but are listed as a separate type because of their focus on "return". The policy of "charging for quarantine places" targets persons who are forcibly quarantined from the mainland, and those who take the initiative to undergo self-payment quarantine and those who return from abroad are not counted. These three types will serve as the "ideal types" for this study.

4 Case selection and data collection

4.1 Cases of restriction of return to home

In the cases of "excessive" emergency response behavior of local governments exposed by the press conference of the joint prevention and control mechanism of the State Council on September 8, 2022, Suzhou City, Jiangsu Province and Sanmenxia City, Henan Province were both reported that there was "non-approval and non-response to the reporting of persons coming (returning) from low-risk areas." Blocking and persuading people to return[11]. By further comparison of the cities of Suzhou and Sanmenxia. First of all, Suzhou and Sanmenxia have very different levels of economic development and social governance capabilities, but they have both chosen to "restrict return to their hometowns", so the "capacity space" of local governments is not a
decision factor for such behavior. Second, as prefecture-level cities, Suzhou and Sanmenxia are consistent with the "vertical squeeze" from the provincial government in their respective provinces, but only they and a few other prefecture-level cities have adopted "excessive" emergency actions. And we have shown that this response to orders from higher levels of government does not depend entirely on the material resources that local governments are able to deploy. Third, the "horizontal squeeze" of Suzhou and Sanmenxia by the same level of government is not obvious, and they are almost the only cities in their provinces that have adopted "excessive" emergency actions. Fourth, the "supplementary squeeze" from external subjects suffered by Suzhou and Sanmenxia is also not obvious, because on the one hand, prefecture-level cities do not need to face the masses directly and respond immediately to the opinions of the masses like grassroots governments and autonomous organizations. On the other hand, although Suzhou City and Sanmenxia took "excessive" emergency actions, they did not cause serious adverse consequences and did not attract widespread attention from public opinion, but were widely known through mass reports and comprehensive reports of the national joint prevention and control mechanism. Therefore, the "triple squeeze" analyzed by Ding Huang and Zhang Shaofei is not obvious and does not fully explain the "excessive" emergency behavior that occurs in the covid-19 epidemic.

From the above analysis, we can conclude that the "real cause motives" that cause "excessive" emergency behavior should be more complex and diverse, and cannot be explained only by the "capacity" space of local governments and the squeeze they are subjected to in the bureaucratic system. Therefore, we must go deep into those real "actors" in the epidemic prevention process, and analyze the "real cause motivation" and "purpose motivation" of their choice of "excessive" emergency behavior through some of their specific measures, words and deeds. To this end, the author chose the "malicious return" event that attracted public attention and official criticism for analysis.

On January 20, 2022, the county magistrate of Yuncheng County, Henan Province, claimed at a meeting: "All medium- and high-risk areas, trying to return, do not talk about whether you have a vaccination certificate, do not mention whether you have a 48-hour nucleic acid test, you just need to return, first isolate and then detain!" The county governor also said that he made such remarks at the time because he encountered many hard-line returnees in his work, which caused great difficulties for the government.[12]

This case meets the requirements of phenomenological sociological research, because the speeches of public servants at meetings and in front of the media are necessarily not "meaningless" unconscious reactions, but have a "informing" function, from which the conscious experience of meaning-giving consciousness of the actor's thoughts and motivations can be understood.

From this case, we can find that if the county governor still does not realize his statement in the process of clarification after the fact, the biggest problem is that the statement of "isolation before detention" seriously violates the principle of "governing the country according to law" and is ultra vires. If the county governor were really a rational actor with a full understanding of our country's legal and political system, he would never have chosen to make such inappropriate statements in public, whether it was to deter returnees or if he really intended to take the unreasonable measure of "isolation before detention", and remain unaware of it afterwards, because such statements would do more harm to his personal future and to the image of the government. Therefore, we can conclude that the prefect is a "limited rational actor" who lacks sufficient knowledge of the legal and political system of our country, but has made wrong decisions based on limited experience and knowledge in order to implement the epidemic prevention policy. Then the "real motive" that caused him to choose "excessive" emergency behavior was his limited knowledge and the difficulties he encountered in his work. The "purpose motive" was to solve the local problem at that time, that is, a large number of field workers returned home during the Spring Festival.

Through the analysis of "restricted return" cases, we can conclude that policy implementers are often "limited rational actors" whose limited literacy and knowledge will cause him to engage in "excessive" emergency behavior, regardless of whether his purpose is for the public good or personal interest. And the quality and knowledge of these individuals are actually irrational factors in the bureaucratic system, because it varies from person to person, from time to time and place, and it is difficult to strictly control and regulate it.

4.2 "Over-control" cases

On December 3, 2022, at the press conference on the prevention and control of the covid-19 pneumonia epidemic held in Jinan, the deputy secretary of the party group of the Jinan Urban Administration introduced to the public the newly formulated "Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of the Epidemic in Public Toilets in Jinan" (hereinafter referred to as the "Guidelines") formulated by Jinan City. Its main content is the upcoming QR code toilet system in Jinan, and all public toilets strictly implement the "venue code" scanning code toilet system, and check the nucleic acid test certificate[13]. As soon as this policy was launched, it caused criticism, and public opinion accused it of adding unnecessary burdens to people's normal lives and being "excessive" epidemic prevention.

This case is a typical case of "over-regulation" and is suitable for phenomenological sociological analysis. Because it extends the scope of control to public toilets, which are widely distributed, numerous, have a large flow of people, and are extremely closely related to daily life, the control cost is extremely high. And the "scan code to go to the toilet" system is not controlled by a group with specific attributes, but everyone who uses the public toilet.
By analyzing the content of the Guidelines, we can see that the introduction of the QR code toilet system is not a local government's arbitrary and disregard of the actual "pat on the head" decision. In fact, the Guidelines provide detailed provisions on many details of the toilet scanning system, such as the daily sanitary of toilets, staff allocation, queuing standards for toilet personnel, and the difficulties of special groups such as the elderly and children. And the original intention of this policy is to prevent cross-infection caused by contact with public toilet personnel. In early December 2022, when the policy was released, Guangzhou, Chongqing and other places have begun to relax epidemic prevention and control, except for special public places such as hospitals, other public places will no longer check for negative nucleic acid test certificates, and Chongqing advised citizens to "do not do nucleic acid unless necessary" at a press conference on the prevention and control of the covid-19 pneumonia epidemic on December 3. By comparing the epidemic prevention and control policies of the two places with the "scan code toilet" system in Jinan, we can conclude that the "purpose motive" of the Jinan municipal government in choosing "excessive control" cannot be to evade responsibility or seek personal interests, but to bear too much responsibility for epidemic prevention and control and prevention of transmission risks, that is, to extend the supply boundary of public services to public toilets. However, this kind of public service requires extremely high human and material costs, and it is difficult to achieve good results, and even interferes with the normal life of the masses, so it is condemned by public opinion as "layer by layer" and "excessive control".

The "risk society" theory has a strong explanatory power for this case. Wang Jiao's research on government public services in the context of a risky society (2023) mentioned that the interaction between people in modern society is extremely frequent, and the world is becoming more and more closely connected, resulting in risks caused by human activities that are far greater than those caused by nature itself, and "there are many uncertain factors, which may cause public risks in any field" [14]. The role of the government in such a risky society is to inject certainty into social life through the provision of public services. The reason why governments often adopt "over-control" behavior is precisely because the supply boundary of public services is extremely difficult to clear. Because in the context of the "risk society", individual risks can easily be transformed into public risks, and in the process of the covid-19 pandemic, the activities of a single infected person in public places may trigger cluster epidemics, causing immeasurable consequences. Therefore, if the government wants to completely mitigate the risk of transmission, it must monitor the health status of each individual in real time, which is almost impossible to achieve in a highly mobile and highly concentrated modern society. Therefore, "excessive control", that is, ignoring the differences between individuals, classifying individuals into several groups divided according to common attributes, and carrying out "one-size-fits-all" form of control, so as to save administrative costs, have operability, and prevent and resolve the risk of epidemic transmission.

Therefore, we can conclude that the harmfulness and uncertainty of social risks and the resulting ambiguity of the government's public service supply boundary are the "real motives" that cause local governments to choose the "excessive" emergency behavior of "excessive control". The "purpose motive" of local governments is to use government power to strongly cut off the risk of epidemic transmission. "Social risk" is also an irrational factor that is accidental and difficult to predict and control.

4.3 "Segregated Charges" Cases

Before 2022, local governments in China rarely had "quarantine charges" in the process of epidemic prevention. However, after May 2022, the phenomenon of "isolation charging" appeared in many places, such as Zhenxiong County in Yunnan Province, Changshou District and Shapingba District in Chongqing, Haishu District in Ningbo in Zhejiang, Jinxian County in Nanchang, Jiangxi Province, and Sansui County in Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture in Guizhou Province. Through observation, we can find that most of the county-level and district-level governments have adopted "quarantine charging" measures.

The administrative payment for the quarantine expenses of administratively quarantined persons during the epidemic mainly tests the financial capacity of local governments, rather than the decision-making and judgment ability in the face of public health crises, which is different from the other two types of "excessive" emergency behaviors. Chen Wangye's research on the financial security capacity of district-level governments under the impact of the covid-19 epidemic pointed out that China's district-level administrative regions are subject to the influence of geography, talents, resources and the financial system of districted cities, and lack stable and sustainable sources of fiscal revenue. The sudden outbreak of the covid-19 epidemic has affected the normal operation of the economy and increased the financial burden [15]. Bi Guoqiang's research on the impact of the covid-19 epidemic on the county-level fiscal economy also came to a similar conclusion - the covid-19 epidemic has led to a significant decline in the fiscal revenue of county-level local governments, but at the same time has increased the pressure on fiscal expenditure [16]. Therefore, we can infer that the excessive emergency behavior of local governments choosing to "quarantine fees" is mainly due to the financial burden caused by the epidemic. In the following, I will further analyze the motivations of local governments through case studies.

On September 22, 2022, the WeChat public account "Wei Zhenxiong" of the Publicity Department of the Zhenxiong County Party Committee of Yunnan and the WeChat public account "Zhenxiong Chengguan" of the Zhenxiong County Urban Management Comprehensive Law Enforcement Bureau released news that a few days
ago, a reporter from the Zhenxiong County Rong Media Center learned from the Zhenxiong County Covid-19 Pneumonia Epidemic Prevention and Control Headquarters that from 0:00 on September 21, 2022, Zhenxiong decided to implement fee management for all new personnel staying in centralized isolation places. The quarantine fee ranges from 100 yuan to 150 yuan per person per day depending on the conditions of the quarantine place. Zhenxiong County has a large population, but its economic development is poor, and while facing greater pressure to prevent the epidemic, it only has relatively weak financial strength. Then the "real reason" motive that caused them to choose "quarantine fees" should be that the pressure of epidemic prevention is too great, and local finances are difficult to support. It is also worth noting that in the news released by the official public account of Zhenxiong County, there is a statement that "if the quarantined person refuses to pay fees, submits false certification materials, or refuses to cooperate with the relevant regulations of the centralized isolation place, it will be handed over to the public security department to pursue legal responsibility in accordance with laws and regulations". The "segregated fee" itself is contrary to the law, and this statement is even more ultra vires. Therefore, the "real reason motive" of the Zhenxiong County government's action included the same factor as when we analyzed the "excessive return" case, that is, the lack of understanding of relevant laws and regulations by local government officials. The "purpose motive" of the Zhenxiong county government is to reduce the burden on local governments through fees.

5 Conclusion and discussion

Through the phenomenological sociological analysis of different types of "excessive" emergency behaviors of local governments, this study concludes that there are three main "real motives" that lead local governments to make "excessive" emergency behaviors: limited personal literacy and knowledge level of local government officials, unpredictable social risks, and insufficient financial capacity of local governments. If local government officials have limited personal literacy and knowledge, they may act rashly, make wrong judgments and wrong decisions; and unpredictable social risks will make the supply boundary of government public services unclear, so that local governments choose "excessive control" in order to cut off risks most efficiently, interfering with the normal production and life of the masses; the financial capacity of local governments is the material conditions that must be relied on to take any active epidemic prevention measures, and if there are financial difficulties, local governments will be forced to adopt "isolation fees" and other unreasonable behavior.

These three factors are "irrational factors" that vary from time to place and person to person, and it is difficult to estimate in advance, which is why "excessive" emergency behavior is an occasional event during the covid-19 epidemic prevention and control period. In view of these three elements, in order to reduce the occurrence of such behaviors as much as possible, it is necessary to do regular work, improve the personal quality of local government officials, strengthen the rule of law and political education; explore the boundaries of public service provision in the daily policy implementation process, so as to satisfy as many people as possible and live without interference; be prepared for danger in times of peace, enhance the financial support ability to deal with various risks, and ensure the stability and sustainability of local financial supply capacity.

Local governments' "purpose motives" for choosing "excessive" emergency response are varied, because local governments have different specific circumstances when addressing any specific problem in the epidemic prevention process. However, local governments, whether they regard the public interest, local interests, or the personal interests of officials as "end motives" in various situations, tend to choose "excessive" emergency response because of the three factors mentioned in the previous paragraph. Because on the one hand, the prevention and control measures taken against a specific group are not only related to the safety of people's lives and property, but also to the normal operation of local production and life, and also to the responsibility of local officials. On the other hand, the three factors of limited personal literacy and knowledge, difficulty in predicting social risks and financial difficulties, once present, will permeate the entire decision-making and implementation process of local governments, prompting them to choose "excessive" emergency response.

There were also certain flaws in this study. This study lacks direct dialogue with local government related staff, but only inferences based on the performance of local governments in different cases, which may be wrong. However, this is mainly due to the fact that if the interview method is used, direct dialogue with local government staff may interfere with their normal work, and some details may not be convenient to disclose. Therefore, the use of interviews violates the academic ethics of "value neutrality" and does not interfere with the normal life of the research subjects. Future improvements to this study will mainly focus on expanding more cases, and not sticking to the context of the covid-19 epidemic, but studying the "excessive" emergency behavior of local governments in a broader field, so as to enrich and improve this research.

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