



Public participation impact on environment NIMBY conflict and environmental conflict management: Comparative analysis in Shanghai and Hong Kong



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ABSTRACT

Public participation is vital for conflict management. Although much practice and best experience of environmental conflict and NIMBY conflict management come from the Western countries, the effectiveness of public participation has seldom been examined in China. Comparative studies in Shanghai and Hong Kong were conducted to examine public participation impact on environment NIMBY conflict and environmental conflict management. The results show that involved stakeholders, the degree of participation, participation approach and timing has impact. There is no public participation during the planning/project decision-making stage in both cases. In Mainland China, manipulation and therapy participation, few participation approach and late participation led negative impacts on public acceptance to NIMBY facilities. Based on the findings in the case studies, involving key stakeholders, enhancing the degree of participation, purposely participation approach and timing participation in the project lifecycle process are suggested for environment NIMBY conflict and environmental conflict management.

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1. Introduction

With the global recognition on environmental problems, public awareness and behavior on environmental protection is significantly increasing. Environmentalism is concerned about the relationship between society and nature (Pepper, 1996). Environmentalism argues that human beings should protect the natural environment especially natural resources from destruction or pollution (Michaud et al., 2008). Environmental degradation like overuse of renewable resources, pollution and based on the former two reasons resulted in the impoverishment of the space of living leads to environmental conflict (Libiszewski, 1991). Environmental conflict emphasizes environmental concerns for human beings. Recently, the urban NIMBY (Not in my backyard) conflicts, especially of which causing of environmental conflict are frequently occurring in the last decade in China (Yu and Zhang, 2014).

NIMBY conflict occurs around the worldwide in the last three decades, no matter in the developed or developing countries, collectivism institution or democracy institution. NIMBY conflict

refers to local residents' protest to nearby sitting of some unwellcome public facilities, such as power plants, landfills and prisons (Dear, 1992). These facilities may have negative impacts on nearby residential neighborhoods, for instance environmental, health, safety and economic influences but the wider public share the benefit (Inhaber, 1998; Lake, 1993). NIMBY conflict may delay or even cancel the planned project and lead mistrust between local government and citizens (O'Garra et al., 2008; Botetzagias and Karamichas, 2009). For the characteristics of NIMBY actions, some scholars critiqued NIMBYism selfish, emotional and irrational (Mazmanian and Morell, 1990; Kraft and Clary, 1991) while some scholars positively argued public were self-interest, rational and could provide their health and safety risks to the NIMBY facilities technical experts (Matheny and Williams, 1985; Zheng et al., 2015).

Burningham et al. (2006) separated environmentalism from NIMBYism as being selfish and irrational of localized opposition to proposed development projects. Johnson (2010) judged NIMBY conflict and environmental conflict from the criteria of self-interest and environmental concerns for human beings. The political, social, economic, ethnic, religious or territorial conflicts, or conflicts over resources or national interests are the output from environmental degradation but in the NIMBY conflict, environmental concerns is for self-interest and is one of the causes leading to the NIMBY conflict. Environment conflict may lead to NIMBY conflict.

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Yu and Zhang (2014) defined environment NIMBY conflict as the NIMBY conflict causing of environmental impact. Based on the previous study, in this study environment NIMBY conflict refers to the NIMBY conflict causing of environmental concerns for self-interest and rational.

Public participation is vital for environmental conflict and NIMBY conflict management (McAvoy, 1999; Cowan, 2003; Johnson, 2010). Public participation could make up the decision makers' knowledge and competence and make them recognize public concerns of public policy (Fung, 2006).

However few studies have examined the effectiveness of public participation for environment NIMBY conflict management in different institutions. Moreover much practice and best experience of NIMBY conflict management come from the Western countries (Kellow, 2005; Tempalski et al., 2007; Drazkiewicz et al., 2015). Recently environment NIMBY conflicts and environmental conflict have become controversial in China (He, 2009; Johnson, 2010; Yu and Zhang, 2014). Thus, exploring how public participation was implemented for environment NIMBY conflict and environmental conflict management in China is a research area that has not been developed of the literature.

The dual concern for public participation and its outcome of environment NIMBY conflict and environmental conflict management motives our comparison of Shanghai and Hong Kong, which have many commonalities as well as differences. Both are global cities with high-speed urbanization. Both are high-density cities with limited land and large population. The environment NIMBY conflict events and environmental conflict events not only affect the two cities' construction development process but also have negative impact on the figure of these two cities aiming for sustainable development (Lam et al., 2007; Sun et al., 2016). Despite these converging factors, the two cities differ significantly in important aspects regarding the political-administrative culture and structure. Therefore Shanghai-Hong Kong comparative research promises new insights on urban conflict management.

The article is divided into six parts. First, it identifies public participation impacts on environment NIMBY conflict and environmental conflict management. Then it presents the background of the NIMBY conflict and environmental conflict in Shanghai and Hong Kong. The next section introduces the case contexts and semi-interviews method, followed by the results examining the effectiveness of public participation implemented in Shanghai and Hong Kong. In the last part, policy implementations and recommendations are provided.

2. Analysis framework

2.1. Public participation impacts on public acceptance to environmental conflict facilities and NIMBY conflict facilities

Previous studies show that there are mainly four aspects of public participation impacting on public acceptance to environmental conflict facilities and NIMBY conflict facilities. They are involved stakeholders, the degree of participation, participation approach and timing.

Our first hypothesis is that the involved stakeholders influence public acceptance to environmental conflict facilities and NIMBY conflict facilities. McAvoy (1999) pointed that public participation

as a noneconomic factor could have a positive impact to NIMBY facility. Drazkiewicz et al. (2015) argued that public participation positively affected environmental outcomes. However, Thomas (2013) demonstrated that when participants found their input or concerns was not considered or utilized in the decision-making results, they would think their time was wasted and distrusted the local government. Vierikko and Niemelä (2016) suggested that key stakeholders should be involved and values pluralism should be carefully analyzed for successful green infrastructure planning.

Second, we hypothesize that from the project lifecycle perspective, the degree of participation influences public acceptance to environmental conflict facilities and NIMBY conflict facilities. Buckwalter (2014) indicated that the choice for administrators was not necessarily whether to include the public but rather how inclusive to be in terms of quality of communication between the government and the residents and potential for impact. Arnstein (1969) provided an influential and useful citizen participation ladder with eight rungs: manipulation, therapy, informing, consultation, placation, partnership, delegated power and citizen control.

The third hypothesis is that participation approach has impact on public acceptance to environmental conflict facilities and NIMBY conflict facilities. There are mainly two purposes of public participation: getting the information from public for the decision making and enhancing public acceptance to the public policy (Thomas, 2010). Based on the incentives of public participation, Thomas (2013) indicated that there are varies participation approaches, for instance public hearing, public meetings, advisory committees, citizen surveys.

Our fourth hypothesis is that participation time influences public acceptance to environmental conflict facilities and NIMBY conflict facilities. Thomas (2010) emphasized that the public managers often defense for their decision making without public participation for the time constrains. Based on a national survey, Ibitayo and Pijawka (1999) argued that early and continuous public involvement in the facility siting and operating process, and involving public concerns of NIMBY facility are important strategies for NIMBY conflict governance. Thomas (2013) suggested that public should be involved in decision making as early as possible for avoiding public concerns for their input.

2.2. Research framework

Based on the above literature review, this article employed a research framework (Fig. 1) from the perspective of project lifecycle to investigate public participation impact on environment NIMBY conflict and environmental conflict management, specifically examining the impacts of involved stakeholders, the degree of participation, participation approach and timing.

2.3. Public participation in mainland China and Hong Kong

In China there is no specialized law for public participation (Sun et al., 2016). However public participation regulations were included in the planning laws and EIA laws, for instance in the People's Republic of China Urban and Rural Planning Law, People's Republic of China Environmental Protection Law of and People's Republic of China Environmental Impact Assessment of. Cai (2009) asserted that without the agreement by the Central Government,

Project lifecycle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision-making stage • Planning stage • Construction stage 	Public participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involved stakeholders • Degree of participation • Participation approach • Timing
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Fig. 1. Framework for analyzing public participation impacts from the project lifecycle perspective.

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