

The Problems and Countermeasures of Chongqing's University Think Tanks Participating in Government Decision-Making

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Abstract. Chongqing has abundant talent and academic resources, and has a solid foundation for building university think tanks. There are problems with the decision-making and consulting abilities of researchers, poor communication between the government and university think tanks, and low efficiency in converting theoretical output into practical application in Chongqing's university think tanks. Therefore, the service of think tanks to government decision-making is still insufficient, and the efficiency of adopting or forming policies for think tank results is not high, resulting in insufficient decision support. In this regard, it is recommended to create a flexible and scientific talent management approach, facilitate information communication channels between the government and universities, and accelerate the process of transforming theoretical achievements into practical applications.

Keywords: University think tanks; government decision-making; Chongqing City

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background and Significance

1.1.1 Research background

In April 2022, the General Office of the Communist Party of China Central Committee issued the "National 14th Five Year Plan for the Development of Philosophy and Social Sciences" (hereinafter referred to as the "Plan"), which proposed to strengthen the construction of new think tanks with Chinese characteristics and focus on building a group of new think tanks with important decision-making influence, social influence, and international influence. Think tanks should have a forward-looking perspective, strong policy sensitivity, and efficient communication skills. They should be able to accurately grasp the national strategic direction in complex and ever-changing domestic and international environments, and provide intellectual support and strategic suggestions for the country's economic construction, social development, and cultural prosperity.

University think tanks are the main component of building a new type of think tank, with profound theoretical accumulation and obvious disciplinary advantages. In November 2016, the 13th Five Year Plan for Science and Technology Innovation in Chongqing emphasized the need to "build a high-level science and technology innovation think tank system, and give full play to the role of chief experts, high-level experts from universities and research institutes in strategic planning, consulting and evaluation, and macro decision-making."; In May 2018, the Chongqing Municipal Party Committee issued the "Opinions on Strengthening the Construction of New Think Tanks in Chongqing", comprehensively planning and deploying new think tanks in Chongqing. In September 2020, the Propaganda Department of the Chongqing Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China issued the "Chongqing Key Think Tank Construction Pilot Work Plan (2020-2022)", emphasizing the cultivation of a number of school level think tank platforms, fully leveraging the advantages of university talents, cultivating high-level think tank research experts, and promoting the construction of think tanks in Chongqing's universities. In December 2020, Chongqing announced the first batch of 22 new think tanks in Chongqing, with 16 university think tanks on the list. These important policies and measures provide a favorable development environment for the construction and development of think tanks in universities in Chongqing, and also put forward higher requirements for them to provide high-quality decision-making consulting services for the economic

and social development of Chongqing. Chongqing not only has a superior geographical location and convenient transportation, but also has significant achievements in technological innovation and education. This place gathers numerous talented individuals who are active in various scientific research institutions and academic halls, injecting a continuous stream of vitality into the development of the city. At the same time, Chongqing is also a place full of academic atmosphere, with numerous universities and research units providing high-level educational resources and research results, from well-known universities to research centers. Chongqing has built 11 new key think tanks and 11 new cultivation think tanks based on universities, and has achieved significant development in multiple fields such as theoretical innovation, suggestions and suggestions, public opinion guidance, and social services.

However, university think tanks face problems such as insufficient decision-making and consulting abilities of researchers, poor communication between the government and university think tanks, and low efficiency in translating theoretical output into practical applications. In order to further enhance the ability of university think tanks in Chongqing to serve government decision-making, this article deeply analyzes the current basic situation and main problems, and proposes countermeasures that are conducive to optimizing and improving the service quality of university think tanks, making them more effectively integrated into the national governance system. Through such measures, we can expect university think tanks to play a greater role in future government decision-making, while also contributing unique and profound wisdom and strength to China's socialist modernization construction.

1.1.2 Research significance

At the theoretical level, based on literature research, this article systematically reviews the relevant theories of think tank participation in administrative decision-making, in order to clarify the importance and development trends of think tank participation in administrative decision-making. Secondly, based on the current situation of think tanks in higher education institutions participating in administrative decision-making, this paper summarizes and draws on the practice of university think tanks in the process of administrative decision-making, in order to provide certain reference for the participation of university think tanks in the process of administrative policy-making in China.

At the practical level, based on the literature research of think tanks and the actual situation of domestic university think tanks participating in administrative decision-making, relevant theories and experiences are applied to identify the problems faced by Chinese university think tanks in the government decision-making process, and reasonable countermeasures are provided, in order to provide support for government departments, the Academy of Social Sciences, private think tanks and other departments to better participate in government policy formulation.

1.2 Concept Definition

1.2.1 Decision making

Administrative decision-making, as the core responsibility of national administrative organs, is not only a simple process, but also a complex and crucial task. In this process, administrative officials face many challenges and opportunities. They must carefully evaluate various information, weigh the pros and cons, and take the public interest as the highest consideration standard to formulate appropriate policies and measures. This kind of decision not only concerns the order and development direction of society, but also affects the well-being and quality of life of citizens. Therefore, administrative decision-making is an exercise of power that requires decision-makers to have a high sense of responsibility, judgment, and innovation ability, while also strictly adhering to laws and regulations to ensure their legitimacy and fairness. Through this decision-making process, administrative agencies can effectively coordinate various interests, promote the resolution of social problems, and achieve the goals of public administration.

1.2.2 University think tanks

Think tanks, a term known as "think tanks," "think tank groups," and "external brains," can be traced back to distant times. Initially, it was just a simple concept, referring to an organization where a group of non military professionals gather to discuss and develop military operation plans and other types of military strategic plans. As time goes by, the meaning of think tanks continues to enrich and expand, gradually evolving into a unique organizational form. This type of organization is not affiliated with any government agency or private enterprise, but operates independently, focusing on policy research and consulting services.

Nowadays, think tanks are no longer limited to the military field and play a crucial role in the formulation of public policies. Think tanks not only provide professional knowledge, but also participate in public discussions to conduct in-depth analysis of various social issues. At the same time, think tanks are committed to enhancing the country's soft power and contributing to the country's long-term development and international influence through their collective wisdom.

1.2.3 Participation of university think tanks

In today's world of increasingly abundant knowledge and information explosion, the think tank of universities has played an irreplaceable role. Its theoretical foundation is solid, research methods are rigorous, and it provides strong talent support for decision-making. By conducting in-depth analysis and exploration of issues, it can not only promote the forefront of academic research, but also provide valuable references for policy-making. University think tanks should continuously leverage their platform advantages, integrate their research resources, and actively form a multidisciplinary research team. On this basis, modern information technology should also be applied to the research of philosophy and social sciences, strengthening the construction of laboratories and databases, and promoting the co construction and sharing of resources. At the same time, it can effectively connect government departments, enterprises and institutions, and the general public, strengthen collaborative innovation and research in philosophy and social sciences, grasp the overall situation from multiple disciplines and perspectives, and provide precise and effective intellectual support for China's modernization construction.

1.3 Literature Review

According to the search results of literature such as CNKI, there are currently relatively few studies and works focusing on the construction and development of think tanks in universities in Chongqing. Based on existing research,Zhong Min(2016) analyzed the development status, existing problems, and improvement suggestions of eight educational think tanks in universities in Chongqing from the perspectives of internal organization and external environment; Xie Yaping and Mi Xiong hui (2022) pointed out that think tanks in Chinese universities face problems such as unclear identity recognition and resource scarcity, which all constrain their decision-making and consulting role. The solution to this problem is to establish a communication system between university think tanks, policy institutions, and management departments, and improve the decision-making evaluation and supervision system.Guo Xiangting (2018) pointed out the problems in the participation of university think tanks in decision-making in China, and believes that the reasons for the problems are incomplete laws and regulations for university think tanks to participate in policy formulation, insufficient independence, and imperfect talent structure. Tan Jing and Wu Zhongyuan (2018) proposed solutions based on the difficulties faced by think tanks in western universities. They believe that the government must stimulate the internal motivation of think tanks in western universities, strengthen their participation foundation, enhance their independence, reform funding management, increase participation guarantees, expand communication channels, optimize participation effects, introduce public participation, innovate participation conditions, etc., in order to better play the advisory and advisory role of think tanks in western universities. Wu Yuge and Shao Changzhen (2022) emphasize the importance of talent in think tanks in universities. It is necessary to strengthen the cultivation of

think tank talents from four aspects: selection, cultivation, evaluation, and motivation, in order to cultivate composite talents with "academic talent" and "consulting politics".

2. The Current Situation of Chongqing's University Think Tanks Participating in Government Decision-Making

University think tanks are educational and research institutions that gather talents, have complete disciplines, and are actively engaged in external exchanges. They play an important role in the country's economic and social development. Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, think tanks in universities have begun to undertake the task of policy research and strategy research. Faced with the increasingly complex situation at home and abroad, government departments urgently need to improve decision-making accuracy and promote the modernization process of the governance system by obtaining the consulting results of university think tanks. Various universities in Chongqing have fully utilized their talents, disciplines, and professional advantages, forming a development pattern of dislocation and distinctive features in various aspects such as public safety, regional governance, and cultural education. The influence of serving government decision-making is expanding day by day.

2.1 Continuously Expanding in Scale

Although the number of universities in Chongqing does not rank among the top in the country, the majority of them are scholars and experts. In 2014, the Ministry of Education issued the "Promotion Plan for the Construction of New Type of Think Tanks with Chinese Characteristics", further promoting the construction of educational think tanks in universities. Chongqing is the largest municipality directly under the central government in China, entrusted with the responsibility of promoting regional development and educational innovation. As the economic center of the upper reaches of the Yangtze River, Chongqing is striving to create an educational highland that integrates economic growth, cultural exchange, and educational enhancement. In order to achieve these grand goals, Chongqing has put forward new challenges and requirements for the participation of university think tanks in the decision-making process, emphasizing the scientific and practical nature of decision-making. A total of 28 university think tanks in Chongqing have been selected for the China Think Tank Index (CTTI) and the first batch of new think tanks in Chongqing, fully reflecting the significant achievements of the construction of new think tanks in universities and colleges. It is an important opportunity for universities and colleges to continue to deepen the construction of new think tanks. From the distribution of disciplines selected by Chongqing's university think tanks in the China Think Tank Index (CTTI), humanities and social sciences are the main disciplines that university think tanks rely on, especially economics and management. They focus on macro level research such as economic and social development, sound policy system, and optimization of social structure. They are also specialized disciplines for cultivating government officials and decision-making management talents, which are in line with the main function of university think tanks in providing decision-making consulting services for the government and society. They have a natural advantage in providing decision-making consulting services for the government and society as disciplines and talents. Next, various universities in Chongqing will deeply implement the relevant opinions of the central government and Chongqing on the construction of new think tanks, fully leverage the theoretical advantages, student advantages, and system advantages of universities, focus on the center and serve the overall situation, and strive to create the "first front" of new think tank construction in the city, contributing the wisdom and strength of universities to promote high-quality development in Chongqing.

2.2 The scope of services is gradually increasing

Chongqing's university think tanks have formed a development pattern of dislocation and distinctive features. The research fields of think tanks in various universities focus on highlighting the characteristics and needs of Chongqing's economic and social development, mainly from the fields

of Chongqing's economy, society, education, etc. Overall, its research areas are both targeted and extensive, covering many key areas such as economy, culture and education, urban-rural development, ethnic minorities, regional coordinated development, international situation, etc. It basically responds to the current development priorities and themes of Chongqing, forming a development trend of complementary professional layout, hierarchical layout, and industry layout, providing strong intellectual support for the economic and social development of Chongqing.

2.3 The Increasing Influence of Decision-Making Consulting

The research in this field by think tanks in various universities in Chongqing has the characteristics of comprehensiveness and systematicness, and has produced a series of development oriented and targeted research results, which are of great significance for the research situation, interpretation of theories, and interpretation of policies. From the situation of various university think tanks undertaking research and tasks of government agencies at all levels, it can be seen that the vast majority of university think tanks have undertaken tasks assigned by provincial, ministerial, and district/county-level government units, and have better fulfilled their functions of providing government decision-making consulting services. In addition, university think tanks have also taken over the projects and tasks assigned by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, indicating that Chongqing's university think tanks have gained recognition and trust from national party and government institutions in their ability to provide political services to a certain extent. Finally, university think tanks carry out advisory training activities for various sectors of society, which not only enhances the level of advisory services and social influence of university think tanks themselves, but also scientifically popularizes advisory opinions to all sectors of society, cultivates the awareness of public participation in decision-making, and enhances the enthusiasm and level of public participation in social governance.

3. The Issue of Chongqing University Think Tanks Participating in Government Decision-Making

Although Chongqing University Think Tank has made significant progress in both quantity and service scope, and its decision-making consulting ability and social influence are constantly improving, as a decision-making consulting institution, it is still on the edge of the government's decision-making circle. In the traditional administrative management model, various government departments will use their internal research institutions and social science academies as decision-making basis. There are still problems in the decision-making process of Chongqing's university think tanks in serving the government, such as insufficient decision-making and consulting capabilities of researchers, poor communication between the government and university think tanks, and low efficiency in converting theoretical output into practical applications.

3.1 Insufficient Decision-Making and Consulting Abilities of Think Tank Researchers

The university think tank has both academic and political attributes, therefore, researchers in the university think tank shoulder a dual mission of "academic" and "political". The researchers in university think tanks are mostly professors, scholars, and graduate students with rich academic knowledge backgrounds. However, their academic papers and decision-making consulting articles have significant differences and contradictions, which give them both natural advantages in academic research and obstacles in decision-making consulting. Their ability to provide advisory opinions is relatively weak, which requires further improvement in the ability of researchers in university think tanks to transform academic research results into decision-making consulting results.

3.2 Poor Communication Between the Government and University Think Tanks

The construction of university think tanks cannot be separated from the close relationship between the government and university think tanks, which is of great significance for leveraging the role of university think tanks. Although Chongqing University Think Tank has been responsible for

providing policy advice to party and government departments since its establishment, its channels for policy advice are very limited compared to official think tanks. At present, the party and government decision-making consultation system in Chongqing is still relatively closed because it directly relies on party and government departments, is closer to the decision-making center, and is more convenient for communication. Moreover, its researchers have a deep research background and writing ability in party and government decision-making consultation. In addition, most government policies and documents need to be kept confidential before they are published. Therefore, policy recommendations from party and government departments are generally conducted through their official think tanks. University think tanks do not fully understand the actual policy needs of government departments, and the government's attention and adoption rate of the results of university think tanks are low. There is a contradiction of information asymmetry between the two, which can easily lead to "double blind" docking, affecting the accuracy and effectiveness of think tank results in serving government decision-making. With the passage of time, the dependence of party and government agencies on internal formal think tanks has become stronger, and the distance between them and university think tanks has become farther and farther, making it difficult to truly reach the center of national policy-making, and their enthusiasm for participating in decision-making has also become weaker.

3.3 The theoretical application of think tanks has low efficiency in practice

There is a problem in Chongqing's university think tanks where academic influence is emphasized while decision-making influence is neglected. Although university think tanks have many advantages in academic, disciplinary, talent, environment, information technology, and other aspects that other think tanks do not possess, they have not been effectively applied and transformed in practice. In terms of academic resource advantages, excessive emphasis is placed on the output of academic achievements, emphasizing theoretical expression over policy recommendations; University think tanks have unique advantages in disciplinary and talent resources, with disciplinary integration, cross penetration, and compatibility between humanities and sciences. Many research results with high academic and political value have emerged. However, in practical applications, there is a problem of insufficient disciplinary integration and penetration, which has become a bottleneck in the transformation of university think tank achievements. In addition, major universities in Chongqing have established their own or externally purchased databases, but these rich platform resources have not been effectively integrated and utilized. Most excellent resources are idle and have become a decoration, making it difficult to achieve the transformation of achievements.

4. Countermeasures To Solve the Problem of Chongqing University Think Tanks Participating in Government Decision-Making

4.1 Creating Flexible and Scientific Talent Management Methods

One is to facilitate the flow of talent. By adopting methods such as appointment system, combining full-time and part-time positions, and on-the-job training, we aim to widely attract outstanding talents from the academic, political, business, and scientific communities, enabling them to have full research freedom and free talent flow and exchange between different think tanks, party and government, military, universities, and enterprises.

The second is to build an efficient training system. Fully utilize the high-end talent resources of universities, accurately grasp hot issues such as social development, academic research, and government governance, and cultivate a group of high-level think tanks that are proficient in China's national and political situation with a goal to enhance their influence.

Thirdly, establish a research team for international university think tanks; Integrate important information from university think tank scholars in international cutting-edge fields and communicate through research plans between think tanks. By integrating international resources into the Chongqing University Think Tank, gathering international talents, improving their research level and influence, and enabling them to better play their role in government decision-making.

4.2 Smooth Information Communication Channels Between the Government and Universities

The government and university think tanks have a high degree of political compatibility and can play a role in achieving twice the result with half the effort. The key reason why there are not many decision-making consulting results and decision-making suggestions adopted by think tanks in universities in Chongqing is the lack of effective communication and exchange between the government and think tanks, resulting in a lack of in-depth understanding of government decision-making consulting needs, and the results obtained by think tanks in universities are not what the government expects. In this regard, the government should strengthen contact with university think tanks, cultivate a highly consistent political understanding, so that the research results of university think tanks can truly touch on the pain points and difficulties of Chongqing's development, and provide advice and suggestions for government decision-making.

Firstly, important thematic symposiums should be held regularly, with the government entrusting university think tanks to undertake research projects. Through project commissioning, the government's requirements for public decision-making should be proposed, and university think tanks should determine the importance order of policy research and conduct targeted research.

Secondly, it is necessary to facilitate the channels for declaring results. Encourage official think tanks or organizations to collaborate with think tanks in higher education institutions, establish information exchange platforms, and jointly report policy consultation results. For example, the Chongqing Association for Science and Technology has collaborated with units such as the China Institute of Engineering and Technology Development and the Center for Urbanization and Regional Innovation Construction at Chongqing University, providing a large number of high-quality think tank decision-making consulting research results for the Municipal Party Committee, Municipal Government, and relevant departments.

4.3 Accelerate the Process of Transforming Theoretical Achievements into Practical Applications

The key to promoting the construction and development of think tanks in universities in Chongqing is to accelerate the transformation of academic achievements into decision-making consulting achievements, and strive to improve the quality of decision-making consulting achievements.

Firstly, Researchers in university think tanks need to shift the theoretical nature of decision-making towards practical application. Researchers often have academic research backgrounds. Due to the significant influence of academic thinking, the research results produced are mostly academic articles with strong theoretical content but lacking practical application. Therefore, it is necessary to consciously establish problem thinking, take problem solving as the guide, and conduct investigations around key issues in the political and economic development of the country and the Chengdu Chongqing region. At the same time, we should also combine the characteristics of think tanks in universities, focus on the practicality and operability of results, and provide practical, feasible, and scientific policy recommendations for party and government institutions.

Secondly, Researchers need to improve the writing level of government decision-making consulting reports. Decision consulting reports generally have the characteristics of simplicity and conciseness, but due to the long-term academic writing of university researchers, they tend to use highly academic expressions, which brings great inconvenience to the review of government decision-makers and thus affects their approval and acceptance. Therefore, when writing decision consulting suggestions, it is important to pay attention to using logical and intuitive writing techniques to provide actionable decision-making opinions.

Thirdly, integrate the excellent subject resources within the university's think tank. Strengthen interdisciplinary cooperation and form high-level think tank research results. Higher education institutions themselves contain a large amount of excellent disciplinary resources, but due to the lack of a platform for mutual communication, they have created barriers between disciplines. The

university think tank is a comprehensive research platform that should fully utilize the advantages of disciplinary integration, and organically combine advantageous disciplines through various means such as academic forums, summit forums, and project solicitation meetings, in order to improve the efficiency of transforming academic achievements into high-quality decision-making reference results.

Fourthly, strengthen digital construction. Establish a platform for the transformation of achievements in university think tanks in Chongqing. By establishing achievement platforms, expert platforms, and think tank sharing platforms, we aim to improve the transparency of information between supply and demand, reduce the cost of information collection, achieve precise alignment with government needs, and improve the pertinence of achievements.

5. Summary

This article analyzes the actual situation of Chongqing university think tanks participating in administrative decision-making, and identifies the problems that Chongqing university think tanks currently face in the government decision-making process, namely insufficient decision-making and consulting ability of researchers, poor communication between the government and university think tanks, and low efficiency in converting theoretical output into practical application. And propose reasonable countermeasures based on actual situations, suggesting that Chongqing university think tanks create flexible and scientific talent management methods, smooth information communication channels between the government and universities, accelerate the process of theoretical achievements transforming into practical applications, in order to provide theoretical support for university think tanks to better participate in government policy formulation.

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