

The Operation Process and Genetic Mechanism of Chinese Campaign-Style Governance Model: The Case Study of APEC Blue

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How to cite this paper: Sun, Y. and Guo, J. (2017) The Operation Process and Genetic Mechanism of Chinese Campaign-Style Governance Model: The Case Study of APEC Blue. *American Journal of Industrial and Business Management*, 7, 372-385.
<https://doi.org/10.4236/ajibm.2017.74027>

Received: February 21, 2017

Accepted: April 18, 2017

Published: April 21, 2017

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Abstract

As a typical model of state governance, campaign-style governance has become an effective complement and correction mechanism for the Chinese government to make up for the deficiencies of conventional governance mechanism. It is used for special rectification for any major issues, for example, emergencies, social problems etc. In recent years, the application of campaign-style governance in environmental pollution control has aroused widespread concern in academia and society. On the basis of previous studies, this article will regard the policy—"APEC Blue" as the case study, exploring the operation process and genetic mechanism of campaign-style governance model. Specifically, this article will discuss the three stages of goal setting, mobilization implementation and policy evaluation. Moreover, the empirical study found that bureaucratic difficulties, path dependence, omnipotent government thinking, diversified demand and limited policy tools, cross-sectoral cooperation and internal assessment mechanism are the important reasons for the large-scale use of campaign-style governance in practice. Therefore, we should correctly treat the value of campaign-style governance and give full play to the positive social effects in state governance.

Keywords

Campaign-Style Governance, APEC Blue, Hierarchical Bureaucracy, Genetic Mechanism

1. Introduction

The word "Governance" has become much more popular since it appeared in the 1990s; it first began in the western countries and then spread to the rest of the world. Unlike western countries, which prefer a multi-center governance,

decentralized governance and Legal governance, the Chinese government is accustomed to using campaign-style governance to deal with political, economic and social issues. Along with the rapid development of China's economy and constantly highlighted social problems, the Chinese government continuously sought for a new breakthrough of governance model, and is determined to spare no effort especially in choosing a policy tool. However, with the Chinese special national condition and the influence of traditional political culture, the Chinese government favors the campaign-style governance model more on the limited selection of policy tools, and in the long-term development phase, along with China's concrete practice combined; this gradually formed a distinct Chinese localization of governance model. As an unconventional governance model, the phenomenon of campaign-style governance is common in China; it has become the policy dependence means for Chinese government to solve major emergencies and social problems. At present, despite the campaign-style governance was still criticized by many scholars, there is no denying that, as a model of governance, this is reasonable and inevitable. This paper will take APEC Blue as a case study, rethink the operation process and genetic mechanism of Chinese campaign-style governance model, and provide reference for the government to explore the national governance.

2. Review on Campaign-Style Governance Literature

2.1. Campaign-Style Governance from Western Scholars' View

The word "Governance" is relative to the term "govern", meaning to control and to manipulate. The contemporary Western governance idea, after a long period of development, it gradually forms polycentric governance, holistic governance, network governance, and other governance models, and that is widely used in the government administration, environmental management, community management etc. Of which, the research of western scholars on campaign-style governance mainly focused on three aspects: first, paying attention to the theoretical explanation of the movement. For example, from the perspective of totalitarianism, Hannah Arendt thinks that the state under the totalitarian regime has the ability to initiate any political or social movement [1]. Second, explaining the national movement by political conflict theory. It is thought that the national movement is essentially the elite as a master to lead a group of people as a squire to struggle with the other groups of the same characteristics [2]. National movement is the political struggle of the masses against the ruling class [3]. Third, studying the Chinese political movement from the unique perspective of Mao Zedong. It is considered that under the leadership of Mao Zedong in China, nothing is more unique, more important, and more puzzling than the mass movement [4]. The roots of contemporary Chinese governance are rooted in the soil of the Mao era [5].

Western scholars' studied on the campaign-style governance theory much earlier and are more mature, they put forward many theoretical explanations for the campaign-style governance; which has spread around the world and has a

profound influence on the social governance theory. However, the research on Chinese campaign-style governance is often limited to a specific style, in which have the tendency to ignore the diversity and integrity of the Chinese campaign style. Moreover, most of the mass movements in China are initiated by the Party and the country from top to bottom, while the western scholars are more focus on styles that are initiated by the underclass or marginalized groups from bottom to top, which aimed to combat the ruling authorities [6]. Therefore, we should take into account the reality and particularity of China's national conditions while absorbing and using Western governance theories, and not blindly conform and going along with the crowd.

2.2. Campaign-Style Governance from Chinese Scholars' Perspective

Compared to the west, China's governance theory developed late and immature, the development of its theory and practice mainly borrowed from the western countries, but undeniably, the politicians and philosophers in ancient China have long proposed their idea of governance. However, for the Chinese dynasties, the primary objective of governance is protecting the interests of the rulers. After the founding of New China, The Chinese government is actively pursuing a governance model that is suitable for social development, but chronic poverty and backward social reality forced the Chinese government to adopt the political mobilization approach. Since then, political mobilization and mass movement has become a common approach of governance in China. American scholar James R. Townsend and Brantly Womack deemed that ever since the death of Mao Zedong, China is faced with the paradox of a system movement, namely the reform that imply of routinize life in China, but it is away to mobilize [7]. Truly, campaign-style governance is China's most common type of a national governance, although some people think that since the death of Mao Zedong, it already did not have a charismatic leader leading the whole country to launch the national revolutionary movement, the Chinese government should abandon the campaign-style governance and change direction to sustainable governance, however, the repeated use of campaign-style governance suggested that campaign-style governance is suitable in China.

In China, the practice of campaign-style governance has existed long time, but as a theory, it is not until the last few years. In June 2004, Liu Xiaoren's article "Huaihe River Pollution: The failure of Campaign-style Governance", published by China Youth Daily, this is the first time campaign-style governance as a theory appeared in the public view. Thereafter, many scholars from different levels, perspective and dimensions started to carry out in-depth study and discussion on this model of governance. Feng Zhifeng [8], Tang Huangfeng [9], Feng Shizheng [10] *et al.* respectively analyzed the concept of campaign-style governance from the macro, meso and micro perspective. Li Zhengquan [11], Zhou Xuguang [12] *et al.* introduced the origin of campaign-style governance. Yan Jirong [13], Tang Xianxing [14] *et al.* evaluated campaign-style governance from

positive and negative functions. Ou Yangjing [15] even regarded grass-roots campaign-style governance as a routine administrative mechanism, rather than temporary, arbitrary, unconventional political mechanism. Despite the current Chinese academic scholars that does not have a uniform definition on the concept of campaign-style governance, on the whole, campaign-style governance is an important solution to deal with collective action. It is a type of policy implementation involving extraordinary mobilization of administrative resources under political sponsorship to achieve a specific policy target within a defined period of time. For example, Fan Yongmao regarded “APEC Blue” as a typical governance model dominated by bureaucracy, which can concentrate resources to accomplish large undertakings and achieve the effect of governance quickly. However, it will also bring some problems, such as being lack of market regulation and social participation, high cost and lack of interest compensation mechanism etc. [16]. Thus, for the application of the campaign-style governance model, we should adopt a dialectical attitude and seek political asylum, in order to exert the greatest possible advantages of campaign-style governance.

3. The Operation Process of Campaign-Style Governance —Based on the Investigation of “APEC Blue”

3.1. A Case Study of “APEC Blue”

From 5th November to 11th November 2014, the 22nd Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) leaders’ informal meeting was held in Beijing, China. This is the largest scale and highest level international multilateral activities which was held in China since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, and is also the first time for China to lead the rules of the Asia-Pacific Conference on economy. It is a great historical turning point for China. But in recent years, Beijing is one of the most serious smog polluted city, and this has seriously affected the image of China internationally. Therefore, improving air quality becomes an important part in organizing the meeting. For this reason, the Chinese government took a series of strong measures, where they need to quickly improve the air quality in a short time, and this phenomenon has been dubbed the “APEC Blue”.

As a non-conventional policy tool, the operation process of the campaign-style governance can be divided into three stages: goal setting phase, mobilization implementation phase and policy evaluation phase [17]. Specifically, the goal setting phase mainly includes the formation of policy issues and the setting of policy objectives. The formation of policy issues comes from a number of factors, it may involve major public emergencies or some social problems etc. Policy objectives are often targeted to specific issues, and it is generally determined by the leadership of government departments. In China, the formation of public policy issues is often highly relevant to politics, and the goal setting also emphasizes “fuzzy consensus”. The mobilization implementation phase includes the establishment of temporary organization, decomposition of policy tasks, formulation of implementation programs, rules of rewards and punishments etc. At

this stage, the government usually set up temporary coordination organizations and use coercive means to mobilize all sectors of society to actively participate in the policy implementation. The final stage of campaign-style governance is the policy evaluation phase. After the implementation of public policy, the results of the movement will be evaluated, corrected and disciplined, and the evaluation results will be an important basis for determining the direction of policy. Scientific policy evaluation is an effective means of rational allocation of policy resources, and also the only way to promote scientific and democratic decision-making. This paper will take “APEC Blue” as a case, research more in depth the operation process of the campaign-style governance, in order to make a profound analysis of the public policy process of the governance model.

3.1.1. Goal Setting Phase

Since 2013, “haze” become China’s annual buzzword. Beijing is considered one of the most seriously polluted cities. Hence, in order to ensure the smooth convening of the APEC meeting in 2014, coping with haze pollution and improving air quality has become apriority that needs to be solved by the Chinese government. This campaign-style environmental governance, on one hand is to gather various administrative resources in the short term, to improve the air quality in Beijing, highlighting the concept of China’s green environmental protection, safeguarding China’s international image and international influence. On the other hand, the APEC meeting is held in order to build a future-oriented of Asia-Pacific partnership, global politics, finance, and the media, It is crucial that China draw global attention to China’s strategy and policy direction during the APEC meeting, rather than focusing on China’s air quality. Therefore, the campaign-style governance is the wise choice for China to deal with the environmental governance in this period.

3.1.2. Mobilization Implementation Phase

In order to improve air quality and alleviate the pollution, in the policy implementation stage, China first established the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei and surrounding areas air pollution prevention and control group, formulated the “Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei and the surrounding areas of the 2014 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Conference air quality program” and “APEC meeting air quality assurance program”, the establishment of regional air quality consultation mechanism, urging the implementation of the “Air Pollution Prevention Action Plan” and “Beijing Air Pollution Prevention Ordinance”. The implementation of emergency mitigation measures in Beijing and the surrounding provinces and cities also instigated regional joint prevention and control: Starting from November 3rd, Langfang, Baoding, Shijiazhuang, Xingtai, Handan (in Hebei province) and more first-tier cities, implemented the highest level pollution emergency measures to reduce emissions; From November 6th, they expanded the scope of the emergency cities. Tianjin city, Tangshan, Hengshui, Cangzhou (in Hebei province), and Jinan, Zibo, Dongying, Dezhou, Liaocheng, Binzhou (in Shandong province), implemented the heavy pollution emergency mitigation

measures to the highest level, especially the strict control of the elevated sources, to ensure and reach the emission standard, and as much as possible to take measures to limit production and pollutant emissions.

In addition, the implementation of even and odd-numbered license plates limit line policies and authorized buses sealed up to 70% in Beijing, Hebei, Tianjin and eight other provinces and cities. According to Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) statistics, Motor vehicle is the largest pollution source of PM_{2.5} in Beijing, during the meeting of APEC, the odd-and-even license plate rule has directly led to more than 2 million vehicles suspended. Furthermore, coal burning is one of the main causes of Beijing smog, hence, all the factories throughout the city suspended production during this period, which includes, the upgrade and transformation of the coal boilers, and eliminated the old locomotives, organizations and institutions were also closed etc.

At the same time, Ministry of environmental protection even sent 16 inspection teams to carry out supervision and inspection, and impose severe punishment to those violators or illegal enterprises who broke the policy implemented. It is reported that from November 1 to 7, 2014, only one week after Shijiazhuang City dealt with 29 relevant responsible people, another five business executives and four-incineration personnel were punished to administrative detention. In short, in order to achieve the short-term “APEC Blue”, the whole society from the central to the local, from the government to the individual, have given a great concern and support.

3.1.3. Policy Evaluation Phase

According to the Beijing Municipal Environmental Monitoring Center data, it shows that in November 2014, Beijing’s air quality index (AQI)¹ was significantly reduced compared to October (**Figure 1** and **Figure 2**)², mild-to-moderate pollution days increased significantly, especially during the period from 7 to 11 November, the air quality index stabilized, with excellent rate as high as 80% (**Figure 3**).

According to the December 17th, 2014, issue by the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), APEC air quality assurance measures results show that during the APEC meeting in Beijing, the major air pollutant emissions were really reduced compared to before, sulfur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), particulate matter (PM₁₀) and fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and other emission reduction ratio reached 39.2% and 49.6%, 66.6% and 61.6% and 33.6%, average cut of around 50%. Compared with the not taking measures, taking measures to reduce the

¹Air Quality Index (AQI) is a dimensionless index to quantitatively describe the air quality status. The main pollutants involved in air quality assessment are classified into six categories: fine particulate matter, respirable particulate matter, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, ozone and carbon monoxide. According to the “ambient air quality index (AQI) technical regulations (Trial)”, the air pollution index is divided into excellent (0 - 50), good (51 - 100), light pollution (101 - 150), moderate pollution (151 - 200), moderate pollution (201 - 300) and serious pollution (more than 300), corresponding to six levels of air quality index, the greater the index, the higher the level, indicating the more serious pollution, the more obvious impact on human health.

²The data source come from Beijing Municipal Environmental Monitoring Center.

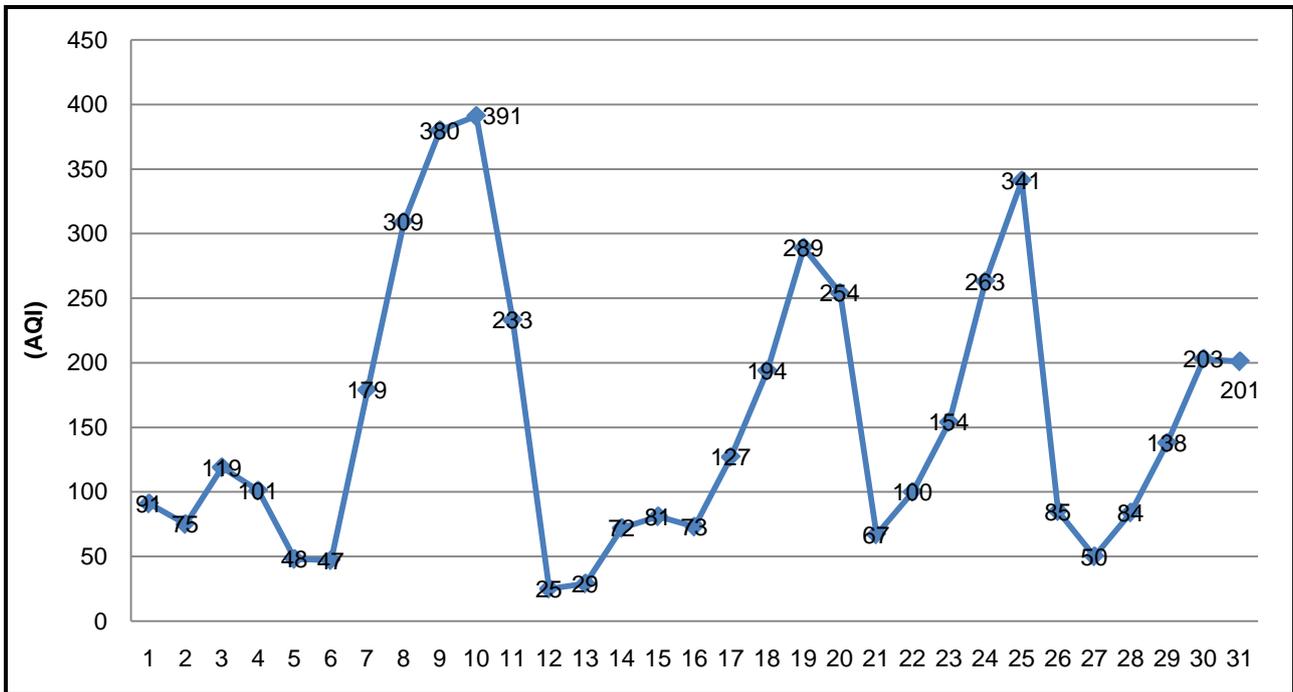


Figure 1. The trend of air quality index in Beijing in October 2014.

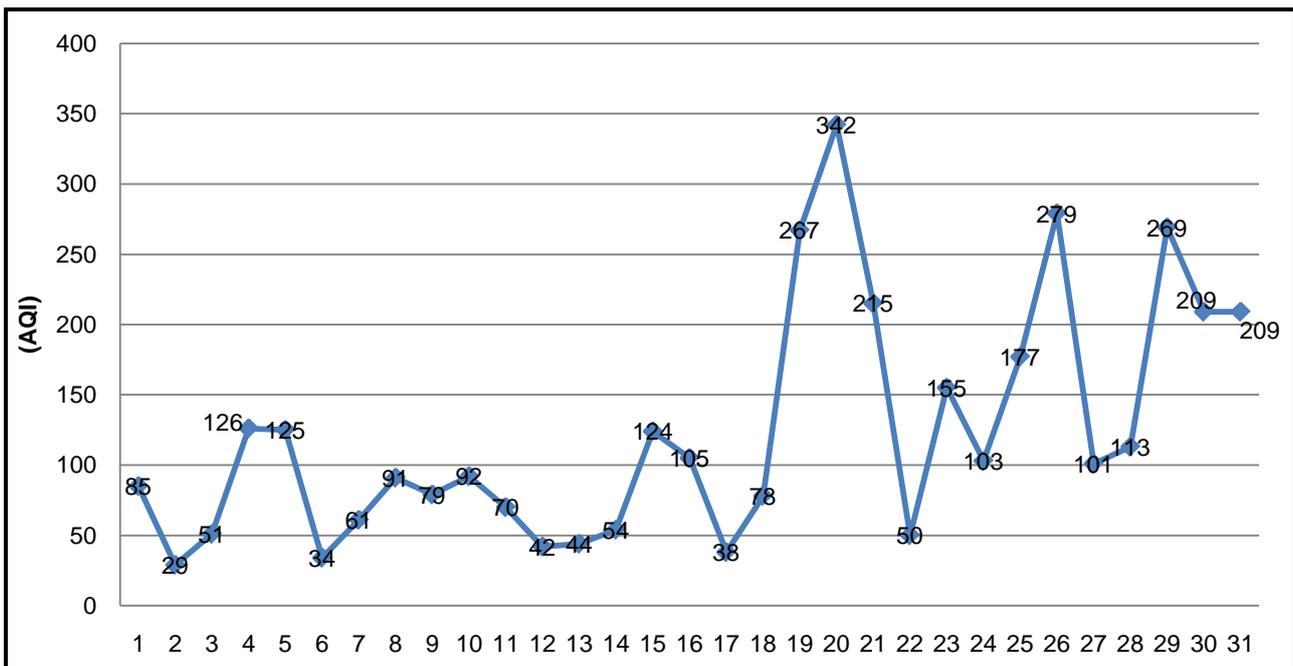


Figure 2. The trend of air quality index in Beijing in November 2014.

average concentration of PM_{2.5} in Beijing city during the meeting was more than 30%, and this further shows that the model of governance was significant. The “APEC Blue” phenomenon during the APEC meeting is the result of the typical Chinese campaign-style governance. In a short term, it quickly achieved an immediate effect, improving the Beijing air quality and giving China’s national system full play advantage to concentrate resources in order to accomplish

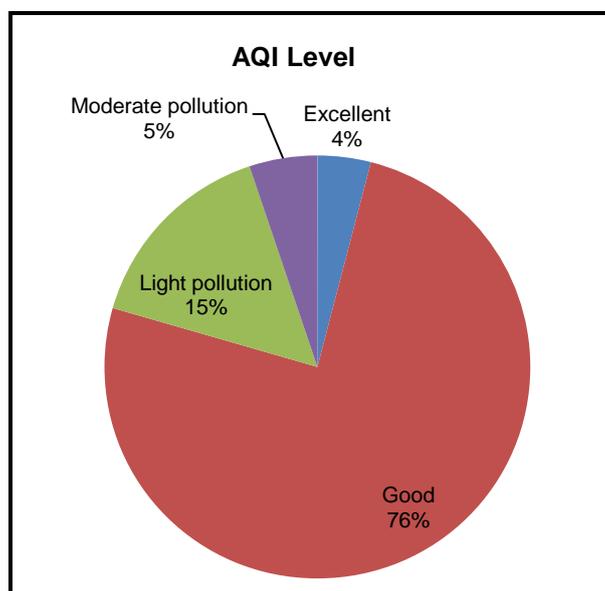


Figure 3. Beijing AQI level ratio from November 7 to 11, 2014.

large undertakings, providing valuable experience for the future development of Chinese environmental pollution control work.

3.2. The Analysis of the Policy Experimentation

During the APEC meeting in Beijing, the emergence of “APEC Blue” means that the Chinese campaign-style governance model can be regarded as successful, which fully reflects to the characteristics of Chinese style policy experimentation. In China, it is the creation of the Communist Party of China to use the policy experimentation as a tool for public decision-making [17]. “APEC Blue” as a successful policy experimentation, which reflects the characteristics of the party and the government policy experimentations overall. During the early stage of the APEC meeting, the party and the government formulated the “APEC Meeting Air Quality Assurance Program” and the regional air quality reaching standards plan, and to ensure legitimacy and authority of the policy implementation in the form of laws and documentations. Simultaneously, it will also be the characteristics of the pilot-promotion of Chinese style policy experimentation for the basis that are incisively and vividly reflected. The Beijing APEC environmental governance is a continuation of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games governance model, for example, odd-and-even license plate rule and the development of public transport etc., are carried forward from the “Olympic Blue” environmental legacy. In order to greet the arrival of the 2022 Winter Olympics, China will also continue to promote the “reduce coal, car control, sewage treatment, dust suppression” pollution control concept. As Nassim Nicholas Taleb says, a country’s ability to innovate is not vary due to different systems, but it depends on the country to “maximize repeated experiments” that provide opportunities [18].

However, APEC Blue also fully demonstrates the shortcomings of Chinese

campaign-style governance. It pursues the short-term effect one-sidedly, relying on iron hand to enforce enforcement and only achieving short-term goals, but in fact by converting the external pressure into internal power, then only we could guarantee the long-term operation of environmental governance. China's environmental pollution control needs to be normalized and institutionalized, only by giving full play to the government, the public and others' initiatives, by relying on the system and rules, normalizing the environmental supervision and law enforcement, in order to realizing the sustainable environmental governance in China. However, the actual policy resources are limited, is not sufficient to ensure the complete realization of any policy objectives. How to make a brief "APEC Blue" really becomes a permanent "Beijing Blue", perhaps the campaign-style governance model provides an effective way for us to explore effective governance.

4. Cause Analysis of Chinese Campaign-Style Governance

All along, the choice of policy instruments is often influenced by many factors, such as the nature of the policy issues, the status of the policy environment, the reaction of policy objects, and the preferences of decision makers [14]. Beijing "APEC Blue", the success of this policy experimentation, let us see the value of campaign-style governance. As a matter of fact, as a policy tool, the campaign-style governance is indeed "palliatives" and has long been criticized, but in China, it is favored by the government because of the high efficiency. Therefore, it is extremely important to explore the reasons for the repeated emergence of campaign-style governance in China.

4.1. Bureaucratic Difficulties and Path Dependence

At present, there are two kinds of governance mechanisms in China, namely, hierarchical bureaucracy and campaign-style governance mechanism. As the basic form of the modern government, bureaucracy has a strict hierarchical system, clear rules and regulations, specialized division of responsibilities and standardized operational procedures. In the modern state governance system, the bureaucracy maintains the authority of the government and the will of the state through the top-down institutional arrangement. However, bureaucracy is not a panacea, it exists bureaucratic inertia, rigidstereo types, routine work and other defects. Campaign-style governance, as an effective complementary tool and corrective mechanism, is an effective alternative.

After the founding of PRC, China has begun to develop in the direction of legalization and normalization, however the long-term of revolutionary practice and planned economy experience, made the party, in a subconscious mind retained the model of governance in the form of superstition and worship [19]. Moreover, the long-term implementation of the highly centralized system has led to weak civil decision-making power. Social governance mainly relays on bureaucratic hierarchy [20], people have been accustomed to participating in political activities by political mobilization. In addition, due to the complexity of

public problems and social conflict becoming increasingly prominent, when the government is trying to find a solution to the problem, they always unconsciously rely on this type of campaign-style governance model, over time, evolution became a habitual means and model of governance. A large number of facts show that, during unusual times, such as the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games and the 2014 APEC meeting in Beijing, campaign-style governance with the characteristics of “fast-track approach”, quickly achieved good results.

4.2. Omnipotent Government Thinking

Universal government thinking is the product of the planned economy, and also the all-around government usual thinking, it advocates that the government ought to do everything. Although we often believe that the government owns all the power and abilities to achieve social governance, it is just an important participant in solving social governance issues. In most circumstances, the existence of government is not a necessary and sufficient condition for governance. Institutional environment, bureaucratic system, authoritarian corruption and other factors are sufficient to hinder the government to solve the problem of governance. The reason why the all-around government is able to carry out the implementation, mainly rely on government authority and administrative instructions. The government relies on the authority granted by the law, and through the mandatory executive order in the short term to exercise the policy from top to bottom. The campaign-style governance, in nature, rely on the political authority to launch it, it quickly mobilize all human, material and financial resources in the short term, in order to achieve the objectives set by the government. During the APEC meeting in Beijing, the government in order to achieve the Beijing, Tianjin, Hebei and surrounding provinces synchronized industrial limit and production shutdown, take the national compelling force as a guarantee, announced the official government red-head documents, in order to obtain a decree of the legitimacy.

4.3. Diversified Demand and Limited Policy Tools

So far, the campaign-style governance is the most dependent way in the process of governing the country by the Chinese government, the limitation of social resources is an important reason for the government to adopt the campaign-style governance. The total amount of social resources determines the choice of policy tools, social development is dominated by the objective laws, and controlled by history, politics, economy, culture, geography, psychology and many other conditions [21]. Since the reform, with the continuous development of China's economy and growing foreign relations, public social problems in China is becoming more and more complex and diversified, this requires the government to take effective measures to solve these problems and conflicts, but at a certain period of time, the social resources are always limited. Moreover, china is affected by the management system of fragmentation pattern in a long time, which further exacerbated the urgency of the resources available to various government

departments. Thus, in order to effectively balance the various conflicts of interest, the government had to take campaign-style governance centralized rectification, and this can achieve good governance in the short term. Take environment management as an example, when formulating the policy to eliminate pollution, the government is unable to fully achieved its goal because this involves adjustment to the economic development strategy and industrial structure design, technology updates, such as a series of policy formulation and implementation [14]. In this case, for the government to obtain short-term results, they can only rely on the campaign-style model of governance and focus on remediation.

4.4. Cross-Sectoral Cooperation and Internal Assessment Mechanism

Under the current administrative system, the effective cooperation between various government departments need to exercise campaign-style governance. For a long time, affected by the bureaucratic system, the Chinese government departments stand in great numbers, the overlapping authority and conflicting policies from different departments, passing each other, which weakened the government's ability to govern and manage image. Intergovernmental cooperation requires the exchange of information and the sharing of resources. Campaign-style governance can make the departments in the short term for a special policy to achieve short-term cooperation. For example, in the aspect of environmental pollution control, the government needs to cooperate with Ministry of Environmental Protection, Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Housing, and other departments. According to various resources and functions, they achieve maximum benefits in the form of cooperative game. During the 2014 APEC meeting in Beijing, the Chinese government, in the interest to improve the air quality, On one hand, General Office of the State Council, National Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Environmental Protection, Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, National Energy Administration and other departments carried out joint operations. On the other hand, to implement the Beijing and surrounding cities regional joint prevention and control, and eventually "APEC Blue" phenomenon resulting from the hard work working together between all regions and departments.

Besides, the government internal assessment mechanism is an important factor for the government to implement the campaign-style governance. The government is the representative of public interest; it has the responsibility to provide the public with qualified public goods and public services. In China, the Communist Party is the leadership core for the development of the socialist economy, government occupies the dominant position in the economic development, and economic construction and economic effectiveness is related to the government officials' performance. In addition to enhancing performance and maintaining public interest, government official also need to act as an "economic man" to pursue their own interests. Campaign-style governance is such a kind of governance model that can not only meet the interests of government officials,

but also in a certain period of time to reflect the government's "image project" [22]. It can make the government focus on a large number of social resources in the short term, to achieve a certain amount of governance effect, and realize the maximum promotion of government officials. Moreover, campaign-style governance focus on social mobilization and propaganda, it can quickly gain public supports and achieve good publicity effect. Thus, as an effective policy tool, the government and officials favor campaign-style governance.

5. Conclusions

Campaign-style governance is a kind of typical model of governance with Chinese characteristics. When faced with major social problems, the Chinese government has started to rely on the instrument of policy. Campaign-style governance with high costs, recurrent and occasional strong features, but this does not affect its play an active role in governing the country. Prior to the APEC meeting in Beijing, some experts predicted, that Beijing's smog will ease from at least 20 - 30 years, but the APEC meeting in a period of more than 10 days would solve this problem. Turning out the campaign-style governance indeed has the advantage of targeted, effective governance. Although it cannot provide us with a universal standard mechanism, it offers China a governance system that is compatible with social economic development and national institution building. Campaign-style governance model is criticized to possess deficiencies rather than making full use of its advantages in campaign. Beijing "APEC Blue" is the continuation of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games governance model. Since the emergence of 2008 "Olympic Blue" and 2014 "APEC Blue", China has no reason to worry about how the upcoming Winter Olympic Games not being able to write a miracle of "Winter Blues"?

Of course, as an effective tool for policy experimentation, Campaign-style governance for effective governance provides additional insights and possibilities. However, facing the reality of China's transition requirements, we need to rethink the transformation of Chinese governance model. At present, the Chinese scholars have discussed the transition path of campaign-style governance from the macro, meso and micro perspective. Some people think that the government public management should shift from motion paradigm to normalization paradigm [23], some people consider that government governance should change from campaign-style governance to multi-center collaborative governance [24], and other people think that achieving changes from campaign-style governance to sustainable governance will be the transition path and direction of change of public governance in China [25]. Although there is a debate between the "paradigm theory" and "policy instrumentalist" [26], it is not difficult to see that the normalized governance is the future trend of campaign-style governance, namely, to realize the institutionalization and standardization of public governance. In the future, we should depend on the system and rules to achieve normalization of Chinese governance model, getting rid of the path-dependent of Chinese campaign-style governance and achieving sustainability of public governance.

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