Where Will the Stall Economy Go after Policy Loosening?

-- The Study of Policy Implementation Dilemma based on Stall Economy in Hangzhou City

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Abstract

The policy of loosening local economy is a new measure and a new plan put forward by the central government to alleviate the unemployment of low-income people and the economic development setback after the strike of COVID 19. Based on 150 valid questionnaires acquired from instigation, case interviews with vendors from different night market, company, sub-district office and government officials in Hangzhou city, adopts the theory of actor network to analyze the policy implementation. Express the respective attitudes and different demands of vendors, management office, government and residents on the street-stall loosening policy, showing the decision-making and implementation problems in the process of unbinding implementation of the rectification policy, and revealing the specific mirroring in the formulation and implementation of the Hangzhou urban governance policy and the deep logic behind it.

Keywords

Street-stall economy; Implementation dilemma; Actor-network.

1. Background & Introduction

At the beginning of 2020, the unexpected epidemic has broken the normal operation of the whole country. In order to control the epidemic, the central government and all the provinces made an expeditious response quickly and adopted strict and resolute epidemic prevention policy. Although in terms of epidemic prevention and control, China has made a satisfactory performance, the epidemic has brought unprecedented impact on China’s domestic economic development. Demand-side indicators slowed down, production and operation arrangement of enterprises was affected, the unemployment rate from national urban survey was 5.9% [1]. The economy was in a state of shutdown.

As the political, economic, cultural, scientific and educational center of Zhejiang Province, Hangzhou has also fallen into this situation. With the implement of epidemic prevention policy in Hangzhou, its economic development will be inevitably affected. It can be seen from Figure 1 that, the main indicators of Hangzhou's national economy are all negative except for the positive growth in the actual utilization of foreign capital. In this context, the Hangzhou government has issued a policy requiring the steady return of unemployment insurance by 2020. It has also required to help companies weather the hard times and maintain the overall stability of the employment situation [2].
2. “Street-stall Economy”: From Concept to Practice

2.1. Tone Setting from Central Government

On March 18, 2020, the General Office of the State Council issued the "Implementation Opinions on Responding to the Impact of the COVID-19 Epidemic and Strengthening Measures to Stabilize Employment". The opinions pointed out that flexible employment should be supported through multiple channels, the management mode of vendors without fixed business sites should be set up reasonably, and business outlets such as booths should be reserved. And the development of "small shop economy", pedestrian street economy should be taken as important standards for all kinds of urban excellence evaluation projects [4]. On May 22, 2020, at the opening of the third session of the 13th National People's Congress, Premier Li Keqiang delivered the Government Work Report, proposing to "Reasonably set up Itinerant vendors' business premises" [5]. During the two sessions, National People's Congress deputy Yang Baoling put forward a proposal to give "street-stall economy" and practitioners legal status, and suit measures to local conditions to release maximum vitality. On May 27, the Central Civilization Office announced that, in order to restore economic and social order, and meet the needs of people's lives, this year's "civilized cities" evaluation indicators will not include street-occupying operations, street markets and itinerant vendors as assessment content. On the same day, the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development issued the "Notice of the Urban Management and Supervision Bureau of the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development on Forwarding the "Five Permits and One Persistence in Urban Management of Chengdu", commending Chengdu’s implementation of the Five Permits and One Persistence. Measures, and inviting all regions to learn from and promote relevant work in light of local realities [6]. On May 28, when Premier Li responded to a reporter's question, he praised a western city's attempt to develop a "street-stall economy". Subsequently, the Premier visited Shandong on June 1, 2020, and once again emphasized that the street-stall economy and the small shop economy are important sources of employment, and the vitality of China. At this point, the "street-stall economy" became the top hot word of the bully network for a time.
2.2. The Regression Trend of Hangzhou's "Street-stall Economy"

Hangzhou’s "street-stall culture" has been recorded since the Southern Song Dynasty. Nowadays, Hangzhou, as the birthplace of Alibaba and the e-commerce capital of China, has a very dynamic development of private economy and information economy, such urban genes provide fertile soil for the booming of Hangzhou's street-stall economy.

Even though Hangzhou has the urban genes that are conducive to the development of "street-stall economy", as well as an open, inclusive and intelligent leadership team, Hangzhou's attitude towards "street-stall economy" is still dominated by suppression. For example, in February 2018, Hangzhou Urban Management Bureau issued the "Work Plan for Urban Management Service Guarantee during the Spring Festival in 2018", which requires strict control of illegal activities in urban areas, such as unlicensed breakfast stalls, mobile fruit stalls, barbecue stalls, unlicensed night food stalls, and illegal parking and selling of motor vehicles [7]. In September 2018, Hangzhou Urban Management Bureau announced that it will actively do a good job in guaranteeing services for major events, and carry out orderly control on key intersections, unlicensed itinerant vendors, etc. It is true that the purpose of governance and control is often out of considerations such as ensuring food safety and maintaining the image of the city, but it is objectively detrimental to the development of the "street-stall economy".

After the loosening of the policy, all over the country's stalls have opened up. On June 3, 2020, Yuan Jiajun, governor of Zhejiang Province, investigated small and micro enterprises, individual industrial and commercial households to understand their survival and development difficulties during the epidemic, and then held a related symposium. He further emphasized that all departments should take more vigorous and more concrete measures to optimize the environment, develop the street-stall economy in an orderly manner, and promote the upgrading of small and micro businesses, individual industrial and commercial households to enhance their vitality [8].

Table 1. Comparison of Hangzhou's relevant policy documents before and after the loosening of the "street-stall economy"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before the loosening of the &quot;street-stall economy&quot;</th>
<th>After the loosening of the &quot;street-stall economy&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy documents</td>
<td>Key words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;2019 International (Hangzhou) Yixing Conference Urban Management Service Guarantee Plan&quot;</td>
<td>Control rigorously</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Notice on Doing a Good Job in &quot;May 1st&quot; City Management Service Guarantee Work&quot;</td>
<td>Persuade, stop and investigate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Under the guidance of the central government and the Zhejiang provincial government, Hangzhou has accelerated the pace of actively promoting the development of "street-stall economy" based on its own reality. Several rounds of symposiums have been held by relevant departments to discuss the regression strategy of Hangzhou's street-stall economy. Although no official policy documents have been announced yet, Hangzhou has launched the "Opinions on Implementation of Hangzhou City's Promotion of Night Economy Development (Draft for Soliciting Opinions)" on July 14, 2020, the time for soliciting opinions is from 14th to 22nd. The "Opinions" pointed out that through six "night measures", the city will form a "10+X" nighttime economic space layout, arrange more than 100 night economic theme activities throughout the year. It can be seen that Hangzhou's policies and measures to promote the development of the "street-stall economy" are being implemented. From the survey, we can know that about 60% people think the street-stall economy will make the city more lively, 10% people figure that the street-stall economy will increase the income of vendors. From table 1, we can know that compared with the attitude of "cracking down" and "banning" the street-stall economy in the past, the attitude of "encouraging" embodied in the relevant documents issued by Hangzhou is remarkable. In conclusion, the development of the street-stall economy has ushered in favorable policies, but in practice, it will inevitably encounter many problems.

3. Research Method and Results

Our research choose four night markets, including Wushan night market, Wulin, night market Jianqiao night market and Hushang night market as the research locations. The choice of these places has been carefully considered: firstly, the Wushan night market has many years of history and has the historical and cultural characteristics of Hangzhou. It has become an indispensable part of the life of Hangzhou people, for this reason they know this night market very well, which is convenient for us to investigate. Besides that, Jianqiao night market is famous for selling snacks and cooking food, while Wulin night market is famous for being close to scenic spots. The Jianqiao night market and Wulin night market are two of the best business night markets in Hangzhou, with many people come to patronize. It is conducive to us distributing questionnaires and conducting interviews. Hushang Night Market is next to the West Lake. It is a night market that has emerged in recent years and is very popular among young people. These four night market are located in different areas of Hangzhou, each has its own characteristics, and all have research value.

Furthermore, in order to investigate the situation of the implementation of the street-stall economic policy in Hangzhou, find the difficulties in the implementation of the policy, we interviewed some agencies (including the officials from Hangzhou urban management and law enforcement, the environmental protection agency, Market supervision Bureau and other agencies have supervisory responsibilities for night markets) to understand how different behavioral entities evaluate this project, and ask for suggestions of dealing with the night stall mess. Due to the direct management of the night markets is the company, sub-district office or managed by them together, we interview them as well. What's more, we also interviews with 10 consumers, 16 low-income vendors, 4 security guard and 6 night market office managers to have in-depth understanding of their roles in this project and explore the problems, both explicit and implicit. After we get the basic information about the interests of each subject and their conflicts and difficulties, our research distributed questionnaires to residents in Hangzhou urban communities who have participated in street-stall economy or has brought products from night market. The questionnaires were distributed online and offline, and received 150 valid questionnaires. The questions aims to learn their attitudes to the street-stall economy,
some details about their shopping consideration of products from night market and their suggestions. The survey shows that most people enjoy the benefit brought by street-stall economy. From the data, we can know that 96.67% people have the shopping habit of going to street stalls, 71.33% people prefer the convenience of street-stall economy and 66.67% like the cheap products, 58% people think it is reasonable and necessary to loosen policy under the epidemic situation, which can effectively promote economic recovery, 30.67% people believe that street-stall economy is indispensable recipe for life which rekindle the city's pyrotechnics. However, people are also worried about the subsequent problems of the stall economy. More than 50% people think street-stall economy will bring quality and after-sales issues, food hygiene and safety issues and management issues. And 72.67% people think the imperfect management system is the reasons for the above-mentioned problems in the street-stall economy, whereas, 64% consider the lack of reasonable planning and 37.33% take for the not obeying the market order as the reason.

4. The Realistic Dilemma of the street-stall economy Development in Hangzhou

4.1. The Vendor Was Puzzled, While the City Inspectors Were Too Tired

The return of the street-stall economy has brought new hope to the unemployed, while it has also brought new challenges to the urban comprehensive law enforcement management. Integrating dozens of functions including urban sanitation construction, landscaping, road traffic and so on, the Urban Comprehensive Law Enforcement Administration is playing a vital role in the campaign of "Building a Civilized City" in Hangzhou in 2020. However, due to heavy workload, one city inspector usually manages dozens of functions including urban sanitation construction, landscaping, road traffic and construction sites.

In order to meet the relevant standards of the "civilized city", it is necessary to strictly control and straighten out illegal stalls set up around city streets. However, at present, the street-stall economy is booming, and a large number of ordinary, laid-off and unemployed people have poured into this industry. Before the loosening of the policy, mobile vendors had always been seeking for the regularity of city inspectors’ inspection, when the inspectors finished the regular checks, they would reset their stall again. But now, with the popularity of "street-stall economy", everyone is talking about that without any hesitation. To make matters worse, the vast majority of them do not accurately understand the connotation of the "policy loosening", and partially understand "deregulation" as "laissez-faire". They even legalize their "occupation of roads" and "random stalls" on the grounds of "the words of the prime minister" and refuse to accept the dissuasion and management of the city inspectors. Under such circumstances, the work of the city inspectors has encountered unprecedented difficulties. In the face of the work pressure and vendors' retaliation, the city inspectors are also very distressed, and can only try their best to patiently explain the true meaning of "policy loosening" to the vendors and instruct them to set up stalls legally at the markets opened by the Hangzhou Municipal Government.

4.2. Stalls Are Hard to Find and Rents Are Rising

Hangzhou has seen a boom in street-stall economy, with many college students and white-collar workers who want to benefit from its recovering boom moving into the stalls quickly. The street-stall economy not only provides the possibility of earning a living for low-income earners, but also the possibility of part-time jobs for other people. As a result, the number of people setting up stalls in the night market has gradually increased.

In order to prevent negative effects such as traffic obstruction, environmental pollution, Hangzhou Municipal Government has set up designated markets for vendors to operate legally. Among them, Wulin Night Market, Jianqiao Night Market, Wushan Night Market and Hushang
Market are extremely popular due to their close proximity to the business district and the complete facilities.

However, the number of markets mandated by the government and the number of stalls that can be accommodated by each market are both limited. The demand for stalls has soared, and the supply falls short of demand, so rents have naturally risen. Take Wushan Night Market as an example, a total of 467 stalls were rented out before the influx of new vendors. The only way to get a stall is to negotiate with the current stall owners and request a sublet. The transfer information released by the relevant network platform shows that a same four-square-meter booth in Wushan night Market costs 2,400 yuan a month, but the official rent on the Wushan side is only 550 yuan, a five-fold difference in price.

4.3. Consumers, Residents and Stall Owners Jointly Denounce, the Night Market Management Offices Are Helpless

For the staff of the night market management office, they are not only disturbed by new vendors due to the stall rent issues, but also suffer joint condemnation from consumers, residents and stall owners frequently. According to the vendors, customer disputes, subletting, and competition among stall owners are all resolved by themselves or by negotiation between stall owners and customers. Even the figures in the office cannot be seen. Consumers are also worried about whether food safety can be guaranteed. Indeed, according to the feedback from the staff of Hangzhou Market supervision Bureau, the current food safety has been included into the management scope of the market supervision Bureau from the Health Bureau, but its focus is on the sampling inspection of the food in hotels and restaurants, and there is no regular work arrangement for the food in the street stalls. Most night market management offices also don’t strictly control the access of food, often just go through the formalities.

In the face of joint criticism from consumers, residents and stall owners, the staff of the night market management office also expressed grievance. After all, the capacity and power of the night market management office are both limited. It has already fully responsible for the management and inspection of night market hygiene, public security issues. For other aspects of work, the night market management office has no authority to manage or must obey government orders.

4.4. Multiple Management and Communication Difficulties

Another important reason that aggrieved the night market management office is the serious multiple management. Take Hushang Night Market as an example, though Hushang night market belongs to Hubin pedestrian street committee, but its actual operational management is Hangzhou Hubin pedestrian street company, officials of this company said, they are executives and managers. Besides, as Hushang night market nears the West Lake, representing the impression of Hangzhou, the Hangzhou West Lake Scenic Area Management Committee also response for that. As the second phase of Hubin pedestrian street renovation and upgrading is one of the key work this year, the municipal Bureau of Commerce and the Shangcheng District government are responsible units, multiple management is inevitable. Moreover, the daily management of the Hushang market also involves several departments. The data of the smart block integrated management platform currently used in Hubin Pedestrian Street needs to integrate the system of public security, urban management, market supervision and other departments. The block management contains four modules, namely crowd management, regional management, event management and event sand table. It takes a lot of effort to coordinate all these. The relevant entities involved in the management of the night market are shown in Figure 2.
4.5. **Unreliable Backer: Lack of Relevant Laws**

At present, there is still no legislative guarantee for the street-stall economy, and that the legislation is scattered and too general. Many aspects of street stall operations are not regulated, and as a result, the rights and interests of consumers are not protected. Indeed, it is not only the lack of relevant laws and regulations on street stalls in Hangzhou, but also the absence of specific laws and regulations in China. At present, the health, supervision, admittance qualifications and other issues of the street-stall economy are scattered in the "Protection of Consumer Rights and Interests", "Tort Liability Law" and other laws. The legal basis of management is implemented in accordance with the "Regulations on Individual Industrial and Commercial Households", "Measures for the Registration of Individual Industrial and Commercial Households", "Regulations on the Management of urban appearance and Environmental Sanitation" and other laws. Besides, China’s current health legislation is limited to the distribution of responsibility, it has not stipulated the punishment measure, the supervision main body. And market supervision department only supervise restaurants, hotels’ food safety, but there is no regulation involved with stalls. Furthermore, the companies which charge in street-stall also should take their responsibilities.

In the past, when the street-stall economy was restricted, it was mainly managed by the urban management department, not within the scope of the market supervision department. But with the return of the street-stall economy, many hidden trouble and conflict problems involving the market regulators trigger out, but there is no law or policy to follow.

4.6. **Policy Ambiguity**

In order to facilitate the development of the street-stall economy, the Hangzhou Municipal Bureau of Commerce drafted the "Implementation Opinions on Accelerating The Development of Night Economy and Promoting Consumption Growth", but as of mid-July 2020, it is still in the stage of soliciting opinions. Compared with the management measures issued by Chengdu, Nanjing, Qingdao, the ambiguity of Hangzhou’s street-stall economy loosening policy is particularly prominent. For example, the document pointed out that all districts should ensure the policy and capital guarantee for key projects of night economy, and create new models of night-time business with their own characteristics. However, it dose not list the business circle, road section, opening time, management standard and so on in detail.

The policy ambiguity has led to management difficulties. Without clear and detailed policy documents and instructions, the staff of the night market management office dare not take...
meticulous actions optionally, and suffer frequent complaints from vendors, thus falling into
distress.

5. The Analysis of Obstructive Factors to the Implementation Dilemma of the Street-Stall Economic Loose Policy--based on the Actor-Network-Theory

5.1. Theoretical Basis
The Actor-Network-Theory, which provides a systematic perspective and has already been widely used in sociology, computer science, management and other fields [9], was put forward by French sociologists Bruno Latour and Michel Callon in the mid-1980s. Actor-Network-Theory includes three core concepts: actor, network and translation. Actors who represent different interest orientations and behaviors begin to communicate and flow through "translation" (The actors change with the network elements so as to carry out the coordination and substitution of interests), and realize interest coordination through a series of consultations and games, so as to reach the target consensus [10].

With the deepening of theoretical research, Chinese scholars have gradually formed a new academic perspective -- actor translation error, and explored the formation of the "policy dilemma" based on this analytical framework [11]. In the perfect translation, the actors in the network can achieve the intended target of the policy through "obligatory passage point" (a critical balance that satisfies the common interests of multiple actors) and achieve the perfect policy results. However, in reality, actors are frequently affected by various "obstructive factors" within, outside and among actors in the process of policy implementation, which makes it impossible to reach the "obligatory passage point" of perfect translation. As a result, the network structure disintegrates, and finally falls into the "policy dilemma" of "translation error".

\[ \text{Figure 3. An analytical framework of "Actor Translation Error"} \]

5.2. Internal factors of actors
Factor 1: Policy ambiguity. The refined and scientific level of policy text formulation determines the ultimate effects of policy implementation to a certain extent. However, from the perspective of reality, ambiguity has become an essential attribute of policy text formulation. In the early stages of promulgation, many policies only proposed new visions and missions [12], lack
specific planning and division of powers and responsibilities. The street-stall economic loose policy issued by the central government and the Hangzhou municipal government only highlight the development direction and value mission, continuing the expression style of most ambiguous policies. For example, the implementation opinions issued by Hangzhou municipal government did not specify the work tasks, specific objectives, management plans and evaluation standards of relevant departments in the process of the development of the street-stall economy, which led to the lack of responsibility and inadequate planning, and thus fell into the policy implementation dilemma.

Factor 2: Cognitive bias. From the perspective of the target groups of policy implementation, whether a policy can achieve the expected goal depends to a large extent on the understanding degree of the target group. The less the target group's understanding deviation of the policy text, the lower risk of policy implementation, and the greater possibility of achieving the expected goal; Otherwise, the easier it is to fall into the implementation dilemma. As the target group of the street-stall economic loose policy, the unemployed people under the influence of the epidemic, present the following characteristics under the control of "cognitive bias": simply and partially understand "deregu lation" as "laissez-faire". On the one hand, the cause of cognitive bias lies in the insufficient publicity; On the other hand, it lies in the attitude and cognitive defects of target groups. Eventually, it will seriously hurt the perfect translation.

Factor 3: overlapping management. The effective implementation of the policy is the most crucial part to ensure the achievement of the expected goal of the policy. The implementation of any public policy inevitably requires effective coordination and cooperation among all levels and departments of the government. However, in most cases, the supposed "CO-OP status" among various levels and departments has evolved into a "decentralized multi-position management mode", resulting in various problems such as target deviation, low efficiency and subject conflict. Through this case, the daily management of the street stall is directly in charge of the corresponding management office, which also involves multiple departments such as the Urban Comprehensive Administrative Law Enforcement Bureau, the Market Supervision Bureau, the Health Bureau, the Industry and Commerce Bureau, the Environmental Protection Bureau and so on, which has resulted in a situation where divided policies from various sources and fragmented on the regional basis.

5.3. Related Factors Among Actors

Factor 1: Interest game. The formulation and implementation of any public policy is bound to hurt some people's interests while satisfying the others. Therefore, in order to protect their own interests, multiple stakeholders related to the policy will take various actions to the interests game during the implementation of the policy span [13]. Through this case, there are four kinds of stakeholders related to the street-stall economic relaxed policy: one is the government as a representation of the management actors, such as urban management, market supervision bureau, they always regard the policy text, implementation and public interests as the most important and priority issues; Another representation of management actors is the street-stall management office (including its affiliated company or sub-district office), whose appeal is to maximize their own interests while completing the matters stipulated by the government. The third one is the business entity represented by the vendors, whose appeal is to realize the maximization of its own interests and try to obtain the maximum benefits with the minimum cost input; Fourth, consumers, represented by residents and consumers, focus on their own living costs and quality, and are unwilling to face the risk of damage to their interests caused by quality, health, environment and other issues.

Factor 2: Communication barriers: Communication runs through the whole process of policy implementation. Effective communication is the first requirements for strengthening coordination and cooperation among various actors. The smoother the communication, the
better coordination and cooperation, and the more trust among each other, the smoother the policy implementation. First, communication barriers between various levels and departments within the government lead to buck-passing and difficulties in coordination. Secondly, in the process of policy implementation, the multiple management of the street-stall market by relevant departments contributes to communication barriers, resulting in different rules and requirements for each street-stall. Thirdly, poor communication among relevant departments, consumers and vendors leads to mutual trust crisis and endangers the stability of actor network.

**Figure 4.** Interest demands of different actors

### 5.4. External Factors of Actors

**Factor 1:** The lack of relevant laws. Economic activities and policy implementation need to be orderly regulated by laws, and the rights and responsibilities of actors also need to be clearly regulated by laws. The more perfect and scientific the relevant laws are, the more action guarantee can be provided for each actors in policy implementation. Strengthen the trust mechanisms of actors’ networks by punishing bad behavior and protecting the interests of actors. As far as the reality is concerned, the legal system of local street-stall economy is lagging behind, with the characteristics of decentralized legislation, lacking a set of systematic and sound specialized laws to regulate the three legal issues, including the management process of government departments, the operation process of local vendors and the consumption process of consumers.

**Factor 2:** The market defects. The disadvantage of market is pursuing profits blindly, which damages the interests of stallholders. With the recovery of "street stall economy", there are more and more people wanting to become the vendors. The serious supply-demand imbalance caused the street-stall rental getting fifth or sixth higher than ever before. The original intentions of street-stall economy relaxed policy is providing a chance for the low-income people who lost their jobs to make a living, but it has become a best marketing and hype chance for some profit-seeking people, which results in the policy implementation effects seriously violating the original intention of policy making.
Figure 5. Obstructive factors to the implementation of the street-stall economic loose policy

6. Policy Recommendations

6.1. Increase the Level of Detail and Rationality in Policy Development

To be rational is a prerequisite for policies to gain widespread support, and to be detailed is a necessary means of avoiding implementation deviation. First, policies must be realistic, accurate and specific, they should indicate the original intent of policy making and clarify the normative objectives and assessment criteria; they should be problem-oriented and be precise in policy implementation; and “means of administration, people in charge, and methods of support” should be plainly stated. Second, policy makers must fully consider the continuity of policies, and develop rational and detailed policies to help the translation of policy texts into realization.

However, several obvious mistakes are observable in China’s policy-making process at present: firstly, policies are too "general" and deficient in details, making it difficult for lower-ranked policy-makers to understand the original intent of policies received from higher leveled government, they therefore have to “improvise” policies when needed. Second, there is a lack of policy continuity, leading to contradictories and ultimately the decline in government authority and credibility. Third, the assessment mechanism of policy implementation is overly detailed. In the process of implementation, operating departments tend to focus mechanically on reaching the assessment goals, rendering impossible an effective and flexible implementation based a thorough understanding of the original intent of policy. This finally will lead to deviations and deadlock in implementation.

6.2. Establish Conduits for Expression

Policy makers should establish a conduit for expressing and collecting feedback, to increase people's participation in policy development and implementation. On the one hand, this can help reduce policy executors’ stress; on the other hand, this can help improve policy implementation based on people’s feedback, thus resolving the contradictory interests of multiple subjects, reaching the Obligatory Passage Point, and completing a perfect implementation. Some suggestions are: first, to extend the time span of public announcement and feedback collection and scope of announcement of policy. At present, some government departments in China only publicize policy and collect feedback on their official websites or even on display boards, making public assessment of policy to a certain extent a showcase, because people have no time or way to participate. Second, to increase the organization of
publicity before and after decision making. Through television, newspapers, Internet, WeChat official accounts, and other conduits, we can publicize the intent, content, and consequences of relevant policies to the people in straightforward and simple language, and improve people’s understanding of policy texts as well as relevant departments. Third, to increase conduits for participation and communication. For instance on-line and on-site meetings, live chat service on official websites, comments on official blogs, hot lines and on-site communication, are all helpful methods to supervise responsible departments and timely improve their methodology.

6.3. Optimize Coordination and Communication, and Enhance Supervision and Implementation

It will be helpful to establish a promotion team to manage “street vendor economy” and its promotion. Members of the team will be selected from local Urban Administrative and Law Enforcement Bureau, Administration for Market Regulation, and other units managing the “street vendor economy.” The team will be responsible for the development and implementation of policies and administrative regulations related to the “street vendor economy,” as well as for the daily work of promotion, supervision, and assessment of “street vendor economy.” First, it is essential to develop rules for market access for street vendors, and methods to supervise food quality and safety. Responsibilities should be strictly allocated to relevant work units, such as the night market administrative office, sub-district offices, to clarify each individual’s responsibility. It is also necessary to establish files for vendors, in order to regulate those who seriously violate rules; Second, the assessment mechanism should be optimized. Take the actual hygiene condition, product quality, customer satisfaction of each stall, etc. as criteria to generally evaluate and rate vendors of each district and/or county. Regular assessment should be done to supervise relevant work units, and business knowledge training should be provided on a timely basis to vendors and administrative units alike to promote the professionalization of the “street vendors economy.” Third, regulatory approaches should be enhanced. The aforementioned promotion team is to carry out supervision work, to comprehensively enhance the implementation of all the provisions of the “street vendor economy.” Whenever an inertia or a mistake in implementation is noticed, and the mentioned inertia/mistake is not corrected on time, according to the contract and assessment methods, penalties should be imposed until a proper rectification is completed. Fifth, special areas for snacks, clothing, daily supplies and other specific goods should be reasonably divided. Different amounts of administrative charge should be collected according to the location of the stall, the flow of people and other factors. The scope of variation of charge should be strictly controlled by the promotion team, to prevent any kind of speculative and illegal investment.

6.4. Improvement of Legislative Methods

Through improved legislative methods can protect the legitimate rights and interests of citizens, juridical persons and other organizations, and can supervise subjects of administration to prevent the violation and abuse of administrative power. There are obvious vacancies in the legislative regulation on the “street vendors economy.” China’s legislation needs to enhance the power of imposing food safety at street stalls, and to clarify the rights and responsibilities of the main entities supervising street stalls. The first noticeable problem with legislation is that the duties are unclear: the food companies should have control over the quality of their products, but in practice there are no legal penalties for neglecting such duties, and there is a lack of supervision of the food safety on street stalls. In addition, the Administration for Market Regulation only controls food products from stores, but not from street stalls. Lastly, there are still no laws or regulations on the management of street stalls in China.

Based on the problems mentioned above, three recommendations are proposed here: first, the administrative departments should first well allocate responsibilities: each department is in charge of the implementation of their own duties; and local-leveled administration is to be
promoted, local governments are responsible for the overall management and supervision of street vendors and stalls, to maintain a healthy and clean environment. Second, food safety should be emphasized for street vendor economy. By introducing legislation on food safety to street stalls, local administrations for market regulation should carry out special inspections of food safety at morning and night markets, checking the licenses of operators and vendors’ health certificates one by one. Finally, unified legislation should be imposed. The State Council could set up specific regulations that would give local legislation a certain degree of autonomy, while simultaneously establish unified norms on issues such as hygiene, environmental protection, making of blacklists, and law enforcement agencies, to unify laws and regulations pertaining to the “street vendor economy.”

References