Summer 2016

Authoritarian governance in China

Yingnan Joseph Zhou
University of Iowa

Recommended Citation

AUTHORITARIAN GOVERNANCE IN CHINA

by

Yingnan Joseph Zhou

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy
degree in Political Science in the
Graduate College of
The University of Iowa

August 2016

Thesis Supervisor: Professor Wenfang Tang

Graduate College
The University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

_____

PH.D. THESIS

_____

This is to certify that the Ph.D. thesis of

Yingnan Joseph Zhou

has been approved by the Examining Committee for
the thesis requirement for the Doctor of Philosophy degree
in Political Science at the August 2016 graduation.

Thesis Committee: _____

Wenfang Tang, Thesis Supervisor

_____

William M. Reisinger

_____

Frederick Solt

_____

Rene Rocha

_____

Alfred Tat-Kei Ho

To mom and dad, Wendy and Joy

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

What determines governance quality in authoritarian settings? The existing literature on governance concentrates on democratic governance and provides no ready answer. By focusing on the world's largest authoritarian country, China, this study delineates an authoritarian model of governance quality. In the model, I argue that in order for good governance to occur, an authoritarian government must have both the ability and the desire to govern well, and the current authoritarian government in China has both. Specifically, its ability to govern well comes from 1) its sovereignty within the territory, 2) its fiscal resources, and 3) its party-state structure blended with decentralization, term and age limits, and performance-based promotion. Its desire to govern well comes from 1) the regime's need for political legitimacy; 2) good governance as an important source of political legitimacy; 3) the decay of alternative sources of legitimacy; 4) the double uncertainty of authoritarian politics that compels leaders to be highly active in delivering good governance. I formulate and test key hypotheses with a variety of original datasets. The Chinese County Governance Data are collected from county government websites. The data on county-level public opinion are constructed through Multilevel Regression and Poststratification (MRP) based on the 2010 Chinese General Social Survey and the 2000 national census data. County leader characteristics are collected from Database of Local Officials. The empirical analysis generally supports the model. My study reveals an authoritarian logic of governance which centers on the party state's top-down control and the regime's insecurity about its political legitimacy. My study also suggests that China's model of governance is not shared by most authoritarian countries today.

PUBLIC ABSTRACT

What determines governance quality in authoritarian settings? The existing literature of governance concentrates on democratic governance and provides no ready answer. My dissertation attempts to narrow this gap by studying the world's largest authoritarian country, China. I delineate an authoritarian model of governance quality which significantly differs the democratic model of governance featuring civil liberties and citizens' bottom-up control. In the authoritarian model of governance, I argue that in order for good governance to occur, an authoritarian government must have both the ability and the desire to govern well, and the current authoritarian government in China has both. Its ability to govern well comes from 1) its sovereignty within the territory, 2) its fiscal resources, and 3) its party-state structure blended with decentralization, term and age limits, and performance-based promotion. Its desire to govern well comes from 1) the regime's need for political legitimacy; 2) good governance as an important source of political legitimacy; 3) the decay of alternative sources of legitimacy; 4) the double uncertainty of authoritarian politics that compels leaders to be highly active in delivering good governance. This model is supported by analyses with a variety of original datasets. The model is also shown to be a rather unique one that is not found in other authoritarian countries today.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

1 INTRODUCTION

For centuries or even millennia, good governance has been a pursuit of humankind. What makes good governance? This question has been testing the human wisdom and endeavor, and it will continue to do so as long as governments exist. Each age and culture has its own criteria of good governance, but at the core, our understanding of good governance never changed greatly. Good governance moves humans beyond the nasty and brutish state of nature towards a world of security, prosperity, and justice.

The key to such a world, many argue, is institutions. Institutions, formal or informal, play an crucial role in determining how power is shared and exercised (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003, Jackman and Miller 2004). It is generally believed that democracy is essential to good governance. Due to democratic elections, leaders are held accountable to citizens at large rather than a small group of elite (Dahl 1971, 1989, O'Donnell 1996, Adsera, Boix, and Payne 2003, Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003). Democratic leaders can enforce their decisions with relative ease because their rule is based on popular consensus (Buchanan 2002). Democratic governments, especially consolidated ones, tend to be less corrupt (Sung 2004). Democracies protect freedom of expression, a backbone of a marketplace of ideas and a source of innovations of all sorts (Mill 1999). Possibly owing to the close connection between democracy and good governance, the existing literature gravitates towards democratic governance. Scholars have gained quite some insights into how specific forms of democracy affects governance quality (Lijphart 2012, Gerring and Thacker 2008, Lardeyret 1991, Linz 1990). Others contend that the working of democratic institutions requires certain cultures, but still, it is democratic culture that concerns

them. This can be seen in the two classic titles in the field of political culture: *The Civic Culture* (Almond and Verba 1963), and *Making Democracy Work* (Putnam 1993). International donors such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Foundation (IMF), and the United States, attach strings of good governance to recipient countries, and their version of good governance bears a strong democratic flavor (Nanda 2006, Alesina and Weder 1999). In the discipline of public administration, a popular topic is how the New Public Management (NPM) challenges the classical democratic principles, as more non-elected actors are involved in the governing process (Pierre 2009, Kersbergen and Waarden 2004).

We still know little about quality of authoritarian governance, except the conventional wisdom that authoritarian governments do not govern very well.[1] To be sure, this is not to ignore the research on governance carried out in authoritarian countries, for example, the big literature on village governance in China (Manion 1996, Kennedy, Rozelle, and Shi 2004, Tsai 2007, Lu 2014, Xu and Yao 2015). However, because of the central role of village elections, this literature should still be categorized as democratic governance literature. For scholars who focus on authoritarian politics *per se*, they appear to be more interested in how authoritarian leaders manage to stay in power than how well they can govern (Wintrobe 1998, Way and Levitsky 2002, Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003, Magaloni 2006, Brownlee 2007, Gandhi and Przeworski 2007, Svolik 2012). Yet so long as authoritarian governments stay in power, they govern. Some govern well, some badly. What explains this variation? If democratic leaders try to govern well because elections force them to, why would authoritarian leaders, who face no electoral challenges and have all the guns, ever bother to govern well? Does authoritarian governance

---

[1] Authoritarianism, autocracy, guardianship, despotism, and dictatorship are used interchangeably in this dissertation.

follow the same logic as democratic governance in the sense that some authoritarian

governments govern better only because they are more democratic and less authoritarian? Or is

there a different logic to authoritarian governance? Or there is no logic at all but only

idiosyncratic cases of benevolent despots? In a world where one third of the regimes are

authoritarian (Svolik 2012, 26), and in a time when authoritarian resilience shatters the optimism

stoked by the Third Wave of democratization and the End of History (Fukuyama 1992,

Huntington 1993, Way and Levitsky 2002, Brownlee 2007, Nathan 2009, Pei 2009, Krastev

2011), these are important questions to ask. And these are the questions that prod me to look for

answers in the most populous authoritarian country – China.

1.1   Why China? On Case Selection

To what extent, one may ask, can the single case of China help us understand

authoritarian governance in general? Isn't it a better idea to conduct large-N analyses that cover

many authoritarian regimes or even both democratic and authoritarian regimes? Such analyses

will no doubt have many advantages. The most obvious one is high external validity. A well-

chosen sample of many authoritarian countries can yield findings generalizable to authoritarian

countries outside the sample. If a sample contains both democratic and authoritarian regimes, we

can deal with fascinating questions like why Hong Kong and Singapore, both non-democratic,

can provide high-quality governance that many democratic counterparts can only envy. Yet such

analyses are as ideal as they are unfeasible. There is a great deal of heterogeneity among

authoritarian countries (Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2014), and even authoritarian countries with

similar institutions still differ significantly in culture, ethnic diversity, and development levels. This necessitates controlling for many variables. Unless one commits himself to the arduous task of collecting sufficient observations – a promising project if resources, manpower, and time are in his favor – he may easily run into what Arend Lijphart (1971, 685) concisely called "many variables, small number of cases" problem, a problem that paralyzes meaningful comparisons.

Therefore, I do not aim for a law-like theory that applies everywhere. I have a more modest goal: to propose and test a theory about governance quality in China, and I do this through large-N statistical analyses at the county level. That said, my study aims to achieve more than a parochial understanding of Chinese governance. I approach the China case from a comparative perspective so that insights can be drawn into authoritarian governance in general. My study has comparative significance for several reasons.

First, I have selected arguably the most important authoritarian country in the world. The regime in China is quintessentially and unequivocally authoritarian. Students of democracy are sometimes unsure where to place hybrid regimes such as Russia and Venezuela in the democratic-autocratic spectrum (Diamond 2002), but few have trouble placing China on the authoritarian end. Besides, China is a big country by many measures. It has the largest population and the third largest territory in the world. Economically, China's gross domestic product (GDP) is second to the US's and is projected to take the first place by the 2020s (Adam 2010, Chan 2014). The "China Model," originally coined as a causal talking point, has entered scholars' discussion as a possible alternative for producing prosperity (Zhao 2010, Bell 2015). More disquieting is perhaps that many dictators are turning their attention to the China Model. Speaking of the China Model, Adrew Nathan (2006, 180) remarks that "Dictatorships from Kazakhstan to Iran are keenly watching its progress." Because of its importance, China

resembles a "crucial case" in testing theories of authoritarian governance. According to Eckstein (1975, 118), a crucial case is one that must closely fit a theory if the theory is true, and conversely, it must not fit the theory even distantly if the theory is false. When properly conducted, a crucial case study may test a theory as effectively as large-N analyses do (Eckstein 1975). John Gerring (2007) further illuminates that a case becomes crucial on two conditions: first, the theory and the data must fit closely; second, the theory must be unique in the sense that it offers explanation of the data that no other existing theory could make sense of. As I will show in later chapters, my theory is unique and it closely fit the data.

The comparative significance of my research is also achieved by my elaboration on the characteristics of China's authoritarianism. The discussion will cast light on governance in other authoritarian countries that may or may not share these characteristics. For example, my theory argues that the Chinese authoritarian regime desires good governance because it brings political legitimacy that the utopian ideology of communism can no longer supply. This implies that in countries where utopian ideologies are still vibrant and dominant, such as North Korea, the top leaders have no strong desire for good governance. Although propositions about other authoritarian countries cannot be directly tested in this dissertation, they still help to build a more general theory of authoritarian governance, which can be tested in the future.

1.2   The Governance Lens into Authoritarian Resilience

Apart from enhancing a general understanding of authoritarian governance, my dissertation also provides a unique angle to understand a central theme of contemporary Chinese

politics – authoritarian resilience. My theoretical framework uncovers a mode of interaction between the top leaders, the local officials, and the public, and how this mode of interaction encourages good governance. Vaguely known to the previous literature, this mode of interaction is crystalized in this dissertation.

The resilience of the Chinese authoritarian regime is perhaps the most unifying theme in the research of contemporary Chinese politics. Shortly after the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) crackdown on the student protests in 1989, many believed that the regime had hopelessly lost its legitimacy and began to number its days. In an interview with ABC television, Liu Binyan (1989), a dissident journalist who had once worked for the party organ People's Daily, predicted that the regime would collapse within 48 hours. It did not collapse within 48 hours, and it did not collapse even after twenty other communist regimes are buried in history books. Today, when China is on its course towards becoming a superpower and when regime supporters are fancying exporting the China Model like exporting Chinese made shoes, some scholars still subscribe to the view that China could collapse anytime. To support this argument, these scholars invariably recount the serious problems that render the communist regime fragile, problems such as corruption, inequality, environmental pollution, and incompatible political and economic systems (Pei 2009, Chang 2010, Acemoglu and Robinson 2012). However, these scholars need to be reminded of one of the most robust findings in the Chinese survey research: the Chinese people highly approve of their authoritarian regime, whether measured by political trust or political support. If regime legitimacy means that a regime is "treated by its citizens as rightfully holding and exercising political power" (Gilley 2006, 500), the communist regime in China seems quite legitimate.

Is this legitimacy real? Are the Chinese people lying in opinion surveys because they fear persecutions? This is a natural reaction to survey data collected from authoritarian countries, where the restriction on free speech is well known. However, scholars who have seriously studied this issue overwhelmingly think this is not the case in China (Shi 2001, Chen 2004, Tsai 2007, Tang 2016). Their sophisticated analyses suggest that the Chinese people's approval of their government is genuine. Then what explains this approval?

The existing explanations can be summarized into three categories: the economic explanation, the institutional explanation, and the cultural explanation. Scholars who are committed to one explanation often defend their views against other explanations, but having closely examined their works, I believe that the three explanations are more complementary than contradictory to each other. Authoritarian resilience is a complex phenomenon likely caused by many factors through intricate mechanisms. Like the blind men touching the elephant, each explanation does its job by partially unveiling the big picture. The big picture becomes clearer as different pieces are put together. My dissertation is intended to be one of the pieces that make sense of the whole picture.

The economic explanation ascribes the resilience in China to its steady and rapid economic growth in the past three decades (Oksenberg 1998, Wang 2005, 2006). This explanation has much intuitive appeal because the dire economic situations, among other factors, are widely believed to have brought down the communist regimes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. But this explanation only has tenuous empirical support. Zhengxu Wang (2005, 2006) defends his economic explanation based on a positive relationship between a person's financial well-being and his satisfaction with the government. This seems to commit the individual fallacy by making country-level interpretation based on individual-level relationships.

A positive relationship between individual financial well-being and satisfaction with the government is likely to exist in any country and provide little clue about whether a nation as a whole supports a regime for economic reasons. Tianjian Shi expresses the same concern when he complains that the economic explanation does not tell us why the Chinese regime is strongly supported even by people who are less well-to-do including the victims of reforms (Shi 2014).

The institutional explanation attributes the resilience of China's authoritarianism to the regime's institutional adaptations, primarily officials' term limits, norm-bound succession of top leaders, and a more inclusive recruitment of the CCP, tax reforms that enhances the central government's fiscal capacity, and meritocracy in CCP's cadre management, (Nathan 2003, Yang 2003, Svolik 2012). With regard to the efficacy of the institutional explanation, Tianjian Shi (2014) thinks that they are better at explaining the regime's survival than its popularity. It's straightforward how term limits, leadership succession, and increased state capacity reduce the likelihood of a regime collapsing on its own, but it's not obvious how they produce citizens' strong political support. More theorization is in order. The more inclusive recruitment of the CCP doesn't explain much either. In the reform era, the CCP has downgraded the importance of class in determining whether one is eligible to join the party and started to accept former class enemies such as private entrepreneurs. Yet judged by the size of its membership as a percentage of the population, the CCP is a very small party. As of 2015, only 6.5 percent of the Chinese population are members of the CCP. In the US, more than 20 percent of the adult population are affiliated with each of the two major parties. In addition, research shows that CCP members do not hold different political attitudes than the rest of the population; CCP membership is rarely found to be a significant predictor of one's attitudes towards the regime (Li 2004, 236, Tang 2005, 68, Shi 2014, 128). The only institutional variable that contributes to the strong political

support seems to be meritocracy. Meritocracy puts capable officials in offices and encourages good performance for the purpose of moving upward. And meritocracy is likely to benefit the populace at large and generate political support nationwide. But this mechanism is still under-theorized in terms of why the regime wants good governance in the first place. In addition, the existing studies on CCP's meritocracy focus on provincial or municipal leaders' economic performance (Landry 2008, Shih, Adolph, and Liu 2012, Lü and Landry 2014), which is but one aspect of meritocracy and substantially overlaps with the economic explanation.

As its name implies, the cultural explanation traces the authoritarian resilience in China to the Chinese political culture. In his book, Tianjian Shi (2014) explains the strong political support by a traditional culture characterized by deference to authority and conflict avoidance. He shows that the traditional culture exerts positive impacts on political support even after institutional and structural factors are controlled for. The robustness of this argument is attested by Shi's observations in China and Taiwan, two polities that share the same cultural heritage but made divergent institutional choices six decades ago. Shi shows that the traditional culture allows the authoritarian regime in China much flexibility to exercise authority without procedural justice, and in Taiwan, the same traditional culture leads many Taiwanese people into the belief that they are given more democracy than they need.

Another culture joined forces with the traditional culture in shaping the high political support in China. It is a populism that arose in Mao Zedong's reign and persisted into the more liberalized reform era. On the basis of this populism, Wenfang Tang (2016) develops the Populist Authoritarianism (PA) Model in an attempt to reveal the nature of contemporary Chinese politics. Essentially, the PA model argues that the Chinese highly support their government because it is highly responsive to their needs; the Chinese government's

responsiveness is more direct and pampering than the responsiveness of democratic governments; and the Chinese government is highly responsive for fear of losing citizens' support. Tang's theory is unique. It remarkably deviates from the conventional wisdom that authoritarian governments are inherently unresponsive. It won't be surprising that skeptics may raise doubts on several fronts. First, they may probe why the same regime permitted Mao to abuse his power but compelled later leaders to be hyper-responsive? If there were categorical changes since Mao, what are they and how do they work? Second, what about other authoritarian countries? Can we apply the PA model to North Korea, where the regime is similarly populist but incredibly repressive? Third, a pillar of the PA model is a hyper-responsive government, but government responsiveness was measured only by survey respondents' perception. Perception could be disconnected from reality. Is it possible that the high perceived government responsiveness is simply a result of the traditional culture, as Shi's (2014) cultural argument implies?

My study on authoritarian governance in China makes several contributions to the authoritarian resilience literature. By focusing on local governance, a public good that benefits everyone, my theoretical framework is equipped to explain the strong political support of the general population rather than of only certain privileged groups. This overcomes the weakness of the economic explanation. By focusing on governance, a concept that is theoretically connected to both regime survival and regime popularity, and by moving beyond the economic bias of the existing studies on leader promotion, my study advances the institutional explanation. My study also complements the cultural explanation, particularly Tang's (2016) PA model, by illuminating why China's regime today, not China's regime under Mao, nor the current regime in North Korea, have the incentives to govern well. In addition, my analysis draws on direct and objective

measures of government responsiveness, a linchpin of the PA model that has only been tested with perception-based data.

1.3 A Theoretical Framework of Authoritarian Governance

I build a theoretical framework that explains the governance quality of Chinese counties. I argue that in order for good governance to occur, two conditions must be met. A government must have both the ability to govern well and it must have the desire to govern well. A government may be extremely competent, yet it may prefer to extract from its people rather than provide for them. Alternatively, a government may have a keen desire for good governance, but it may be a failed state that cannot function.

I further argue that the Chinese regime since Deng Xiaoping has both the ability and the desire to govern well. It has the ability because China is a party state where the ruling party has tremendous control at all levels of government and across government agencies. Meanwhile, a moderate level of decentralization spurs local innovation and competition. The regime in China desires to govern well because good governance brings regime legitimacy that it can no longer get elsewhere. The regime can no longer draw legitimacy from its revolutionary legacy as the old generations pass away. The regime can longer draw legitimacy from the utopian ideology of communism because it has been discredited by the party's own repudiation of Mao and by the global collapse of communist regimes. The death of communism as a viable ideology makes it more difficult for the CCP to justify repression. This leaves good governance a major remaining source of regime legitimacy.

But does the government deliver the minimum just barely enough to keep the masses from revolting? It doesn't, because it has no idea where this minimum is. In a democracy, where legitimacy of political leaders is rooted in winning elections, leaders have clear idea on the level of legitimacy they possess. But no such information is available for the Chinese authoritarian leaders. Authoritarian leaders have no votes to tell them where they are, and it's doubtful if opinion polls, even reliable, can save the same purpose. Moreover, authoritarian leaders in China base their legitimacy on the fragile and mysterious foundation of government performance. Nobody, even not authoritarian leaders themselves, knows exactly what levels of performance make them legitimate and what levels put them in danger. For leaders who know that performance increases legitimacy but don't know what performance is good enough, it is rational to shoot for the higher and perform as well as they can.

1.4   Government Website as a Data Source

Testing my theory necessitates measuring governance quality. Good measures of governance should be objective and comprehensive. By objective, I mean governance quality should be directly measured by what a government does or produces, not by people's perceptions of government quality, as most existing studies do (e.g., La Porta et al. 1999, Kaufmann, Kraay, and Mastruzzi 2004, 2010). I favor objective measures because governance, by its very nature, is a reality independent of perception. Perception-based measures are usually easier to get, but the ease comes with the cost of low internal validity. Good measures of governance should also be comprehensive. It should capture the fullness of the concept instead of one or two sides of the concept, such as a government's economic performance.

I try to achieve objectiveness and comprehensiveness by collecting governance quality data from a novel source: county government websites. Nowadays, government websites are quite common. It'll be surprising if a government body in China does not have one. The prevalence of county websites is probably because of a directive issued by the State Council in 2007 (Wen), which mandates that government websites be set up as key platforms of information. The layouts and features of the Chinese county websites are remarkably similar. This is a gospel for a coder who had to browse 133 websites and collect over 2,000 data points. Nevertheless, websites vary in their depths and quality of their features, and are therefore amenable to comparison.

I have collected data on governance quality from 133 county websites. Being the primary sampling units (PSUs) in the Chinese General Social Survey (CGSS) 2010, the 133 counties were selected based on the Probability Proportional to Size (PPS) principle and are representative of the county governance in the whole country. The greatest benefit of selecting the 133 counties is that it allows for connecting governance data to opinion data. I have collected website data on four aspects of governance: 1) quality of public services; 2) information transparency; 3) generosity of social spending; 4) government responsiveness. The four aspects will be combined into a single governance index in 3.3.3.

The independent variables I use to predict governance quality include local officials' promotability, occurrences of protests, county-level political trust, etc. The data on these variables are all constructed first-hand based on local leaders' biographical data and existing survey data. To make county-level opinion measures more accurate, I employ the method of Multilevel Modeling and Poststratification (MRP). To my knowledge, this is the first application of MRP in the study of Chinese politics.

1.5 Plan of This Dissertation

The subsequent chapters establish my framework of authoritarian governance both theoretically and empirically. In Chapter 2, I review the existing literature on governance, lay out my theoretical framework, and put forward testable hypotheses. In Chapter 3, I construct an objective and comprehensive index of governance quality. In Chapter 4, I test this theoretical framework empirically. In Chapter 5, I discuss the implications of my findings and draw conclusions.

2   A THEORY OF AUTHORITARIAN GOVERNANCE

In his book on authoritarian politics, Milan Svolik (2012, 1-2) laments the dearth of coherent knowledge of authoritarian politics. He states that for a newly elected leader in a democracy, there are a wide array of survival tips available, ranging from how to target voters in campaigns and what strategies to adopt under different electoral systems, but for a new leader in an autocracy, there are only fragmented suggestions on authoritarian parties, repression, and elections. While I have reservations on the ethnics of assisting autocracies, I agree with Svolik that there needs to be a coherent understanding on authoritarian politics. And I think this is particularly true with authoritarian governance. In this chapter, I will try to build a coherent theoretical framework that can explain authoritarian governance in China and also shed light on authoritarian governance in general. But before I introduce the framework, let me begin by reviewing what the literature already knows.

2.1   A Review on What is Governance

The term governance is widely used, but its definition is not as widely agreed on. Some usages of the term are not even tangentially related to my dissertation and therefore no detailed discussion is needed. Examples are corporate governance in the context of business management, and "governance without government" in the context of global governance (Rosenau and Czempiel 1992, Krasner 1983, Strange 1996).

The usages of governance that are pertinent to my topic can be divided into two categories: "old governance" and "new governance" (Peters 2000). Both are concerned with how power is shared and exercised and how resources are allocated, but they differ in the authorities that dominate these activities. Under old governance, it is only the government that governs. Under new governance, the government, as well as non-state actors, governs.

As its name suggests, old governance is the traditional conceptualization of governance. It defines governance as a government's activities. Some major themes of the old governance research are governance indicator, government quality, government/institutional performance. The primary motivations of the old governance research include a practical need for, and an intellectual curiosity about, good governance. Based on the belief that aid projects are more effective in countries with good governance, International aid agencies rank countries by their governance quality. For instance, the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators constructed by Daniel Kaufmann (2010, 2004) and his colleagues rank the governance qualities over 200 countries and territories. Other scholars investigate the causes of good governance. La Porta et al.'s (1999) and Adsera et al.'s (2003) look for answers by cross-national studies. Some seek answers at the sub-national level. Examples are Robert Putnam's (1993) famous study on regional government performance of Italy and Stephen Knack's (2002) study on governance quality of the US states. What is common to the aforementioned studies is that governments are primarily responsible for governance.

Under new governance, a popular paradigm in the discipline of public administration, the government is no longer the central actor in governing activities. Many non-state actors, such as NGOs, private companies, and academic institutions, play important roles in governance. One area where new governance looms large is new public management (NPM). As a management

style, NPM has two features: privatization of public services and commercial management practices in government agencies. A central question that arises from the first feature is how to protect the classic democratic principles which are threatened by NPM. If public services are outsourced to non-elected and profit-seeking private companies, how can voters hold the companies accountable (Pierre 2009, Kersbergen and Waarden 2004)? Along the second dimension of NPM, one important question is whether commercial management styles, such as customer orientation, performance measurement, and performance incentives, are effective means to improve government transparency and accountability and how they reshape the conventional relationships between citizens and the state (Hirst 2000, Williams 2004). Besides NPM, network is another subfield where the conception of new governance is adopted. A typical network includes a government and other NGOs who collectively govern a locality. Actors in a network depend on other organizations for resources and employ strategies within known rules of the game (Rhodes 2000). In a network, a government has no dominant authority over non-government actors. It possesses the power to cooperate but not the power to command.

My dissertation adopts the conception of new governance, and it focuses on governments' activities. This choice is made for a simple reason: old governance fits the reality of authoritarian countries much better than new governance. One defining feature of authoritarianism is the government's supreme power in relation to non-government organizations, which directly contradicts the notion of new governance. New governance is more compatible with a democratic and pluralist system in which the government is content with being a cooperator rather than a dominator.

2.2   A Review on What Makes Good Governance

The existing literature identifies a variety of factors that influence governance quality. Broadly speaking, there are political, economic, and cultural factors.

2.2.1   Political Factors

Political factors are those directly influencing who gets what, when, and how (Lasswell 1950). The existing literature presents three primary political factors: democratic institutions, legal systems, and organizational characteristics.

In the age-long debate about democracy versus authoritarianism, governance has always been a key issue. It is an essential criterion based on which a system is to be assessed. Hence both sides of the debate are committed to the argument that their system is better at governing. It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to enumerate all the arguments. But a thorough evaluation of the arguments and empirical evidence seems to suggest the victory of democracy. The central question is whether democracy or authoritarianism has greater instrumental values in governance. Arguments for democracy are many. One argument is that power in democracy is more evenly distributed. This even distribution of power has several merits. First, democratic institutions give citizens greater power in controlling their leader. Because of the power differential and information asymmetry between political leaders and ordinary citizens, political leaders are usually in a position to enrich themselves at the expense of public interests (Barro 1973, Ferejohn 1986), and they will not hesitate to do so if they are given the full rein.

Democracy, as Adsera, Boix, and Payne (2003) argue, allow citizens to rein in this self-enriching behavior more effectively than authoritarianism. In democratic countries, ballots enable citizens to pose credible threats to leaders and compel them to act in the interests of the public. But because the possibility of repression and collective action problem, in authoritarian countries, it is very difficult for citizens pose credible threats, which involves demonstrating the willingness and ability to overthrow the leaders.

Bueno de Mesquita and his coauthors (2003) reach a similar conclusion through more nuanced arguments. According to them, the real issue is not whether leaders can be effectively controlled but controlled by whom. Their selectorate theory contends that leaders, whether democratic or authoritarian, are under the control of their winning coalitions. A leader cannot survive if he loses the support of his winning coalition. Therefore, to maintain the support of his winning coalition, he needs to distribute private benefits among them. As the size of winning coalition increases, the individual share of the private benefits decreases. If the size of the winning coalition reaches a substantial portion of the population, the leaders shifts to provide public benefits, as what happens in democracies. Thus, democracies are better at governing because they provide more benefits to the population at large than dictatorships.

Economists Acemoglu and Robinson (2012) focus on another benefit of even distributions of power. In their book entitled *Why Nations Fail*, they argue that an even distribution of power makes it more likely for a nation to establish inclusive economic institutions as opposed to extractive economic institutions. A nation prospers under inclusive economic institutions which encourage the great mass of people to fully use their talents and skills in economic activities. A nation fails, or is bound to fail, under extractive economic institutions which allow the state to extract wealth from one subset of the population to to the

advantage of another. Acemoglu and Robinson do not overlook the rapid economic growths that take place in extractive institutions, such as the ones in the Soviet Union, in Taiwan under the Chiangs, in South Korea in the 1980s, and in post-reform China. Acemoglu and Robinson argue that those economies grew because the rulers allocated resources in highly productive activities or they were partially open to inclusive institutions. But such growths are unlikely to last because economies may stop growing when institutions become extractive, and elite's struggle for extractive power may lead to civil wars.

Apart from distributing power more evenly, democracy facilitates governance in other ways. Democracy almost always comes with civil liberties. Freedom of expression, for example, reduces the information asymmetry between leaders and citizens and subject the former to more transparent scrutiny of the latter (Persson and Tabellini 2002, Adsera, Boix, and Payne 2003). Freedom of expression also fosters a marketplace of ideas that is essential to innovations of all kinds (Mill 1999, Fukuyama 1992). In addition, as the consent theory of political legitimacy suggests, in consenting to be governed by a democratic government, people oblige themselves to obey it (Buchanan 2002, 698). This facilitates governance by reducing law enforcement costs (Brehm and Rahn 1997). However, this line of arguments seems to have overlooked democratic citizens' greater liberty to resist a regime and the strong political legitimacy observed in authoritarian countries.

The other side of the debate has offered several arguments in favor of authoritarianism. They are either meant to undercut the abovementioned arguments for democracy or positively affirm that autocracies are better at governing. They point out an incoherence within the concept of democracy, particularly the tension between the majority rule and individual liberty, and the slippage of democratic practice from democratic ideals (Dahl 1989, Wolff 2006, Li 2013). As for

arguments that positively affirm the superiority of authoritarianism, the most well-known and arguably the strongest one is Plato's (2014) craft analogy. Plato holds that governing is a difficult, complex, and sophisticated art. It takes a philosopher king who is extremely capable, versatile, and versatile. The art of governing is certainly more challenging than conducting a surgery. If we think it ridiculous to entrust our surgery to a random crowd in the street, isn't it more ridiculous to hand the well-being of a nation over to a large number of ordinary people? On the basis of these arguments, some believe that it is a dead end to justify democracy on instrumental grounds and it is more promising to appeal to democracy's intrinsic values, such as its respect for intrinsic equality of human beings.

The pro-authoritarianism arguments appear strong only on the philosophical level. As Dahl (1989) warns, we should not compare an ideal apple with a practical orange. When we look at the real world, the evidence is clearly in favor of democracy. Six thousand years of human civilization does not seem enough to raise a philosopher king by Plato's standards. And benevolent despots, who are at best pale replicas of the philosopher king, are still relatively rare. Overall, democracy contributes to human well-being more than authoritarianism. In the 20th century, several large-scale famines struck authoritarian countries and claimed tens of millions of lives, but none happened in democracies (Sen 2009, Devereux 2000). Quality of life, measured by infant mortality rate, literacy rate, and life expectancy, is higher in democratic countries (Frey and Al-Roumi 1999). And development aid increases subjective happiness in recipient countries only when the recipient countries are democratic (Kosack 2003). Democratic countries have overall higher rankings on governance-related studies (Kaufmann, Kraay, and Mastruzzi 2004, 2010, International 2015).

Agreeing that democracy is more conducive to good governance than authoritarianism, scholars further probe which specific forms of democracy deliver best governance. Debates take place on different fronts: plurality versus proportional representation, presidentialism versus parliamentarism, and unitarism versus federalism. The central issue of this in-house debate, still, is the distribution of power. Some favor more dispersion of power. For example, Arend Lijphart (1991, 1999, 2012) and Juan Linz (1990) prefer power-dispersing institutions such as parliamentarism, proportional representation, and federalism. They argue that these institutions facilitate governance because they honor deliberation and consensus, supposed bases of sound decisions. On the other side of the debate are Lardeyret (1991) and Gerring and Thacker (2008), who favor institutions that concentrate powers. They argue that institutions that disperse power is inherently conservative because they create more veto players and are biased towards the status quo. The best model of democracy is one in which the leaders takes into all interests and ideas in society yet retain strong authority. An ideal model conceived by Gerring and Thacker (2008) is the centripetal model. In the centripetal model, which takes the shape of a pyramid, the government is inclusive to all interests and ideas at the bottom, and these interests and ideas are aggregated at every step as one ascends the pyramid. "Particularistic interests are converted into ideologies; ideologies are converted into general-interest appeals; parochial perspectives are nationalized" (Gerring and Thacker 2008, 20). In practice, the centripetal model takes the form of a mixture of unitarism, parliamentarism, and closed-list PR that favor strong and unified parties

Legal system is another political factor that influences quality of governance. It is an indicator of state power in relation to property owners (La Porta et al. 1999). The two major legal traditions in the world – the common law tradition and the civil law tradition – are on opposite

poles of this indicator. Common law developed in England as property owners' defense against the crown's encroachments, and it tends to produce noninterventionist governments. By contrast, civil law was introduced by the state to control economic life, and it tends to create intrusive governments. The most intrusive governments are bred by socialist law, which allows the state to seize ultimate control over society and the economy. La Porta et al. (1999) argue that common law leads to better governance by restraining leaders' rent-seeking behavior.

The third political factor of governance quality is organizational characteristics. Organizational characteristics are more of a concern to sociologists and students of public administration than to political scientists; the latter are more interested in societal-level factors such as regime type and political culture. But in fact, the everyday responsibilities of a government are carried out by numerous employees situated in a multitude of agencies. Broad political factors such as regime types and legal systems cannot fully explain whether these agencies can effectively achieve their goals, leaving room for organizational characteristics such as how personnel are selected, hierarchies structured, and rules followed. The most ideal characteristics are specified by Max Weber (2015) in the rational-bureaucratic model. They are: 1) clearly defined labor and authority; 2) hierarchical structure of offices; 3) written guidelines prescribing performance criteria; 4) recruitment to offices based on specialization and expertise; 5) office holding as a career or vocation; 6) duties and authorities attached to positions, not persons. The rational-bureaucratic organization is meant to resemble an impersonal and well designed and functioned machine, which can precisely arrive at the pre-set goal at the highest speed and lowest cost. Of course, a model that is so mechanistic and stifling cannot escape criticisms, but its effects on the modern life are profound. Look at the McDonald's seamless workflow and precise quality control. Look at the office staff's robotic Email sentence: "Let me

know if you have any other question." When it comes to governance, Peter Evans (1995) argues that a government's adherence to this rational-bureaucratic model is one of the dividing lines between developmental and predatory states.

2.2.2 Economic Factors

Governance quality is mostly influenced by three economic factors: economic development, economic internationalization, and capital mobility. At its most basic level, a government needs money to run. A higher development level of a region gives a government more dollars to hire talented people and provide public goods. In addition, it is argued that economic development increases physical assets available to leaders, reducing their incentives to divert resources to themselves (Adsera, Boix, and Payne 2003). Similarly, some argue that higher salaries of government officials serve to curb bureaucrats' rent-seeking tendency (Klitgaard 1988, Besley and McLaren 1993). Moreover, there is a reciprocal relationship between economic development and good governance: economic development can set in motion a benign cycle where economic development breeds good governance and good governance breeds economic development (Chong and Calderon 2000, Ho and Li 2014).

The second economic factor is economic internationalization. Countries reliant on international trade and foreign investment tend to attach more importance to governance. Scholars find that low levels of corruption, sound policies and good public services are among the primarily considerations of foreign investors when making investment decisions (Habib and Zurawicki 2002, Ades and Di Tella 1999). The last economic factor is capital mobility. Capital

mobility is usually low in countries where one capital predominates. In oil countries with low

capital diversity, for example, leaders can seek rent relatively easily because the prosperity of

capital owners to a large extent hinges on the leaders' policies and regulations (Adsera, Boix,

and Payne 2003). As the economy becomes more diverse and assets more mobile, asset holders

can escape distortionary regulations and expropriation by investing in different sectors (Adsera,

Boix, and Payne 2003).

2.2.3   Cultural Factors

Quality of governance is also affected by cultural factors. Scholars gave culture countless

definitions, but here, a short and plain definition serves well. Culture means shared values within

a group that set the standards of appropriate behavior (Shi 2014). And I consider informal

institutions – rules and norms not on the book but are widely abided by – to be culture as well.

Based on its definition, it is obvious that culture influences behavior. As Alec Nove (1993, 22)

puts it, "Most people, presented with a cheese and a ham sandwich, can choose either. An

Orthodox rabbi cannot."

The cultural variables found to influence governance quality are many, but almost all of

them can be captured by the umbrella concept social capital. Social capital was first introduced

by sociologist James Coleman (1988) as a contributing factor to human capital. Coleman finds

that social capital in families and communities has positive impact on high school graduation

rates. Social capital was given political significance by Robert Putnam's 1993 book *Making*

Democracy Work. Putnam (1993, 2000) defines social capital as features of social organizations

that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit. Key components of social capital are networks, norms of reciprocity, and social trust. Putnam (1993) shows that the difference in social capital explains the better government performance in northern Italy than southern Italy. And he attributes this difference in social capital historical reasons. Stephen Knack (2002) finds that social capital, measured by associational activities and informal socializing, is positively associated with performance of state governments in the US. How does social capital contribute to good governance?

First, in localities with abundant social capital, the political leaders and civil are likely to be public-spirited. If political leaders and civil servants are selected from the locals, they naturally share the local culture. In a place where private benefits are valued over public interests, there is a greater chance that the government is corrupt and extractive. In the Italian town Montegrano, Edward Banfield (1967) observed a pervasive "amoral familism." People there cared only about their nuclear families and held little regard for the common good. They refused to help others except there were immediate gains, and they expected others to do the same. Putnam (1993) made a very similar observation in southern Italy in the 1970s. He found that the culture there lacked a sense of generalized reciprocity, the expectation that a benefit granted now will be repaid by others in the future. Immersed in this culture, government officials tended to be corrupt because they treated public offices as opportunities for private interests.

Second, social capital empowers the public to hold leaders accountable. Social capital, when embodied by associational memberships and social trust, makes it easier for citizens to get organized and cooperate with one another. An organized and cooperative citizenry can form a powerful force that holds leaders in check. Also, closely connected citizens can more easily communicate each other. An informed and articulate citizenry are in a better position to get their

demands met. The effect of social capital on creating accountability is especially pronounced when the locality is small and residents are acquaintances. There is a broad agreement among China scholars that a key to successful village self-governance is cohesive and broad-based groups that incorporate village leaders as members. Being members of these groups, leaders are under moral obligations to serve their groups' interests. These groups also help overcome the collective action problems in self-funded public projects. Examples of such groups are village temples, clans, and lineage groups (Tsai 2007, Xu and Yao 2015). A recent book by Jie Lu (2014) shows that young villagers' out-migration to cities pose serious challenges to village governance by hollowing out the networks that are traditionally sustained by those social groups.

Last but not least, social capital eases decision making by forging agreement. Societies rich in social capital tend to have common interests and goals. When disagreements arise, people can find grounds for compromise (Boix and Posner 1998, Knack 2002). By contrast, in ethnically diverse and polarized places, people often struggle for peace. Good governance is a more distant luxury. Ethnic fragmentation is a major cause for conflicts (Horowitz 1985). When ethnic groups have polarized policy preferences, it is difficult for political leaders to make popular decisions, because they cannot accommodate one group without alienating other groups (Lieberman 1993). Hero and Tolbert (1996) find that American states with large minority populations tend to have lower high school graduation rates but higher infant mortality rates. Alesina, Baqir, and Easterly (1997) show that in ethnically diverse American cities, interest groups are more likely to favor patronage spending that only benefit the majority groups.

One thing noteworthy about social capital is its stronger leverage for explaining governance quality in democratic systems than in authoritarian ones. The first argument on officials' public spiritedness seems to work better when there is democratic representation. The

27

effects of social capital may not have as strong influence on officials in systems like China where officials are often appointed to places other than their origins, a measure taken by the regime to prevent regionalism. The second argument on accountability seems to work better for systems with the freedom of association and institutions that provide bottom-up control. Chinese villages belong to the latter case because village committees are self-governing organs elected by villagers. As for the third argument that social capital eases decision making, it should work particularly well for a pluralist system with democratic decision making.

2.3   A Theoretical Framework of Authoritarian Governance

To summarize the literature rather tersely, we know that democratic governments generally perform better than authoritarian governments, and we know that governance quality in democratic countries are determined by certain institutions and cultures. We also know that economic factors and bureaucratic characteristics influence governance quality regardless of regime type. But the existing knowledge does not quench our curiosity about governance quality in authoritarian countries. If governance in authoritarian countries is not uniformly poor, what explains the variation? Two views suggest themselves. The first is that quality of authoritarian governance is determined by essentially the same logic as quality of democratic governance. If an authoritarian government wants to improve its governance, the only choice is to be less authoritarian and more democratic. Good authoritarian governance occurs when the regime opens itself to competitive elections, loosens its grips on local affairs, and begins to respect civil liberties. This implies that governance in authoritarian countries improves as the regime democratizes. However, this view looks implausible once we turn our eyes upon the real world.

An exemplar is Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms that were meant to save the Soviet Union but only succeeded in sinking it. Gorbachev's reforms were typical attempts to move a totalitarian country in a democratic direction. Glasnost (meaning transparency) ushered in free speech, contested parliamentary elections were held in 1988, and New Thinking renounced the Soviet Union's previous control on Eastern European countries. But the ramifications of these reforms were the union's collapse and many economic and social problems that plagued the newly independent countries (Rivkin-Fish 2005, Balzer and Askonas 2014). Some may point to the successful democratizations in South Korea and Taiwan as counterexamples, but upon closer inspection, these cases by no means indicate that democracy is essential for good governance in authoritarian countries. The modernizations in South Korea and Taiwan started and matured when they were still under authoritarian rule (Evans 1995, Acemoglu and Robinson 2012), and there is little evidence of significant progress in governance when these countries were in democratic transitions. The democratic logic of good governance kicked in after South Korea and Taiwan democratized, but at this time, we are no longer talking about authoritarian governance.

The inadequacy of the first view invites us to consider an alternative view: governance quality in authoritarian countries follows a different logic – there is something inherent in authoritarianism that determines the quality of governance apart from democratic principles manifested in electoral politics and civil liberties. In this section, I shall build a theoretical framework that explains the Chinese governance quality in particular but sheds light on authoritarian governance quality in general. Before I spell out this framework, definitions of key terms are in order.

2.3.1 Terminology

In my framework, authoritarianism refers to any type of regime where average citizens do not have electoral means to choose their top leaders, and where the government actively restricts civil liberties. This definition does not require an absolute absence of democratic elements. For example, regimes that only have nominal elections or elections for trivial offices can still be authoritarian. But if the democratic elements come to a point where the there is real competition and uncertainty in choosing the top leaders, a country ceases to be authoritarian. Hybrid regimes that do not fit this definition are not considered authoritarian. This definition allows me to use the umbrella concept of authoritarianism to refer to regimes that are often otherwise labelled as autocracy, dictatorship, totalitarianism, and despotism.

Governance refers to government quality. Therefore, governance, government quality, and governance quality are used interchangeably in this dissertation. As I mentioned in 2.1, this is a conception of old governance as opposed to new governance which treats the government as one governing actor among many. In my framework, governance is understood by what a government produces, not by what it looks like or what procedures it follows. A fuller justification of this choice is provided in 3.1.

The simple word good is hardest to define, because no simpler words can be found to describe what good is. But because what is good is so easy for human conscience to grasp, no definition is needed. Once we agree on what to include in governance, we should not have difficulty agreeing on what governance is good. Few would dispute that peace is preferable to war, order to chaos, affluence to poverty, and health to illness. In other words, good governance is very near being a universal human ideal.

2.3.2 Theory

I argue that good governance will occur even in authoritarian countries if two conditions are met. First, the government must have the ability to govern well. Second, the government must have the desire to govern well. In the pages that follow, I argue that the authoritarian regime in China meets both conditions. But the regime meets the two conditions by a logic entirely different from governance in democratic countries. The functioning of the authoritarian governance in China does not depend on democratic principles that feature citizens' bottom-up control of officials, nor does it totally rely on authoritarian officials' idiosyncratic characteristics. By specifying how China meets the two conditions, my theoretical framework will shed light on governance in other authoritarian countries (more detailed discussion in 5.1).

Good governance occurs if and only if two things are present. First, the government must have the ability to govern well. Second, the government must have the desire to govern well. If a government does not have the resources or power to govern, good governance will not occur no matter how strongly the government desires it. Examples are state failures. Before the Chinese Nationalist Party regime (otherwise known as the KMT regime) retreated to the island of Taiwan in 1949, several Chinese cities plunged into a situation of state failure. In Shanghai, for example, the hyperinflation turned paper bills as cheap as wastepaper. People used one million-dollar bills to buy rice, and the bills weighed more than the rice. However, this life appears more livable in comparison with the life in today's Somalia, where the central government cannot do much to bring the country out of anarchy. Arms and drug trafficking are pervasive in the face of a paralyzed police force (Jamal 2013). Peace is nowhere to be seen in the midst of protracted civil wars. In 2012, unemployment is so bad that 54 percent of the adults are unemployed (United

Nations Development Programme 2012). It may well be the case that the state failures in the Nationalist China and today's Somalia are because the leaders did not want to govern well. But that doesn't matter. Whether they want good governance or not, they are not able to deliver it.

A government also needs the desire to govern well. A government may possess the full capacity to govern well yet be unwilling to do so. The Soviet Union government under Joseph Stalin demonstrated tremendous capacity to develop the heavy industry, yet it chose to oppress all walks of society with grave state terror. In the midst of China's great famine during 1959 to 1961, when tens of millions of people were starved to death, the government still provided generous food aid to its communist allies (Dikötter 2010). The aid to Albania alone was estimated to reach one-fifth of Albania's domestic need (Dikötter 2010, 113). Given Mao Zedong's supreme authority at the time, it is hard to believe that he had no other choice. As the Belgian king, Leopold II spared no efforts to promote economic growth and educational reform in Belgium, yet at the same time, he exercised severe oppression in Congo (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003), of which he was the personal owner. Leopold II undoubtedly had the power to govern better. Apparently, he lacked the desire to do so.

Turning to China, I argue that the Chinese single-party regime since Deng Xiaoping has both the ability and the desire to govern well. As for ability, the Chinese regime today is nowhere near state failure. Specifically, its ability lies in 1) its sovereignty within the territory, 2) its fiscal resources, and 3) The party-state structure blended with decentralization, term and age limits, and performance-based promotion.

1) Sovereignty within the territory

The current CCP regime is sovereign within China's territory. It maintains effective authority over the military and other state apparatuses. The CCP's civilian control of the military is a strong and long tradition. The government is solely in charge of public security and public good provision.

2) Fiscal resources

A government needs money to get things done. Copious resources not only increase the quantity and quality of public projects and services but also diversify the government's choices. In the past three decades, the growth of China's government revenue is on a par with the growth of national economy. Although China's government revenue looks unimpressive when divided by the total population, it is safe to say that the government has a lot of fiscal resources at its disposal. As of 2014, China's government revenue was ranked the second in the world, the first being the US (CIA World Factbook 2014).

3) The party-state structure blended with decentralization, term and age limits, and performance-based promotion

The authoritarian regime in China takes the form of a party-state. As Archie Brown (2009, 209) points out, the monopoly of the ruling party is a defining feature of a communist system. Despite the substantial economic reform since 1978, China's party-state structure has remained intact. The CCP still controls the government at the national level and below (Joseph 2014). Although the party and the government at every level are organizationally separate, the

33

party secretary is almost always a higher authority than the head of the state (Joseph 2014). Oftentimes, a city mayor is simultaneously the city party secretary, but when the mayor and secretaries are two persons, the city mayor is usually concurrently the vice party secretary in the party committee and subordinate to the secretary. In most cases, party committees make important decisions, ranging from economic decisions to personnel decisions, and the corresponding governments carry those decisions out. Vertically speaking, the party-state is a hierarchical structure. Policies and directives are handed down from above. Lower-level governments are expected to implement them in accord with the spirit of the central government.

However, certain elements of the Chinese party-state conducive to governance are missing in the Soviet party-state. First, the party-state in China is more decentralized, making local adaptation and innovation possible. As Jean Oi (1992) observes, the Chinese system was more decentralized than the Soviet system even in the Mao years. While the Soviet central plans were directly transmitted to enterprises, the center's plans in China were transmitted through many layers of government bureaucracy. Oi contends that this initial decentralization paved the way for China's future decentralizing reforms. For example, the decollectivation of agriculture stripped the village governments of the power to sell produce and forced them to raise revenue through non-agricultural entities (Oi 1992). The 1994 fiscal reform clearly defined the tax shares of the central and local governments, motivating the local governments to enlarge taxes to maximize surplus (Oi 1992, Guo 2009).

Another characteristic of the Chinese party-state is government officials' term and age limits. Today, government officials no longer have lifetime tenures, a common privilege in Mao's China as well as in the Soviet Union. Officials of the central government can serve up to two five-year terms. The institutionalization of the term limits at the central level has been

34

demonstrated by the peaceful leadership successions in 2002 and 2012. But laws are unclear about the term limits of local government officials (Landry 2008, 89-90). Nonetheless, in practice, the turnover rates of local officials are high. Pierre Landry (2008, 90) notes that few mayors actually have served more than five years in their cities. It is frequently believed that such short tenures impede consistent policies and long-term visions. But on the other hand, short tenures make it more difficult for leaders to develop their own cliques and engage in corruption. Moreover, as Landry (2008) notes, shorter tenures increase the party's chances to make appointments and thus enhance the party's personnel control.

Government officials in China also face age limits. In order to be promoted, a leader has to be under a specific age. Being older than the limit makes one ineligible. This limit is raised as one moves up the party-state hierarchy. For example, the age limits for promotion to the deputy department-level (副厅级), the department-level (正厅级), and the vice-ministerial level (副部级) are respectively 52, 55, and 58. An immediate consequence of the age limits is officials' incentive to prove themselves early and quickly. The vast majority of officials hit their age ceilings at the low end of the hierarchy. Only by starting high and young, and by skyrocketing up hierarchy can one ever hope to reach the top.

Being young may make one eligible for promotion, but it does not automatically make him qualified, let alone competitive. Since the 1980s, the CCP started to link officials' promotion to their performance in meeting economic and social targets, including economic growth, social stability, and control of birthrates (Edin 2003, O'Brien and Li 1999). Although factions and nepotism still matter (Zhong 2003, Shih, Adolph, and Liu 2012), there is growing evidence that performance is a criterion for promotion. Victor Shih and coauthors (2012) find a positive

relationship between the rank of a CCP central committee member and the amount of provincial revenue he or she collected as a provincial leader. Studying the promotions of city leaders, Landry (2008) finds that the role of performance in particularly pronounced in high-profile promotions. Gang Guo (2009) finds that county leaders would strategically increase government spending during their third and fourth years, when decisions on their promotions are being made. By analyzing the content of county government websites, Jennifer Pan (2013) echoes Guo in showing that when county mayors first took office, they would emphasize their commitment to the distribution of public and private goods, but as their term approached to an end, they would highlight their economic achievements.

Having argued that the Chinese authoritarian regime has the ability to govern well, I now turn to the question whether it has the desire to govern well. My answer is still positive. But if a democratic government desires to govern well because elections force them to, why does the authoritarian government in China, which is non-elective and capable of repression, ever care to govern well? The answer is that good governance provides legitimacy that the regime needs. To make this case, I advance the following arguments: 1) The CCP regime needs political legitimacy and cannot rule by repression alone; 2) good governance is an important source of political legitimacy; 3) the previous sources of the CCP's legitimacy have dwindled, making good governance more important; 4) the double uncertainty of authoritarian politics compels leaders to be highly active in delivering good governance.

1) The CCP needs political legitimacy and cannot rule by repression alone

In this dissertation, I follow the Weberian tradition and define political legitimacy as citizens' belief that a regime's rule is morally acceptable (Gilley 2006, Easton 1975). This conception is criticized by political philosophers on the grounds that it turns a normative evaluation of a regime into citizens' subjective beliefs (Grafstein 1981). If political legitimacy is defined this way, the critic argues, a regime that meets no standard of procedural justice can still be counted as legitimate. My sympathy for this criticism notwithstanding, I do not think it should bother us here, because the goal of this study is not a normative evaluation of a regime's legitimacy. Rather, it is to demonstrate that the CCP regime does need its citizens' approval. If this approval is labeled otherwise, e.g. as political support or political trust, my argument will not be affected; the message remains the same.

With regime legitimacy thus defined, we can easily see the benefits of political legitimacy to a ruler. One benefit is that citizens would voluntarily obey the rulers they deem legitimate (Scholz and Lubell 1998, Scholz and Pinney 1995). If a regime loses legitimacy, it will face citizens' resistance of all sorts, ranging from civil disobedience to revolutions. It goes without saying that a regime would prefer a compliant citizenry to a rebellious one. But legitimacy is not the only path to citizens' compliance, nor is it the shortest. Another path is repression. If an authoritarian regime can use force to impose compliance, why would it bother to build legitimacy? The reason is that compared with building legitimacy, repression costs more but benefits less. Repression incurs economic, political, and moral costs. Economically, it is expensive to maintain an armed force that is capable of repressing large-scale revolts. Politically, it can be dangerous to maintain such a force. As Svolik (2012) acutely points out, authoritarian leaders' reliance on repressive agents will confer resources and political standing to those agents, who may eventually do away with authoritarian leaders. Repression is always morally

questionable, and it requires justification both to the domestic public and the international community. Such justifications are rhetorically challenging because the regime not only has to defend its own positions against the opponents' but it also has to show that the opponents deserve being treated with violence. The domestic public may be easy to convince if propaganda is strong, but the international community is not as easy to persuade. After the CCP cracked down the Tiananmen Square Protests in 1989, Western nations imposed sanctions on China (Joseph 2014). The US suspended military sales and Japan froze loans to China. Today, when China is deeply integrated into the global system, repression can be a costlier route to take. In terms of benefits, repression does not promise much. The result of repression is at best resigned compliance that could evaporate once repression is lifted, whereas the result of legitimacy is voluntary compliance that can help a regime to withstand adverse circumstances.

The cost-benefit analysis is not the only reason why the Chinese authoritarian regime needs legitimacy. Another reason is the populism in the Chinese political culture. In a systematic attempt to explain China's authoritarian resilience, Wenfang Tang (2016) highlights a strong populist orientation in the Chinese political culture. The populist orientation originated even before the party took power and persisted into the reformed era. In spite of the many signs that China is departing from a revolutionary society towards a rational bureaucratic society (Lieberthal and Oksenberg 1988, Manion 1993, 2004, Landry 2008), Tang (2016, 6) argues that there is a remarkable continuity of the Mass Line ideology – a populist ideology under the slogan "from the masses, to the masses." The Mass Line ideology encourages top leaders to build legitimacy through mass mobilization. It also encourages a direct contact between the regime and the masses outside of formal institutions. Tang notes that under this ideology, during the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1969, Mao directly appealed to his supporters outside the governments

in order to oust his opponents. Under this ideology, in 1989, Premier Zhao Ziyang appeared in

Tiananmen Square to plead the student protesters to leave before it was too late. Under this

ideology, in its anti-corruption campaign in 2012, the CCP encouraged ordinary citizens to

expose officials' wrongdoings and punished corrupt officials publicly. This populist culture

complements the cost-benefit analysis in committing the regime to building legitimacy. In short,

the CCP needs political legitimacy not only because it is a rational thing to do but also because it

is in its habit and mentality to do so.

2) Good governance is an important source of political legitimacy

It is intuitive that good governance enhances legitimacy (Krastev 2011). David Easton's

(1975) model of political support illustrates this point from a theoretical standpoint. In his model,

there are two types of support: diffuse support – of which political legitimacy is a dimension –

and specific support. Diffuse support refers to people's deep affection with a government or

regime. It is principally formed through socialization and is independent of the government's

outputs. It is durable; once formed, it is difficult to change. An example of diffuse support is

patriotism. One's love, or lack of it, for his or her country is developed as he or she was brought

up. No individual administration's failure is enough to shatter it, just as no individual

administration's success is enough to create it. Easton contends that diffuse support is more

important to a regime's survival than specific support.

Specific support is a more fluid form of political support. It goes up and down with a

government's outputs. It is usually associated with specific administrations and leaders instead of

a regime. An example is the approval rating of a president, which in itself tells little about

whether people think the whole political system legitimate. However, specific support is not without import. Long-term and steady changes of specific support can affect diffuse support.

According to this Eastonian model, government outputs affect specific support, which in turn affects diffuse support. Earlier, I defined governance quality as government outputs, and Easton (1975) treated legitimacy as one of the two dimensions of diffuse support. Applying the Eastonian model, it follows that governance quality affects political legitimacy. When the government performs well, it scores and when it performs badly, it loses points. Recent studies indeed find that the Chinese's people's political trust and political support are positively related to government performance. Dickson, Shen, and Yan (2013) show that the local governments' public good provision leads one to support the regime more. Xiaobo Lu (2014) shows that public awareness of the policy of school fee abolition increases political trust in the central government. However, contrary to Easton's idea that government performance affects regime legitimacy slowly and incrementally, both studies suggest that legitimacy can be sensitive to government performance within a relatively short period of time.

3) The previous sources of the CCP's legitimacy have dwindled, making good governance more important

The fact that good governance generates regime legitimacy does not necessarily mean that the CCP has to rely on it for legitimacy, because there may be other sources of legitimacy. During the first three decades (1949 -1978) of the CCP's rule, its legitimacy primarily came from the party's historical legacy and its adherence to the communist ideology. These were once stable and rich resources of legitimacy, overshadowing good governance as an important source.

Yet after Mao's death in 1976 and the subsequent market-oriented reform, these sources considerably declined.

CCP's historical legacy comes from its victories in two wars: the Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945) and the Chinese Civil War (1945-1949). In China's domestic education and propaganda, the CCP over-claimed its credit in the victory of the Sino-Japanese War by downplaying the contributions of the Nationalist army. Still, both victories brought legitimacy to the CCP regime because the public believed that the party won two righteous wars. The Sino-Japanese War was believed to be righteous because it was a defensive war against the Japanese aggressor. The Civil War was believed to be righteous because it was fought against the Nationalist regime that diligently pursued cronyism. The CCP was seen as the victor that brought peace, independence, and dignity to the despairing Chinese nation.

However, this historical legacy is bound to fade precisely because it is historical. The glorious past can be remembered, but it can never be relived. With respect to generating legitimacy, the historical legacy has the strongest impacts on the generations who lived through that part of history, who experienced the positive changes the wars brought. For the generations who could only learn that history at school, the historical legacy resonates less. As old generations pass and new generations come, the CCP's historical legacy is bound to be exhausted (Gilley 2008).

The communist regime also drew legitimacy from the utopian ideology of communism. Communism was both a belief system and practical guidelines that were systematically introduced by Marx and Engels and modified by Lenin. This ideology holds that the human society develops in a directional and mechanical fashion. The fundamental drive of this

development is economics. Economic development leads to class struggles, which move the human society towards the ultimate destination of a communist society, a heaven on earth where there is no state or class but sufficient goods for all. The communist ideology also asserts that the working class can play active roles in speeding up this process. It is difficult to comprehend how anyone can be active in a materialist world where what happens is destined to happen, but this theoretical difficulty does not prevent the communist parties in China and other communist countries from establishing dictatorships of the proletariat (proletariat means lower classes in general and the working class in particular).

The utopian ideology of communism could legitimate the communist dictatorships in China for two reasons. First, communism promises a better world than its ideological rivals of capitalism and liberal democracy. It promises a total eradication of inequality and poverty which capitalism and liberal democracy are good at tolerating. To justify its dictatorship, repression, and radical social transformation, the Chinese communist regime could invoke the logic that greater good is worth pursing at greater costs (Brown 2009). This logic dominated the party's official discourses in the early years of the regime. Second and equally important, many people once genuinely believed in communism. Therefore, the party's appeal to communism did not ring hollow. The masses widely considered it a grave offense to inhibit the communist cause. Class enemies deserved punishments and re-education. A conviction of being a class enemy would settle the matter. No further reasoning was needed. The widespread acceptance of the communist ideology left deep marks on the generations socialized into this period. They exhibit distinct political attitudes even decades later. For example, Wenfang Tang (2016, 51) finds that people who turned 18 years of age during 1949 to 1978 were more nationalistic than the later generations.

Similar to historical legacy, the communist ideology as a source of regime legitimacy decayed in the post-Mao era. Without representative data, it is hard to know for sure how many people in today's China still believe in communism. But a non-superficial interaction with the Chinese society would strongly indicate that very few do. Today, it is difficult to meet a person who shows a true interest in turning China into a stateless and classless communist country. It is more difficult to find a person who organizes his life around this communist ideal. People's views towards communism and communist party membership are rather cynical. The China Survey 2008 asked respondents what they thought other people joined the communist party for. 36% mentioned "helpful to career," 42% mentioned "to raise social status," 33 percent mentioned "political opportunities," and only 21% mentioned "to work for communism."

The demise of communism as a source of regime legitimacy is in part because of the CCP's own rejection of communism. Although in the party constitution, communism is still the ultimate goal of the party, it is paid very little attention to in practice. The CCP today looks nothing like a vanguard party dedicated to moving China toward communism. Rather, every step the party took since 1978 is in the opposite direction. Agricultural collectivization was abolished. Private ownership was allowed. The command economy gave way to the market economy. Previous class enemies were welcomed into the party. Communism is no longer at the center of the party's discourse, being replaced by economic development and social harmony. But economic development and social harmony are pale and banal substitutes of communism. Most important, since the communist party is in no unique position to pursue economic development and social harmony, they cannot provide the party with legitimacy as communism once did.

4) The double uncertainty in authoritarian politics compels leaders to be active in delivering good governance.

If the CCP is reliant on governance for building legitimacy, we are immediately confronted with a further question: which level of legitimacy is enough? A regime probably does not build legitimacy more than it needs. Then does the Chinese authoritarian regime deliver the minimum just enough to keep the masses from revolting? It does not. The reason, I argue, is that the double uncertainty inherent in authoritarian politics gives the Chinse leaders a sense of insecurity and compels them to perform.

In China, there is an uncertainty about the level of legitimacy a leader needs to stay in power. Legitimacy, defined as citizens' subjective belief that a government is morally right to rule, is quantifiable. It can be measured by how strongly people believe a regime is legitimate or how many people believe that their regime is legitimate. Yet however legitimacy is measured, there is no agreement in authoritarian countries on the amount of legitimacy a leader must hold in order to stay in power (Tang 2016, Zhou and Ou-Yang 2016). Leaders know that they need legitimacy but do not know how much they need. But even if there were such an agreement in authoritarian countries, the uncertainty still remains because nobody has any reason to trust the agreement. In authoritarian countries, no independent authority has the power to enforce such agreements (Olson 1993, Wintrobe 1998, Svolik 2012). Violence is the ultimate arbiter of conflicts (Svolik 2012). By contrast, no such uncertain troubles democratic leaders. In democratic countries, legitimacy is expressed by popular votes, and there is clear agreement on how many votes a democratic leader needs to stay in office.

The Chinese authoritarian regime is also uncertain about its real legitimacy. Authoritarian leaders do not have accurate information on how popular they really are. In democratic countries, the number of votes accurately reflects – or to be precise – it defines leaders' legitimacy. Authoritarian leaders, on the other hand, have no elections to gauge their legitimacy (Shambaugh 1996, Tang 2016, Zhou and Ou-Yang 2016). Their only alternative is opinion polls. But authoritarian leaders still have reasons to be skeptical about poll numbers. This is not because polls can be poorly conducted – although this is often true – but because authoritarian leaders are aware that their ability to repress opponents may make them pose as supporters (Wintrobe 1998). As a consequence, strong legitimacy may be deceptive.

If an authoritarian regime knows that it needs legitimacy but does not know how much it needs and how much it has, the only rational thing to do is build legitimacy actively or even obsessively. This is consistent with the observation made by different scholars that the authoritarian regime in China is highly responsive to citizens. The Chinese leaders are often forced to appear tough to threats from the US, Taiwan, and Japan, even when this is clearly unwise from a diplomatic standpoint (Shirk 2008, Nathan 2015). In making their expenditure decisions, provincial and city officials would be receptive to citizens' preferences expressed though quasi-democratic institutions (Meng, Pan, and Yang 2014). The Chinese regime often outperforms their democratic counterparts in being responsive to protestors, though this responsiveness would look inordinate to the Western eye. In China, protests or threats of protests can be very effective in getting the government to respond (O'brien and Li 2005, Bernstein and Lü 2003, Chen 2009, Chen, Pan, and Xu 2015, Tang 2016). Township governments in several provinces even illegally held popular elections to cope with local legitimacy crisis (Li 2007).

2.3.3 Hypotheses

My theoretical framework delineates an authoritarian logic of governance which differs from the democratic logic of governance. The most significant difference lies in the fundamental driving force for leaders' desire to govern well. In democratic countries, leaders are driven by citizens' bottom-up control. But in authoritarian China, leaders are driven by their fear of losing regime legitimacy. To test my theoretical framework, I propose five hypotheses. All of the five hypotheses concern the county governments in China. The first three hypotheses are directly deduced from my theoretical framework. The fourth and fifth are rival hypotheses based on the idea that the governance in China follows essentially the same logic as democratic governance.

If the authoritarian regime in China desires good governance and has the ability to transfer this desire to local leaders through promotion incentives, we should expect that local leaders with strong promotion incentives deliver better governance than local leaders with weak promotion incentives.

H1: The strength of a leader's promotion incentive is positively related to governance quality.

If governance in China is driven by leaders' insecurity about regime legitimacy and if the party-state has the ability to control local officials, we should expect that leaders in areas with lower levels of past legitimacy should be under greater pressure to govern well. Therefore:

H2: There is better governance in areas with lower political trust in the past.

If the Chinese regime deals with its insecurity about its legitimacy by being sensitive to protests, we should expect better governance in areas with more protests in the past.

H3: There is better governance in areas with more protests in the past.

On the other hand, if the governance in China essentially follows the same logic as democratic governance, we should expect governance to be positively associated with citizens' bottom-up control over officials. There are naturally fewer mechanisms of bottom-up control in authoritarian countries. The two proxies of bottom-up control are voting in village or residential committee elections and social capital. Admittedly, the rural village elections and urban residential elections have nothing to do with choosing county leaders, but voting in these elections still reflect a citizenry's reliance on formal democratic institutions. Social capital is chosen because it is thought of as being a key contributor to good democratic governance (see 2.2.3).

H4: There is better governance in areas with higher voter turnout rates in village or residential committee elections in the past.

H5: There is better governance in areas with richer social capital in the past.

3 MEASURING COUNTY GOVERNANCE IN CHINA

As I argued in 2.3.1, good governance is very near being a universal ideal. People may quarrel about the merits of democracy and autocracy, yet few would disagree that a good government should provide for, be accountable to, and be responsive to, its people. However, a necessary step towards this ideal is to know what good governance is, both in abstract and in concrete terms. If we do not know what it is in the abstract, we cannot measure it in specific; if we cannot measure it in specific, we cannot improve it in practice. As a preparation for testing the five hypotheses proposed in the preceding chapter, this chapter conceptualizes governance, and it measures governance quality in 133 Chinese counties using data from county government websites.

3.1 System of Output Conception?

The conceptualization of governance is a much contested area in the governance literature. Scholars are divided into those who conceptualize governance as procedures and institutions, and those who conceptualize governance as outputs. David Easton's (1957) functionalist model of political system can us help illustrate this division. In the middle of Figure 1 is a political system – a totality of executive bodies, legislatures, courts, and bureaucracies. The political system takes inputs in the forms of popular support and citizen demands, and it produces outputs such as decisions and policies. One camp of scholars argues that governance

should be conceptualized as what the system looks like or how the system operates. Examples

are regime types and legal system. I call this the system conception of governance. The second

camp argues that governance should be conceptualized as what comes out of the system; i.e.

outputs such as service delivery and social spending. I call this the output conception of

governance. Other scholars choose a middle ground and mix the system and output conceptions

together. In my study, I adopt the output conception of governance and measure governance

quality accordingly. This choice is made for both theoretical and practical reasons. But before I

elaborate on them, let me first review some research that adopts the system conception.

Figure 1 David Easton's Functionalist Model of Political System
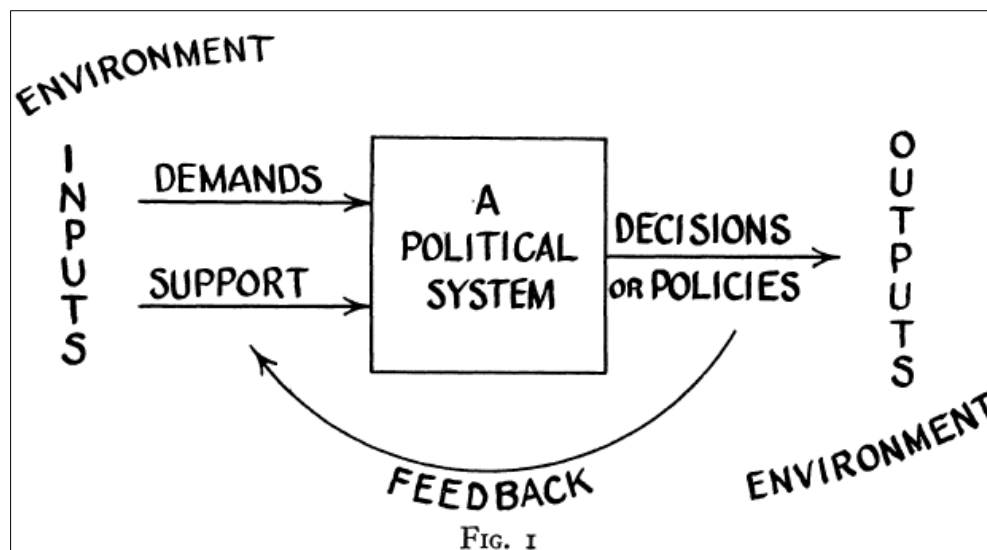
Source: Easton, David. 1975. "A Re-assessment of the Concept of Political Support." p. 384

Max Weber's (2015) ideal bureaucracy is an example of system conception of

governance. The six characteristics specified by Weber were listed in 2.2.1. Apparently to

Weber, what makes a bureaucracy ideal is how it is structured and operates, instead of what it

produces. Other works carry this tradition to other areas of government and measure governance

by procedural justice (Kaufmann, Kraay, and Mastruzzi 2010, Hendriks 2013), state intervention in the market (La Porta et al. 1999), political freedoms (La Porta et al. 1999, Kaufmann, Kraay, and Mastruzzi 2010), rule of law (Kaufmann, Kraay, and Mastruzzi 2010, Adsera, Boix, and Payne 2003), legal system (Adsera, Boix, and Payne 2003), control of corruption (Adsera, Boix, and Payne 2003, Kaufmann, Kraay, and Mastruzzi 2010), bureaucratic quality (Adsera, Boix, and Payne 2003), impartiality (Rothstein 2011), protection of property (Adsera, Boix, and Payne 2003), and resilience (Hendriks 2013).

A thorough yet not-so-convincing defense of the system conception was lately made by Francis Fukuyama (2013). In his thought-provoking article, Francis Fukuyama offers four arguments against the output conception. First, he argues that outputs are often determined by exogenous factors beyond a government's control, and nothing beyond a government's control should be incorporated in the conception of governance. For example, health and education are also results of a country's natural and economic endowments and are hence not good measures of governance. Second, Fukuyama contends that outputs are difficult to measure. Speaking of some common measures of legal system, he states these measures such as time of trial and rate of case clearances reveal little about the justice produced by a legal system. Third, he holds that outputs cannot capture normative dimensions of governance. When it comes to public safety for example, we should not only care about whether a criminal case is solved, but how it is solved – was the procedure just, and was torture used? Fourth, he warns that once outputs are introduced, it is hard to know where to stop. Researchers may go down a slippery slope and start to treat anything citizens desire as governance.

Fukuyama's criticisms of the output conception of governance surely deserve attention. But just because the output conception may cause problems does not mean the system

conception is better. In addition, all the problems Fukuyama names can be solved by careful conceptualization and meticulous operationalization. It is true that the output conception may hold a government responsible for outputs beyond its control. An easy solution would be to distinguish outputs from outcomes. In his study of institutional performance in Italy, Putnam (1993) emphatically makes this distinction. Outputs are things over which a government has direct and total control but outcomes are things beyond a government's control at least to some degree. Thus, health spending is an output, but life expectancy is an outcome; social security spending is an output, but unemployment rate is an outcome. A narrow focus on outputs instead of outcomes will avoid introducing elements beyond a government's control. It will also ease Fukuyama's concern about "when to stop." We stop when things get beyond a government's control.

Fukuyama's view that outputs are difficult to measure is unbalanced. Even though outputs of a judicial system is recalcitrant to operationalization, it does not mean that outputs are generally more difficult to measure than systems. In fact, a more balanced evaluation should indicate that outputs are easier to measure than systems, precisely because outputs tend to be more tangible than systems. Institutional performance can be measured by the speed of budgeting, social spending, or even the density of daycares (Putnam 1993). But system concepts such as accountability, political freedoms, and procedural justice are very hard to measure objectively and directly. No wonder expert surveys dominate the measurements in research that adopts the system conception of governance.

As for Fukuyama's argument that output measures miss normative dimensions of governance, e.g. procedural justice, I think we should ask whether normative concerns should be parts of governance in the first place. No doubt procedural justice is important, but the question

is whether it should be treated as a cause of good governance or good governance itself. I believe we should treat it as a cause of good governance rather than governance itself, because rigorous causal analyses require that we do not conflate causes with results. We are not indifferent to normative concerns by treating procedural justice as a cause of good governance, because we can still ask important questions like whether procedural justice contributes to good outcomes.

Furthermore, I prefer the output conception of governance because it allows a fair comparison between different types of regimes and bridge together the governance literature and the regime theory literature. If we measure governance by outputs regardless of how the political system looks like, we will be able to conclude that Singapore and Hong Kong, though non-democratic, still have governance of top quality. This can lead to a question of interest to both governance scholars and regime scholars: how do those governments govern well without democratic institutions? If adopt the system conception and make democracy a part of good governance, we will give Singapore and Hong Kong lower ratings, and the interesting just asked will be stifled.

My last reason for adopting the output conception of governance is a practical one and specific to this project. Since the government bodies I study are Chinese county governments, the government structures and institutions are highly similar if not identical. If I adopt the system conception, there will be little variation on county governance.

3.2   Subjective or Objective Measures

Having settled for the output conception of governance, we still need to make a decision on operationalization: whether to use subjective or objective measures of governance. An opt-made point is that there is no objective measures, because any data collection process inevitably involves human beings – even totally automated data collection has to be programmed by human beings. Economic indicators such as GDP and government expenditure are subjective, because they are calculated by humans. This view, taken to the extreme, will become the posts-modernist idea that everything written by human hands and uttered by human mouths is subjective. While I am interested in knowing whether the post-modernist thinks post-modernism is subjective too, I believe this unconventional usage of the word subjective should not force us to pretend that Gini coefficient as a measure of inequality has similar objectivity as responses to the survey question "How unequal do you think the society is?"

In the case of governance, the advantages of objective measures over subjective ones are compelling, although scholars frequently opt for the latter for its ease of access. Objective measures are superior ultimately because they have higher internal validity. Governance, whether conceptualized as systems or outputs, is a reality independent of perception, just as speed is a reality independent of perception. Miles per hour is a more valid measure of a vehicle's speed than how fast a passenger feels the vehicle is traveling. Similarly, objective indicators of governance are more valid than subjective ones. The perception-based World Governance Index (WGI) (Kaufmann, Kraay, and Mastruzzi 2004, 2010), has been criticized for lacking internal validity. For example, scholars find that the WGI is highly correlated with Freedom House's ratings on democracy, but WGI and Freedom House ratings are two distinct datasets collected by two different organization, and they were intended to measure two different concepts (Bratton and Chang 2006, Wang 2010).

Subjective measures of governance are also troubled by survey respondents' different standards. What appears a highly responsive government to person A may seem hopelessly unresponsive to person B. What about subjective measures at the aggregate level? Will the rule of aggregation cancel out the differences in standards? It seems not. One curious finding in comparative politics is that authoritarian regimes have higher levels of popular support than democratic governments. If we take the survey data at their face value, we should conclude that Vietnam and China have the best governance in the world (Norris 2011). However, superficial comparisons of this sort can be very misleading. Gary King and his coauthors (2004), taken at face value, survey data show that people in China have higher levels of internal efficacy than people in Mexico, but after the different standards of the two peoples are corrected by their vignette method, the Mexicans turn out to be more efficacious than the Chinese.

Perhaps the most famous indicators of governance quality is the WGI developed by Daniel Kaufmann and his colleagues (2004, 2010) at the World Bank. It is a dataset that heavily relies on subjective data. Their data are mostly from surveys of experts and ordinary households. Kaufmann et al. (2010) make four points in favor of subjective measures of governance, which I do not find very convincing. First, they argue that the distinctions between subjective and objective indicators are not clear-cut, and many "so-called" objective measures still involve subjectivity. As a just discussed, even if subjectivity is ever-present, this does not mean no measures are categorically more objective than others, and because governance is an objective reality, we should always strive for more objective measures. Second, they maintain that citizen perceptions may have real influence on government agencies, and therefore we should measure governance quality by perceptions. While I agree scholars have a duty to change the world, but I am not sure if it should be, or can be, achieved by sacrificing validity of research. Third, they

state that in some areas of governance, such as corruption, objective data are unavailable. This is a data availability issue with which I am in sympathy. But the unavailability of objective data does not automatically make subjective measures better. Fourth, they hold that objective data tend to capture only the *de jure* laws on the book and miss the *de fecto* reality on the ground. This can be a problem if we only look on the law book, yet as I will show next, there are many objective measures that can capture governance on the ground.

3.3   Measuring Chinese County Governance through Government Websites

In this section, I construct indicators of governance quality in Chinese counties. In light of the discussion above, I will focus on government outputs instead of systems, and I will try to obtain objective measure of governance quality. In addition, previous research related to governance in China usually focus on the economic side of governance, but governance is a multi-faceted concept that covers more than economic management. So another goal of my data construction is comprehensive indicators that capture most important facets of governance.

In what follows, I will explain my three choices in measuring governance quality: 1) my use of government website data; 2) my focus on counties; and 3) my focus on the four aspects of governance.

3.3.1   County Websites as a Source of Governance Data

Objective measures of governance are difficult to obtain. Resourceful international organizations such as the World Bank can make concerted efforts to construct country-level indicators of governance, but such efforts are very rare at the subnational level. This perhaps explains the routine reliance on subjective governance measures of China scholars (Kennedy, Rozelle, and Shi 2004, Saich 2006, 2007, Wang 2010, Lewis-Beck, Tang, and Martini 2013). Objective measures are used infrequently, but most of those objective measures are economic indicators, such as GDP growth and public finance (Zhang et al. 2004, Tsai 2007, Landry 2008, Dickson, Shen, and Yan 2013). Yet economic performance and government spending can hardly capture the multifaceted concept of governance. Furthermore, the government bodies examined by these studies are usually provincial or municipal governments (Landry 2008, Dickson, Shen, and Yan 2013) and village committees (Zhang et al. 2004, Tsai 2007). Studies focusing on provincial and municipal governments can be nationally representative, but the observations are usually relatively few. And as I will explain, these governments are not the governments with which citizens have frequent contact. Villagers presumably have more frequent contact with their village committees, but studies on village governance are rarely nationally representative.

Aiming at indicators of governance that can capture the fullness of governance and are nationally representative, I turn to a novel source of data – county government websites. Today, virtually every county government in China has a website. The near-universal presence of county websites is probably a result of the Open Government Information Ordinance (OGIO) promulgated by the State Council in 2007 (Wen 2007). The ordinance designates government websites as key platforms of information disclosure and it decrees the types of information to be disclosed. Having browsed more than 200 county government websites, I find that county websites serve many more functions than information disclosure. They also deliver services,

conduct online surveys, and facilitate communication between citizens and governments. The features and layouts of government websites are remarkably similar, but the depths and quality of those features exhibit much heterogeneity that invites comparison.

There are several advantages of collecting governance data from county websites, the first being the large volume of data. A typical county government website delivers many online services, discloses all kinds of information, and serves as a platform for the communication between citizens and governments. The riches of information, which can be loaded in a computer in an instant, is unimaginable for traditional fieldwork. The diversity of data on government websites enable us to construct governance index that covers different aspects of governance. In addition, the data on government websites are longitudinal and keep updating every day. With suitable data collection techniques, we can build time-series data, a luxury to governance scholars in the past. Moreover, the similarity website features and layouts allows for comparisons of a big number of county governments on a variety of variables, providing unprecedented opportunities for highly generalizable research.

The most common criticism of government websites as a source of governance data is that the data only capture online governance, while most government activities take place offline in the real world. At the heart of this criticism is the concern that a government's website may misrepresent its real performance. Two points can be made in response. First, the distinction between online governance and offline governance may not be all that meaningful. When Internet and portable electronic devices permeate every sphere of life, the dividing line between online and offline governance becomes fuzzy. In some American cities, citizens no longer need to wait in the DMV waiting rooms to get a driver's license. They can sign in with their cellphones, go about their business, and get a text message when it's their turn. Is this online

governance or offline governance? A government agency may stick its opening hours on its front door. It may also post it on its website. Are there real differences between these two activities? In most cases, it seems that online governance and offline governance are no more useful categorization than indoor governance and outdoor governance.

However, even if the distinction between online and offline governance is valid, my study is still not confined to online governance. This is my governance data include traditional measures of governance; government websites only serve as data sources. For example, one of my governance indicators is social spending as a percentage of total government spending. Nobody would think this is only an indicator of online governance. In fact, websites are the only suitable media where government spending may be released in detail. Where else can you post a spreadsheet with three hundred rows?

3.3.2   Why Counties?

Why do I focus on counties instead of provinces or towns? To answer this question, it is necessary to know the local administrative divisions in China. As Table 1 shows, the top level of the local government is the provincial level, followed by the vice-provincial level, the prefectural level, the county level, and the township level. There are 34 units at the provincial level that are equivalent to the states in the US. Besides provinces, it is hard to draw similar parallels at other levels between China and the US. Nonetheless, county-level units in China, assuming different labels shown in the second column of Table 1, can be roughly understood as small cities or districts within big cities. I choose to focus on the county level instead of the higher provincial

levels because citizens have more frequent and deeper contact with the county governments. I choose counties over the lower towns or township governments because towns or townships as administrative units do not cover China completely. That is to say, every citizen in China can be found in a county-level units, but not everyone can be found in township-level or town-level units. For citizens in urban areas, the lowest-level administrative units are counties.[2] I choose counties over towns or townships also because county governments possess greater political and economic powers and therefore are more politically significant than towns or townships governments.

Table 1 Administrative Divisions of Local Governments in China

Provincial level (省级)	Provinces (省)
	Autonomous regions (自治区)
	Municipalities (直辖市)
Vice provincial level (副省级)	Vice provincial-level cities (副省级市)
	Vice provincial-level autonomous prefecture (副省级自治州)
	Vice provincial-level districts (副省级市辖区)
Prefectural level (地级)	Prefecture-level cities (地级市)
	Prefectures (地区)

---

[2] Typically, town-level units are the lowest administrative bodies in rural areas, whereas county-level units are the lowest administrative bodies in urban areas. Village committees are not formal administrative units in China.

Table 1 – continued

County level (县级)	Counties (县)
	Districts (市辖区)
	County-level cities (县级市)
	Autonomous counties (自治县)
	Banners (旗)
	Autonomous banners (自治旗)
Township level (乡级)	Towns (镇)
	Townships (乡)

3.3.3 Sampling and Measurements

I collected governance data of 133 localities from their government websites. A complete list of the 133 localities can be found in Table A1 in the appendix. Among the 133 localities, 27 are prefectural-level units, as they are districts of the four municipalities (直辖市): Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, and Chongqing. The remaining 106 localities are county-level units. To avoid verbosity, in my subsequent analysis, I use the word county to refer to all of the 133 localities. Since there is no substantive difference between districts of municipalities and county-level units, this conflation is inconsequential. The 133 counties are chosen because they are the principal sampling units (PSUs) of the 2010 Chinese General Social Survey (CGSS), which employed the Probability Proportional to Size (PPS) sampling method. This allows localities with bigger population greater likelihood of being selected (see Figure 2). By focusing on these localities, I can gather nationally representative data on governance and also tie them to the CGSS opinion data. The CGSS is a national survey project that resembles the General Social Survey in the US. Starting in 2003, there have been eight waves of surveys. My study draws on

the data from the 2010 CGSS firstly because it is the only wave of CGSS with county

information available to the public. Without county information, I cannot connect county public

opinion data to governance data collected from county government websites. In addition, I

choose to use the 2010 data because my hypotheses require opinion data from the past, but they

still have to be recent enough to have impacts on governance quality. Since I collected the

governance data in 2015, five years seem to be a reasonable lag length.

Figure 2 Principal Sampling Units (PSUs) in CGSS 2010
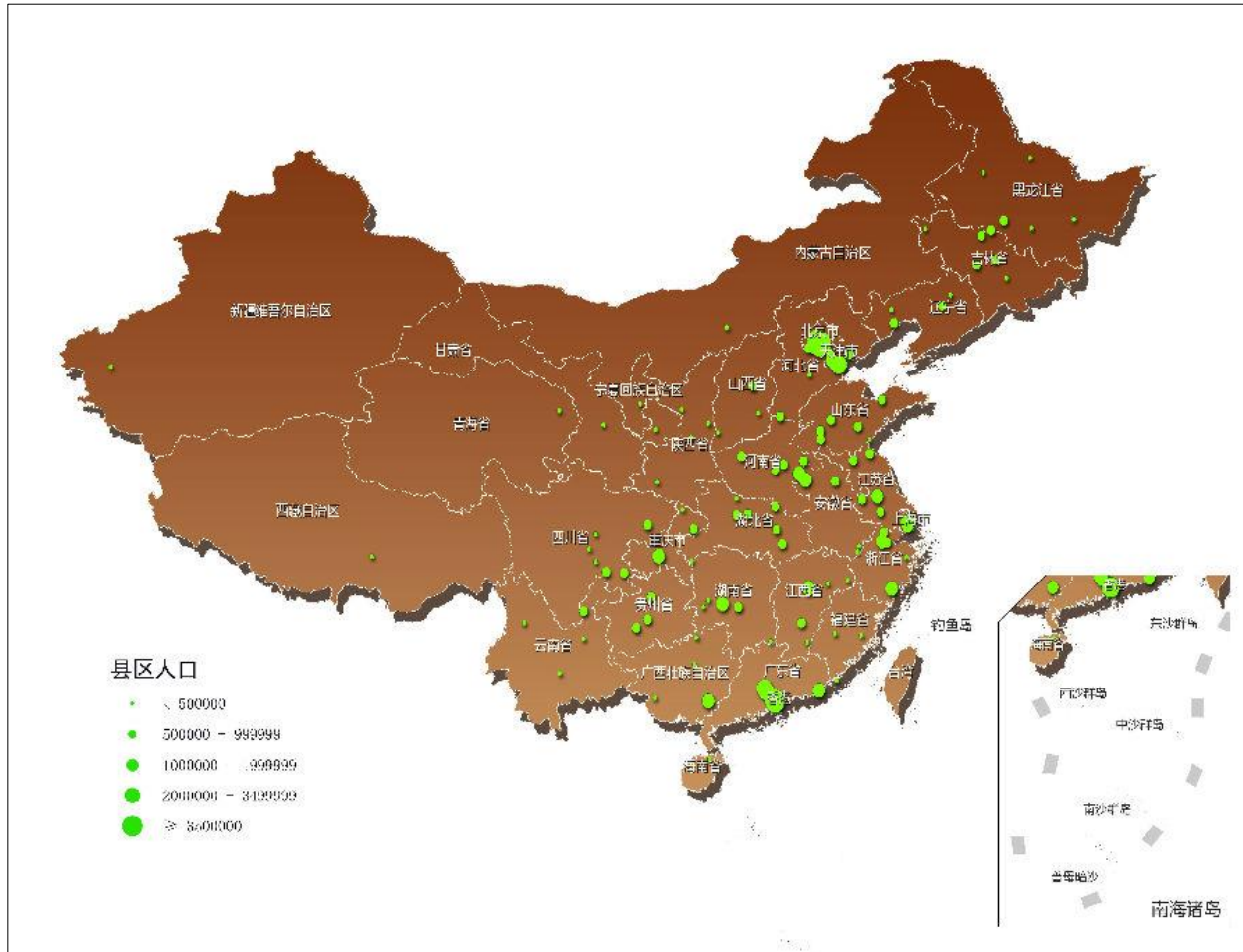
I collected data from the 133 websites between November, 2015 and January, 2016. A total of 2, 234 data points were collected. Henceforth, this dataset is referred to as the Chinese County Governance Data.To describe my data collection process roughly, I browsed each government website, extracted information, and hand-coded the variables on a spreadsheet. The similarity of websites tremendously facilitated this tedious yet fulfilling process. Still, it is possible to make errors. But since the coding task involves very little interpretation of the texts, the likelihood of errors should be considerably lower than that of interpretive content analysis. In the future, I will collaborate with a second coder and check inter-coder reliability of my data.

County governance quality is measured by four indicators: 1) quality of public services; 2) information transparency; 3) weight of social spending; and 4) government responsiveness. I select these four aspects in the belief that a good government should deliver services of high quality, be transparent, be generous to spend on education, health, and social security, and be responsive to citizens' needs. Human conscience and our common moral experience should allow us to accept this belief with ease. Yet it may still be wondered why these four in particular are chosen. Compared with some thick indicators of governance (e. g., La Porta et al. 1999, Adsera, Boix, and Payne 2003, Kaufmann, Kraay, and Mastruzzi 2010), my four-dimension indicators look slim. Nevertheless, for reasons articulated earlier, the thinness of my measurement is intentional. I strictly limit governance to outputs and exclude system measures like voice and accountability (Kaufmann, Kraay, and Mastruzzi 2010) and outcome measures like infant mortality (La Porta et al. 1999). Still, my measures are less comprehensive than Putnam's (1993) twenty-one indicators of institutional performance, which also narrowly focus on outputs. Unfortunately, a researcher has to make a decision between resources and ambition, a decision especially tough when the former is tiny and the latter huge. Given the big number of counties I study and the limited recourses I have, I consider my measures a reasonably good balance between resources and ambitions. I can enviously imagine the improvements of my measurements had I been given Putnam's resources.

1) Quality of public services

To measure quality of public services, I focus on two services: application of travel visa to Hong Kong and Macau, and application of birth permits for second children. These two

services are chosen because they are services ordinary citizens are likely to use. Being Special

Administrative Regions of China, Hong Kong and Macau require entry visas. Riding on the

increasing popularity of overseas tourism, Hong Kong and Macau, as "quasi-overseas"

destinations, attract swarms of tourists from mainland China. Because of the single-child policy

which was initiated in the early 1980s, parents need to apply for a permit if they want to have a

second child. Children born without such permits may cause fines to their parents and the lack

proper documents which are necessary for the children's later enrollments in public schools or

other social services.[3]

Table 2 Coding Scheme for Public Service Quality

Description	Value
No mention of the service	0
Mention the service AND Has guidelines on how to apply on the ground AND Miss key information, e.g. which documents to bring	1
Mention the service AND Has guidelines on how to apply on the ground AND Has complete key information	2
Mention the service AND Has guidelines on how to apply on the ground AND Has complete key information AND Has downloadable forms	3
Accept online application	4

---

[3] Starting January 2016, parents no longer need permits to have second children, but this policy change took place after I had collected all the data on this variable.

For each of the two services, I created a scale ranging from 0 to 4. The coding scheme is presented in Figure 3. After constructing both scales, I added them together to create an indicator of social services ranging from 0 to 8 (see Figure 3).

Figure 3 Distribution of Quality of Social Services
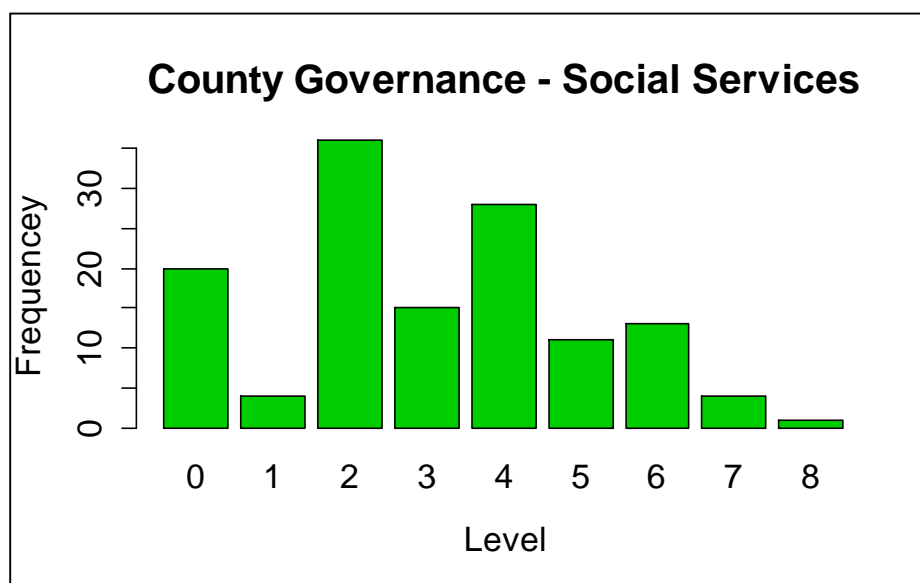
Note: N = 132
Source: The Chinese County Governance Data

2) Information transparency

Information transparency is measured by the releases of county government spending of the year 2014. I focus on government spending because a government's precise and detailed disclosure on how it spends its money is widely considered a hallmark of being transparent. In authoritarian countries like China, the widths and depths of disclosure is indicative of a government's commitment to transparency. The coding scheme is presented in

Table *3*. If a website does not release information on government spending, it is coded as 0. If a website releases information on government spending and there are only figures of the items on the top level, and if the top-level items are incomplete, it is coded as 1. Examples of the top-level, the second-level, and the third-level items are education spending, spending on ordinary education, and spending on primary education. Items on the top level are considered incomplete if they miss one or more of the twelve categories stipulated by the Budget Law (2014) which was passed in 1994 and amended in 2014. The twelve categories are general public services, foreign affairs, public safety, agriculture, environmental protection, education, science and technology, culture, health, sports, social security and employment. In my sample, the releases coded 1 overwhelmingly cover fewer than 10 top-level items and are presented in news reports or government reports read by county mayors to local People's Congress. Such reports tend to flaunt a government's good performance in many different areas and they usually devote no more than one or two paragraphs to government spending. It is unsurprising that such spending information is general and superficial.

If a website has releases on government spending, if it only contains spending figures on items on the top level, and if the top-level items are complete, it is coded as 2. Top-level items are considered complete if they encompass all the 12 items stipulated by the 2014 Budget Law, as listed above. If a website has releases on government spending, if it not only contains complete items on the top level but also details down to the second level, it is coded as 3. The distribution of information transparency is shown in Figure 4.

Table 3 Coding Scheme of Information
Transparency

Description	Value
No release	0
Release AND Only incomplete items on the top level	1
Release AND Only complete items on the top level	2
Release AND Complete items on the top level AND Details on the second level	3

Figure 4 Distribution of Information Transparency
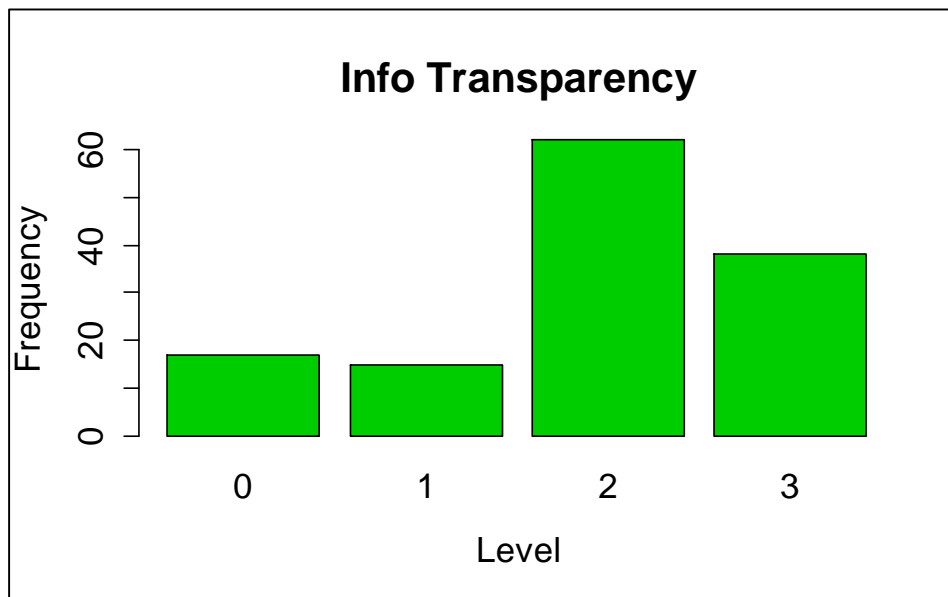
Note: N = 132
Source: The Chinese County Governance Data

3) Weight of social spending

Weight of social spending is measured by spending on education, health, and social

security as a percentage of total government spending in the year 2014. Generous social

spending is widely regarded as a characteristic of good governance. It facilitates human

development and furthers equality, and it goes against political leaders' self-seeking instinct to

benefit themselves at the expense of the general public. I focus on weight of social spending in

total spending instead of the sheer size of social spending because the latter is often a function of

a county's population size and economic development that are beyond a government's control,

while weight of social spending taps into a government's commitment to general welfare. Data

of social spending and total spending are collected from 2012 China Statistical Yearbook for

Regional Economy except the data of eight districts in Shanghai, which are missing in the

yearbook. I filled these missing values with the spending figures in 2014 gathered from

government information releases on the websites of those eight districts. The distribution is

presented in Figure 5.

Figure 5 Distribution Social Spending as a Percentage of Total Spending
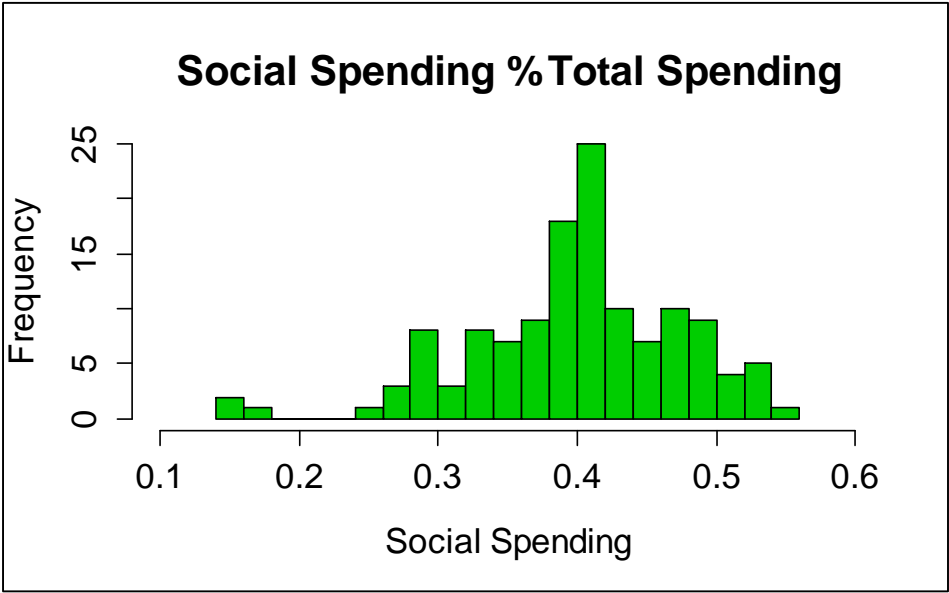
Note: N = 131
Source: The Chinese County Governance Data

4) Government responsiveness

If we compare the websites of local governments in China and in the US, we can find a interesting difference in the communication between citizens and the government in these two countries. While government websites in both countries have channels for citizens to express their concerns, the websites in the US only support private and one-on-one communication, whereas the websites in China tend to publicly display government-citizen communication. For example, on the website of Iowa City, Iowa (https://www.icgov.org/), a section called "Report a Concern" allows citizens to log in and leave messages. A citizen's initial message would supposedly start a thread of correspondence accessible only to the citizen and the government. By contrast, on government websites in China, citizens can often report their concerns and hear back in a public way. On county government websites in China, it is easy to find tabs bearing the names "Government-citizen Interaction (政民互动)," "Public Participation (公众参与)," "Interaction and Communication (互动交流)," or "Mayor's Mailbox (市长信箱)." Some of the platforms closely resemble online forums, where citizens' posts and governments' replies are all under the sun (e.g. http://www.hrbdw.gov.cn/app/bxt/index.jsp). Some governments are more restrained in exposing this communication and are more selective in the types of communication they disclose (e.g. http://www.changning.sh.cn/jact/front/front_mailpublist.action?sysid=9). The Chinese counties' conscientious efforts to showcase their communication with citizens point to the importance of responsiveness in Chinese county leaders' incentive structure. On those online platforms, citizens post all types of comments. They could be as petty as requesting photographic evidence of one's own traffic violations and as provocative as impeaching corrupt officials. To allow impeaching local officials on their own turf is a puzzling thing to do whether the

government is democratic or not, yet it won't be all that surprising in light of the authoritarian regime's ruthless efforts to muster political legitimacy, as I explained in 2.3.2.

I measure government responsiveness by two indicators: the types of cases publicized and the total number of cases publicized. As Table 4 shows, if a government has no platform for government-citizen interaction or it publicizes no cases, it is coded as 0. Note that I do not count Email addresses as interaction platforms. Firstly, it is because Email is seldom used by the Chinese people in their daily communication; instant messages apps such as WeChat and QQ are much more popular nowadays. Second, Email is not much used by county governments either, as only 55 percent of the 133 counties provide Email addresses on their websites and many of the Email addresses are for technical support. If a website has government-citizen platforms and only publicizes the cases with replies, it is coded as 1. If a website has interaction platforms and publicizes cases both with and without replies, it is coded as 2. Because publicizing unprocessed cases would subject a government to citizens' supervision on its work progress, it signals a greater commitment to being responsive. Distribution of this indicator is shown on Figure 6.

Table 4 Coding Scheme of Government Responses: Types of
Cases Publicized

Description	Value
No platform or no cases	0
Cases publicized AND only cases with responses publicized	1
Cases publicized AND cases with or without responses publicized	2

Figure 6 Distribution of Government Responsiveness I:
Types of Cases Publicized
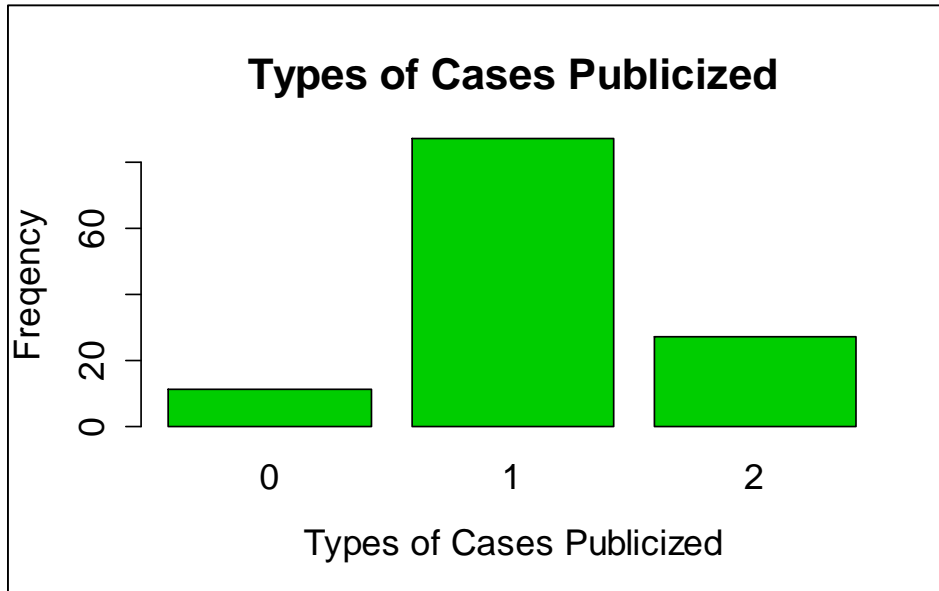
Note: N = 125
Source: The Chinese County Governance Data

The second indicator of government responsiveness is the total number of cases

publicized. This is meant to tap into the total volume of cases a government has processed. To be

sure, a government may only publicize a portion of the cases it has processed and therefore the

total number of publicized cases may not be the real number of cases a government has

processed. But it is reasonable to think that governments are generally motivated to come across

as responsive and show the best they have. As shown in Figure 7, the distribution of case

numbers is heavily right-skewed.

Figure 7 Distribution of Government Responsiveness II:
Total Number of Cases Publicized

Number of Cases Publicized

Frequency (y-axis) vs Number of Cases (x-axis)
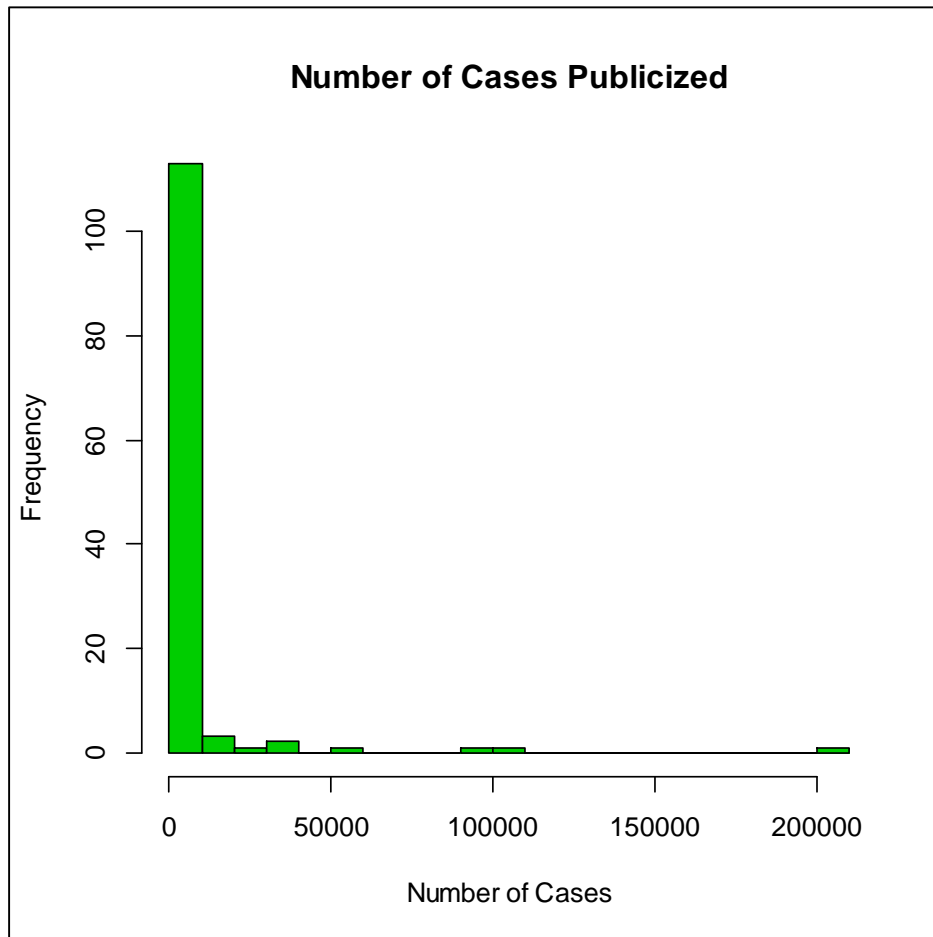
Note: N = 1234
Source: The Chinese County Governance Data

To combine the two indicators of government responsiveness into a single index of government responsiveness, I took four steps: a) rescale the types of publicized to 0-1; b) log-transform the total number of cases publicized due to its heavy right skewness; c) rescale the result so Step c into 0-1; d) take the sum of the results Step a and Step c. The distribution of the index of government responsiveness is presented in Figure 8.

Figure 8 Distribution of Government Responsiveness Index
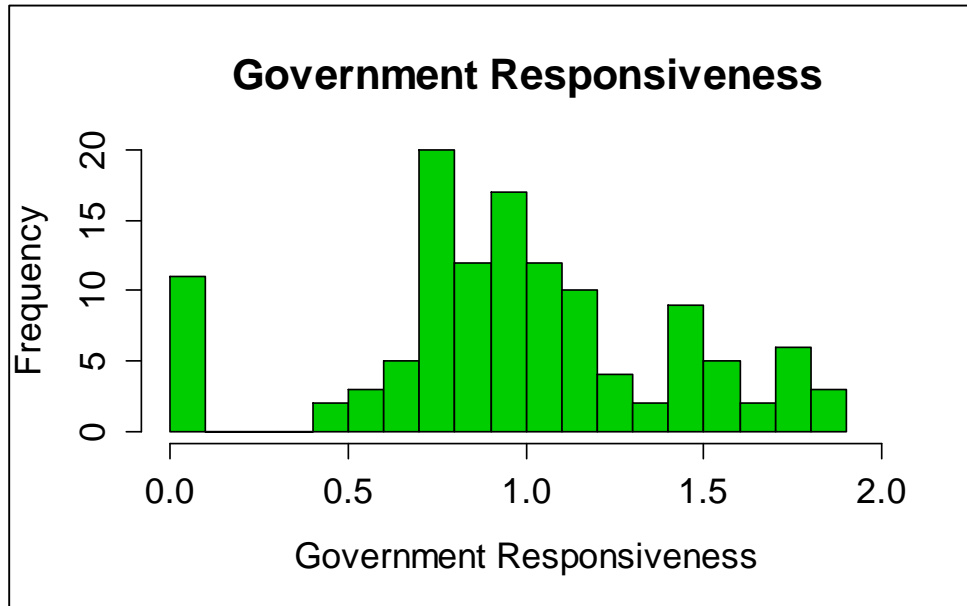
Note: 133
Source: The Chinese County Governance Data

Before combining these four aspects of governance, it is helpful to take a look at how they correlate with each other.

Table *5* shows the correlation matrix of the four aspects of governance. Public service quality correlate with the other three aspects at the 0.1 level, but the other three aspects are only weakly correlated with one another. I also performed a factor analysis on the four variables. As Table 6 shows, public services are heavily loaded on the factor, while the other three weakly loaded on the factor. Taken together, the correlation matrix and the factor analysis suggest that county governments who have good public services generally do well in the other three aspects, but a government's performance in the other three aspects provides no similar clues.

Table 5 Correlation Matrix of Four Aspects of Governance

	Public services	Information transparency	Social spending	Government responsiveness
Public services	1	0.14	0.10	0.11
Information transparency	0.14	1	-0.02	-0.03
Social spending	0.10	-0.02	1	0.09
Government responsiveness	0.11	-0.03	0.09	1

Table 6 Factor Analysis of Four
Aspects of Governance

Governance indicators	Factor loadings
Public services	0.997
Info transparency	0.139
Social spending	0.141
Government responsiveness	0.112

This may cause concerns. If we believe good measures of governance quality should tightly cohere with each other, then modest performance of correlation and factor analyses seem to suggest that either I committed too many measurement errors or I chose the wrong aspects of governance to measure. The first is a measurement concern, on which I can say nothing beyond that I tried my best to follow the coding scheme closely. A good judgment can only be made with the help of a second coder. The second concern is a conceptual one. Are the four aspects of governance poorly chosen? At least I do not think there is *a priori* reason to think so. Earlier I went great lengths to clarify my conceptualization of governance, and settled for government

outputs that can be measured objectively. All of them are outputs that a government can directly control and all my measures are objective. In addition, the four aspects seem to capture very distinct areas of government outputs. At this point, I'm open-minded to how to interpret the correlation and factor analyses. However, I am prone to think that the low corrections and factor loadings are not serious problems. It is possible that most governments perform better in some areas than in other areas, just as some students are good at English and some are good at mathematics. To ease the concern that these indicators shouldn't be combined, in Chapter 4, I will build statistical models for each indicator as well as the additive index.

To combine the four aspects of governance, I first standardized each of the four indices into z-scores. Then I created a general governance index by adding the z-scores together. In combining the four indicators together, I assigned equal weight to each one, because I believe they are equally important aspects of governance. The distribution of the general governance index is presented in Figure 9. A complete ranking of governance of the 133 counties is presented in Table A1 in the appendix. One thing worth noting about the ranking is that counties are not strongly clustered by province or municipalities (直辖市). Three districts in Tianjin are ranked 1, 4, and 5, but two cities are ranked 46 and 123. Four counties in Guangdong are ranked top ten, yet two counties in that province are ranked 86 and 101. In the next chapter, I will account for the variation of this combined governance index so as to test the five hypotheses proposed in Chapter 2.

Figure 9 Distribution of General Governance Index

Governance Quality
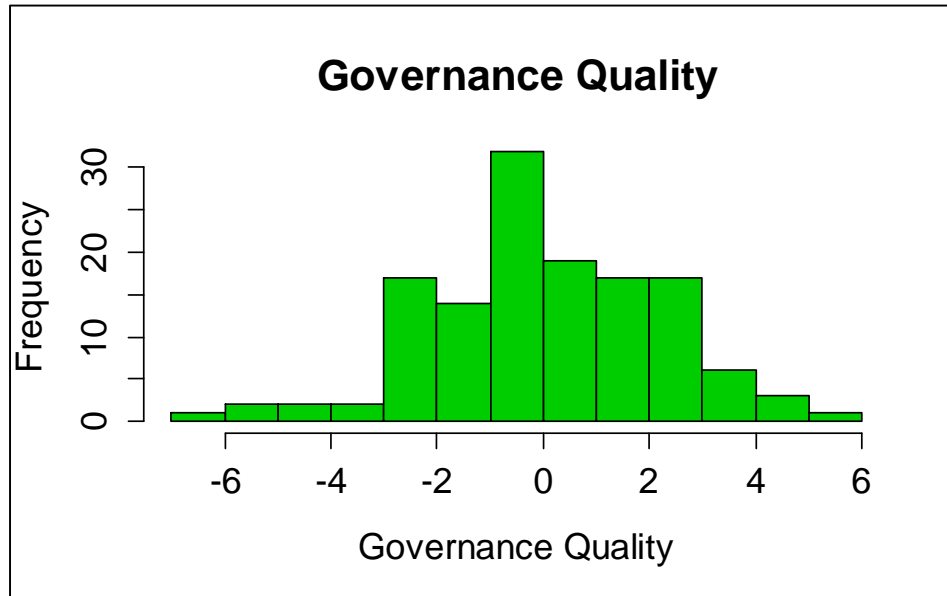
Note: N = 133
Source: The Chinese County Governance Data

4   EXPLAINING GOVERANCE QUALITY OF CHINESE COUNTIES

In this chapter, I use statistical models to predict the governance quality of Chinese counties. The statistical models are specified in accordance to the five hypotheses I posited in 2.3.3.:

H1: The strength of a leader's promotion incentive is positively related to governance quality.

H2: There is better governance in areas with lower political trust in the past.

H3: There is better governance in areas with more protests in the past.

H4: There is better governance in areas with higher voter turnout rates in village or residential committee elections in the past.

H5: There is better governance in areas with richer social capital in the past.

4.1   Measuring Independent Variables

In all the five hypotheses, the dependent variable is governance quality. In my empirical test, I predict each of the four indicators separately and I also predict the combined governance index. Corresponding to the five hypotheses, the five key independent variables are promotion

incentives, political trust, amount of protests, voter turnouts in village elections, and social

capital. Let me present how each of them is measured.

4.1.1   Independent Variable: Promotion Incentives

Promotion incentives are not amenable to operationalization, because it is largely up to

what leaders themselves think. But the party-state structure in China provides an excellent

opportunity. Because of the mandatory age limits, certain leaders are simply not eligible for

promotion, though they be perfectly qualified for it (detailed discussion in 2.3.2). Using a

leader's age as a dividing line, Yang Zhong (2003, 122) categorizes county leaders into

promotable leaders and terminal leaders. Zhong notes promotable and terminal leaders have

distinct incentive structures. Promotable leaders tend to be more compliant with directives and

policies from upper-level governments, while terminal leaders tend to be less compliant and be

more prone to rent seeking behavior. The higher the administrative level, the higher the age limit.

For instance, the age limits for promotions to the deputy department-level (副厅级) and the

department-level (正厅级) are 52 and 55. This means that the party will not promote anyone

older than 52 to deputy department-level positions and it will not promote anyone older than 55

to department-level positions. Officials who have hit their age limits see no chance of upward

mobility and have no promotion incentives.

To determine whether a county official is promotable or terminal, I need two pieces of

information: the official's administrative level and age. As I mentioned in 3.3.3, 27 of the 133

localities in my sample are at the prefectural level. In the Chinese cadre system, the mayors and

party secretaries of these localities are department-level (厅级) officials. For these officials, the

age limit for promotion to the next higher level (the vice-ministerial level, or 副部级) is 58. If in 2015 (the year when the data were collected), a department-level official is younger than 58, I count him or her as promotable; otherwise, I count the official as terminal. For the mayors or secretaries of the 106 county-level localities, there are two possibilities. They may either be department-level (正处级) or vice-department-level (副处级) officials. Department-level officials are those from the districts or counties in vice-provincial-level localities, with the age limit for promotion to the next higher level being 55. For these officials, if he or she is younger than 55 in 2015, he or she is counted as promotable. Otherwise, the official is counted as terminal. Vice-department-level officials are mayors or secretaries of districts or counties in prefectural-level localities. For them, the age limit for promotion to the next higher level is 52. So if an official at this level is younger than 52 in 2015, he or she is counted as promotable. Otherwise, he or she is counted as terminal.

The levels of the officials can be easily deduced from the administrative levels of the localities they serve, which are public knowledge. The age information is gathered from the Database of Local Officials (http://ldzl.people.com.cn/) hosted by the party organ People's Net (http://people.cn/). I wrote a Python program to scrape the data automatically. The database does not have the age information for about 20% of the officials of my sampled localities. I manually searched alternative sources such as Baidu Encyclopedia and filled some of the missing information, but there was still missing information that could not be filled. My final data show that 93 out of the 113 mayors (82%) are promotable and 75 out of the 121 party secretaries (62%) are promotable. I created a dummy variable for promotable officials, with 1 indicating the being promotable and 0 being terminal.

4.1.2   Independent Variable: Political Trust

The second key independent variable is the level of political trust in a county. The CGSS 2010 has a standard question on political trust, but because the data are at the individual level, I need to create county-level indicators. The most intuitive method is aggregation – simply taking the average of responses in a county. This is perhaps the most popular way to construct aggregate-level opinion due to its straightforwardness. However, aggregation cannot serve my purpose here because it will generate county-level indicators too unreliable to be useful. The CGSS 2010 has 11783 observations totally, a decent sample size for a national survey of China. Yet the survey covers 133 counties, and each county only has around 100 observations. My analysis suggests that the standard errors of the aggregate estimates are so large that the confidence intervals all overlap with each other, making it impossible to see any differences between counties. One solution commonly used in the research of US state politics is to increase the number of observations in each locality by pooling different surveys together (Erikson, Wright, and McIver 1993). But this cannot be applied to survey data of Chinese counties, because no two national surveys cover the same group of counties.

Fortunately, scholars of US state politics invented another method that can be used to generate county-level opinion data. It is called Multilevel Regression and Poststratification (MRP). Research has shown that MRP strongly outperforms aggregation in producing opinion estimates that are more accurate and robust (Lax and Phillips 2009b). It can also produce reasonably accurate estimates of US state opinion with only a single national poll with only 1,400 survey respondents (Lax and Phillips 2009a). In addition, it can correct for clustering and

80

other statistical issues in aggregation that may cause biased estimates (Kastellec, Lax, and Phillips 2014).

The idea of MRP is simple. We first use survey data to run a multi-level model. For example, the group-level independent variables could be gender, education, and county. These group-level independent variables can divide persons into different groups, and the multi-level model can predict the level of political trust of each group of persons. For instance, the multi-level model may predict the level of political trust of a group of males who are between 30 to 40 years of age, with college education, and live in county X. It may also predict the level of political trust of a group of females who are thirty-year of age, with high school education, and live in county Y. In this way, it can predict the level of political trust of all groups of persons. The next step is to find out from census data the proportions of different types of persons in each county. Finally, the county-level estimate can be calculated by taking the weighted average of different types of persons' political trust in a county.

Next, I present the specific steps I took to construct county-estimates of political trust using MRP.

1) I recoded age and education in the CGSS dataset into age groups and education groups. Following Tang's coding procedure for Chinese generations, I created four age groups: the socialist generation who are born before 1947, the Cultural Revolution generation born between 1948 and 1959, the reform generation born between 1960 and 1971, and the post-reform generation born after 1972. I created four education groups: no formal education, elementary or private tutoring (私塾), secondary school, and above college.

2) I recoded the survey question on political trust into a dummy variable. This is a standard practice for MRP, as MRP has not been applied to categorical variables yet. The question in CGSS 2010 asks the respondent to rate his or her trust in the central government on a five-point scale: totally trust, somewhat trust, between trust and distrust, somewhat distrust, totally distrust. I collapsed this variable into a dummy by recoding totally trust and somewhat trust into 1 and the other three answers into 0.

3) I fit a multi-level model with the dependent variable being the political trust dummy, independent variables being gender, age group, education group, age-education combination, county, province, county's urbanization, county's overall living condition, and county's percentage of minority population. A respondent's gender, age group, education group, age-education combination, county, and province are from the CGSS 2010 data. A county's urbanization and percentage of minority population are found in the 2000 Census. A county's overall living condition is constructed based on the county's density of tap water, kitchens, toilets, and showers, the data of which are also from the 2000 Census. I used the data from the 2000 Census because it is the latest census that provides all necessary information for MRP. For respondent *i,* with indexes *j, k, l, and m* for gender, age group, education group, and county respectively, and including an age-education interaction):

$$Pr(y_i = 1) = logit^{-1}(\beta^0 + \alpha_{j[i]}^{gender} + \alpha_{k[i]}^{age} + \alpha_{l[i]}^{edu} + \alpha_{k[i],l[i]}^{age.edu} + \alpha_{m[i]}^{county})$$

The terms after the intercept are modeled effects for different groups of respondents.

Specifically:

$$\alpha_j^{gender} \sim N\left(0,\ \sigma_{gender}^2\right), for\ j = 1, 2$$

$$\alpha_k^{age} \sim N\left(0,\ \sigma_{age}^2\right), for\ k = 1, \dots, 4$$

$$\alpha_l^{edu} \sim N\left(0,\ \sigma_{edu}^2\right), for\ l = 1, \dots, 4$$

$$\alpha_{k,l}^{age.edu} \sim N\left(0,\ \sigma_{age.edu}^2\right), for\ k = 1, \dots, 4, and\ l = 1, \dots, 4$$

The county effects are in turn modeled as a function of the province into which the county falls and the county's level of urbanization, overall living condition, and percentage of minority population:

$$\alpha_m^{county} \sim N\left(\alpha_{n[m]}^{province} + \beta^{urban} \cdot urban_m + \beta^{cond} \cdot cond_m + \beta^{minority} \cdot minority_m\right), for\ m$$
$$= 1, \dots, 133$$

The province variable is, in turn, another modeled effect:

$$\alpha_n^{province} \sim N\left(0, \sigma_{province}^2\right), for\ n = 1, \dots, 31$$

4) The multi-level model from the previous step gave the predicted probability that any group of persons trusts the central government given their gender, age, education, and county. From the 2000 Census, I gathered the information on the size of each of these groups in a county. Finally, the MRP estimates of political trust is equal to the weighted averages of the predicted probabilities in a county.

The distribution of county-level political trust is presented in *Figure 10*. It shows that overall, the Chinese counties highly trust the central government: in the vast majority of counties, more than 80% of the people trust the central government. According to the MRP estimates, the counties with the most political trust are those from northwestern provinces, including Xinjiang, Shaannxi, and Gansu, and the counties with the least political trust are those from Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, and Guangdong.

Figure 10 Distribution of County-level Political Trust
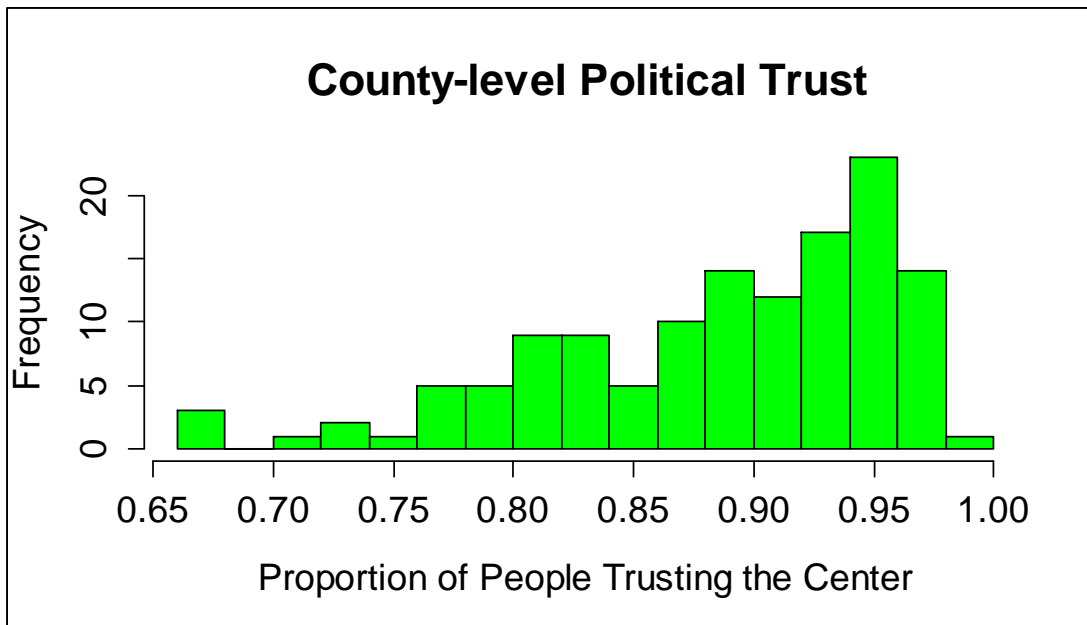
Note: N = 133
Source: Constructed by MRP based on CGSS 2010 and 2010 Census Data

4.1.3 Independent Variables: Frequency of Protests

A county's frequency of protests is measured by the proportion of people in a county who reported protests that happened around them in the past three years. The survey question asks: In the past three years, did any of the following happen around you: protests, collective petitions, strikes, and demonstrations? I coded it as a dummy variable with 1 indicating a positive answer and 0 indicating a negative answer. Then I calculated the proportion of positive answers as a measure of protest frequency in a county. Of course, this is an indirect and possibly a rough measure of protests, but since data on protests in China are extremely dearth, I can conceive of no better way of collecting protest information for the particular 133 counties. I did not use MRP because a multi-level model that uses education and age to predict whether one was aware of protests makes no sense theoretically. The distribution is presented in Figure 11. A couple of counties stand out. Half of the residents in those counties reported protests that happened around them.

Figure 11 Distribution of County-level Frequency of Protests

County-level Protests

Frequency

Proportion of People Reporting Protests
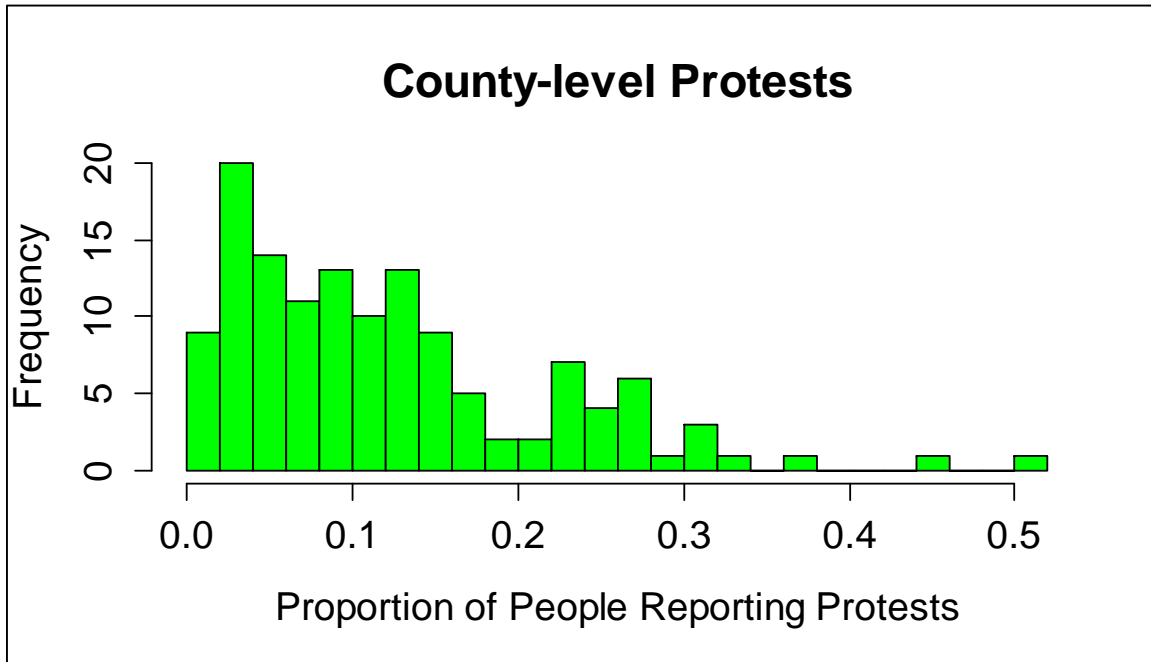
Note: N = 133
Source: CGSS 2010

4.1.4 Independent Variable: Village Election or Residential Committee Election Turnouts

The CGSS 2010 asks a respondent whether he or she has voted in village elections or residential committee elections in the past three years. I followed the steps in 4.1.2 and created an MRP indicator of county-level voter turnouts. The distribution is presented in Figure 12.

Figure 12 Distribution of County-level Voter Turnouts

County-level Voter Turnouts
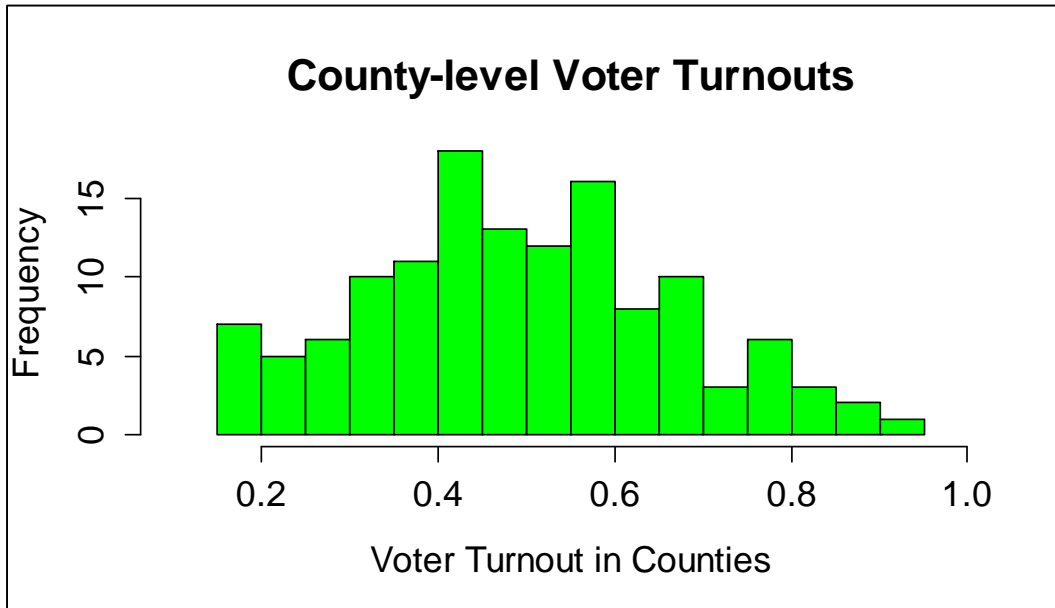
Note: N = 133
Source: Constructed by MRP based on CGSS 2010 and 2010 Census Data

4.1.5   Independent Variable: Social Capital

Social capital is measured by social trust. The survey question asks whether a respondent thinks most people can be trusted or he or she has to be careful when dealing with people. I followed the steps describes in 4.1.2 and created a MRP indicator of county-level social trust. The distribution of this MRP indicator is shown in Figure 13.

Figure 13 Distribution of County-level Social Trust
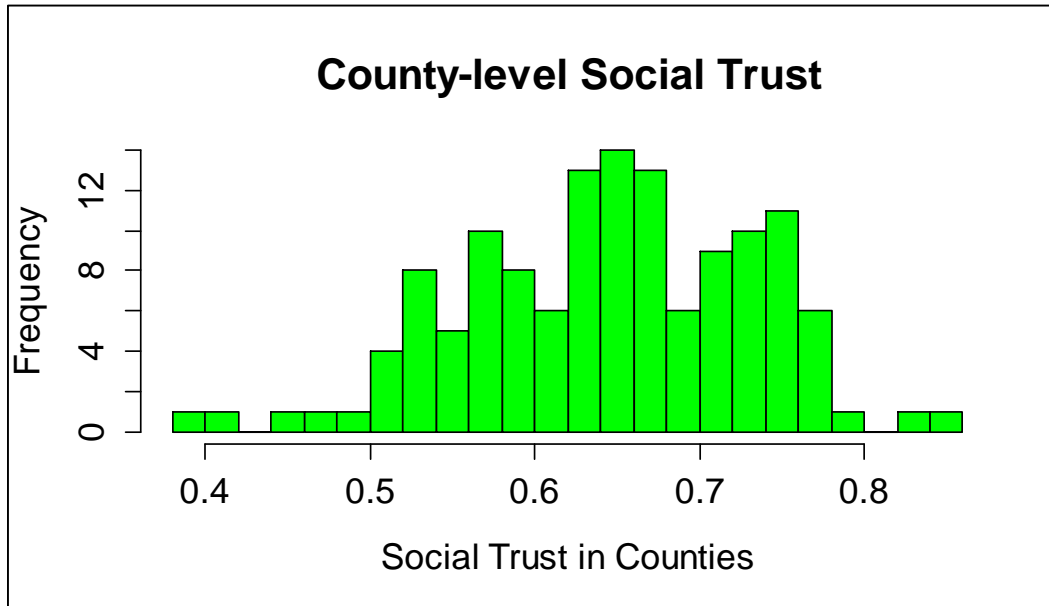
Note: N = 133
Source: Constructed by MRP based on CGSS 2010 and 2010 Census Data

4.1.6   Independent Variables: Control Variables

Apart from the five key independent variables, I also have several control variables: political trust in the local governments, external efficacy, percentage of ethnic minorities in a county, county GDP per capita, and geographic regions. County-level political trust in the local governments and county-level external efficacy are MRP estimates produced following the steps in 4.1.2. Percentage of ethnic minorities in a county are from the 2000 Census data. County GDP per capita equals county GDP divided by county population, information on both is collected from Baidu Encyclopedia. For 84% of the counties, their GDPs per capita are for 2012 to 2014. For the other counties, the GDPs per capital are for 2009 to 2011 and 2015. To control for

regional effects, I included region dummies for the East, the North, the Northeast, the Northwest, the South, and the Southwest. The Central China is treated as the reference category.

4.2   Regression Analysis

I specified five OLS regression models. The dependent variables in the first four models are the four aspects of governance: quality public services, information transparency, weight of social spending, and government responsiveness. The dependent variable of the fifth model is the combined governance index.

The first hypothesis (H1) predicts that in counties with promotable leaders (instead of terminal leader), there is better governance. This hypothesis receives support with respect to county mayors but not party secretaries. My analysis shows that in counties with promotable mayors, there are better public services, more generous social spending, and better overall governance. The finding that only mayors' promotion incentives matter speaks to division of labor between mayors and party secretaries: party secretaries are in charge of personnel matters and setting the overall policy directions, while mayors implement policies and are in charge of everyday governing.

H2 predicts that in counties with lower political trust in the past, governance is better. This peculiar logic of authoritarian governance is supported by three of the five equations. Specifically, in counties with lower political trust in the past, there are better public services, greater information transparencies, and better overall governance.

H3 suggests that in counties with more protests in the past, governance is better. This hypothesis is supported by the equation on government responsiveness. In other words, in counties where more citizens reported protests in the past, the governments tend to be more responsive to citizens. This speaks to another unique logic of authoritarian governance: the government's responsiveness is driven by its fear of social instability. Previous research reveals this logic by studying citizens' perception of government responsiveness (Tang 2016, Zhou and Ou-Yang 2016). My finding here as well as the findings of Chen et al. (2015) further confirm this logic through direct and objective measures of government responsiveness.

Table 7 Determinants of Governance Quality of Chinese Counties

	Public services	Info transparency	Social spending	Responsiveness	Governance
Intercept	6.38*	5.9***	0.47***	0.97	7.05*
Promotable mayor	1.25**	0.15	0.04*	0.12	1.45**
Promotable secretary	0.14	0	-0.03	-0.07	-0.39
Central political trust	-8.53**	-4.6**	-0.15	-0.54	-12.34***
Protests	-2.66	-0.67	-0.1	1.05*	-1.32
Voting	-3.00**	0.34	-0.06	-0.86**	-3.59**
Social trust	4.59*	0.11	0.17	0.71	6.09**
Local political trust	1.92	0.41	0.06	0.97	3.94
External efficacy	4.13*	-0.97	0.08	-1.1	-0.31
Ethnic minority	-2.34**	-0.85	-0.13***	-0.22	-4.38***
GDP pc	0.04	-0.03	-0.01***	0	-0.09**
Region: E	-0.78	-0.3	-0.07***	-0.01	-1.7**

Table 7 – continued

Region: N	-0.7	0.13	0.01	0.15	0.24
Region: NE	-1.06	0.98*	-0.06	-0.44	-1.29
Region: NW	-1.82*	0.14	-0.05	-0.08	-1.41
Region: S	0.77	0.31	0.02	0.04	1.08
Region: SW	-0.67	0.14	-0.06	0.13	-0.79
Adjusted R2	0.2899	0.1257	0.3461	0.0596	0.388
N. of cases	97	97	95	90	97

* $p <= 0.1$, ** $p <= 0.05$, *** $p <= 0.01$

Note: OLS regression, two-tailed test, summary statistics in Table A2 in the appendix.
Source: Dependent variable from Chinese County Governance Data; independent variables: CGSS 2010, 2010 Census data, and Database of Local Officials

What about the democratic elements in the authoritarian system? Do they play important roles in sustaining quality of authoritarian governance, as suggested by H4 and H5. H4 states that governance is better in counties where citizens are more active in voting in village elections or residential committee elections. But my analysis strongly rejects this hypothesis. The regression results show that where citizens are more active in the conventional participation of voting, the public services tend to be poorer, governments less responsive, and the overall governance poorer. This corroborates well with the other findings I just presented, which show that the drive for authoritarian governance in China is fundamentally different from the drive in democratic countries. While in democratic countries, voting is regarded as an important form of conventional participation that facilitates bottom-up control over the government, it does not work the same way in authoritarian countries. In my analysis, it reduces governance quality, possibly through diverting citizens' attention from making demands through unconventional channels and creating fear for the government.

H5 concerns another democratic element: social capital. The regression result shows that when measured by social trust, it does contribute to good governance in Chinese counties. Does this imply that the authoritarian governance in China shares some of the democratic logic of governance? Answering this question requires a further look into the mechanisms by which social trust influences governance quality in China. In 2.2.3, I presented three ways in which social capital may influence governance quality. One is that to the extent that leaders are chosen among the locals, the public-spiritedness of the locals should be shared by the leaders. This should not be the mechanism here, because county leaders in China are often appointed by the party from elsewhere. Another way how social capital contributes to good governance is through forging agreement. This mechanism does not seem at work here either. The hierarchical decision making of Chinese counties is not a pluralist model in which different parties bargain and make compromises. The third way how social capital contributes to good governance is by enabling citizens to hold officials accountable. Is this what happens here? If accountability means citizens' direct power to require explanations from officials, this is not what's going on here. But in China, social capital may help citizens hold leaders accountable indirectly, by empowering them to join unconventional participation and unnerve the regime. And the insecure regime will signal to local officials that it wants stability. Local officials, being accountable to the regime and eager to get promoted, will deliver stability by improving governance quality. This provides yet another confirmation for the authoritarian logic of governance that I uncovered.

5 REFLECTIONS ON THE AUTHORITARIAN LOGIC OF GOVERNANCE

After the theoretical and empirical exertions in the previous chapters, it is time to zoom out and see how these chapters have addressed the two big issues I posed in Chapter 1. First, what determines governance quality in authoritarian countries? Second, how does governance help us understand authoritarian resilience in China?

5.1 An Authoritarian Logic of Governance

My study shows that the authoritarian regime in China is in active pursuit of good governance. And the mechanisms through which good governance occurs in China are very different from the mechanisms in democratic countries. In democratic countries, good governance is a result of proper functioning of democratic institutions. And proper functioning of democratic institutions hinges on an effective bottom-up control of citizens who are protected by civil liberties and connected by a reasonable amount of social capital. In such systems, democratic leaders' desire to govern well is driven by their direct accountability to citizens. But in China, where civil liberties are restricted and democratic institutions are essentially missing, good governance occurs because the regime desires it and has the ability to impose this desire on lower-level officials in the party-state system. The non-elective authoritarian regime desires good governance because it is one of the few sources of legitimacy the regime can cling to. In addition, because the authoritarian regime does not know how much legitimacy is enough and how much legitimacy it has, it feels insecure. For a regime with a deep sense of insecurity,

unconventional participation is often effective to compelling it to perform. I also examined the effects of democratic elements on authoritarian governance, and they did not seem to play positive roles for authoritarian governance. Voter turnouts, considered to be a key asset of democratic governance, turned out to be a hindrance in China. Although social capital was found to have a positive impact, a closer look reveals that it does not work in a democratic way. Rather, its effects fit well with the authoritarian logic of governance: it helps citizens signal citizen dissatisfaction to the regime. Driven by the fear of losing legitimacy, the regime is compelled to perform.

But does this authoritarian logic of governance apply to other authoritarian regimes? The reader may come up with several cases that do not comfortably fit this logic. For example, in Mao's China, Kim's North Korea, Vladimir Putin's Russia, and South America's bureaucratic states during the 1960s to the 1980s, there are no paranoid regimes that keep performing to win legitimacy. Why?

Recall that in Chapter 2, I argued that in order for good governance to occur, two conditions must be met. The government must have the ability to govern well, and it must have the desire to govern well. It follows that in the counterexamples above, the governments must either lack the ability or the desire to govern well. And a comparison between the current Chinese regimes and those other regimes suggest that this is case. In 2.3.2., I presented several theoretical arguments for how the current CCP regime has both the ability and desire to govern well. These arguments can help us understand what are missing in the other regimes.

My theoretical arguments suggest that the CCP regime under Mao and the North Korean regime under Kim do not have strong desires to govern well. The primary reason is that they

94

need not depend on good governance for building legitimacy. Both countries are strongholds of the ideology of communism. The communist discourse dominates the official discourse, and the people believe in it. In those societies, a communist future is a noble cause worth pursuing at great costs, including repression. Communism is a powerful source of legitimacy for communist regimes. By comparison, good governance much less important. My theoretical arguments also indicate that in Mao's China and Kim's North Korea, the communist regimes lack the ability to govern well. Although they have party-state structures, their party-state structures do not have performance-based promotion systems to incentivize local officials. And they apparently are short of fiscal resources.

What about Vladimir Putin's Russia? To begin with, my definition of authoritarianism in 2.3.1 does not count the hybrid regime in Russia as authoritarian. Therefore my theoretical framework was not intended to apply to Russia. That said, even if we treat it as an authoritarian regime for the purpose of argument, my theoretical framework can still explain why it does not share China's logic of authoritarian governance. The reason is precisely because the regime is not totally authoritarian. The authoritarian regime in China desires good governance because it has no other good source of legitimacy. But for leaders in Russia, electoral victory is a good source of legitimacy. No doubt the elections in Russia are terribly rigged, but the point is winners can still appeal to their victories to justify their rule, and opponents still recognize that legitimacy should come from free and fair elections. When legitimacy can still be supplied by elections, good governance is not that urgent. Moreover, being partially democratic, Russia does not have a party-state structure in which the ruling party controls all levels of the government. Putin's United Russia is the dominant party, but it is dominant only in the sense that it controls the vast majority of government offices or parliamentary seats. It is nowhere near the CCP's exclusive

control over all government officials in the country. Without such a party-state structure, the top leaders in Russia lack the ability to control governance at various levels of the state.

The bureaucratic authoritarian states in South America during the 1960s to the 1980s do not conform to the logic of authoritarian governance in China either. In Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay, the technocrats and the military joined forces to control the societies and to suppress the opposition parties. This stands in sharp contrast to the Chinese regime's routine accommodation to citizens' demands even though they are made through unconventional channels. Did the regimes in South America lack the desire or the ability to govern well? I believe they lacked the desire. By looking at the histories of those bureaucratic state, one will get a strong impression that those states cared very little about legitimacy. They were heavily reliant on repression and minority control. For these reasons, many believe that the bureaucratic authoritarian regimes were doomed to collapse (Schmitz 1999, Magalhães 2014). But why wouldn't they care about legitimacy? It may be said that their policies were so unpopular that they could only be carried out by coercion. But it raises yet another question: Why would the regimes push for policies that were so unpopular? I think one important reason is ideology. Ideologically speaking, the Chinese authoritarian regime and the bureaucratic authoritarian regimes are at the opposite poles. China's regime today still possesses a populist orientation, but the bureaucratic authoritarian regimes pushed for neo-liberal policies and embraced neo-liberal discourses. Neo-liberal regimes are usually much less used to mobilizing the masses than populist regimes.

5.2 Implications for Authoritarian Resilience in China

My discovery of the authoritarian logic of governance throws light on the puzzle of China's authoritarian resilience. According to my analyses, the Chinese people are supportive of the authoritarian regime because the regime is on constant alert for legitimacy deficit and works diligently to reduce it. My theoretical framework also advances the literature by answering some of the questions left unaddressed by existing explanations (see 1.2). The economic explanation cannot account for the strong political support of the economically disadvantaged. My theoretical framework does not have this problem because governance is a public good accessible to all. The institutional explanation is more illuminating to why the regime can survive than why it is popular. My theoretical framework crystalizes why and how the regime actively seeks its people's approval. The cultural explanation, particularly the one offered by Tang (2016), relies on perception-based measures of government behavior. My empirical analyses use direct and objective measures of government behavior and lend support to Tang's cultural explanation.

How should we evaluate this authoritarian logic of governance? Under this logic, the CCP regime performs for fear of losing legitimacy. And because it does not know how much legitimacy is enough and how much it has, it does not know when to stop. This leads to the interesting phenomenon that the government in China would directly respond to demands that are petty and unreasonable. These demands are often resisted by democratic governments (Zhou and Ou-Yang 2016). It can be good to have a government that is so diligent in performing, but this does not come without costs. One cost is the underdevelopment of intermediate institutions and organizations. Both are more efficient and fair ways of achieving goals. Seeing government is so responsive, citizens will be too impatient to go through these institutions and organizations

and directly make contact with the government. This could overload the government and reduce governance quality.

Second, the authoritarian governance in China is unlikely to be sustainable. It is likely to be self-undermining rather than self-reinforcing. Grief and Latin (2004) define a self-undermining institution as one that cultivates the seeds of its own demise. The authoritarian governance in China is likely to be self-undermining because the government works particularly hard in places with low legitimacy and more protests in the past. Once citizens have sensed this pattern, they will be encouraged to signal low legitimacy through more and more protests. Because low political legitimacy makes effective governing more difficult, this model of authoritarian governance works against itself in the long run.

Last, the legitimacy generated by good governance provides no ultimate protection to authoritarian leaders, because there is no agreement between a leader and citizens on how much legitimacy the leader needs in order to stay in office. When faced with challenges to his rule, a democratic leader can point to the fact that he won the election, which, in normal democratic contexts, should be enough to settle the matter. Faced with similar challenges, an authoritarian leader has nothing to point to. Nothing, not even an 80% approval rating, can give the authoritarian leader the confidence to say "I am the legitimate ruler."

5.3   Future Plans

In the future, I will continue to work on this research along two lines. First, I will collaborate with another coder and check the inter-coder reliability of my governance indicators.

If it is not satisfactory, another round of data collection is in order. If the reliability is reasonably high, I will further examine how to interpret the low correlations and factor loadings for the four indicators of governance.

Second, in this dissertation, my indicator of government responsiveness is measured by types of disclosure of government-citizen interactions and the number of cases. In the future, I hope to get into the content of the interactions. For example, I will model the speed of responses, the quality of responses, and the types of demands.

APPENDIX

Table A1 Ranking of County Governance in China

Ranking	County	Governance index
1	天津市河东区	5.66
2	广东省广州市荔湾区	4.34
3	广东省广州市越秀区	4.12
4	天津市红桥区	4.11
5	天津市河北区	3.52
6	湖南省郴州市汝城县	3.50
7	广东省广州市天河区	3.24
8	广东省广州市白云区	3.23
9	北京市朝阳区	3.22
10	安徽省阜阳市太和县	3.02
11	黑龙江省哈尔滨市道外区	2.76
12	湖南省邵阳市邵东县	2.74
13	北京市崇文区	2.72
14	北京市东城区	2.72
15	广东省广州市海珠区	2.71
16	湖北省襄樊市宜城市	2.61
17	广东省深圳市福田区	2.46
18	山东省济宁市市中区	2.38
19	山东省临沂市沂水县	2.37
20	天津市河西区	2.34
21	四川省泸州市江阳区	2.27
22	福建省三明市永安市	2.23
23	湖南省邵阳市隆回县	2.21
24	山西省长治市襄垣县	2.18
25	河南省漯河市临颍县	2.12

26	山东省烟台市莱州市	2.07
27	北京市大兴区	2.05
28	北京市丰台区	1.89
29	广西壮族自治区玉林市玉州区	1.85
30	四川省眉山市丹棱县	1.83
31	河南省商丘市睢阳区	1.76
32	吉林省白城市洮南市	1.70
33	重庆市涪陵区	1.68
34	福建省福州市永泰县	1.68
35	云南省玉溪市新平县	1.66
36	黑龙江省齐齐哈尔市克山县	1.62
37	天津市南开区	1.47
38	北京市海淀区	1.45
39	河南省周口市扶沟县	1.38
40	广东省广州市黄埔区	1.28
41	四川省乐山市五通桥区	1.23
42	黑龙江省哈尔滨市延寿县	1.16
43	辽宁省葫芦岛市连山区	1.16
44	贵州省遵义市红花岗区	1.02
45	江西省赣州市会昌县	0.95
46	天津市和平区	0.93
47	北京市昌平区	0.76
48	上海市长宁区	0.74
49	上海市徐汇区	0.66
50	陕西省铜川市宜君县	0.63
51	河北省邯郸市磁县	0.54
52	山西省太原市迎泽区	0.51
53	江西省赣州市兴国县	0.44
54	江西省上饶市信州区	0.39
55	浙江省杭州市余杭区	0.18
56	北京市宣武区	0.17
57	湖北省武汉市江夏区	0.11

58	陕西省汉中市城固县	0.10
59	四川省成都市温江区	0.04
60	浙江省湖州市吴兴区	0.03
61	黑龙江省黑河市逊克县	0.02
62	辽宁省沈阳市和平区	0.02
63	上海市黄浦区	0.01
64	浙江省温州市鹿城区	-0.03
65	山西省运城市河津市	-0.03
66	贵州省安顺市西秀区	-0.05
67	湖北省襄樊市南漳县	-0.05
68	贵州省贵阳市云岩区	-0.07
69	四川省宜宾市宜宾县	-0.08
70	上海市虹口区	-0.11
71	辽宁省朝阳市双塔区	-0.16
72	青海省西宁市城北区	-0.17
73	江西省宜春市丰城市	-0.18
74	湖北省孝感市孝南区	-0.21
75	北京市房山区	-0.28
76	江苏省南京市六合区	-0.33
77	四川省南充市营山县	-0.35
78	江西省鹰潭市余江县	-0.37
79	海南省海口市秀英区	-0.40
80	安徽省黄山市歙县	-0.52
81	河南省信阳市浉河区	-0.55
82	上海市闸北区	-0.55
83	湖南省怀化市中方县	-0.56
84	重庆市城口县	-0.63
85	安徽省蚌埠市固镇县	-0.64
86	广东省汕头市潮南区	-0.72
87	甘肃省庆阳市镇原县	-0.74
88	上海市普陀区	-0.74
89	福建省漳州市东山县	-0.76
90	安徽省宣城市绩溪县	-0.79

91	河南省洛阳市宜阳县	-0.83
92	吉林省长春市朝阳区	-0.84
93	新疆维吾尔自治区喀什市英吉沙县	-0.92
94	浙江省杭州市江干区	-0.93
95	河北省沧州市肃宁县	-0.95
96	吉林省吉林市桦甸市	-1.10
97	浙江省宁波市奉化市	-1.17
98	山东省济宁市汶上县	-1.25
99	江苏省常州市钟楼区	-1.26
100	重庆市奉节县	-1.34
101	广东省广州市萝岗区	-1.36
102	陕西省延安市志丹县	-1.47
103	广西壮族自治区崇左市大新县	-1.52
104	河南省周口市郸城县	-1.60
105	江苏省徐州市新沂市	-1.67
106	甘肃省兰州市榆中县	-1.69
107	山东省日照市岚山区	-1.74
108	上海市杨浦区	-1.78
109	辽宁省铁岭市银州区	-1.88
110	广东省深圳市宝安区	-2.08
111	黑龙江省七台河市勃利县	-2.14
112	云南省昆明市寻甸县	-2.14
113	江苏省扬州市江都市	-2.19
114	云南省昭通市巧家县	-2.35
115	湖北省襄樊市老河口市	-2.53
116	吉林省松原市扶余县	-2.57
117	陕西省延安市宜川县	-2.63
118	吉林省吉林市昌邑区	-2.71
119	湖南省怀化市洪江市	-2.72
120	上海市浦东新区	-2.73
121	黑龙江省哈尔滨市双城市	-2.73

122	广西壮族自治区柳州市三江县	-2.78
123	天津市滨海新区	-2.79
124	江苏省连云港市新浦区	-2.79
125	广西壮族自治区柳州市柳北区	-2.84
126	浙江省杭州市上城区	-2.99
127	湖北省恩施州来凤县	-3.30
128	河北省唐山市丰南区	-3.85
129	山东省泰安市泰山区	-4.12
130	宁夏回族自治区吴忠市同心县	-4.62
131	内蒙古自治区呼和浩特市土默特左旗	-5.08
132	云南省大理市剑川县	-5.35
133	西藏自治区拉萨市城关区	-6.56

Table A2 Descriptive Statistics of Independent Variables

	Min	Max	Median	Mean	N.
Central political trust	0.67	0.98	0.90	0.89	131
Protests	0.00	0.52	0.10	0.12	133
Voting	0.16	0.91	0.49	0.49	131
Social trust	0.38	0.84	0.65	0.64	131
Local political trust	0.33	0.93	0.64	0.65	131
External efficacy	0.14	0.66	0.30	0.31	131
Ethnic minority	0.00	0.99	0.01	0.08	133
GDP pc	0.31	50.63	3.90	6.20	131

	Yes	No	N.
Promotable mayor	93	20	113
Promotable secretary	75	46	121

	Central	East	North	NE	NW	South	SW	N.
Region	22	32	20	10	8	15	17	124

REFERENCES

2014. "Budget Law of the People's Republic of China."

Acemoglu, Daron, and James Robinson. 2012. *Why Nations Fail: the Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty*. Danvers: Crown Business.

Adam, Shamim. 2010. "China to Exceed U.S. by 2020, Standard Chartered Says." http://www.bloomberg.com/ Accessed May 3, 2016. http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2010-11-15/china-may-surpass-u-s-by-2020-in-super-cycle-standard-chartered-says.

Ades, Alberto, and Rafael Di Tella. 1999. "Rents, Competition, and Corruption." *American Economic Review* 89 (4):982-993.

Adsera, Alicia, Carles Boix, and Mark Payne. 2003. "Are You Being served? Political Accountability and Quality of Government." *Journal of Law, Economics, and organization* 19 (2):445-490.

Alesina, Alberto, Reza Baqir, and William Easterly. 1997. "Public Goods and Ethnic Divisions." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 114:1243-1284.

Alesina, Alberto, and Beatrice Weder. 1999. Do Corrupt Governments Receive Less Foreign Aid? : National bureau of economic research.

Almond, Gabriel A., and Sidney Verba. 1963. *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*. Princeton, N.J.,: Princeton University Press.

Balzer, Harley , and Jon Askonas. 2014. "Innovation in Russia and China." *Russian Analytical Digest* 155:2-10.

Banfield, Edward C. 1967. *The Moral Basis of a Backward Society*. New York: Free Press.

Barro, Robert J. 1973. "The Control of Politicians: an Economic Model." *Public Choice* 14 (1):19-42.

Bell, Daniel A. 2015. *The China Model: Political Meritocracy and the Limits of Democracy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Bernstein, Thomas P, and Xiaobo Lü. 2003. *Taxation Without Representation in Contemporary Rural China*. Vol. 37. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Besley, Timothy, and John McLaren. 1993. "Taxes and Bribery: the Role of Wage Incentives." *The Economic Journal* 103 (416):119-141.

Boix, Carles, and Daniel N Posner. 1998. "Social Capital: Explaining Its Origins and Effects on Government Performance." *British Journal of Political Science* 28 (04):686-693.

Bratton, Michael, and Eric CC Chang. 2006. "State Building and Democratization in Sub-Saharan Africa Forwards, Backwards, or Together?" *Comparative Political Studies* 39 (9):1059-1083.

Brehm, John, and Wendy Rahn. 1997. "Individual-level Evidence for the Causes and Consequences of Social Capital." *American Journal of Political Science* 41 (3):999-1023.

Brown, Archie. 2009. *The Rise and Fall of Communism*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers.

Brownlee, Jason. 2007. *Authoritarianism in an Age of Democratization*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Buchanan, Allen. 2002. "Political Legitimacy and Democracy." *Ethics* 112 (4):689-719.

Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce , Alastair Smith, Randolph Siverson, and James Morrow. 2003. *The Logic of Political Survival*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Chan, Szu Ping 2014. "China Overtakes US to Be Biggest Economy by 2024." The Telegraph Accessed May 3, 2016. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/economics/11078885/China-overtakes-US-to-be-biggest-economy-by-2024.html.

Chang, Gordon G. 2010. *The Coming Collapse of China*. New York: Random House.

Chen, Jidong, Jennifer Pan, and Yiqing Xu. 2015.

Chen, Jie. 2004. *Popular Political Support in Urban China*. Wachington D. C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press.

Chen, Xi. 2009. "The Power of "Troublemaking": Protest Tactics and Their Efficacy in China." *Comparative Politics* 41 (4):451-471.

Chong, Alberto, and Cesar Calderon. 2000. "Causality and Feedback between Institutional Measures and Economic Growth." *Economics & Politics* 12 (1):69-81.

CIA World Factbook. 2014. "Government Budgets by Country." CIA Accessed May 15, 2015. https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2056.html.

Coleman, James S. 1988. "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital." *American Journal of Sociology* 94:S95-S120.

Dahl, Robert A. 1971. *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Dahl, Robert Alan. 1989. *Democracy and Its Critics*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Devereux, Stephen. 2000. Famine in the 20th Century. Institute of Development Studies, UK.

Diamond, Larry. 2002. "Thinking About Hybrid Regimes." *Journal of Democracy* 13:21 - 35.

Dickson, Bruce, Mingming Shen, and Jie Yan. 2013. "They Have Issues: Public Goods and Regime Support in Urban China." The Rise of Public Opinion in China, Iowa City, IA, October 18-19, 2013.

Dikötter, Frank. 2010. *Mao's Great famine: The History of China's Most Devastating Catastrophe, 1958-1962*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing USA.

Easton, David. 1957. "An Approach to the Analysis of Political Systems." *World politics* 9 (03):383-400.

Easton, David. 1975. "A Re-assessment of the Concept of Political Support." *British Journal of Political Science* 5 (04):435-457.

Eckstein, Harry. 1975. "Case Study and Theory in Political Science." In *Handbook of Political Science, Vol. 7: Strategies of Inquiry*, edited by Nelson Polsby, 79-138. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Edin, Maria. 2003. "State Capacity and Local Agent Control in China: CCP Cadre Management from a Township Perspective." *The China Quarterly* 173:35-52.

Erikson, Robert S, Gerald C Wright, and John P McIver. 1993. *Statehouse Democracy: Public Opinion and Policy in the American States*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Evans, Peter B. 1995. *Embedded Autonomy: States and Industrial Transformation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ferejohn, John. 1986. "Incumbent Performance and Electoral Control." *Public choice* 50 (1):5-25.

Frey, R Scott, and Ali Al-Roumi. 1999. "Political Democracy and the Physical Quality of Life: The Cross-national Evidence." *Social Indicators Research* 47 (1):73-97.

Fukuyama, Francis. 1992. *The End of History and the Last Man*. New York: Free Press.

Fukuyama, Francis. 2013. "What is Governance?" *Governance* 26 (3):347-368.

Gandhi, Jennifer, and Adam Przeworski. 2007. "Authoritarian Institutions and the Survival of Autocrats." *Comparative Political Studies* 40 (11):1279-1301.

Geddes, Barbara, Joseph Wright, and Erica Frantz. 2014. "Autocratic Breakdown and Regime Transitions: A New Dataset." *Perspectives on Politics* 12 (02):313-331.

Gerring, John. 2007. "Is There A (viable) Crucial-case Method?" *Comparative Political Studies* 40 (3):231-253.

Gerring, John, and Strom C Thacker. 2008. *A Centripetal Theory of Democratic Governance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gilley, Bruce. 2006. "The Meaning and Measure of State Legitimacy: Results for 72 Countries." *European Journal of Political Research* 45 (3):499-525.

Gilley, Bruce. 2008. "Legitimacy and Institutional Change The Case of China." *Comparative Political Studies* 41 (3):259-284.

Grafstein, Robert. 1981. "The Failure of Weber's Conception of Legitimacy: Its Causes and Implications." *The Journal of Politics* 43 (02):456-472.

Greif, Avner, and David D Laitin. 2004. "A Theory of Endogenous Institutional Change." *American Political Science Review* 98 (04):633-652.

Guo, Gang. 2009. "China's Local Political Budget Cycles." *American Journal of Political Science* 53 (3):621-632.

Habib, Mohsin, and Leon Zurawicki. 2002. "Corruption and Foreign Direct Investment." *Journal of International Business Studies* 33 (2):291-307.

Hendriks, Frank. 2013. "Understanding Good Urban Governance: Essentials, Shifts, and Values." *Urban Affairs Review* 50 (4):553-576.

Hero, Rodney E, and Caroline J Tolbert. 1996. "A Racial/ethnic Diversity Interpretation of Politics and Policy in the States of the US." *American Journal of Political Science* 40 (3):851-871.

Hirst, Paul. 2000. "Democracy and Governance." In *Debating Governance: Authority, Steering, and Democracy*, edited by Jon Pierre, 14-35. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ho, Alfred, and Wenbin Li. 2014. "Governance and Economic Competitiveness of Local Governments: A Case study of Guangdong Province." 2014 Annual Meeting of Association of Chinese Political Studies, Lawrence Kansas, September 22 to 23, 2014.

Horowitz, Donald L. 1985. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. Oakland: Univ of California Press.

Huntington, Samuel P. 1993. *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*. Vol. 4. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.

International, Transparency. 2015. "Corruption Perceptions Index 2015." Accessed May 11, 2016. http://www.transparency.org/cpi2015#results-table.

Jackman, Robert W, and Ross Alan Miller. 2004. *Before Norms: Institutions and Civic Culture*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Jamal, Ahmad Rashid. 2013. "Identifying Causes of State Failure: The Case of Somalia." Accessed May 14, 2016. http://www.atlantic-community.org/-/identifying-causes-of-state-failure-the-case-of-somalia.

Joseph, William A. 2014. "Studying Chinese Politics." In *Politics in China*, edited by William A. Joseph, 1-3. New York: Oxford University Press.

Kastellec, Jonathan P. , Jerey R. Lax, and Justin Phillips. 2014. "Estimating State Public Opinion With Multi-Level Regression and Poststrati cation using R." Princeton University Accessed May 20, 2016. http://www.princeton.edu/~jkastell/MRP_primer/mrp_primer.pdf.

Kaufmann, Daniel, Aart Kraay, and Massimo Mastruzzi. 2004. "Governance Matters III: Governance Indicators for 1996, 1998, 2000, and 2002." *The World Bank Economic Review* 18 (2):253-287.

Kaufmann, Daniel, Aart Kraay, and Massimo Mastruzzi. 2010. "The Worldwide Governance Indicators: Methodology and Analytical Issues." *World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 5430*.

Kennedy, John James, Scott Rozelle, and Yaojiang Shi. 2004. "Elected Leaders and Collective Land: Farmers' Evaluation of Village Leaders' Performance in Rural China." *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 9 (1):1-22.

Kersbergen, Kees van, and Frans van Waarden. 2004. "'Governance'as a Bridge between Disciplines: Cross-disciplinary Inspiration Regarding Shifts in Governance and Problems of Governability, Accountability and Legitimacy." *European Journal of Political Research* 43 (2):143-171.

King, Gary, Christopher JL Murray, Joshua A Salomon, and Ajay Tandon. 2004. "Enhancing the Validity and Cross-cultural Comparability of Measurement in Survey Research." *American Political Science Review* 98 (01):191-207.

Klitgaard, Robert. 1988. *Controlling Corruption*. Oakland: University of California Press.

Knack, Stephen. 2002. "Social Capital and the Quality of Government: Evidence from the States." *American Journal of Political Science* 46 (4):772-785.

Kosack, Stephen. 2003. "Effective Aid: How Democracy Allows Development Aid to Improve the Quality of Life." *World Development* 31 (1):1-22.

Krasner, Stephen D. 1983. *International Regimes*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Krastev, Ivan. 2011. "Paradoxes of the New Authoritarianism." *Journal of Democracy* 22 (2):5-16.

La Porta, Rafael, Florencio Lopez-de-Silanes, Andrei Shleifer, and Robert Vishny. 1999. "The Quality of Government." *Journal of Law, Economics, and organization* 15 (1):222-279.

Landry, Pierre F. 2008. *Decentralized Authoritarianism in China*, *Cambridge University Press*. New York.

Lardeyret, Guy. 1991. "The Problem with PR." *Journal of Democracy* 2 (3):30-35.

Lasswell, Harold Dwight. 1950. *Politics: Who Gets What, When, How*. New York: P. Smith New York.

Lax, Jeffrey R, and Justin H Phillips. 2009a. "Gay Rights in the States: Public Opinion and Policy Responsiveness." *American Political Science Review* 103 (03):367-386.

Lax, Jeffrey R, and Justin H Phillips. 2009b. "How Should We Estimate Public Opinion in the States?" *American Journal of Political Science* 53 (1):107-121.

Lewis-Beck, Michael S, Wenfang Tang, and Nicholas F Martini. 2013. "A Chinese Popularity Function Sources of Government Support." *Political Research Quarterly* 67 (1):16-25.

Li, Eric X. 2013. "A Tale of Two Political Systems." Accessed May 10, 2016. https://www.ted.com/talks/eric_x_li_a_tale_of_two_political_systems?language=en.

Li, Lianjiang. 2004. "Political Trust in Rural China." *Modern China* 30 (2):228-258.

Li, Lianjiang. 2007. "Direct Township Elections." In *Grassroots Political Reform in Contemporary China*, edited by Elizabeth Perry and Merle Goleman, 97-116. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Lieberman, Myron. 1993. *Public Education: An Autopsy*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Lieberthal, Kenneth, and Michel Oksenberg. 1988. *Policy making in China: Leaders, structures, and processes*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Lijphart, Arend. 1971. "Comparative Politics and Comparative Method." *American Political Science Review* 65 (3):682-693.

Lijphart, Arend. 1991. "Constitutional Choices for New Democracies." *Journal of Democracy* 2 (1):72-84.

Lijphart, Arend. 1999. *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-six Democracies*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Lijphart, Arend. 2012. *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-six Countries*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Linz, Juan J. 1990. "The Perils of Presidentialism." *Journal of Democracy* 1 (1):51-69.

Liu, Binyan. 1989. Military Reaction to Student Protests in China with Ted Koppel In *Nightline ABC*, edited by Ted Koppel.

Lu, Jie. 2014. *Varieties of Governance in China: Migration and Institutional Change in Chinese Villages*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Lü, Xiaobo. 2014. "Social Policy and Regime Legitimacy: The Effects of Education Reform in China." *American Political Science Review* 108 (02):423-437.

Lü, Xiaobo, and Pierre F Landry. 2014. "Show Me the Money: Interjurisdiction Political Competition and Fiscal Extraction in China." *American Political Science Review* 108 (03):706-722.

Magalhães, Fidelis M.L 2014. "Bureaucratic Authoritarianism in Latin America: Re-assessing military's salvation narrative." Accessed May 22, 2016. https://aitaraklaranlive.wordpress.com/2014/04/02/bureaucratic-authoritarianism-in-latin-america-re-assessing-militarys-salvation-narrative/.

Magaloni, Beatriz. 2006. *Voting for Autocracy : Hegemonic Party Survival and Its Demise in Mexico*, *Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics*. Cambridge Cambridge University Press.

Manion, Melanie. 1993. *Retirement of Revolutionaries in China: Public Policies, Social Norms, Private Interests*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Manion, Melanie. 1996. "The electoral connection in the Chinese countryside." *American Political Science Review* 90 (4):736-748.

Manion, Melanie. 2004. *Corruption by Design: Building Clean Government in Mainland China and Hong Kong*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Meng, Tianguang, Jennifer Pan, and Ping Yang. 2014. "Conditional Receptivity to Citizen Participation Evidence From a Survey Experiment in China." *Comparative Political Studies*:0010414014556212.

Mill, John Stuart. 1999. *On Liberty*. Orchard Park, NY: Broadview Press.

Nanda, Ved P. 2006. "The "Good Governance" Concept Revisited." *The ANNALS of the American academy of political and social science* 603 (1):269-283.

Nathan, Andres. 2009. "Decentralized Authoritarianism in China: The Communist Party's Control of Local Elites in the Post-Mao Era." *Foreign Affairs*.

Nathan, Andrew J. 2003. "Authoritarian Resilience." *Journal of Democracy* 14 (1):6-17.

Nathan, Andrew J. 2006. "Review: Present at the Stagnation-Is China's Development Stalled." *Foreign Affairs* 85 (4):177.

Nathan, Andrew J. 2015. "The Puzzle of the Chinese Middle Class." *Journal of Democracy* 27 (2):5-19.

Norris, Pippa. 2011. "Comparing Political Support around the World." In *Democratic Deficit: Critical Citizens Revisited*, edited by Pippa Norris. Cambrige: Cambridge University Press.

Nove, Alec. 1993. *The Soviet System in Retrospect: An Obituary Notice*. Vol. 4: Harriman Institute, Columbia University New York.

O'Brien, Kevin, and Lianjiang Li. 1999. "Selective Politcy Implementation in Rural China." *Comparative Politics* 31 (2):167-186.

O'Donnell, Guillermo A. 1996. "Illusions about Consolidation." *Journal of Democracy* 7 (2):34-51.

O'brien, Kevin J, and Lianjiang Li. 2005. "Popular Contention and Its Impact in Rural China." *Comparative Political Studies* 38 (3):235-259.

Oi, Jean C. 1992. "Fiscal Reform and the Economic Foundations of Local State Corporatism in China." *World Politics* 45 (01):99-126.

Oksenberg, Michel. 1998. "Confronting a Classic Dilemma." *Journal of Democracy* 9 (1):27-34.

Olson, Mancur. 1993. "Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development." *American Political Science Review* 87 (03):567-576.

Pan, Jennifer. 2013. Cambridge, MA.

Pei, Minxin. 2009. *China's Trapped Transition: The Limits of Developmental Autocracy*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Persson, Torsten, and Guido Enrico Tabellini. 2002. *Political Economics: Explaining Economic Policy*. Cambridge, MA: MIT press.

Peters, Guy. 2000. "Governance and Comparative Politics." In *Debating Governance: Authority, Steering, and Democracy*, edited by Jon Pierre. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Pierre, Jon. 2009. "Reinventing Governance, Reinventing Democracy?" *Policy & Politics* 37 (4):591-609.

Plato. 2014. *The Republic*. Seattle: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.

Putnam, Robert D. 1993. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Putnam, Robert D. 2000. *Bowling Alone : the Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Rhodes, Roderick Arthur William. 2000. "Governance and Public Administration." In *Debating Governance: Authority, Steering, and Democracy*, edited by Jon Pierre, 14-35. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Rivkin-Fish, Michele. 2005. "Bribes, Gifts and Unofficial Payments: Rethinking Corruption in Post-Soviet Russian Health Care." In *Corruption: Anthropological Perspectives*, 47-64. Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto.

Rosenau, James N, and Ernst-Otto Czempiel. 1992. *Governance without Government: Order and Change in World Politics*. Vol. 20. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ Press.

Rothstein, Bo. 2011. *The Quality of Government: Corruption, Social Trust, and Inequality in International Perspective*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Saich, Tony. 2006. "Satisfaction with Government Performance: Public Opinion in Rural and Urban China " *China Public Administration Review* (5):1-19.

Saich, Tony. 2007. "Citizens' Perceptions of Governance in Rural and Urban China." *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 12 (1):1-28.

Schmitz, David F. 1999. *Thank God They're on Our Side: the United States and Right-wing Dictatorships, 1921-1965*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Scholz, John T, and Mark Lubell. 1998. "Trust and Taxpaying: Testing the Heuristic Approach to Collective Action." *American Journal of Political Science* 42 (2):398-417.

Scholz, John T, and Neil Pinney. 1995. "Duty, Fear, and Tax Compliance: The Heuristic Basis of Citizenship Behavior." *American Journal of Political Science* 39 (2):490-512.

Sen, Amartya. 2009. "Democracy as a Universal Value." In *Democracy: A Reader*, edited by Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner, 307-320. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Shambaugh, David. 1996. "Containment or Engagement of China? Calculating Beijing's Responses." *International security* 21 (2):180-209.

Shi, Tianjian. 2001. "Cultural Values and Political Trust: a Comparison of the People's Republic of China and Taiwan." *Comparative Politics* 33 (4):401-419.

Shi, Tianjian. 2014. *The Cultural Logic of Politics in Mainland China and Taiwan*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Shih, Victor, Christopher Adolph, and Mingxing Liu. 2012. "Getting Ahead in the Communist Party: Explaining the Advancement of Central Committee Members in China." *American Political Science Review* 106 (01):166-187.

Shirk, Susan L. 2008. *China: Fragile Superpower*. New York: Oxford University Press, USA.

Strange, Susan. 1996. *The Retreat of the State: The Diffusion of Power in the World Economy*. Cambridge: Cambridge university press.

Sung, H-E. 2004. "Democracy and Political Corruption: A Cross-national Comparison." *Crime, Law and Social Change* 41 (2):179-193.

Svolik, Milan W. 2012. *The Politics of Authoritarian Rule*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Tang, Wenfang. 2005. *Public Opinion and Political Change in China*. Stanford: CA: Stanford University Press.

Tang, Wenfang. 2016. *Populist Authoritarianism: Chinese Political Culture and Regime Sustainability* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Tang, Wenfang, Yingnan Zhou, and Ray Ou Yang. 2016. "Political Trust in China and Taiwan." In *Populist Authoritarianism: Political Culture and Regime Sustainability in China*, edited by Wenfang Tang. New York: Oxford University Press.

Tsai, Lily L. 2007. "Solidary Groups, Informal Accountability, and Local Public Goods Provision in Rural China." *American Political Science Review* 101 (02):355-372.

United Nations Development Programme. 2012. "Somalia Human Development Report 2012: Empowering Youth for Peace and Development." Accessed May 14, 2016.

http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/hdr/Somalia-human-development-report-2012.html.

Wang, Zhengxu. 2005. "Before the Emergence of Critical Citizens: Economic Development and Political Trust in China." *International Review of Sociology* 15 (1):155-171.

Wang, Zhengxu. 2006. "Explaining Regime Strength in China." *China: An International Journal* 4 (2):217-237.

Wang, Zhengxu. 2010. "Citizens' Satisfaction with Government Performance in Six Asian-Pacific Giants." *Japanese Journal of Political Science* 11 (1):57-75.

Way, Lucan, and Steven Levitsky. 2002. "The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism." *Journal of Democracy* 13 (2):51-65.

Weber, Max. 2015. "Bureaucracy." In *Weber's Rationalism and Modern Society*, edited by Tony Waters and Dagmar Waters, 73-127. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

Wen, Jiabao. 2007. "Open Government Information Ordinance of China." Accessed March 30. http://www.gov.cn/zwgk/2007-04/24/content_592937.htm.

Williams, Daniel W. 2004. "Evolution of Performance Measurement until 1930." *Administration & Society* 36 (2):131-165.

Wintrobe, Ronald. 1998. *The Political Economy of Dictatorship*. Vol. 6. New York, NY: Cambridge Univ Press.

Wolff, Jonathan. 2006. *An Introduction to Political Philosophy*. New York: Oxford University Press, USA.

Xu, Yiqing, and Yang Yao. 2015. "Informal Institutions, Collective Action, and Public Investment in Rural China." *American Political Science Review* 109 (02):371-391.

Yang, Dali L. 2003. "State Capacity on the Rebound." *Journal of Democracy* 14 (1):43-50.

Zhang, Xiaobo, Shenggen Fan, Linxiu Zhang, and Jikun Huang. 2004. "Local Governance and Public Goods Provision in Rural China." *Journal of public economics* 88 (12):2857-2871.

Zhao, Suisheng. 2010. "The China Model: Can It Replace the Western Model of Modernization?" *Journal of Contemporary China* 19 (65):419-436.

Zhong, Yang. 2003. *Local Government and Politics in China: Challenges from Below*. Armonk, New York: ME Sharpe.

Zhou, Yingnan Joseph, and Ray Ou-Yang. 2016. "Explaining High External Efficacy in Authoritarian Countries: A Comparison of China and Taiwan." *Democratization* 1-22:1-22.