Regime Adaptation Through Learning: Dual-Track Cadre Training and Authoritarian Resilience in China

by

Linan Jia

(Under the Direction of [Rongbin Han])

Abstract

This dissertation examines sources of authoritarian regime adaptability by analyzing the market-driven evolution of once centralized political elite-training institutions in China and how it contributes to regime adaptability. Findings in my fieldwork and survey data indicate that local cadres demanded an improvement of training resources due to traditional intra-party institutions' limitations in providing the diverse training they need in the reform era. Such a demand generated a market with diversified, competitive societal training providers, which was tolerated, acknowledged, and regulated by the CCP with the consideration of enhancing its governance capability and adaptability. Meanwhile, the CCP has not loosened its grip on traditional cadre training institutions due to the consistent goal of maintaining its political cohesiveness and ideological dominance. Accordingly, a dual-track cadre training system exists in China, in which traditional agencies provide political training that reinforces the regimes' ideological dominance, while market agencies provide competence training that improves governing agents' capability and performance. I evaluate the effect of such a dual-track system on China's regime adaptability by examining the relationship between training and the CCP's cadre selection, promotion, and discipline. The empirical analyses show that both traditional and marketized training is conducive to grassroots-level and prefectural-level cadre promotion. However, their relationship with the regime's anticorruption practice differs: while traditional training is negatively associated with the probability of prosecution, marketized training is positively related to the probability of prosecution. This dissertation is the first empirical study dedicated to the inner workings of marketized cadre training. Empirically, this research contributes to our understanding of China's evolving cadre management institution and serves as an indispensable addition to existing research on cadre training and political selection in China. Theoretically, by revealing a dual-track process of authoritarian institutional adaptation, this study contributes to the authoritarian resilience thesis. It presents a framework that simultaneously addresses the frequently contradictory priorities of authoritarian adaptability: political cohesiveness that unites the elites and government performance that satisfies the masses.

Index words: [China, Cadre Training, Promotion, Anticorruption, Authoritarian Resilience]

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Dedication

For my parents and J.T.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

"*Cadres in all walks of life should strive to be technically and professionally proficient, to become professionals, red and expert. To become expert first and red later… is wrong… But it's also insufficient to only be red, they should understand professional knowledge and techniques as well.*" [1].

—– Mao Zedong, Speech at The Third Plenary Session of the Eighth Central Committee, 1957

1.1 Overview: Cadre training, Outsourced?

The campus of university Z in Beijing seems extremely busy on an ordinary summer day in June 2017. Among studious-looking young lads and ladies with their aura of innocence and a purposeful stride, groups of middle-aged men and women arrive in luxury buses to occupy conference rooms in the university's international exchange center or even some of the larger classrooms typically devoted to college classes. Frequently, they speak various dialects from different parts of China that can be difficult to understand for someone only familiar with Mandarin. During lunchtime, they would be led by an administrative assistant to the university cafeteria in groups and have meals among university students. After a short lunch break, they would head back to the classrooms and attend seminars taught by university professors, just like ordinary college students do. When the day's meeting ended, they would reside in the guest rooms in the university's international exchange center or nearby hotels. Finally, they will recuperate and prepare for another day of intensive learning that could even be overwhelming for university students.

Contrary to the perception of stagnant, blindly obedient bureaucrats in an authoritarian regime ruled by a Leninist Party, these active learners on university campuses are Chinese local government officials participating in professional training sessions provided by public academic institutions and other social agencies through competitive market mechanisms. Traditionally, local officials are trained in centrally coordinated party schools at various administrative levels with a curriculum focused heavily on political education and ideological indoctrination. In the past three decades, however, they are generally allowed to participate in training programs provided by societal agencies by their own choice and learn from

[1] Essays of Mao Zedong, 1993. People's Publishing House, Volume 7, pp 309.

curriculum that include little political education content. So how, and why, did the CCP regime in China relax its authority to mold its governing agents according to the expectations of the Party?

Throughout the 20th century, scholars interested in political party institutions have witnessed the decay of many communist parties in post-communist societies without much surprise (Ambrosio, 2014; Ekiert & Hanson, 2003; Fish et al., 2002; Gans-Morse, 2004; Kalyvas, 1999; Kurtz & Barnes, 2002; Linz & Stepan, 1996; Pop-Eleches, 2007; Skilling, 1982). They imagined most, if not all of them, to be ossified institutions unable to adapt to changing socio-economic contexts while maintaining political coherence, especially in non-democratic systems. It is difficult for many regimes to sustain political dominance and societal control while producing growth and development in rapidly evolving societies, which poses extraordinary challenges for the dominant party to stay in power.

Nevertheless, some communist parties in authoritarian states have managed to avoid the fate of demise in changing circumstances (Gandhi & Przeworski, 2007; Grzymala-Busse, 2002; Ishiyama & Bozóki, 2001; Kitschelt et al., 1999; Magaloni & Kricheli, 2010). In Central and Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia, and other parts of the world, some communist parties that lost their dominance after the Cold War managed to evolve with the transitional societies they rooted. Some even managed to achieve electoral success in a more competitive political context. Regime parties in Vietnam, Cuba, and especially China led national economic reforms and are able to produce growth and development in varying degrees (Brødsgaard & Zheng, 2006; Burki & Erikson, 2005; Hiep, 2012; London, 2014; B. Naughton, 1995; Sweig & Bustamante, 2013; Zhao, 2009). In the case of China, the socio-economic reforms led by the CCP "have not only resulted in it achieving a phenomenal increase in its living standards, it has made China a major global economic actor and has enhanced its status in the world community" (Tisdell, 2009, p. 292).

Among the factors explored by extent theories contributing to authoritarian party survival and adaptation, organizational elements are crucial (Brødsgaard & Zheng, 2006; Levitsky & Way, 2010; Pepinsky, 2014; Svolik, 2012). Individual case studies and comparative analyses point to the importance of strong organizational power in maintaining political dominance among elites while performing other governance tasks essential for popular support and regime legitimacy. Despite cultural and historical differences in various countries, researchers stress the role of political institutions in co-opting potential challengers from emerging societal groups while maintaining ruling elite unity as one of the essential elements of organizational power that contributes to sustainable regime adaptation. Admittedly, authoritarian regimes can also resort to various forms of coercive or repressive force when dealing with challenges, but scholars are generally skeptical about the sustainability of such practices.

However, the existing analytical frameworks of authoritarian adaptation pay inadequate attention to how non-state actors may contribute to regime adaptability. For example, studies have explored how authoritarian regimes adapt their institution to co-opt important societal groups previously excluded from the ruling group (Dickson, 2000, 2003). Research also reveals the varieties of ways the government deals with disgruntled societal actors, such as corporatism or repression (Ong, 2018; Reny, 2019). Still, few have examined the alternative mode of interaction between authoritarian states and society beyond cooptation, corporatism, and repression. This research focus may be appropriate in contexts where the boundary between the state and society is more clearly delineated. Still, it could become insufficient in

countries where such boundary is more blurred, and the level of state embeddedness in society is relatively high.

Another often-neglected dynamic is the potentially contradictory priorities of authoritarian regime survival. Existing studies tend to focus on independent contributing factors in regime adaptation. For example, the performance legitimacy framework emphasizes maintaining a high economic growth rate and delivering public goods in exchange for popular support for authoritarian regimes (Yang & Zhao, 2015; Zhao, 2009). Accordingly, government officials are selected based on their ability to promote local economic growth. The logical outcome of a systemically impaired performance record is the loss of popular support and regime demise. Government performance also depends on the result of social governance. Poor management of various governance issues, such as failure to manage grievance and contain popular unrest, also entails threats for authoritarian regime stability.

On the other hand, research on factional and elite politics stresses the power struggle between elite political groups, arguing that the regime's persistence depends on the dynamics of factional struggle and elite power-sharing (Doyon & Keller, 2020; Shih et al., 2012; Shih & Lee, 2020; Svolik, 2012). Therefore, some researchers believe that patronage ties instead of performance significantly affect the political selection process. Moreover, factional struggles threaten political unity and may lead to instability and regime disintegration. These findings provide valuable perspectives on the crucial elements of authoritarian regime resilience. Nevertheless, they have difficulty integrating diverse aspects of regime power, such as political dominance, economic development, and social governance, into one comprehensive framework.

This introductory chapter introduces a framework to understand authoritarian regime adaptability through an alternative mode of interaction between the authoritarian regime and societal actors. It starts with tracing an ongoing institutional transition in China that leads to the puzzling partial marketization of the cadre training system in the Communist Party of China (CCP) regime during the reform era. This framework draws attention to the possibility of societal actors actively participating in the regime's adaptability-building process through ways outside of formal political participation channels. Rather than being directly involved in the institutionalized political process, their impact on regime adaptability is reflected indirectly through the regime's established cadre management system. By selecting, promoting, and disciplining cadres trained in political loyalty and professional governance skills, the cadre management system serves as a mechanism for traditional cadre training institutions and newly emerged societal cadre training agencies to contribute to the regime's multifaceted adaptability.

1.2 Cadre Training Institution and its Evolution

Using China as a case study, this research examines the transition of a significant institutional element that contributes to the adaptation and resilience of the CCP regime – its cadre training system [2]. How

[2] It is worth noting that while prototypes of modern-day party schools appeared as early as the beginning of the 1920s, right after the founding of the CCP, practices of training governing agents can be traced back to the Qing dynasty. Utilizing party schools to train its cadres is not exclusive to the CCP. For example, the Kuomintang had also resorted to its Party cadres' school to ensure the ideological coherence of its governing agents when it started its governance in Taiwan (Myers & Lin, 2007)

the Party-State trains its cadres in China is a crucial yet understudied aspect of authoritarian personnel management institutions. [3]. Early studies on Chinese cadre management focused on the debate between "red" and "expert" (Baum, 1964; Kent, 1981; Kringen, 1975; B. Li & Walder, 2001; Ray, 1970). Recent research on the education and training of the CCP cadres in contemporary China overwhelmingly focuses on party schools (C. Lee, 2015; Pieke, 2009a; Shambaugh, 2008; G. Tian & Tsai, 2021). Such focus is understandable since cadre training tasks are traditionally assigned to intra-party institutions such as party schools at different administrative levels, supplemented by administration institutes and cadre executive leadership academies. [4].

After decades of development in the context of Chinese political trajectory, by the 1990s, the CCP party schools had been officially recognized as one of the core institutional elements of the ruling party [5]. While covering various issue areas concerning governance, the primary role of this system is political education. These cadre training institutions are directly supervised by multiple levels of the CCP organization department, with their training programs strictly managed and screened by party leaderships. Such political control is hardly surprising given the constant need for the CCP to maintain ideological unity and political commitment in its front-line agents through cadre training. A study of training content in the Central Party School of the CPC shows that coursework regarding orthodox party theory, ideologies, and party history consistently counts as more than 40 percent of training content, with the highest of 68 percent in 1994 (C. Lee, 2015). Since the Central Party School of the CPC represents the most advanced teaching in China's party school system at various administrative levels, less developed party schools at the local level likely have even fewer resources to expand their teaching beyond political education.

In recent years, however, cadre training agencies officially recognized by the central government went beyond the scope of strictly supervised party institutions. The first official policy document on cadre training - *Regulations on Cadre Education and Training Work (Trial)* - issued in 2006 stipulated that cadre training may be delegated to "qualified universities, research institutes, and social training organizations." This stipulation officially permits departments of local government, as consumers of training resources, to

[3]In this research, the use of "cadre" broadly applies the definition in The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Politics to the CCP regime in China: "The political use of this military term indicated the intention of the Leninist leadership of the Russian Revolution to create a disciplined, hierarchically organized, and swiftly responsive system of control of the revolutionary movement. The cadre system was also the embodiment of the 'vanguard party' which Lenin believed was made necessary by the inability of the working class to achieve class consciousness spontaneously. Cells were established in all neighborhoods, work places, and social organizations, and their cadres owed their entire loyalty not to the members of the organization within which they worked, but to the Party cadres at the level above." https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095540840, accessed on October 15th, 2021.

[4]In 2018, National Administration Institution was integrated with the Central Party School, with the latter carrying out functions of both institutions. Prior to this change at the national level, such integration of institutional functions has already started at the local level (Pieke, 2009a). The new Central Party School is under the direct leadership of the CCP Central Committee and will be directing the work of party schools at different administration levels. This indicates an increasingly centralized management of cadre training institutions within the CCP system. See "CCP Central Committee Issue Plan for Deepening the Institutional Reform of the Party and State," March 21th, 2018.

[5]From the founding of the CCP to the 1930s, party schools are important training site for the CCP's education of revolutionary leaders. During the 1940s, party schools serve as crucial venues of the Yan'an Rectification Movement and trained cadres who contributed to the anti-Japanese war. After the founding of the PRC, party schools gradually incorporated training content necessary for economic reform and development (Wu, 2011).

choose from a wider variety of training providers in addition to intra-party training agencies based on their demand. I define marketization in this context as a process whereby training consumers can choose from various training programs supplied by competitive providers based on their needs. In this way, a formerly "seller's market" of cadre training, in which local governments must get training from a limited number of party schools and other intra-party training agencies, is being transformed into a "buyer's market," in which local governments can choose from competitive training resources beyond the scope of intra-party training agencies.

Crucially, the official recognition of extra-party training agencies came much later than the observed emergence of cadre training outside of intra-party providers, indicating a rather spontaneous initial development of a competitive cadre training market before the CCP's official permission. While some scholars documented that cadre training provided by a diversity of providers had grown since early 2000, my fieldwork and archival research find a much earlier starting point for such a process, which can be traced to the early 1990s. In other words, the CCP officially recognized the role of extra-party training agencies more than a decade after the emergence of competitive cadre training conducted by public institutions and private agencies in the market. Accordingly, the description of training marketization as "the Centre's strategy" (Pieke, 2009a, p. 126) is worth a reevaluation. Even if it is the central government's strategy to expand training, such a strategy has been overly vague and left ample room for market improvisation.

The expansion and diversification of training agencies indicate that party institutions no longer monopolize cadre training, a trend observed in existing studies on party schools (C. Lee, 2015; Pieke, 2009a). Higher education institutions such as universities and other training agencies in the market that are not necessarily constrained by the party's stringent supervision are directly or indirectly allowed to provide training for the party's policy implementors. The implementation of many cadre training programs is now delegated to agencies with more potent educational resources but not necessarily ideologically committed compared to traditional intra-party training institutions such as party schools. It seems that "the main thrust of the marketization of cadre training has been to allow for a greater diversity of providers of training in modern management skills and other forms of non-ideological training" (Pieke, 2009a, p. 127).

Another notable characteristic of cadre training marketization is the participation of private entrepreneurs in the process. Very few studies mentioned the operation details of extra-party training providers such as universities and other societal training agencies (C. Lee, 2015; Pieke, 2009a). However, the role of training management companies in the facilitation of training marketization remains unexplored. One of the significant discoveries in my fieldwork is that most universities do not manage cadre training details with their existing personnel and resource. A common practice for most universities is to outsource most cadre training management to training management companies that provide education consultation and training management services.[6] Accordingly, the training program advertising, negotiation of the training contracts, admission, accommodation of trainees, and most importantly – the design of training syllabus

[6] According to Chinese National Bureau of Statistics, enterprises in the service sector that provide research and technology, cultural, and management service can be categorized into micro, small, and medium-size with an employee of less than 10, between 10 and 100, and between 100 and 300, respectively. This categorization is similar to that used by the World Trade Organization, which defines small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as firms employing between 10 and 250 people, and micro firms as those employing less than 10 people.

and instructor hiring are commonly managed by training management companies with minimal, if not zero, political obligations.

While Chinese President Xi Jinping famously stressed that "the surname of party school is the 'Party'" (L. L. P. Gore, 2016), the "surname" of extra-party training agencies that conduct cadre training remains unclear. That is, most extra-party training agencies are not necessarily institutionally bonded to carry out detailed Party directions regarding training content. Even for public institutions such as universities that follow the "president responsibility system under the leadership of the Party committee" (G. Zhou, 2020, p. 170), there is no indication that a university's Party committee is involved in the operation of cadre training provided by the universities. Moreover, private agencies that offer core training management services are under even less Party control, if any. Therefore, the resultant diversified cadre training harbors the potential danger of the Party losing control of cadres' training content and its grip on its agents. In other words, it brings uncertainties to the capacity of the party-state to "monitor and control lower-level agents" (Edin, 2003, p. 35). Moreover, universities' common practice of outsourcing cadre training management could exacerbate these uncertainties.

Yet, the CCP seems to accept the diversification and partial marketization of its cadre training system, regardless of the possibility of the Party losing ideological control of local cadres responsible for policy implementation and direct interaction with citizens.[7] In 2009, the Chinese Central Organization Department authorized 13 universities as the first group of national cadre training university base. [8] It is worth noting that the number of universities across the country that conduct cadre training goes way beyond those 13 authorized universities. Major universities in all localities of China are building up their cadre training services, although with varying degrees of success. Thus, there is a de facto diversification of cadre training between extra-party training agencies in the market and the intra-party training institutions under the hierarchical direction of the CCP. In the 2018-2022 National Cadre Education Training Plan, the Chinese government calls for the "optimization of social training agencies' participation in cadre education training mechanism," showing no sign of taking a step back from cadre training marketization.[9]

This contradiction yields the core puzzle of this study: why and how is a once centralized political training system marketizing in China, and through what mechanisms can it affect the authoritarian regime's adaptability and resilience?

This dissertation proposes that training marketization derives from local cadres' demand to improve training resources due to traditional intra-party institutions' limitations in providing the training they need during China's rapidly changing reform era. Such a demand, along with the overlapping trend of higher education reform that led to universities' financial strain, and the explosive development of the non-state economic sector that led to a boom of small and medium-sized private enterprises, contributed to the generation of a competitive market with diversified training providers. The CCP regime toler-

[7] I use "partial" marketization because this is not a pure market process: regardless of their performance and competitiveness, intra-party training institutions such as party schools will not be driven out of the cadre training market. They still serve as one of the most important channels for cadre evaluation and promotion and are institutionally protected by the party-state.

[8] "Central Organization Department confirmed 13 universities as national cadre training university base." https://xgc.nju.edu.cn/65/45/c1519a25925/page.htm, accessed on October 1st, 2020.

[9] 2018-2022 National Cadre Education Training Plan,2018.

ated, experimented with, and gradually regulated the cadre training market with the consideration of enhancing its governance capability and adaptability while maintaining its organizational coherence and ideological dominance. The marketization transition also brings additional societal actors such as private entrepreneurs into the Party-State's organizational power-building process without incorporating them into the formal institution, which presents an alternative mode of interaction between the state and the society with complex implications. In the meantime, due to the CCP's consistent emphasis on political dominance, training marketization does not necessarily indicate the irrelevance of the traditional intra-party cadre training institution. Through influencing the regime's hierarchical cadre management system that appoints or removes its governing agents at various administrative levels, both types of training play a crucial role in the dynamics of authoritarian adaptation in China.

The following section draws upon the theory of organization power in authoritarian politics, existing research on traditional cadre training institutions, and the role of societal actors in authoritarian politics to build a theoretical foundation for understanding the transition of cadre training system and its implications. Section four presents this dissertation's analytical framework. Finally, the last section of this chapter outlines the following chapters, in which I test the association between cadre training and the regime's cadre management practices at various administrative levels in China.

1.3 Authoritarian Politics and Sources of Regime Resilience

1.3.1 Organizational power as a source of authoritarian resilience

Comparative studies of authoritarian regimes suggest that the ability of the regime to deal with relationships with the masses and the elites using its organizational power is crucial for authoritarian regime stability (Boix & Svolik, 2013; Geddes, 2003; Levitsky & Way, 2010; Magaloni & Kricheli, 2010; Pepinsky, 2014; Reuter & Szakonyi, 2019; Sinkkonen, 2021; Svolik, 2012). While not entirely applicable in this research, Levitsky and Way's research on competitive authoritarianism offers an inspiring perspective on the organizational power of the authoritarian regime. They argue that two significant factors – "ties to the West and the strength of governing-party and state organizations" (Levitsky & Way, 2010, p. 5) – contribute to competitive authoritarian regime stability. They define such regimes as countries with "formal democratic institutions" yet unfair competition since "the playing field is heavily skewed in favor of incumbents" (Levitsky & Way, 2010, p. 5). Their theory predicts that authoritarian states with high linkage to the West are likely to democratize regardless of the organizational power of the regime; strong organizational power likely leads to regime stability when the linkage is low. On the other hand, weak organizational power may lead to either government turnover or regime survival, depending on the level of Western leverage.

China is categorized as a fully authoritarian regime due to its lack of channels "for opposition to contest legally for executive power" (Levitsky & Way, 2010, p. 7). Still, some aspects in Levitsky and Way's framework can be highly relevant in the Chinese context. The absence of any opposition party means that it will be much harder for international linkage or leverage to influence Chinese politics institutionally

since the discretion of state rulers can significantly affect the maintenance of global connection. Even if the relationship can develop freely, there still lacks institutional resources to cast political influence. Levitsky and Way acknowledge that "opposition-centered variables are of limited utility" (Levitsky & Way, 2010, p. 56). Therefore, the most powerful influencer of regime stability in the Chinese case becomes the governing Party's organizational power to manage the regime's relationship with the masses and the elites.

Studies of Chinese politics suggest that cadre training institutions constitute important sources of organizational power, but how they work may follow a logic different from the competitive authoritarianism framework. According to Levitsky and Way, both state coercive capacity and Party strength contribute to a regime's organizational power (Levitsky & Way, 2010). Specifically, organizational power refers to the regime's ability to "prevent elite defection, co-opt or repress opponents, defuse or crack down on protest, and win (or steal) elections" (Levitsky & Way, 2010, p. 56). Except for elections and co-option, all the scenarios considered here are potentially intense and "extraordinary" political moments distinguishable from the routine governance process.

This focus on extraordinary political moments in defining organizational power does have its merits. Still, it risks overlooking the functions of routinized political institutions in buttressing organizational power. As Pepinsky pointed out in his review of the comparative authoritarianism approach, "authoritarian regimes do many things besides grow/stagnate and survive/collapse" (Pepinsky, 2014, p. 650). The ability of political institutions to reinforce political dominance and policy implementation on a routine basis is at least as important as its ability to mobilize needed resources at critical or extraordinary times. As previous research shows, the subjects of this study – cadre training institutions – are crucial for ensuring Chinese cadres' political adherence and competence in policy implementation (C. Lee, 2015; Pieke, 2009a; Rothstein, 2015; Shambaugh, 2008). Therefore, understanding the development of cadre training institutions in China offers us valuable insights regarding the Party State's organizational power.

The measurement of organizational power further emphasizes the need to study the dynamics of cadre training marketization. The formation and implementation of organization power depend on the scope of organizational reach, without which a regime can hardly utilize organizational strength broadly and efficiently. In Levitsky and Way's research, the scope of non-coercive organizational power refers to "the size of a party's infrastructure, or the degree to which it penetrates the national territory and society" (Levitsky & Way, 2010, p. 64). Their measurement of scope as the prevalence of the party's mass organization serves a reasonable criterion. Still, it said little about the capability of the mass organization to implement party policies or interact with constituents. Cadre training institutions, in this regard, concern precisely the enhancement of cadres' ability of political implementation along the Party line. Accordingly, developing a cadre training system can be an essential proxy in measuring the scope of the Party's organizational power. A potential expansion of cadre training from intra-party organizations to extra-party societal agencies would suggest a considerable increase in the party's organizational reach.

Improving cadre cohesion, commitment, and capability is one of the essential purposes of traditional cadre training institutions. The diversification of training institutions means that in addition to agencies within the party apparatus, societal agencies are also becoming instruments in serving such a purpose.

However, their training content contains much less element of political education. High levels of organizational cohesion are rooted in "nonmaterial ties" such as ideology or "bonds of solidarity forged out of periods of violent struggle" or "successful revolutionary or liberation movements" (Levitsky & Way, 2010, p. 65). Such elements constitute some of the most emphasized types of content in Chinese cadre training. While this content has been the traditional focus in intra-party training institutions, existing research has not empirically explored the extent to which extra-party cadre training addresses such content. With the Chinese central government's recent re-emphasize on education regarding ideology and CCP's revolutionary history, possibly due to party leaders' worry about the fading influence of the revolutionary legacy on regime stability (Levitsky & Way, 2010, p. 363), extra-party agencies' attitude toward ideology training content becomes even more relevant. Whether or not societal agencies integrate Party ideology with other more professional and technological elements of training will have important implications for the party state's organizational power.

The overlap and intertwinement of state and Party functions in China further complicates the implications of cadre training diversification for the organizational power of the Party-State. Recent research shows an ongoing trend of a "fusion of party and government" (Brødsgaard, 2018, p. 386), indicating an even more considerable influence of the CCP on state affairs. Traditional party schools and other intra-party organizations' training emphasizes ideological indoctrination but has limited resources to provide more professional and technological training regarding specific governance subjects. Such focus contributes to cadres' cohesion and political commitment but does not necessarily improve their capability in governance. The emergence of cadre training provided by societal agencies focused on professional training could contribute more to cadres' governance competence. Still, its impact on their organizational cohesion and ideological commitment remains unexamined. Therefore, the Party's organizational strength dynamic in China is mainly contingent upon the inner workings of cadre training diversification.

It is worth noting that I am taking a slightly different perspective on state strength compared to Levitsky and Way's approach. Levitsky and Way operationalize state strength as the power to enhance "incumbents' capacity to suppress opponents and critics and to defuse or prompt potential opposition movements through intimidation, cooptation, and deprivation of resources" (Levitsky & Way, 2010, p. 67). This operationalization essentially emphasizes the coercive aspect of state power. My operationalization of regime power, on the other hand, focuses more on the capability of the Party agents to implement central government policy, improve performance, and effectively govern on a routine basis. This conception of the "mundane" and infrastructural aspect of state power emphasizes the importance of governance performance in maintaining regime legitimacy (Han, 2018; Hiep, 2012; Holbig & Gilley, 2010; S. White, 1986; Yang & Zhao, 2015; Zhao, 2009; Y. Zhu, 2011). Moreover, recent studies such as Koss's ground-breaking research on the profound reach of the CCP organization into Chinese society and the contributing effect of such organizational penetration on authoritarian resilience also emphasize the importance of regime agents' governance performance (Koss, 2018).

Thus, my characterization of the regime's organization power shares similarities with concepts such as state capacity (Dincecco, 2017; Duckett & Hussain, 2008; Kennedy & Chen, 2017; Ong, 2018) or infrastructural power (R. Cai & He, 2021; F. Chen, 2020; C.-K. Lee & Zhang, 2013) which concerns with

the ability of the government in general to accomplish policy goals. However, organization power used in this dissertation specifically emphasizes the role of Party institutions in facilitating policy goals, which stresses the party's infrastructure (Levitsky & Way, 2010, p. 64) reach and its capacity to shape cadres' behavior for their accomplishment of intended policy goals. Although non-CCP members make up 62 percent of all cadres in China, of "leading cadres" who occupy leadership positions and are responsible for making crucial governance decisions, only 4.7 percent are non-CCP members(Brødsgaard, 2018, p. 392), which justifies the essential role of Party institutions in understanding China's policy outcome.

My focus on cadres as governing agents of the CCP regime points to cadre management as a crucial mechanism of the authoritarian regime's organizational power. The multiple criteria to select, promote, or discipline a governing agent in China reflects the multifaceted nature of the CCP's organizational capacity in managing the regime's relationship with the masses and the elites (Burns, 1987; Chan, 2004; Edin, 2003; Manion, 1985). Rothstein pointed out that Chinese cadre organization follows a very different operational logic from the classic Weberian bureaucracy (Rothstein, 2015). While the latter is characterized by adhering to impersonal organizational rules, the former is characterized by a solid commitment to specific policy doctrine defined by the CCP regime. Accordingly, when the regime prioritizes economic and social development that appeases the need of the masses, cadres who can effectively achieve performance goals are likely to be selected and promoted through China's cadre management system. Meanwhile, since the cadre management system operates on the political and ideological dominance of the CCP, political loyalty serves as one of the fundamental criteria of cadre selection, promotion, and discipline to ensure regime dominance over the elites – a crucial precondition for local policy implementation along the lines of the central government (Kennedy & Chen, 2017).

1.3.2 Cadre training institution as a source of authoritarian organizational power

The marketization of previously centralized cadre training institutions is not a phenomenon that is unique to China (Huskey, 2004). According to Huskey's study of the bureaucratic training system in post-communist Russia, the once-centralized training institutions dominated by Higher Party Schools experienced radical decentralized transformation since the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Before marketization, the Higher Party Schools in communist Russia served a similar function as the party school system in China – to provide integrated leadership education with a focus on the political ideology of the Communist Party to government officials. During the early years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, however, the Higher Party Schools stopped being a centralized network under the central government's control. Instead, they disintegrated into individual local training institutions with strong ties to local political elites. With the marketization comes the curriculum change from focusing on Marxist ideology and working-class theory to management skills and professional knowledge.

The decentralization of bureaucratic training - characterized by a lack of integrated training institutions – contributed to "provincial fiefdoms in which governors or presidents may approach local training establishments as extensions of their offices"(Huskey, 2004, p. 327). Accordingly, the marketization and

decentralization of Post-communist Russia's cadre training institution significantly weakened the regime's organizational power in uniting the elites and reduced the regime's capacity to control its local agents. The uneven development of decentralized local training institutions also led to inequality in local administrative resources. Meanwhile, higher education institutions such as universities suffering from budget cuts during the transition period were eager to meet the demand for training officials who lack governance skills. The joining of universities in bureaucratic training further deepened the institutional pluralism in Russia's official training system, making an integrated training framework even less likely regardless of the state's intention to do so. The transformation of the Russian cadres, regarded as the "mother of all reforms" (Huskey, 2004, p. 346), led to a bureaucracy that lacks political cohesiveness, which contributes to "fissures within the ruling elites"(Huskey, 2004, p. 367).

Early studies of Chinese cadre training institutions focused on the importance of the party school system, which was regarded as "a training mechanism to improve the expertise and competence of Party and State cadres in China, and as an important institutional agent for conveying ideology and policy reforms to cadres" (Shambaugh, 2008, p. 844). Therefore, the core purpose of Chinese cadre training institutions is to shape cadres' preferences and improve their competence according to the party's direction and expectation. As a result, researchers tend to focus on intra-party training institutions such as the Central Party School, as well as provincial and lower levels of party schools (Brødsgaard & Zheng, 2006; C. Lee, 2015; C. Lee & He, 2014; A. Liu, 2009; Pieke, 2009a, 2009b; Shambaugh, 2008; Tran, 2003; Tsai & Dean, 2013). As one of the most critical party structures, party schools are historically rooted and are crucial sources of the Party State's organizational power. While doubts about their efficacy in ideology alignment remain (A. Liu, 2009), scholars generally regard these institutions as a vital source of political stability, party adaptation, and regime resilience (Z. Wang, 2021).

Meanwhile, recent empirical research suggests that cadre training is undergoing a process of marketization, decentralization, and organizational proliferation. Pieke posits that the marketization of the Chinese cadre training system has almost the opposite effect of the privatization of government functions like that promoted by Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s (Pieke, 2009a). Instead of downsizing the power of the party-state, it shows the regime's "faith in the power of a modern, centralized and well-resourced government in shaping society and the economy" (Pieke, 2009a, p. 9). In addition, Pieke notices that universities and schools at the local, national, and international levels are participating in the cadre training market, ending the traditional monopoly of intra-party training institutions. He labels this change as part of the party state's "neo-socialist project"(Pieke, 2009a, p. 10) , which is to engineer socialist modernization and engage in economic globalization while maintaining "party leadership over all institutions of governance" (Pieke, 2009a, p. 9). Meanwhile, Lee focuses primarily on the marketization within the party school system (C. Lee, 2015). She points out that the incentives for party schools to grasp market opportunities may distract them from strictly following party discipline, therefore compromising their role as the CCP's instrument for elite selection.

These studies serve well to draw our attention to the development of cadre training institutions in China. Still, they often paid inadequate attention to the inner workings of marketized cadre training and thus failed to capture the complete picture of the diversification process. Therefore, their predictions

about the effect of cadre training marketization tend to be inconclusive. Pieke's and Lee's accounts of cadre training marketization primarily focus on the process within intra-party institutions (C. Lee, 2015; Pieke, 2009a). An example is the marketization of correspondence degree coursework in party schools. To fulfill local cadres' need to meet the mandatory education level for their employment, party schools provided correspondence courses for degree certificates. This practice later became problematic because government employers did not recognize some of such certificates as equivalent to the formal degree granted by higher education institutions such as universities(Pieke, 2009a).

When it comes to extra-party training institutions, Pieke briefly discussed cadre training programs in three of the most prestigious universities in China (Pieke, 2009b). My research indicates that diversified training institutions have grown exponentially across China during the reform era. Accordingly, it is unclear whether the practice of these three top universities can be representative of other social agencies with different levels of educational and administrative resources, as well as the implication of this divergence on the party state's adaptability prospect. Likewise, Lee acknowledges the emergence of different training providers but focuses her discussion mainly on intra-party organizational competition and the marketization process within party schools (C. Lee, 2015). This dissertation aims to fill such a gap by exploring the inner workings of cadre training provided by public academic institutions, one of the significant categories of training providers complementing intra-party training agencies. It also gives a first-hand account of private entrepreneurs' participation in cadre training and examines the implication of such involvement.

1.3.3 The role of public institutions and private actors in authoritarian politics

China's higher education institutions have long been considered crucial actors in Chinese economic, political, and societal development (Hayhoe, 1989, 1990, 1993, 1994, 2000; Hayhoe & Zha, 2015; Perry, 2015). However, research on higher education institutions produces mixed results on their potential influence on authoritarian regime durability. Higher education seems to create critical attitudes toward the authoritarian regime or even promote democratization in some cases (Sanborn & Thyne, 2013; Turam, 2021). For instance, in their study, Wang, Wu, and Han show that college education leads to a more critical attitude toward the regime and support for political participation among college-educated adults (G. Wang et al., 2015). In other cases, however, higher education only increases engagement in individualist behavior such as online discussion of politics while showing no impact on people's propensity to participate in collective action (Y. Wang, 2018).

Recent research focused on faculty members and university structures indicates that sophisticated authoritarian regimes such as the Chinese government "actively support (and shape) institutions of higher education intending to win the allegiance of the intelligentsia and thereby prolong their reign"(Perry, 2019, p. 2). On the one hand, such an effort succeeded at least to some extent. For instance, one of the most influential advisors to Chinese national leaders is Wang Huning, who is a renowned intellectual behind major national political agendas such as the "'Three Represents,' 'Scientific Outlook on Development,' and 'Chinese Dream'"(Patapan & Wang, 2018, p. 14). Study on the Chinese political science discipline suggests that scholars "actively support the current regime instead of undermining it" and provide advice contributing to regime legitimacy (Noakes, 2014, p. 258). Findings relating to intellectuals in Chinese

local universities also suggest that most professors follow the CCP's direction in research and teaching and play a supportive role in informing the regime's public policymaking process(Hao & Guo, 2016).

Such compliant behavior may have various roots. Historically, since the Tiananmen events, the political control and education of Chinese universities have generally been strengthened (Hayhoe, 1993). Pragmatically, Perry points out that faculties in Chinese higher education institutions work in a sophisticated evaluation and compensation system based on generous state funding (Perry, 2019). Consequently, they become "acquiescent" intellectuals who contribute to maintaining authoritarian rule rather than independent scholars who engage in political criticism.

On the other hand, recent study on repressive experience among Chinese scholars indicates that self-censorship is a common concern for research practice in China, which provides further evidence for the driving force behind the lack of political criticism in the Chinese academic community (Greitens & Truex, 2020). Through examining the Party's attempts to instill ideology in China's journalism education, Repnikova posits that faculty and students' adherence to official ideology "appears to be more on the surface than in substance" (Repnikova, 2017, p. 415). Hao and Guo also note that intellectuals may also play a contra-establishment or critical role toward the regime in a less obvious manner(Hao & Guo, 2016).

The expansion of cadre training from intra-party providers to marketized training providers such as universities indicates that Chinese universities play an ever more essential role in influencing authoritarian rule. Chinese intelligentsia has facilitated authoritarian policy implementation through other channels in the past. For example, according to recent research on the CCP's work team practice during crucial policy reform periods such as the Land Reform, intellectuals actively participated in work teams as "key intermediaries between central leaders and grassroots society" (Perry, 2021, p. 73). It is worth noting that a precondition for intellectuals to participate in work teams is to go through a series of intensive Thought Reform activities to ensure their ideological commitment(Perry, 2021).

University faculties are one of the most significant sources of instructors in marketized cadre training. Not only do acquiescent intellectuals refrain from engaging in political criticism, but now they are also actively participating in the state's project of cadre training, assisting the party-state in the cultivation of its political agents. Their interpretation of government policy and choice of focus in the training content directly affect cadres' perception of policy issues and capability in dealing with governance tasks. Once bystanders of policy implementation, who contributed to the sustainment of authoritarian rule mainly by participating in state-sponsored academic research projects, intellectuals who participate in cadre training are now interacting with local government agents and potentially shaping the course of policy implementation. If some university faculty are simply adhering to official ideology superficially, like Repnikova claimed in the case of journalism education, what would be the potential impact of them participating in cadre training (Repnikova, 2017)? The dynamics of intellectual-cadre interaction in extra-party cadre training will undoubtedly have important implications for the influence of cadre training on regime durability.

In addition to public academic institutions, there is also a growing literature on other non-state sources of authoritarian regime resilience. Studies on Chinese middle class and private entrepreneurs cast doubt on these social groups' impact on China's possible democratic change (J. Chen, 2013; J. Chen & Dick-

son, 2010). Contrary to the conventional wisdom that middle class and private entrepreneurs are the driving force of democratization, Chen and Dickson's research found that both social groups tend to be supportive of the current Party-State and do not support democratic institutions and values. Moreover, research on civic environmental organizations in China suggests that they have maintained a largely non-oppositional stance towards the Party-State and have made limited progress in challenging and affecting government decisions (S.-Y. Tang & Zhan, 2008). Recent research provides evidence that 'social elite' entrepreneurs who have political connections with current government officials or legislative body members have attempted to influence the policy process and advance environmental protection activities within the government framework of the Party-State (X. Zhan & Tang, 2016). Contrary to the common perception of the rule-defying role of societal organizations (Reny, 2019), these findings show that formal and informal organizations in an authoritarian context can also work with the regime and contribute to regime resilience by facilitating beneficial policy outcomes (Mertha, 2009).

Research on internet politics in authoritarian regimes also indicates that private enterprises play an important role in sustaining authoritarian resilience when governments outsource internet surveillance to private entities or encourage private companies' self-censorship (Calingaert, 2010; Coskuntuncel, 2016; Creemers, 2017; Eldridge & Franklin, 2018; Han, 2018). For instance, by effectively influencing a few large internet companies such as Baidu or Tencent, the Chinese government can outsource internet regulation to these private enterprises and achieve most surveillance goals (J. Liu, 2019; L. Liu, 2021). More importantly, recent research on how profit-driven Chinese data companies and media organizations actively participate in the regime's "institutional construction of Internet-opinion control" provides inspiring evidence on how private actors, driven by market mechanisms, can contribute to authoritarian resilience without political participation in institutionalized channels(Hou, 2020). These studies provide a valuable empirical and theoretical foundation for understanding public institutions and private agencies' involvement in China's marketized cadre training system.

The above review suggests that to understand the CCP regime's adaptability better, more work is needed to explain dual-track cadre training and evaluate its implications. Theoretically, we need a framework that accounts for the incentives and tradeoffs of the state's decision to accommodate the diversification and marketization of cadre training. Empirically, an adequate understanding of how marketized cadre training works is crucial to evaluate its impact on regime resilience. I am interested in the conditions under which marketized cadre training comes into place, how this training system operates, the behavior of actors involved in this process, and the implications of such transition to Chinese regime adaptability. Also, existing literature has yet to conduct sufficient empirical analyses in the study of cadre training, such as tests of the association between training and promotion or prosecution prospects for cadres at different administrative levels. This study aims to contribute to all these aspects.

1.4 Analytical Framework

This section presents this dissertation's analytical framework and empirically testable implications from this framework.

My framework involves three levels of actors: the CCP as the ruling regime, the intra-party and extra-party training agencies, and the cadres. I assume that the Party aims to stay in power and needs loyal and capable agents to implement its policies. Scholars recognize China as a fragmented authoritarian state that tends to maintain a high rate of development in a rapidly changing society (Lieberthal & Lampton, 1996; Mertha, 2009). Accordingly, the Chinese government relies on capable and loyal local agents to negotiate with various relevant actors that influence the policy-making process, implement its policy, and tackle the socio-economic problems that emerge during rapid development. In this case, the agent, or cadre, represents the personnel that works in party and government institutions, is responsible for policy implementation and interaction with citizens at the local level. The intra-party training agency represents the party's institution for cadre training, and the extra-party training agency represents public institutions and private agencies that provide cadre training.

Focusing on China, this research develops a dual-track institutional theory of authoritarian adaptability. I argue that the CCP, prompted by the need to adjust its governance capacity according to the rapidly changing socio-economic context, tolerates and accommodates partially marketized cadre training as a means to bring competition to and expand the scope of imbalanced cadre training. This accommodation of partial training marketization meets local cadres' need for enhanced learning and increases the CCP's governance capability without seriously undermining its dominance in political agenda-setting. More importantly, extra-party actors such as Chinese universities and private entrepreneurs in the education industry become instruments of the party in the project of governance capability enhancement. Thus, they actively participate in the Party State's maintenance of its performance legitimacy. The mechanism that connects intra-party and extra-party cadre training systems and the CCP's regime legitimacy is the Party State's hierarchically controlled cadre management system that selects, promotes, and disciplines cadres at different administrative levels of the Chinese government. By influencing the crux of China's cadre management process, both traditional training providers and recently involved public and private actors participate in building authoritarian regime legitimacy.

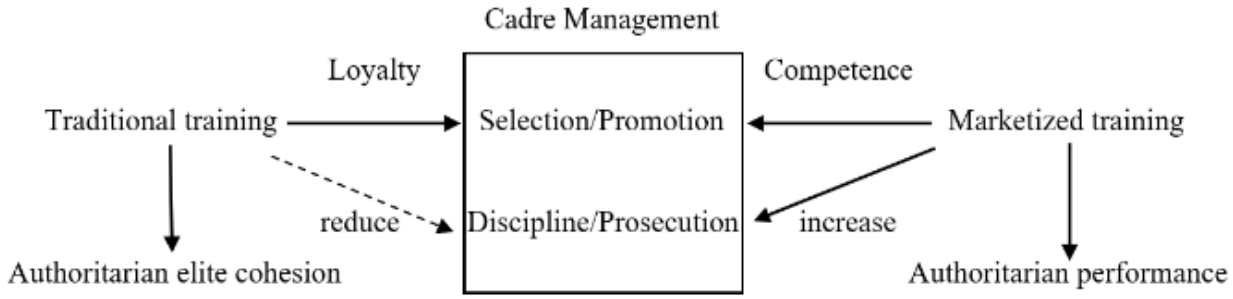

Figure 1.1: Dual-track cadre training and authoritarian legitimacy

Figure 1.1 illustrates the dynamic of dual-track cadre training and authoritarian legitimacy. The left side of the figure represents the traditional cadre training system, which contributes to authoritarian elite cohesion by cultivating loyal cadres that are likely selected for political promotion through China's cadre

management system. Another vital function of traditional cadre training, which essentially compliments loyalty cultivation, is to warn cadres about the danger and consequences of corruption and disloyalty, thus deterring cadres from malpractices, corruption, and political betrayal.

The traditional cadre training system enjoyed its domination until China's economic reform took off. The need to improve cadres' governance capability in the rapidly changing socio-economic context tends to exceed the capacity of established traditional training institutions. As a response, the Party chooses to utilize, rather than crack down the power of the market to mobilize necessary resources and improve training quality through market competition. Note that given the ruling party's capacity in regulation and rulemaking, it should have the option to either stop, restrain, or acknowledge the further development of cadre training marketization after its initial development. It seems that the party has chosen the third option. Certain features of traditional party school training, such as party schools' restrictions on trainee's administrative rank and limited training contents, have significant implications. Specifically, even if the state increases its resource investment in the traditional training system, it may still be lacking in addressing the knowledge needed at different levels of government. As will be discussed in Chapters IV and V, Chinese cadres along the administrative hierarchy enjoy vastly different autonomy and responsibility levels, thus facing distinct challenges in their governance effort.

Instead of solely relying on the established institutions or altogether abandoning them, the Party is now embracing a bourgeoning extra-party training market and delegating certain parts of training responsibility to that market while keeping the established intra-party training institutions intact. In this case, the CCP balanced the need to prevent a maxing out of governance capability with the need to maintain political dominance over its governing agents. To some extent, this process is similar to China's dual-track economic reform traced by Barry Naughton. According to Naughton, China adopted a gradualist approach to economic reform. The political leaders tolerated, acknowledged, and allowed increasing market competition while maintaining a certain amount of control on the established state-owned system (B. Naughton, 1995). Instead of radically letting go of state control all at once, like many Eastern European countries after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, China's gradualist approach created room for economic growth. Still, it preserved the core interest of the state elites.

In the case of cadre training, the traditional training system is being preserved and recentralized due to its essential role in reinforcing political loyalty. Meanwhile, the regime tolerates, acknowledges, and utilizes a competitive market of cadre training participated by public institutions and private agencies due to the market's advantage in enhancing cadres' governing capability. The right side of Figure 1.1 represents the marketized cadre training system. Public institutions such as universities and private actors such as training management companies in the education industry actively participate in competitive training service provision. Marketized training providers play an important role in improving cadres' competence and performance, focusing on government management and professional development knowledge and skills. By selecting and promoting cadres with a higher level of competence, the authoritarian regime can maintain its performance legitimacy and reduce mass discontent. Nevertheless, the lack of emphasis in marketized training on loyalty to the Party and the vices of official malpractice may also lead to a higher probability of cadre misbehavior.

While taking advantage of the market mechanism in enhancing cadre training quality, the party also has incentives to regulate the extra-party training market due to its need to maintain a certain level of control on such crucial aspects of personnel management. Later in this study, I will show that the demand-driven cadre training provided by public and private agencies in the competitive market tends to significantly downplay political education and potentially deemphasizes the Party's ideological discipline. This concern is likely one of the underlying reasons for developing state regulation on such a market. Interestingly, instead of abolishing the marketized training system, the state started a process of cooptation and is trying to turn it into a more regulated system, potentially due to inherent deficiencies in traditional intra-party training institutions in meeting local cadres' training demands. Thus, the regulation of the expanded extra-party cadre training market showcases the regime's attempt to reinstate state control and institutionalize the competitive cadre training market. What follows could be an increasingly regularized training market with strengthened Party control.

The inherent flexibility and competitiveness in marketized cadre training alleviate the widening training disparity between party schools at different administrative levels created by imbalanced resources distribution. Lower-level party schools have limited resources to improve training efficacy through means such as curriculum innovation, which harbors the danger of grassroots cadres receiving inadequate training and lacking essential skills and professional knowledge for effective governance. In addition, Marketized training provides local grassroots cadres with an up-to-date interpretation of recent changes in significant policy and governance approaches and technical expertise regarding cadre's work. Meanwhile, it deemphasizes direct indoctrination of orthodox Marxist theory and party ideology.

Instead of one-directional organizational pluralization, the institutional development of the Chinese cadre training system follows a dual-track process. On the one hand, it preserves and recentralizes intra-party training institutions, which provides political education, while also acknowledging and regulating competitive extra-party training agencies, thus enabling capability training. Ultimately, these deliberate policy choices contributed to the cultivation of more competent local cadres, who may have a better chance to stand up to the myriad challenges encountered in the rapidly changing socio-economic context in the reform era. But on the other hand, the system also maintained the CCP's political cohesiveness and ideological dominance over its governing agents. More importantly, the dual-track cadre training system brought the Party and important social actors together in building the foundations of the CCP's regime legitimacy.

To summarize, local cadres demand an improvement of training resources due to intra-party training providers' limitations in providing the training they need in the reform era. Such demand generated a market with diversified, competitive training providers, whom the Party tolerated, acknowledged, and gradually regulated, with the underlying consideration of enhancing its governance capability and adaptability while maintaining its political coherence and ideological dominance.

Compared to existing frameworks, this focus on dual-track institutional development deepens our understanding of the evolving institution of cadre training. Previous research shows that intra-party training institutions marketize to meet the need of cadres to upgrade their education credentials and party schools to boost their financial conditions (C. Lee, 2015; Pieke, 2009a). However, the main arena

of institutional change in these frameworks still sits within the Party system. My framework emphasizes the marketization and institutionalization of extra-party training agencies, an important addition to the traditional cadre training system. It tells a story of higher education institutions and other societal actors' active participation in the building and maintaining the authoritarian ruling party's organizational power and regime legitimacy.

1.5 Research Overview and Chapter Outline

1.5.1 Research overview

By positioning the Chinese case in a global context of authoritarian resilience, this study employs qualitative and quantitative methods to examine the marketization process of cadre-training institutions that are crucial to the CCP's organizational power. A wide range of empirical data was gathered during fieldwork in Beijing and other parts of China from 2017 to 2019 to substantiate this research project. Based on publicly available cadre resume on various Chinese websites, I also created an original cadre training history dataset of all prefectural leaders in China from 1999 to 2019, which provides evidence regarding the relationship between cadre training and political selection in China. I collected the cadre training data through several sources. The first step creates a list of all prefectural leaders from 1999 to 2019 with information in provincial and city yearbooks. I then collected their career history and bibliographical information through published resumes on governmental websites and Baidu Baike (百度百科). Cadres' training information is then extracted from their career history. As shown in the geographical distribution of training (Figure 1.2), cadre training is prevalent in almost all prefectures of China. In some localities, over 90 percent of the prefectural leaders received cadre training from 1999 to 2019, which attests to the relevance of this study.

This study aims to break new ground on understanding market-aided institutional transition in authoritarian regimes by focusing on Chinese cadre training marketization and testing various empirical implications related to the process. Instead of overturning existing frameworks, my analytical goal is to demonstrate that the framework presented here has more comprehensive explanatory power in understanding the often-contradictory priorities of authoritarian adaptation.

The focus on extra-party societal agencies' role in authoritarian institutional change may also inspire researchers of other authoritarian systems to look beyond dominant authoritarian institutions when exploring the dynamics of institutional change. Admittedly, some characteristics of China, such as its size in the territory, population, economy, and historical legacies, may render it less representative of other authoritarian regimes in the world. However, the parsimonious theoretical distinction between intra-party institutions directly monitored by the ruling Party and extra-party societal agencies that enjoy a certain level of autonomy could still be a helpful perspective in the study of regime resilience in other systems. More importantly, this research points to an alternative mode of interaction between the state and the society in the non-democratic context, going beyond the traditional framework of cooptation and repression. This joins the recent scholarly effort in exploring the intricate state-society dynamics in

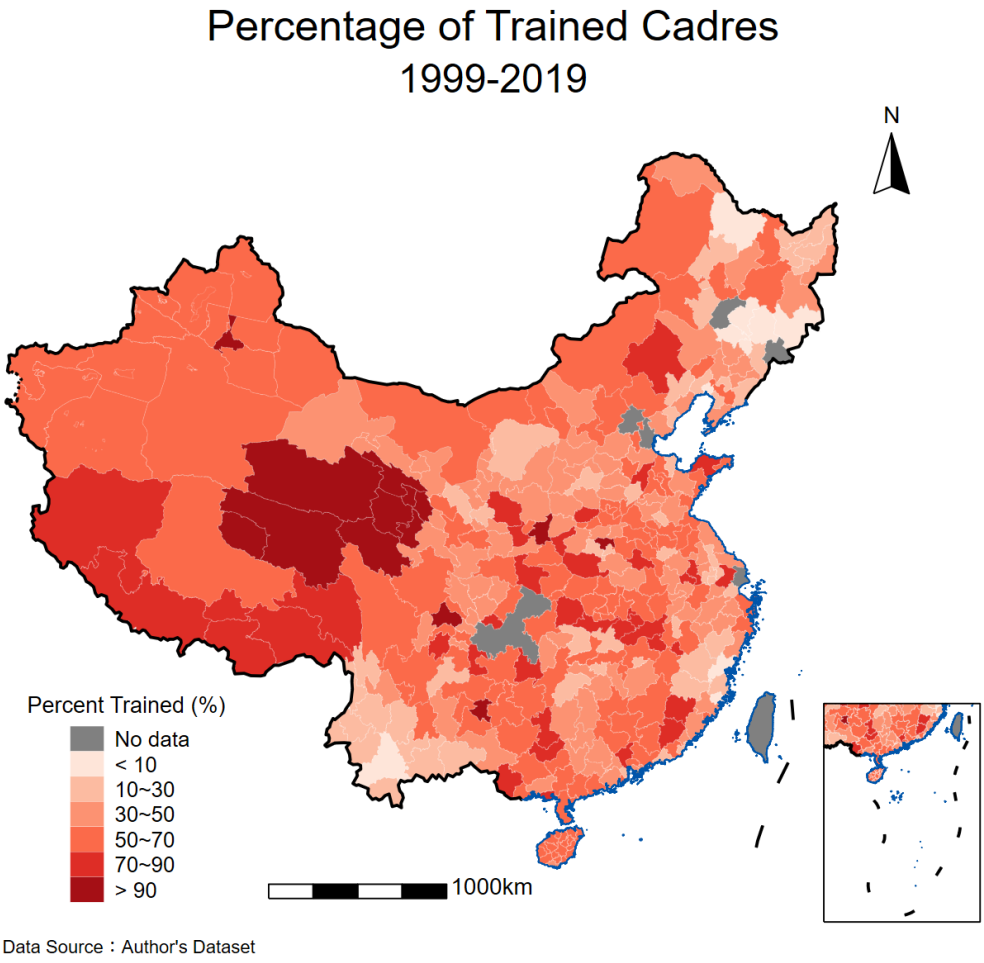

Figure 1.2: Prefectural cadre training in China, 1999-2019

authoritarian politics (Creemers, 2017; Han, 2018; Roberts, 2018; S.-Y. Tang & Zhan, 2008; X. Zhan & Tang, 2016).

1.5.2 Data collection and analysis

To utilize quantitative and qualitative research methods to substantiate this research project, I gathered a wide range of empirical data during my fieldwork in Beijing and other parts of China from 2017 to 2019. I was gratefully granted access to anonymous quality control survey data of cadres who participated in cadre training programs hosted by a university in Beijing. The university conducted the survey during each of its

cadre training programs. However, since the signing of a training contract is frequently based on market dynamics, the university could not predetermine the survey respondent population. Accordingly, the survey data cannot statistically represent the entire population of Chinese grassroots cadres, even though it shows variation regarding cadre trainees' geographical distribution. The survey records 4,608 grassroots cadres' demographic information, past training experience, attitude toward training, and evaluation of their training experience. This imperfect yet rare dataset allows the author to utilize county and township-level cadres' demographic and training information. More importantly, it enables me to examine the effect of training programs provided by the university targeting county and township-level cadres.

Other data collected during my fieldwork includes semi-structured information-gathering interviews with cadre trainees, instructors, university administers, third-party training company managers and assistants, and government officials. A sample of the interview questions can be found in the Appendix, which focus on the policy development and operational procedure of cadre training programs. I also gathered publicly available records of universities' cadre training programs, training materials, government documents, and archives. Syllabus of party school and university cadre training programs are collected from the school's website on the internet and provided by faculty of party schools and universities. In addition, I participated full-time in many training sessions and observed the teachings of instructors, the reactions of the cadre trainees, and the interactions between instructors and cadres. Finally, to understand how university cadre training operates, I also volunteered in a private company that collaborates with the university on cadre training programs. Such experience grants me valuable first-hand experience in the entire ground-level operation process. While certainly not free of limitations, these sources allow me to fill in the gap of an adequate understanding of the extra-party cadre training market, explore the interactions between various actors in that market, and test crucial hypotheses in my theory.

In addition, this dissertation introduces a cadre training dataset that includes all prefecture-level cadres in China from 1999 to 2019. Besides their complete career history and general demographic information, it records the type and amount of training they received and their patronage ties with upper-level officials. It also includes prefecture-level economic data to measure cadres' performance.

I will analyze these data using mixed methods. Chapters II and III present qualitative evidence from materials collected during my fieldwork, archival research, and interviews. The qualitative analysis will include, but is not limited to, an interpretation of training materials in examining the focus of different types of training. By interpretively coding training materials into groups of similar topics, I will evaluate the level of ideological and technical/professional focus in cadre training programs. The quantitative analysis in Chapter IV-VI will focus on examining the relationship between types of training and cadre trainees' prospect of political selection, promotion, and prosecution at various administrative levels.

1.5.3 Plan of the chapters

This dissertation is structured as follows. After the introductory chapter, Chapter II provides a brief overview of the traditional cadre training system, focusing on the institution of party schools that stresses cadres' political and ideological education. Concurring with previous literature, I show that the traditional cadre training system represented by the party schools at various administrative levels in China plays an es-

sential role in the regime's political education endeavor. The curriculum of party school training programs is dominated by ideological content regarding the Party's history and theory and the national leadership's political agenda. This loyalty-focused curriculum structure led to traditional training's disadvantage in providing courses on professional knowledge and technical skills local cadres needed to solve practical problems in local governance. Meanwhile, recent years have seen a recentralization of traditional training institutions and an expansion of the central government's desired cadre training scale, intensifying the dilemma between an insufficient and unbalanced resource in the traditional training system and increased demand for training.

After reviewing the development and disadvantages of the traditional cadre training system, I provide a detailed account of the marketization of cadre's capability training in Chapter III, which suggests that marketized cadre training has become a crucial supplement to traditional party school training. I show that marketized cadre training relies on an extensive collaborative relationship between academic institutions and small private enterprises that provide training services. While educational institutions are equipped with abundant intellectual resources demanded by local cadres' governance challenges in the reform era, they lack crucial training management resources. Third-party training service providers, on the other hand, can provide flexible and efficient training management for cadre training programs. However, their lack of political obligation and devotion entails uncertainties to the regime's goal of maintaining political accordance. I then present an analysis of the content of marketized training. Such content shows that while local cadres recognize the importance of ideological cultivation, given the opportunity, they will choose more professional and technical training content that contributes to their capability in managing local economic development and social governance issues. Given what's been discussed in Chapter II, this chapter also finds that, while acknowledging the utility of marketized training, the CCP shows no sign of loosing its grip on the traditional cadre training system. On the contrary, recent years have seen a re-centralization of the cadre training institution and increased regulation on marketized training both by the CCP regime and the societal actors involved.

The following three chapters explore the relationship between cadre training institutions and authoritarian regime adaptability through the CCP's cadre management process. Chapter IV examines the relationship between traditional training, marketized training, and cadre selection at the township level. Extant literature on cadre selection in China stresses the role of performance and political connection but pays insufficient attention to the effect of cadres' loyalty to the regime on the promotion outcome. There also lacks systemic empirical evidence on political selection at the grassroots level. Based on local cadres' training records, I utilize cadre training experience at party schools and academic institutions to account for regime patronage and merit at the grassroots level. Using a rigorous data-processing method – coarsened exact matching (CEM) allows me to explore the causal effect of cadre training on promotion. The empirical results show that party school training significantly increases the probability of township-level cadre promotion, while university training contributes to political selection to a lesser but indispensable degree. Also, the distribution of regime patronage seems to be heterogeneous across different administration levels. County-level cadres have a much higher probability of being selected into party school

training programs than township cadres. By contrast, selection into university training is less skewed by administrative level.

Chapter V analyzes the correlation between cadre training experience and political promotion of prefectural-level leaders in China from 1999 to 2019. Most extant explanation of prefectural-level leadership promotion focuses on the role of patronage connections and economic performance, but yields mixed results. A review of recent literature reveals that such inconsistent findings may result from the potential omission of crucial elements in the current promotion study. Accordingly, in this chapter, I aim to provide evidence on the effect of cadre training on prefectural elite promotion when controlling for patronage relationships and performance. Based on an original prefecture cadre training and promotion dataset, my analysis shows that traditional and marketized training are conducive to the promotion of prefecture-level leaders. Consistent with the findings in Chapter IV regarding grassroots cadres, prefecture elites who have both types of training experience have the highest probability to receive a promotion, while those with no training record are the least likely to be promoted. Crucially, the effects of cadre training remain significant even after controlling political elites' patronage connections and economic performance. The findings in Chapters IV and V provide evidence for the regime's reliance on a dual-track training system in selecting and promoting capable and loyal agents at both grassroots and elite levels.

Chapter VI considers the recent political development during the Xi Jinping administration and studies the relationship between training experience and the regime's anticorruption practice. Existing research on anticorruption practice in China pays insufficient attention to the effect of the regime's corruption-prevention efforts. In this chapter, I examine how party school and marketized training are correlated to cadres' probability of being prosecuted for corruption after controlling other factors. Differences in the training content of party school and university programs suggest that traditional and marketized training may have a divergent effect on cadre prosecution. On the one hand, party school training focuses heavily on political education that reinforces the CCP's ideological dominance and authority. Moreover, it explicitly condemns corruption and malpractice by including courses and on-site activities regarding the consequence and punishment of corruption. Accordingly, it is likely that party school training produces a deterrence effect on corruption and will be negatively associated with the probability of cadre prosecution. [10]

On the other hand, marketized training includes much less political education content and overwhelmingly concerns cadres' professional knowledge, technical skill, and local governance issues of interest. Without accompanying political education and corruption deterrence, the improvement of competence and skill may even embolden cadres who think they can evade punishment. Therefore, it is less likely that marketized training will be negatively correlated with the probability of cadre prosecution. The results broadly support these hypotheses, pointing to potential complications concerning regime resilience due to the dual-track training system.

[10] A possible alternative explanation is that some cadres are less likely to be prosecuted so that they are more likely selected to receive party school training. However, there lacks empirical evidence regarding the selection criteria of party school training. To test such alternative explanation, more data regarding the specific selection criteria of party school training are necessary, which is beyond the scope of this study.

Chapter VII concludes this dissertation by considering the implication of dual-track cadre training institutional transition to the CCP's political cohesiveness, performance legitimacy, and the future of regime adaptability. Rather than treating cadres' governance preference and capability as *a priori* condition, my research focuses on one of the most critical processes that shape their governance preference and ability. The marketization of cadre training is tolerated, acknowledged, and utilized by the regime, although it does not necessarily always meet the Party's expectations. Meanwhile, traditional cadre training institution still plays a crucial role in the CCP's political education of its cadres, and recent years have seen a recentralization of the traditional training system. Like many other institutional transitions in authoritarian regimes, cadre training marketization is still evolving, with many boundaries being explored by various prominent actors involved. The framework examined in this research suggests that authoritarian regimes may enhance their adaptability by opening up opportunities for social agencies to spontaneously help facilitate the goal of the regime while preserving established institutions to maintain its political cohesiveness.

Chapter 2

The Traditional Cadre Training System

"*Adhere to correct political direction is the first priority of Party School operation and the most important hallmark of 'the surname of party school is the Party'.*" [1]

—– Opinions of the CPC Central Committee on Strengthening and Improving the Work of Party Schools under the New Situation, 2015

2.1 Introduction

Traditionally, CCP cadres are primarily trained in party schools or other institutions directly under the supervision of the Party committee or the central government. This chapter will briefly review the history and examine the current state and recent development of traditional cadre training institutions in China.

Based on extant literature, archival and document research, in-person interviews, and descriptive statistics from the dataset obtained during my fieldwork, this chapter finds that the traditional cadre training system represented by the party schools is crucial for the CCP's political education and ideological domination over its officials. Courses in party school training focus heavily on the CCP's history and theory, the Party's cadre management practices, and current CCP leader's political agenda while providing less professional and technical knowledge crucial for local cadres' effective governance. Such emphasis on political cultivation and shortage of practical knowledge is one of the main disadvantages of traditional cadre training. Accordingly, cadres show more interest in training programs provided by academic institutions compared to party school training.

Nevertheless, such a disadvantage does not necessarily indicate the looming irrelevance of traditional training. On the contrary, the CCP seems to have re-centralized the traditional cadre training system in recent years. Specifically, the recentralization is characterized by a deeper reach of the party school system into the county-level, a reduction in malpractices of local party schools observed by previous scholars,

[1] Opinions of the CPC Central Committee on Strengthening and Improving the Work of Party Schools under the New Situation (中共中央关于加强和改进新形势下党校工作的意见), December 14th, 2015, People's Daily, part 6.

and the incorporation of the School of Administration system into the Party School system. However, such recentralization can hardly remedy the disadvantages of the traditional cadre training system, and an expansion of cadre training capability seems inevitable.

2.2 Traditional Cadre Training Institutions

Chinese cadre training system includes different types of training agencies whose hierarchical distance with the political authority varies: party school system, academies of governance, leadership academies, socialism academies, and academic institutions that regularly conduct collaborative training with government branches and party organization departments (C. Lee, 2015). The last type stands relatively further away from Chinese political authority among these agencies, while the other institutions are closely regulated and monitored by the Party and state authority. Their division of labor also varies in the administrative position of cadres trained by them, with party schools and cadre academies at the national and provincial level mostly training high-level elite cadres. In contrast, agencies lower than the provincial level generally train grassroots cadres. For example, three national-level cadre academics established in 2005 – China Executive Leadership Academy in Pudong, Jinggangshan, and Yan 'an – and the Party School of the Central Committee of CCP are all headed by a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee – one of the crucial leaders in Chinese core political circle. As a result, the cadres trained in these agencies are frequently on or above the provincial level and close to the center of Chinese political power. Meanwhile, prestigious academic institutions occasionally hold training sessions for elite cadres. Still, in general, most academic institutions enjoy a certain level of flexibility in the administrative status of cadre trainees. [2]

Extant studies on contemporary Chinese cadre training institutions focus primarily on the party school system. Such a system was regarded as "a training mechanism to improve the expertise and competence of Party and State cadres in China, and as an important institutional agent for conveying ideology and policy reforms to cadres" (Shambaugh, 2008, p. 844). Therefore, the core purpose of cadre training institutions is to shape cadres' preferences and improve their competence following the Party's direction and expectation. [3] Case studies focus on intra-party training institutions such as the Central Party School and provincial and lower party schools. [4] Pieke noticed that as one of the most critical party structures, party schools originated in CCP's early years of revolutionary struggle and have developed into a crucial

[2] As will be discussed in the next chapter, academic institutions participated in cadre training even before the marketization of competence training. The main difference between academic institutions' participation in cadre training before and after marketization is whether the training programs are arranged through hierarchical government direction or competitive market mechanisms.

[3] It is worth noting that while cadre training was being practiced during the early years of CCP and has undergone significant development over the decades after the founding of the PRC, cultivating government officials is not necessarily the invention of the CCP. The practice of training government officials in China can be traced back to the New Political Reform of the Late Qing Dynasty at the beginning of the 1900s as one of the government's attempts to salvage the crisis-ridden regime mired in foreign attack and domestic insurgencies. Upon the direction of the Qing government, officials-cultivating bureaus were established across China to teach officials about a variety of subjects crucial to government reform at the time, such as Chinses and western political theory, world history, international and domestic law, foreign language, finance, and so on. See Cui and Xu, 2006; T. Tian, 2007; Xiao, 2006, 2007; Xu, 2008, 2014; Q. Zhang, 2006

[4] See Brødsgaard and Zheng, 2006; C. Lee, 2015; C. Lee and He, 2014; A. Liu, 2009; Pieke, 2009a, 2009b; Yu, 2016

source of the party state's organizational power (Pieke, 2009a). While doubts about their efficacy in ideology alignment remain, scholars generally regard party schools as a vital source of regime stability, party adaptation, and state resilience (A. Liu, 2009).

Table 2.1: CCP Central Party School curriculum structure

Course Type	**Summary of Course Content**
Theoretical Education Course	Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought and the Theoretical System of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics; Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics in the New Era
Party Character Education Course	Party Constitution, Party rules and Party discipline; Ideal and faith; the Party's tenet; History of the Party and the Country; Revolutionary tradition; Moral character; The rule of law thinking; Combating corruption and promoting integrity
"Contemporary World" Course	Contemporary world economy; Contemporary world politics; Science and Technology in the Contemporary World; The rule of law in the contemporary world; Contemporary World Military; Contemporary thought of the world; Ethnicities and religions of the contemporary world
"Situation and Task" Seminar	Seminars by Party and state leaders, as well as ministerial-level leaders of central and state organs on major strategic decisions of the Party Central Committee and the State Council, as well as major international and domestic hot topics
Capability Training Course	Strategic thinking skills; Administrative ability according to law; Scientific and democratic decision-making ability; Public opinion guiding capability; Crisis management ability; Political leadership; Reform and innovation skills
Knowledge Training Course	Seminars on economics; Politics; Culture; Society; Ecological Civilization; History; Nationality; Religion; Art

It is no coincidence that research on cadre training institutions primarily focuses on the party school system. According to the regulation on the Work of CCP Party School issued by the CCP Central Committee in 2019, "party schools (schools of administration) [5] are schools that cultivate leading cadres under the leadership of the CCP, they are an important part of the party committee, the main channel of training leading cadres at various levels, the critical field of the CCP's ideological and theoretical building, as well as

[5]Schools of administrative used to be one of the leading training providers for policy knowledge. However, the Plan on Deepening Reform of Party and State Institutions issued by the CCP Central Committee in March 2018 stipulated the institutional integration between the Central Party School and the National School of Administration. Additionally, a professor from the National School of Administration indicates that party schools and schools of administration at local levels are mostly integrated even before the 2018 Plan. Accordingly, "one institution, two titles" (Yi Ge Ji Gou, Liang Kuai Pai Zi 一个机构，两块牌子) describes the current relationship between party schools and schools of administration, and party schools (schools of administration) becomes the official title for the integrated institution.

the CCP and the nation's philosophy and social science research institution and important think tank."[6] It also stipulates that the work of party schools must emphasize and promote core doctrines of the CCP derived from its previous and current leaders, "advocate Socialism with Chinese Characteristics, adheres to the guidance of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, Deng Xiaoping Theory, the important thought of Three Represents, Scientific Outlook on Development, Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics in the New Era, strengthen Four Consciousnesses (Si Ge Yi Shi, 四个意识), demonstrate commitment to Four Matters of Confidence (Si Ge Zi Xin, 四个自信), and live up to Two Upholds (Liang Ge Wei Hu, 两个维护)." [7] Furthermore, possibly to ensure training efficacy, the duration of training sessions in different party schools ranges from 1 to 4 months from county level to national level. The CCP Central Party School mainly hosts 4-months training sessions for department-level, bureau-level, and county-level cadres. [8] Thus, the party school system is unequivocally the linchpin of the CCP regime's thought unification institution.

The CCP has meticulously stipulated the quantitative and qualitative standards for training, indicating the political center's resolution to maintain and enhance its political authority and policy coherence. The 2018-2022 National Cadre Education and Training Plan issued by the CCP Central Committee specifies detailed training requirements for cadres at all levels. Specifically, it stipulates that cadres at the ministerial and provincial-level, department and bureau level, and county level must receive an accumulative training for three months or more than 550 credit hours within five years. Meanwhile, grassroots cadres below the township level must participate in no less than 12 days or 90 credit hours of training per year. Among the CCP Central Party School and provincial and city-level party schools' curriculum, most courses should focus on Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics in the New Era. Table 2.1 presents the curriculum structure of the Party School of the Central Committee of CPC. [9] Theoretical education and party character education (Dang Xing Jiao Yu, 党性教育) consist no less than 70 percent of the total course hour. [10] Party schools at lower levels across China more or less follow this structure to set up their curriculum.

[6] The CCP Central Committee, Regulation on the Work of CCP Party School (2019), Article 2.

[7] The CCP Central Committee, Regulation on the Work of CCP Party School (2019), Article 3. Integral to president Xi Jinping's series of theoretical doctrine, "Four Consciousnesses" refer to "maintain political integrity, think in terms of the big picture, follow the leadership core, and keep in alignment with the central Party leadership," "Four Matters of Confidence" refer to "confidence in the path , theory , system , and culture of socialism with Chinese characteristics," and "Two Upholds" refer to "Upholding General Secretary Xi Jinping's position as the core of the CCP Central Committee and the whole Party, as well as the authority of the CCP Central Committee and its centralized, unified leadership."

[8] The CCP Central Committee, Regulation on the Work of CCP Party School (2019), Article 16.

[9] Source: Party School of the Central Committee of CCP official website, curriculum structure, https://www.ccps.gov.cn/jypx/kctx/.

[10] The concept of "party character" first appeared in the CCP leader Liu Shaoqi's "On the Cultivation of Communists" (Lun Gongchandangyuan De Xiu Yang, 论共产党员的修养) and has been widely used in the CCP leaders' speech and Party documents. According to the Encyclopedia of Chinese Education, party character education refers to "fundamentally transform every party member with the fine characteristics of the proletariat, the world outlook of dialectical materialism, and Marxist ideology."

For example, Table 2.2 provides a detailed curriculum sample of a three-month Young Cadre Training Program at a provincial party school.[11] There are several noticeable characteristics of the training content. First, ideological training and CCP political cultivation account for a considerable portion of the learning plan. Specifically, classical Marxism theories courses such as "core ideas in The Communist Manifesto" and "Basic contents of Marxism", CCP history and theory courses such as "elements of Mao Zedong Thought" and "the glorious achievement of the CCP", and courses on principal theories and policies of Xi Jinping such as "Four Comprehensives" and "study General Secretary Xi Jinping's important discussion on comprehensively governing the country according to law" are the primary focus of the training. This course focus attests that the primary goal of party school training is to reinforce cadres' political identity and the CCP's ideological domination.

Table 2.2: Curriculum of a three-month Young Cadre Training Program at a Provincial Party School

Date	Course Content
March 14-18	Registration, opening ceremony, and military training
March 21	Core ideas in The Communist Manifesto and its modern implications; Video: Lenin's writings in his later years and the preliminary exploration of socialist construction
March 22	Actively and steadily promote the reform of the political system
March 23	Leader's seminar and discussion
March 24	Strengthen soft power and realize the China Dream; CCP group meeting: value learning opportunity, strive to realize "three transformations."
March 25	Comprehensively raise the scientific level of Party building
March 28	Study General Secretary Xi Jinping's important discussion on comprehensively governing the country according to law

Continued on next page

[11]Course content mentioned in the table: Three Transformations (san ge zhuan bian三个转变) - "Three transformations" was a concept raised by Xi Jinping in 2014 when he visited China Railway Equipment Group in Zhengzhou city, Henan province. Specifically, it refers to "transform made in China to create in China, transform China speed to China quality, transform China product to China brand." Five Major Concepts (wu da li nian 五大理念) - The Fifth Plenary Session of the Eighteenth Central Committee of the CCP passed Proposal of the CPC Central Committee on formulating the 13th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development, in which "innovative development, coordinated development, green development, open development, and shared development" was proposed as the five major concepts in guiding Chinese socio-economic development during the 13th five-year plan. Four Comprehensives (si ge quan mian 四个全面) - Four Comprehensives is a list of political goals first proposed by Xi Jinping in 2015 and later adjusted in 2020 after the Fifth Plenary Session of the 19th Central Committee of the CCP. They include "Comprehensively build a moderately prosperous society; Comprehensively deepen reform; Comprehensively govern the country according to law; and Comprehensively govern the Party strictly." Two Studies and One Become (liang xue yi zuo 两学一做) - In 2020, the first comprehensive was adjusted to "Comprehensively build a modern socialist country." In February 2016, the General Office of the Communist Party of China issued a document of "On carrying out the study and education program of 'Study the Party Constitution, Party Rules, and Regulations, and Study a Series of Speeches, and Become Qualified Party Members' among all Party members," which started a learning campaign among all CCP members.

Table 2.2 – continued from previous page

Date	Course Content
March 29	Establish five major concepts to successfully build a moderately prosperous society in all respects
March 30	Video: Study the Four Comprehensives ; CCP branch meeting: How to analyze and solve practical problems with Marxist positions, viewpoints, and methods
March 31	China's financial reform under the New normal; Video: Capital and the logic of market economy
April 1	Interpreting Regulations of the Communist Party of China on United Front Work (Trial)
April 5	Problems and countermeasures of new-type urbanization in China; Leader's seminar
April 6	Leader's seminar: on-site teaching - a few issues regarding the transaction of public resources; Emergency rescue drill at the scene of accidental injury
April 7	Define the boundary between the market and the government and maximize the vitality of the market; On-site teaching: transforming the functions of XX city government
April 8	Actively and steadily promote the integration of urban and rural development; Video: Building a moderately prosperous society in every aspect; CCP group meeting: adapting Marxism to conditions in China – from Four Comprehensives to Five Major Concepts
April 11	Interpreting the New Party Constitution of the Eighteenth National Congress; Leader seminar: interpreting the new Budget Law
April 12	Comprehensively promoting CCP governance in accordance with rules
April 13	Strengthen exercise of the Party spirit, improve the cultivation of Party spirit
April 14	Discussion: Party-mass relations under comprehensive and strict Party governance; CCP group meeting: Pass on the red gene, practice "two studies and one become."
April 15	Leader seminar: Interpretation of the Regulations on the Selection and Appointment of Leading Cadres
April 18	Regional strategic choice in the context of economic integration; CCP group meeting: Basic contents of Marxism (positions, viewpoints, methods)
April 19	Improve the ability and level of scientific development with innovative thinking; CCP branch meeting: Party spirit analysis exchange and comment
April 20	The glorious achievement of the CCP; On-site teaching: The history of the New Fourth Army and the spirit of the Iron Army; CCP branch meeting: Revolutionary tradition education, revisit the vows of the CCP membership
April 21	Innovate anti-corruption mechanisms and promote probity in political development
April 22	Visit the Integrity Alert and Education Base
April 25-29	Learning and exchanging
May 3	Video: Study on some elements of Mao Zedong Thought

Continued on next page

Table 2.2 – continued from previous page

Date	Course Content
May 4	Issues in industrial transformation and investment attraction in XX city during New normal
May 5	Innovation in social governance under new circumstances; On-site teaching: Social governance practices in XX city
May 6	Modern management theory and management idea innovation; CCP group meeting: discussion on the cultivation of middle-aged and young cadres
May 9	Philosophical literacy and leadership skills
May 10	Leading cadres' pressure management and healthy mentality; CCP branch meeting: Institutional obstacles restricting XX city development and the choices of reform path
May 11	On-site teaching: XX Memorial CCP spirit education
May 12	Special research reports; Graduation examination
May 13	Learning evaluation; Commencement

Second, the training program is characterized by frequent group activities based on CCP organizational structure, such as CCP group meetings on a smaller scale and CCP branch meetings on a larger scale. Most of the group activities have a specific theme of discussion focusing on important national political agenda proposed by CCP leaders, such as "Three Transformations" or "Five Major Concepts." Elements of CCP theories such as "basic contents of Marxism" or "adapting Marxism to conditions in China" are also common themes of group discussion. While seemingly pedantic for outside observers, such group activities provide excellent opportunities for cadre trainees to network with each other and showcase their political allegiance to the Party authorities who may be monitoring and evaluating cadres' behavior. The organization of group activities based on CCP groups or branches reinforces cadres' political identity in the hierarchical Party structure. As can be seen from the marketized training curriculum in Chapter III, such group activities based on CCP organizational structure barely exist in marketized cadre training.

Third, while the curriculum includes courses on local economic development and policy implementation, they tend to be over-generalized and lack professional content or technical details. It seems that these courses focus more on aligning local practices to central government's political agenda such as "Three Transformations" or "Four Comprehensives" and less on knowledge-based innovative solutions for concrete problems encountered in local governance. Admittedly, there are a few specific courses such as "issues in industrial transformation and investment attraction in XX city during the New normal" or "interpreting the new Budget Law." Still, compared to the curriculum of marketized training in Chapter III, the courses in party school training tend to be generic and with fewer technical details.

Fourth, interpreting the CCP's cadre management practice, such as cadre selection, promotion, and discipline, is an important part of party school training. For instance, "interpretation of the Regulations on the Selection and Appointment of Leading Cadres" clearly aims to help cadres better understand the rules and regulations of cadre promotion. Courses such as "innovating anti-corruption mechanisms and

promoting probity in political development" or activities like "visit the Integrity Alert and Education Base" familiarize cadres with the CCP's anti-corruption practice and warn them about the consequences of malpractice. During my interview with local cadres, some showed me textbook samples from party school training sessions. There were several textbooks detailing representative corruption cases, telling real stories about the corrupt officials' background, exactly how corruption happened, the investigation and prosecution process, and the punishment received by corrupted officials. My interviewees also mentioned anecdotal details that in some localities, cadre trainees are invited to stay overnight in the cells at detention centers for cadre investigation and personally experience the "consequence" of corruption. One can only imagine the chilling effect of such an experience.

Fifth, the frequent usage of political education videos as a teaching method is also an interesting feature of party school training. The videos cover topics of CCP legacy such as "Lenin's writings in his later years and the preliminary exploration of socialist construction" or "elements of Mao Zedong Thought" and significant national political agenda such as "study the Four Comprehensives" or "building a moderately prosperous society in every aspect." While visual presentation can be an effective method of information delivery, it also minimizes audience participation in the learning process. It is unclear from the curriculum whether there are discussions planned after the video lessons. However, according to cadres interviewed during my fieldwork, discussions after video lessons are uncommon. If that is the case, overreliance on video teaching may reduce the intended efficacy of party school training.

Sixth, not all political agendas from the CCP leadership receive equal emphasis. Party school training focuses primarily on theories from historical CCP leadership such as Mao Zedong and the current CCP leader Xi Jinping. Noticeably, political agendas proposed by past CCP leaders such as the "Three Representatives" of Jiang Zemin and the "Scientific Outlook on Development" by Hu Jintao are absent from the teachings of current local party school training. [12] These absences indicate that party school training has been heavily influenced by the political agenda of the current CCP leadership.

Overall, such a curriculum design manifests the crucial role of the party school system in providing political education to the cadres and reinforcing the CCP's ideological dominance, focusing on the current political leader. In 2015, the "Opinions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Strengthening and Improving the Work of Party Schools under the New Situation" for the first time in official document announced, "the surname of party school is the Party" as the fundamental guideline of party school operation. [13] Later in 2019, the regulation on the Work of CPC Party School again emphasized that "the surname of party school is the Party, all the processes and every aspect of party school

[12] Introduced by Jiang Zemin in 2000 and later ratified by the CCP at the Sixteenth Party Congress in 2002, "the Three Representatives" refers to "Representing the development trend of China's advanced productive forces; Representing the orientation of China's advanced culture; and Representing the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the Chinese people." It was argued by some scholars as crucial for the CCP's regime legitimacy by coopting new social groups emerged during the economic reform era, especially private entrepreneurs. The "Scientific Outlook on Development" was ratified into the CCP's constitution at the 17th Party Congress in 2007. Specifically, the principle emphasizes scientific socialism, sustainable development, social welfare, a humanistic society, increased democracy, and the creation of a Socialist Harmonious Society.

[13] "Opinions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Strengthening and Improving the Work of Party Schools under the New Situation",December 9th, 2015. http://cpc.people.com.cn/n1/2015/1214/c64387-27923584.html, accessed on November 17th, 2021.

work must be distinctively political, and party school should serve as a model of abiding by the Party's political discipline and rules." With the fundamental task of training influential actors in practically every aspect of Chinese governance, including "leading Party and government cadres at all levels, civil servant, leading personnel of state-owned enterprises and public institutions, young cadres, leading personnel of theoretical propaganda, high-level talents, grassroots cadres, Party members, and teachers in the party school (school of administration) system," it is clear that the party school's impact on the Chinese political system is significant.

2.3 Limitations of Traditional Cadre Training System

Such an ambitious plan to cultivate cadres at different sectors and levels of Chinese administration through the traditional cadre training system is feasible only if the regime has an unlimited resource to conduct political training in addition to fulfilling other governance goals. However, given China's enormous territorial, populational, and economic scale, as well as its hierarchical administrative structure, investing unlimited resources in cadre training is costly and unrealistic.

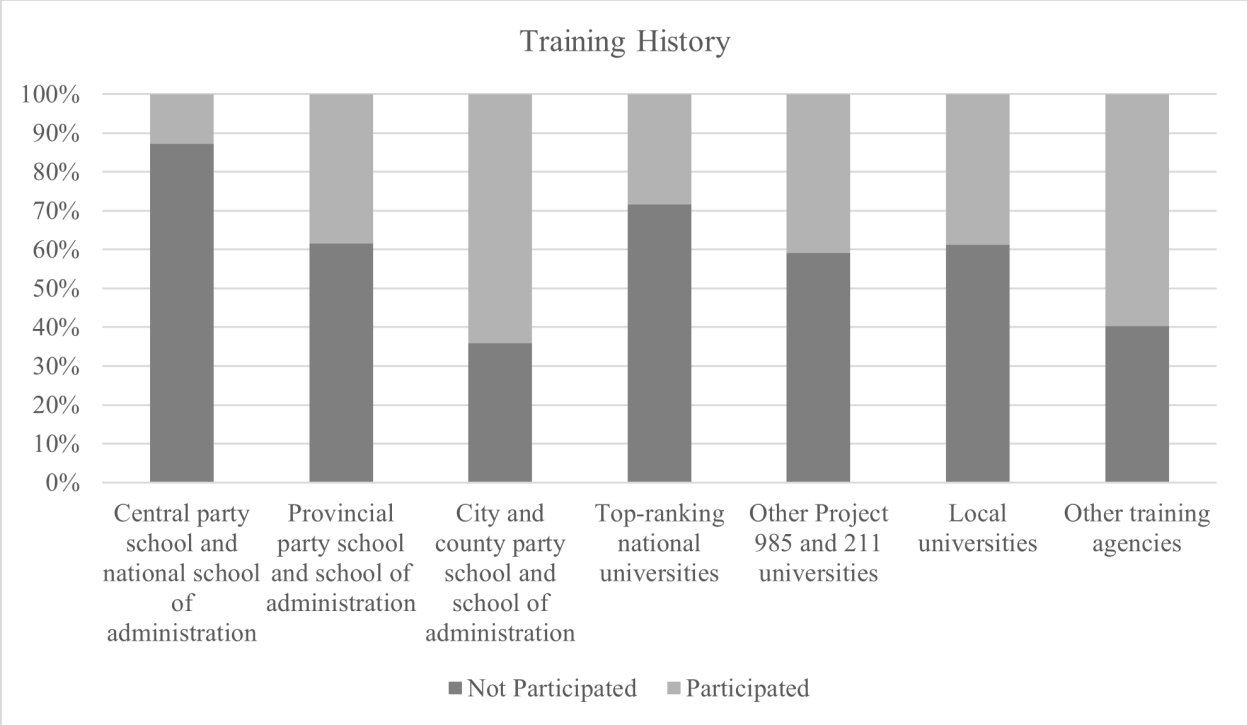

Figure 2.1: Township and county cadres' training history

My fieldwork yields some anecdotal evidence on the perception and preference of local cadres on different types of training, which highlights the limitation in traditional training and the motivation for local government to improve training quality for its cadres. According to the cadre training survey

data obtained during my fieldwork, by 2019, more than 80 percent of grassroots cadres haven't received training from the Central Party School and National School of Administration (Figure 2.1). This finding is unsurprising since cadres covered in this survey are from township and county levels that are unlikely to be selected for Central Party School training. Moreover, while the overall percentage of training in universities and party schools seems similar, party school training is concentrated at the city and county levels. In contrast, central and provincial party schools' shares are much lower. Again, given the relative low administrative level of the survey respondents, this finding is hardly surprising. [14]

To some extent, the findings above indicate that for township and county level cadres, higher-level party schools seem to be harder to access, and their training seems to be concentrated in lower-level party schools. Lee's data on the training plan of one Chinese city in 2008 shows that 61 percent of cadres were going to a city-level party school, and only 16 percent were going to university training programs (C. Lee, 2015, p. 117). The findings here indicate that there seems to be an increase in the participation of extra-party cadre training in the past decade, at least for the cadre group surveyed in this study.

When asked about their preference for training, top-ranking national universities are the most desirable among township and county cadre surveyed (Figure 2.2). The Central Party School and National School of Administration training are less preferred than the top universities but are highly demanded compared to lower-level party schools. The potential reason behind such preference is that being trained at such high-level Party training institutions will grant cadres a higher possibility of being promoted. Still, such opportunities are rare compared to university training programs. Many of the interviewed county cadres have participated in training in elite universities but not in the Central Party School during my fieldwork. It is worth noting that according to a previous study, not all cadres who received training in the Central Party School are promoted later (C. Lee, 2015). This observation is hardly surprising since the decisions of political selection are predominately made by the CCP's organization department and personnel management department at different administrative levels. It is more likely that high-level party schools serve a screening function, where cadres who have the potential to be promoted will be groomed and observed. Unfitting candidates will likely be reevaluated by the Party's organization department, where promotion decisions are finalized.

As pointed out by previous studies, the Central Party School is very selective in its trainees (Pieke, 2009a; Shambaugh, 2008). Only the most capable candidates who are likely to get promoted will be selected to participate in training programs there. In most cases, lower-level cadres will not get the opportunity to be trained in the Central Party School. Recall that the CCP requires cadres at and above the township level to attend no less than three months or 550 credit hours of training every five years. Also,

[14] In relevance to the next chapter, it is worth noting that more than 60 percent of the township and county level cadres surveyed had not participated in training in top-ranking national universities and local universities (Figure 2.1). Chinese government designated 112 universities in Project 211, a national program that aims to develop higher education institution that will contribute to the nation's development in social and economic fields. These universities are expected to set up standards for the overall quality of higher education institutions in China. Project 985 was initiated during the Jiang Zemin administration. It has a less specific aim of building "world-class universities in the 21st century" that reach international advanced level. The number of universities in Project 985 has grown throughout the years, reaching 39 by 2020.See https://www.chinaeducenter.com/en/cedu/ceduproject211.php, accessed on November 4th, 2021.

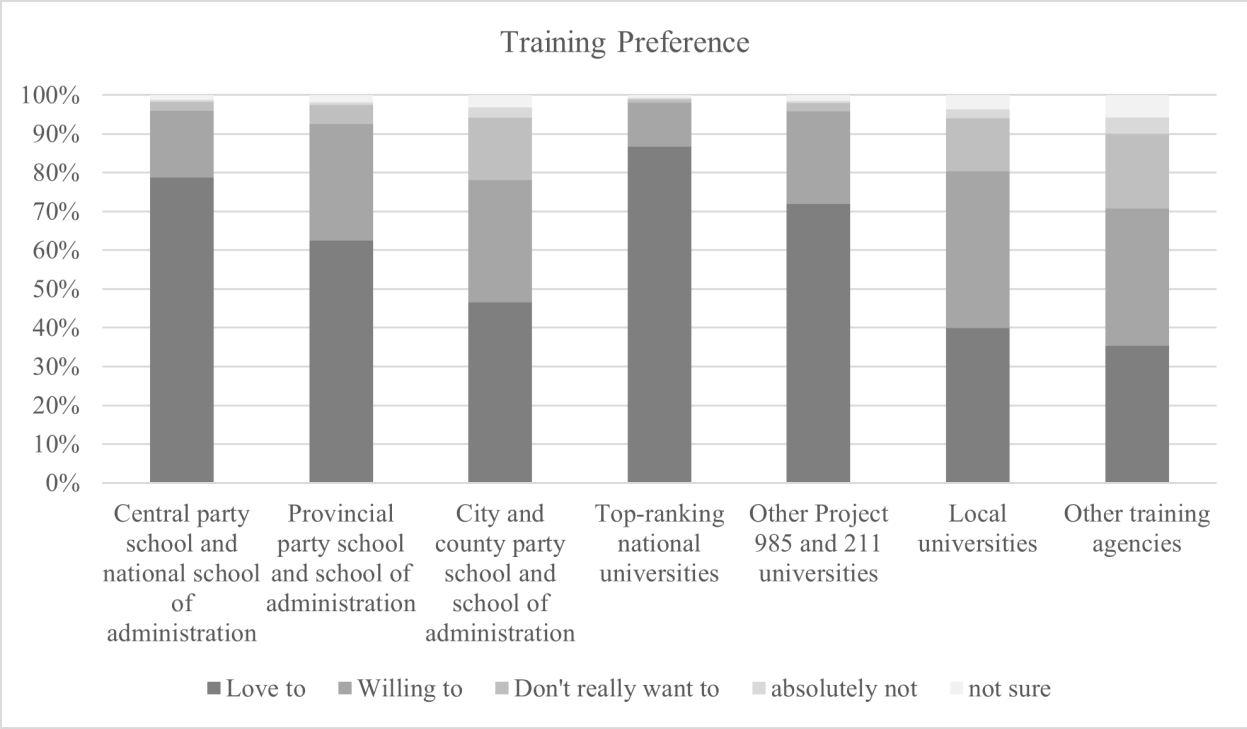

Figure 2.2: Township and county cadres' training preference

grassroots cadres must receive no less than 12 days or 90 credit hours of training per year. [15] From which training agencies, then, are local cadres going to get the required training?

One of the options is provincial and lower-level party schools. However, the party school system's inherent characteristics made it insufficient for the regime's goal of building a modern developing country. As Figure 2.2 shows, less than 50 percent of the surveyed cadres would love to attend county-level party schools. Thus, provincial party schools are preferable to those at the county levels, partly because training in higher-level party schools is a possible indicator for getting a promotion (C. Lee, 2015). [16] Still, cadres seem to be even more satisfied if they can attend training sessions from the prestigious Project 985 and 211 universities instead. Except for local universities, training programs provided by accredited academic institutions are generally more desirable than party school training.

This preference can be attributed to several factors. First, the curriculum design at local party schools can hardly meet cadres' practical needs for more professional, technical knowledge, which is crucial for

[15] 2018-2022 National Cadre Education and Training Plan, section 3.

[16] Since this survey focuses primarily on township and county-level cadres, it is possible that county-level party schools may be more appealing to cadres at administrative levels lower than township. For instance, a village cadre may prefer get training from a county-level party school since it may indicate a chance of promotion. Since there lacks data on training preference of cadres below the township-level, it is beyond the scope of this study to test such hypothesis.

effective governance in a rapidly changing society. Local officials are often directly interacting with the citizens and implementing policies. Their performance, therefore, is largely dependent on their competence in policy interpretation and implementation using professional knowledge, which may not necessarily be the main focus of party school training. On the other hand, universities can meet professional training needs with their solid academic resource. Meanwhile, these options are seriously limited for local party schools, which is probably why over 70 percent of surveyed cadres agree that party school training is also disadvantaged in practical knowledge regarding problem-solving at work and policy interpretation (Figure 2.3).

Second, instructors in local party schools are often ill-equipped to deliver the content needed. For example, my interviews with local party school instructors indicate that they take more pride in having their policy comments reprinted in leading ideological newspapers than researching and teaching practical governance challenges. These first two disadvantages of local party schools in providing competitive training derive structurally from their role as faithful messenger of the party's ideological directives. As a result, the curriculum is designed to meet political education requirements rather than pragmatic governance knowledge delivery. Moreover, some party school instructors, especially those at the local level, lack an advanced degree in academic fields. Their duty is less about researching and creating new knowledge that solves practical governance problems but more about being faithful advocates of political allegiance. Accordingly, designing appealing training programs at local party schools is challenging.

Third, one of the competitiveness in university training is the flexibility of the program plan, which is largely unavailable in party school training. Local government departments enjoy considerable freedom in choosing from different training plans offered by various universities. Nevertheless, such factor may become less critical if cadres participating in party school training are not expecting practical knowledge in the first place. Specifically, it is possible that cadres who are all for promotion may prefer party-school training regardless of its content since high-level party school training is an indicator for potential career advancement. Cadres who focus less on promotion but more on practical problem solving, or are less hopeful about receiving a promotion, may prefer university training.

It should be pointed out here that local, especially low-level, party schools, have been trying to improve their curriculum, yet the progress has been moderate at best. For instance, according to a township party school annual report, the school has recently incorporated various content such as environmental protection, combating criminal syndicates, production safety, and AIDs prevention into its training programs. [17] However, compared to academic institutions where full-time faculties conduct advanced research, lower-level party schools have limited resources and capabilities to focus on practical policy research and curriculum innovation. This limitation is reflected in the performance evaluation of this party school. Its innovation and training capability got 8 out of 10 points in the annual review, and the satisfaction of coordinating departments and citizens got 5 points out of 7. A closer look into the annual report of lower-level party schools indicates that they also serve multiple functions besides conducting grassroots cadre training. While not necessarily preventing local party schools from improving their training capability, such operations may distract them from devoting all resources to training. For example, this party

[17] A Sichuan township party school annual report in 2018.

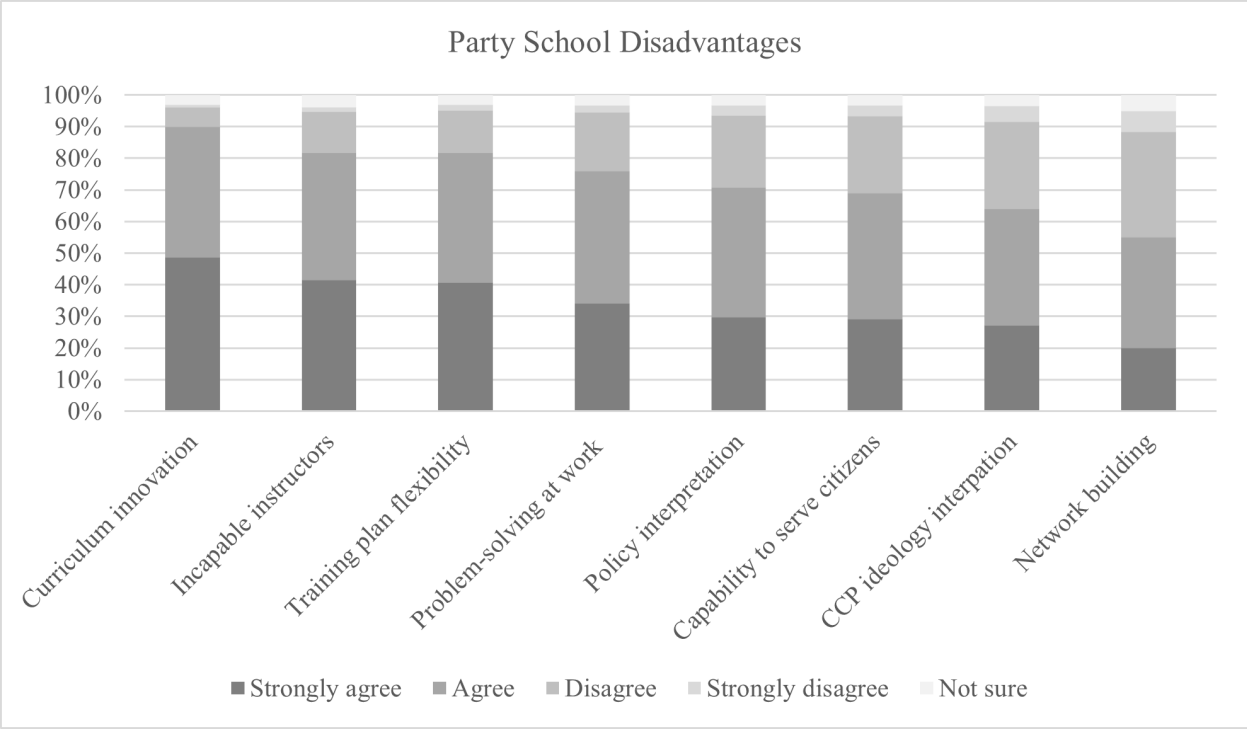

Figure 2.3: Township and county cadres' perception of Party School disadvantages

school noted its contribution to local investment promotion, such as drawing in investors to establish two village-level enterprises. Compared to training capability, categories regarding these additional functions of a low-level party school, such as financial management and policy implementation, got full points in its annual performance evaluation.

2.4 Re-centralizing Traditional Training System

Given the previous analysis on the limitations in traditional training providers, it is tempting to conclude that traditional institutions will lose their place in the cadre training field. However, it would be presumptuous to disregard traditional training agencies' role. The CCP seems to be determined to keep the conventional cadre training institutions intact, regulated, and even expand its reach in some cases.

The *Regulation on the Work of the Central Party School (Trial)* issued in 1995 and the *Regulation on the Work of the Central Party School* published in 2008 both stipulate that party school should be established at the national, provincial, autonomous region, municipality, and city level. Nevertheless, the latest version of the regulation issued in 2019 also specifies establishing and strengthening party schools at the county level – the administrative jurisdiction right above the lowest jurisdictions of township and

village. A recent study on the curriculum plan of a county-level party school finds that lower-level cadres are receiving training that was only available to higher-level cadres in the past (G. Tian & Tsai, 2021). Such finding provides evidence that the 2019 Regulation has already been reasonably implemented at local party schools. In addition, regulation and evaluation of courses in grassroots party schools by the Central Party School have also been strengthened. Such an expansion of organizational reach attests to the re-centralization tendency of the current administration on traditional political training.

Another sign of increased regulation and recentralization of the traditional training system is the reduction of malpractice in local party schools. Lee posits that the incentives for financially strained local party schools to grasp market opportunities may distract them from strictly following party discipline, therefore compromising their role as the CCP's instrument for cadre selection (C. Lee, 2015). The local party school condition stands in sharp contrast to well-funded and closely monitored party schools at the higher level, such as the Shanghai Party School and the Central Party School. This contrast is notable since different party schools are responsible for training cadres at different administrative levels. An imbalance in party schools' training resources raises the question of whether political education and loyalty cultivation are valued at lower-level party schools compared to profit-seeking activities. Case studies on local party schools provide anecdotal evidence on this issue. According to Pieke's account of local party schools in Yunan province, lower-level party schools share similar organizational structures with higher-level party schools and fulfilling the similar task of training cadres. However, the former frequently suffer from budgetary constraints and leadership neglect, which lead to corruption and other malpractices that compromise their institutional integrity (Pieke, 2009a).

However, in recent years, the profit-seeking activities and malpractices in local party schools observed by Pieke and Lee more than a decade ago seem to be increasingly regulated (C. Lee, 2015; Pieke, 2009a). [18] Some anecdotal evidence can be found in the financial reports of local party schools. Table 2.3 shows that local party schools at all levels generate no income from for-profit commissioned training programs compared to the local party school financial record presented in Lee's study (C. Lee, 2015, p. 126). [19] Only the provincial party school generated part of the income from undertakings such as degree programs. Township and county party schools rely exclusively on government finance bureau transfer. Prefecture party school's income also primarily comes from financial bureau transfer. Also, besides provincial party schools, which cover part of its expenses with undertaking income, party schools at other administrative levels cover all their costs with the financial transfer.

Such finding indicates that party schools' under-regulated economic practices found in Lee's study are partially curtailed in recent years, at least according to the data collected here. The malpractices could be a

[18] While Lee's book was published in 2015, the data used in her book was mainly collected between 2000-2010.

[19] According to the official definition in the accounting report, "income from undertakings" refers to income earned from public institutions carry out professional and other related activities per the function of the institution. In this case, it refers to the education sessions and programs or degree programs (if there are any) provided by local party school. It is worth noting that education sessions offered by lower-level party schools, such as policy explanation seminar in villiages, are fully compensated by the schools' operation budget and free of charge for the villages.

Table 2.3: Income and expense record of selected Party School across administrative levels, 2018

(In 10,000 yuan)		**Provincial party school**	**Prefecture party school**	**County party school**	**Township party school**
Income	Finance-bureau transfer	8275.23 (59.09%)	1599.52 (92.84%)	459.08 (100%)	236.90 (99.99%)
	Undertaking income	5649.90 (40.34%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0.02 (0.01%)
	Commissioned training programs	0 (%)	0 (0%)	0 (%)	0 (0%)
	Other	80 (0.57%)	123.45 (7.16%)	0 (%)	0 (0%)
	Total	14,005.13	1722.97	459.08	236.92
Expenses	Education	12,848.08 (91.74%)	1052.56 (65.88%)	357.76 (77.93%)	206.42 (87.13%)
	Social security and employment	752.71 (5.37%)	391.46 (24.5%)	85.26 (18.57%)	21.66 (9.14%)
	Housing security	404.34 (2.89%)	65.92 (4.13%)	16.06 (3.5%)	7.72 (3.26%)
	Other	0 (0%)	87.65 (5.49%)	0 (0%)	1.12 (0.47%)
	Total	14,005.13	1597.59	459.08	236.92
Balance		0	125.38	0	0

passing stage in the initial phase of the transition of the cadre training system. However, a decrease in party schools' economic malpractices does not necessarily translate to their capability to provide local cadres' comprehensive and professional training. The stipulations mentioned above on party school curriculum structure indicate that party schools' primary function is still political cultivation. A recent study on county-level party school course content shows that even practical training courses are predominately politically oriented (G. Tian & Tsai, 2021). For example, classes on environmental protection or poverty alleviation focus heavily on promoting president Xi Jinping's thoughts and theory on such issues, which may reduce the class time devoted to professional and technical knowledge on such subjects.

Third, the recent official incorporation of the School of Administration system into the Party School system further signals the Party's efforts to centralize different agencies in the traditional cadre training system and exert more control on cadre education. The Chinese government established the National School of Administration in 1987 based on the model of France National School of Administration, which provides training for government officials and civil servants according to the administrative need of the reform era. Extant literature lacks systemic research on the difference between the training programs

and targeted trainees in the Schools of Administration and party schools. However, one of the significant distinctions between the two is that the party school system is under the leadership of the CCP Central Committee, while the State Council manages the School of Administration system. In 2018, the CCP Central Committee issued the *Plan on Deepening Reform of Party and State Institutions*, which announced a series of significant institutional reforms. One of the reforms is to incorporate the School of Administrative system into the Party School system, with the goal of "comprehensively strengthen the central and unified leadership of the CCP on cadre training work, centrally coordinate the work of cadre training, assignment of important theoretical research, and direction of party school (school of administration) work at all administrative levels." [20] After this reform, the School of Administrative system is also under the leadership of the CCP Central Committee.

2.5 Conclusion

The traditional cadre training system represented by the party schools at every administrative level in China plays a crucial role in the CCP's political education and ideological dominance. However, it has been shown in this chapter that traditional training institutions suffer from under-developed curriculums that lack the practical knowledge needed by local officials. The sheer number of cadres required to be trained also strains resource-deprived traditional institutions, especially at lower administrative levels. Meanwhile, the recentralization of traditional training institutions does not inherently solve their disadvantage in providing updated, specialized, professional, and technical knowledge necessary for efficient and effective local governance in the reform era.

The limitation in training capability of the traditional cadre training institution primarily represented by the party school system leads to a puzzling question: how, then, can local governments fulfill the task of training its vast number of governing agents? Previous research shows that even administrators of party schools have long recognized the impossible mission of training a vast number of grassroots cadres with limited resources. They seem to be well aware of the limitation of the traditional cadre training system (C. Lee, 2015, p. 102). The demand for more comprehensive and diverse training seems understandable given the extraordinary pressure local cadres face to govern in the rapidly changing society of the reform era. The expansion of training capacity in various aspects, in this case, is a necessity rather than an option. In the next chapter, I will focus on the role of public institutions such as universities and market agencies such as private enterprises in expanding China's cadre training capacity by providing competitive training programs via a 'market of competence training.'

[20] Plan on Deepening Reform of Party and State Institutions, 2018.

Chapter 3

The Marketization of Competence Training

"*If China is going to have a problem, it will be a problem within the CCP itself. We need to be acutely aware of this issue, pay attention to cadre cultivation, follow the criteria of 'revolutionary, young, knowledgeable, and professional' in choosing cadres with both political integrity and professional competence.*" [1]

—– Deng Xiaoping, South Tour Speeches, 1992

3.1 Introduction

Besides the traditional cadre training system, academic institutions facilitated by third-party training managers have also become prominent cadre training providers in recent years, a phenomenon insufficiently explored in extant literature. This chapter provides a comprehensive account of marketized cadre training. It starts with the precondition and emergence of cadre training marketization, followed by a documentation of the inner workings of competitive training provision. It then traces the recent recentralization of the cadre training system and discusses its implications.

My findings diverge from previous research that attributes cadre training marketization to central government direction (Pieke, 2009a) and provide evidence for a market-driven process with the active participation of societal actors such as academic institutions and private companies providing training management services. However, the spontaneous marketization is only partial since it is conditioned upon the CCP's adherence to core institutions in traditional training such as the party school system, academies of governance, leadership academies, and socialism academies. Furthermore, there are also signs of increased CCP regulation on the problematic practices that seem to be prevalent during the initial development stage of the competitive cadre training market. These findings suggest that a partial market transition of the CCP's cadre training system is well underway. The dual-track dynamic of the cadre training system resembles Naughton's research on China's dual-track economic reform (B. Naughton, 1995). During such a transition, traditional training providers are protected by the CCP regime due to

[1] Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping, 1993. People's Publishing House, Volume 3, pp 380.

their crucial role in maintaining political identity and ideological dominance. At the same time, local governments and societal actors initiated and promoted spontaneous market practices to provide competitive training that focuses on urgently demanded practical subjects such as regional economic development and social affair management.

3.2 Preconditions for Competence Training Marketization

The collaboration between academic institutions and government departments on cadre training can be traced to the initial stage of the reform and opening era. The Chinese government resorted to intellectual resources outside of party schools and schools of administration system long before the emergence of competitive marketized training. For instance, in September 1979, the Chinese Department of Agriculture organized the first session of a 4-months cadre training program at Zhejiang University of Agriculture. That session trained 44 cadres in agriculture affairs from Jiangsu province, Zhejiang province, and Shanghai on CCP agriculture policy, agriculture economy, and agriculture science and technology. [2] In September 1980, nearly 100 cadres participated in the third session of the training. [3] Both Chinese and international specialists delivered lectures. It is worth noting that the participants in this training session are leading cadres, including Director and Deputy Director of Agriculture at the provincial, city, and county level, Secretary and Deputy Secretary of the County Party Committee, and Director and Deputy Director of Agriculture Office.

By October 1980, the Department of Agriculture has organized 15 cadre training sessions targeting operative and administrative cadres of People's Communes at the village level in provinces such as Hebei, Liaoning, Hubei, Jiangsu, Sichuan, Yunnan, Guizhou, Gansu, Qinghai, and Xinjiang. [4] Sichuan province, for example, trained more than 27,000 cadres in the agricultural sector during 1979-1980. [5] Instructors for these training sessions included professors and lecturers from the Department of Agriculture Economy at universities including Beijing Agriculture University and various agriculture colleges throughout China. In addition, other specialized universities also conducted training programs for government departments such as transportation, water resources, chemical industry, etc.

The 1970s-1980s marked a new cadre training institutional development wave throughout China. This development led to one of the central government's earliest official regulations on how universities and specialized secondary schools should get involved in cadre training. On August 30th, 1980, the Ministry of Education, State Development Planning Commission (SDPC), and the Ministry of Finance announced *Interim Provisions for Cadre Special Training Programs and Cadre Training Courses Hosted by Univer-*

[2] "Department of Agriculture cadre training program starts in Zhejiang Agriculture University," Zhejiang Daily, October 10th, 1979, section 1.

[3] "Department of Agriculture cadre training program in Zhejiang Agriculture University," Zhejiang Daily, September 18th, 1980, section 1.

[4] "Strengthen the training of cadres of commune operation and management," Zhejiang Daily, October 1th, 1980, section 2.

[5] Sichuan Daily (Chengdu), 1980, 5.13.

sities and Specialized Secondary Schools. [6] Before the announcement, Ye Jianying, then Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, mentioned in the speech celebrating the 30th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China that "we should routinely train current cadres through different levels of party schools, specialized secondary schools, universities, and various training courses, and institutionalize such training routine." [7] In addition, in February 1980, the Central Organization Department (COD) and the Central Propaganda Department co-issued the "Opinions on Strengthening Cadre Education," which identified cadre education as a strategic task of crucial significance. Thus, both core political leaders' direction and the primary Party apparatus's announcement signified the central government's intention to reform cadre training institutions.

The 1980 interim provision laid out some general principles for cadre training conducted by universities and specialized secondary schools. First, relevant central government departments or local governments must approve training programs and courses. Second, special training programs typically last two to three years, while most programs are shorter than two years. Third, while university training programs and courses aim to train personnel in government departments and state-owned enterprises at or above the county level, specialized secondary schools focus on training such personnel below the county level. Fourth, the training content is designed by the sponsoring government department, while schools are responsible for developing teaching plans, preparing course materials, and establishing a learning management system. Finally, it is worth noting that the Organization Department and Personnel Department of trainees' affiliated government entity determine participants' eligibility, which means that cadres cannot participate in the training without the support or permission of their workplace.[8]

Although the Chinese government has acknowledged university and specialized secondary schools' role in cadre training, the mechanism of competitive training providers competing in an open training market has not yet developed. In other words, the training mechanism in the 1980s was still characterized by top-down direction and central planning. For example, it was not until 1985 that Chinese universities were generally allowed to distribute 10 percent of annual enrollment to cadre training (C. Lee, 2015, p. 105). According to the 1980 interim provision, the leadership on such training work lies in the Party committee of government departments and educational bureaus at each administrative level. In addition, the propaganda and organizational department of the Party committee and the personnel department of various government levels oversee training management. Accordingly, training management was still a largely internal process within the government without market involvement. While scholars have cited sporadic comments from central government officials regarding their discontent with the traditional training system (C. Lee, 2015, p. 102), there is no direct evidence on the central government's concrete initiative in introducing a competitive market mechanism in cadre training programs during the 1980s-1990s.

[6] China Education Yearbook 1949-1981, "Notice from the Ministry of Education, the State Planning Commission, and the Ministry of Finance on the Interim Measures for Holding Specialized Cadre Training Courses and Cadre Training Courses in Institutions of Higher Education and Secondary Specialized Schools," August 30th, 1980.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Ibid.

3.3 Emergence of Competitive Cadre Training

In contrast to a top-down direction and hierarchical planning, the marketization of cadre training features a bottom-up collaboration between public institutions and private entrepreneurs and local government departments in a competitive market environment. According to interviews conducted during my fieldwork, competitive cadre training programs facilitated by market mechanisms emerged at the beginning of the 1990s, much earlier than the official recognition from the Chinese government. One of the interviewees is the CEO of a small education service company that collaborates with universities to provide cadre training programs. His company established collaboration with one of the universities in Beijing in 1993 and with universities in other parts of China even before 1993 (ZR 2017-15). According to his recollection, he was just one of the many private entrepreneurs in the training service business who started around that period, which set the starting point of cadre training marketization to the early 1990s. An equally important implication from the example of this company is that since the beginning of training marketization, academic institutions were not the sole participant in this practice. Like in other sectors of the Chinese economy during the reform era, micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises are one of the main contributors to cadre training marketization.

Due to the scarcity of relevant reports and archives, it is empirically challenging, if not impossible, to identify the first cast of a competitive cadre training program. However, some circumstantial evidence could help us better understand the transition of universities from passive providers in the traditional training system that was primarily dictated by the Party-State, to active participants collaborating with training management companies in the competitive training market. China in the 1990s witnessed two overlapping trends that possibly contributed to the emergence of the competitive cadre training market.

With the 14th National Congress of the CCP in 1992 officially announcing the building of a socialist market economy, Chinese universities went through systemic reform which partially freed them from tight state control, expanded their autonomy, but at the same time led to a severe financial burden on university operation (G. Zhou, 2020). On the one hand, university's income from annual government expenditures on higher education decreased drastically, going from 93.5 percent in 1990 to 55 percent in 2001. At the same time, the percentage of student tuition in university's income only increased from 0.5 percent in 1990 to 24.7 percent in 2001; University income from other education services such as continuing education or short-term courses, on the other hand, increased from 2.3 percent in 1990 to 13.3 percent in 2001 (H. Guo, 2004). It is worth noting that, different from western universities, endowments do not constitute a significant income source for Chinese universities, making student tuition and income from other education services the second most important source of funds, only after government expenditures. This shortage of revenue in funding university operations likely created solid incentives for university administrators to seek opportunities such as cadre training contracts to improve their financial situation. During my fieldwork, some of the university administrators and private entrepreneurs interviewed confirmed such considerations.

Another significant trend in 1990s China is the rapid development of the non-state-owned economy and the explosive increase of private entrepreneurs in various sectors (S. Zhang, 1996). For instance, the

number of private enterprises in China increased from 90,581 in 1989 to 1.509 million in 1999. [9] This trend of rapid growth in the private sector was relatively standard across China in the 1990s after the government initiated economic reform. Taken together with my interviews of private entrepreneurs during fieldwork, it is likely that the first generation of the private entrepreneurs in training management companies emerged during this period partnered with financially strained universities in the initial development of marketized cadre training.

While my fieldwork points to the emergence of marketized cadre training in the early 1990s, it was not until January 2006 when the central government first issued *Regulations on Cadre Education and Training Work (Trial)*, which was finalized into *Regulations on Cadre Education and Training Work* in October 2015. [10] Both versions of the regulation specified that cadre training could be delegated to public institutions such as universities and research academies, and societal training agencies. [11] Both regulations also mentioned direct delegation or competitive bidding as the methods of collaborating with training agencies.

Apart from my fieldwork, other evidence also shows that official training regulations tend to validate or acknowledge the existing practice of training marketization rather than initiate it. For instance, although the 2006 Regulation (Trial) first introduced the concept of cadres' self-selection of training programs in an official document, such practice had already been carried out in some local governments. According to a report on "menu-style" cadre training in Guangxi autonomous region, from 2004 to 2006, the Guangxi government has trained all prefecture-level cadres through 8 training programs in which cadres self-selected topics of interest.[12] More than 200 county-level cadres in the same region also participated in 6 training sessions with self-selected topics. [13]

The acknowledgment and validation from the central government further promoted the development of cadre training marketization. For example, soon after the issuance of the 2006 Regulation (Trial), 14 departments and institutions in Beijing hosted an open bidding event in May 2006, during which more than 20 Chinese and international universities, research academies, and societal training agencies participated in competitive bidding for 18 cadre training programs. [14] It is reported that such a competitive bidding event will become a yearly event as part of Beijing's cadre training institution.

Such practice gradually expanded to other regions in China. For example, on December 16th, 2011, 52 domestic and international universities and training agencies participated in the competitive bidding on 15 essential cadre training programs in Sichuan Province. The focus of training programs is new approaches to regional industrialization and urbanization. Both central and local media reported such practice as the

[9] Chinese Industrial and Commercial Administration Statistics Compilation, 1989, 1999.

[10] Regulations on Cadre Education and Training Work (Trial), 2006; Regulations on Cadre Education and Training Work, 2015.

[11] Interestingly, although the 2006 Regulation (Trial) also encouraged collaboration with international training agencies, the 2015 Regulation removed international agencies from the recommended training agency list and instead emphasized strict discipline and management of international training programs.

[12] "Learn with question and communicate with cases, menu-style cadre training is on trend in Guangxi," January 17th, 2006, Renmin Daily.

[13] Ibid.

[14] "Beijing promote cadre training program through open bidding to the public," May 10th, 2006, Beijing Daily.

first time that Sichuan Province officially introduced market competition in cadre training. [15] The list of universities and training agencies included but were not limited to Qinghua University, Peking University, University of Oxford, University of Georgia, the University of St. Gallen in Switzerland, Sichuan Institution of Social Science, University of Hong Kong, and Xi'an Jiaotong University. Specifically, the list includes 14 international training agencies and 38 domestic ones. Among domestic agencies, 20 of them are outside of Sichuan Province. Thus, the bidding ended up with five overseas training programs, seven programs out of Sichuan Province, and three programs within Sichuan Province. According to some representatives from the participating universities and agencies, the competitive bidding mechanism provided an open and transparent platform for universities to present their potentials in contributing to cadre training, such as their faculty resource and international perspectives.

While the practices above are among some of the earliest public reports of competitive bidding of training contracts, bidding is only one form of market competition. The actual process of training marketization almost certainly has been going on for years. For instance, according to Lee's finding, a few training contracts were already awarded to both domestic and international academic institutions in various localities of China from 2003 to 2009, including one from Sichuan (C. Lee, 2015, p. 115). These contracts were likely signed through mechanisms other than public bidding, such as established government department – academic institution connection from previous collaborations or connections facilitated by training management companies. By the end of 2011, Sichuan province had already formed training relationships with universities in 12 countries. It established long-term collaborations with 15 Chinese universities, including Qinghua University and Peking University, and built six university cadre training bases within the province.

According to the interview of a Sichuan CCP Organization Department cadre, this bidding is "the first time introducing competitive mechanism in cadre training in Sichuan Province, which broke through the traditional training model dominated by party school and school of administration."[16] It is worth noting that most of the bidders have collaborated with CCP Organization Department and government departments at various levels before, although not necessarily through a bidding process with the level of openness and competitiveness as seen in this case. For instance, an administrator from Nanyang Technological University in Singapore noted that the university had trained central and local cadres from China since 1992. A Peking University administrator also mentioned that this is not the first time for the university to participate in training program bidding. Other international academic institutions such as Harvard University and University of Georgia also have collaborative relationship with Chinese local governments regarding cadre training [17].

The information provided by the cadre interviewed also indicated that the next step for Sichuan Province would be to promote and institutionalize this new "outsourcing" mechanism of cadre training

[15] "Sichuan Province broke with the norm and opened bids for cadre training projects around the world," December 16th, 2011, Xinhua News Agency.

[16] Ibid.

[17] "Chinese officials ready for training at Harvard," August 22, 2005, Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United States of America; "UGA receives five scholarships from China," February 24, 2011, https://news.uga.edu/five-scholarships-from-china/, accessed on December 11, 2021.

throughout the province, a practice widely observed in the literature of policy experimentation in China (Florini et al., 2012; Teets & Hasmath, 2020). This further reform of cadre training mechanism bridges cadres' demand in understanding contemporary governance problems such as urban and rural planning, development of strategic emerging industries and modern services, and governance innovation with university and other agencies' supply of an intellectual resource and international perspective. In this sense, the traditional monopoly of cadre training by party schools and schools of administration is inherently inconsistent with the need of cadres to understand endless new challenges in China's modernization process because of the insufficient training resource it could provide.

3.4 Operation of Marketized Cadre Training

One of the essential features of marketized cadre training is the partnership between public institutions such as universities and private actors such as entrepreneurs in training management companies. [18] As will be discussed later, these companies provide comprehensive training management service to academic institutions which lack resource to manage training programs by themselves. This partnership is hardly surprising, given universities' primary functions are providing undergraduate and graduate education and conducting academic research activities with a concentrated intellectual resource. Consequently, most university departments do not have the funds to hire additional personnel to manage cadre training programs. Commonly, each department will only designate one faculty member, often at the associate dean level, to oversee cadre training-related activities (JY 2018-60). However, cadre training program management is not a one-person job. The process includes but is not limited to drafting and distributing initial proposals of training programs, coordinating with local government officials on training curriculum and cost, arranging transportation, accommodation, and meal plan, hiring and managing appropriate instructors, and renting venues. All these works require a team of capable full-time personnel who are familiar with each aspect of training management. These procedures and logistics involved in training program management indicate that market mechanisms can better allocate training resources, benefiting multiple parties involved in this process.

Training management companies in this regard are far more capable and efficient than academic institutions in dealing with training logistics. Accordingly, most universities purchase training management services from training management companies with a negotiated plan to distribute the profit earned, especially for training programs hosted outside the university's home city (ES 2018-71). Since training management companies are the primary *de facto* manager of cadre training programs and university involvement in the management process is very limited, the former tends to get the bulk of the profit from cadre training programs. According to an interviewee, 40 percent of profit distribution to the university is considered "outrageous" (ES 2018-72) in the operation of marketized training programs. Therefore,

[18] The training management companies concerned in this study are registered as Limited Liability Company (LLC) in China, whose business scope include educational information consultation, business management consultation, organizing exhibitions, conference service, corporate design, organizing cultural and art education exchange activities, technology development, technology consultation, technology services, and software technology training.

the commonly practiced profit distribution plan is likely that the university gets less than 40 percent of training profit, while training management companies can keep the rest.

There are a series of steps before local cadres arrive on a university campus and start their first seminar. The first step is drafting a program proposal by training providers. The proposal is officially presented on behalf of specific university departments, but in practice, employees of training management companies draft most, if not all, training proposals. A large part of these employees' job is "market research," that is, to track recently issued policy reforms or changes in official regulations that may be of interest to local authorities. Usually, the program proposal drafted by employees in training management companies proposes many different recommendations regarding the newest development in various governance issue areas. Local government representatives occasionally make some suggestions (JY 2018-56). For example, a training contract between the Department of Organization and Human Resource in city C and University Z dictates: "Party A (the university) is responsible for curriculum design, textbook choice, and instructor assignment – based on the government department's needs and requirements. Party B (the government department) proposes suggestions and requirements for the curriculum adjustment and participates in the process of designing training program and teaching plan." [19] According to materials shared by one of the training managers, their training proposals cover broad governance areas, such as legislative work of the local people's congresses, press secretary work during emergencies for various government agencies, how to deepen the reform of the administrative law enforcement system, the implementation of reform measures in national and local tax collection and management, etc. These "menu-style" proposals provide local authorities with a wide range of choices in the training they receive.

The proposal will typically include the following components: the goal of this training program – outlines the problems and difficulties encountered by local governments in the governing process and what types of knowledge and information are needed to address such issues; training content – a curriculum draft that includes all the seminars and courses that will be covered in the program; the targeting cadre group – specify the sector of local government and its cadres who are most suitable to participate in this program; expert invited – a list of government officials and scholars who will be asked to teach for this program; training materials – what kind of learning material will be used during the training; training time and location – a list of time and venues for government department to choose from; charging standard – how much is the program cost per trainee; how to register – government department have to fill in and mail or fax the registration form within 7 days prior to the program starting date, which specifies department name, address, coordinator, and a list of trainee with detailed information; Other information – a list of administrators from the university and the training management team who can respond to questions and complains from trainees.

As can be noticed, there are a few implications from the procedure of creating a proposal. For example, the proposal is drafted by training management company employees, who are neither part of the government nor university, and can be non-CCP members. When asked about whether CCP membership is required for managing cadre training programs, Mr. Y, the CEO of a private training and event

[19] Source: marketized cadre training contract samples obtained during author's fieldwork in China. The contracts were shared by training management company managers.

management company with roughly 100 employees that contracts with universities to conduct training programs, replied:

"CCP membership is not required to manage cadre training. For example, I'm not a CCP member myself. The local party organization in the city where my company is registered once asked me to join the Party, but I didn't. If you don't want to be involved in a political career, it's not crucial if you are not a CCP member."(JY 2018-55)

According to Mr. Y, most of his employees are not CCP members either. While not under direct CCP management, privately-owned companies like Mr. Y's have been regulated by the CCP regime since they gained legal status in 1988, regardless of the industry. According to the Constitution of the Communist Party of China, enterprises with more than three CCP members should set up party cells.[20] However, by 2018, more than half of the private enterprises qualified to set up party cells had not established Party cells.[21] Mr. Y's company is among those that could have but did not set up Party cells. More than a decade ago, the local party committee reached out to him and asked him to set up a Party cell. They also quoted the regulation that any enterprises with more than three CCP members should do so. However, Mr. Y. avoided setting up a Party cell in his company by transferring two Party members away from the company because he thought attending multiple CCP meetings every year was a hassle. (JY 2018-55) Later, he also politely refused the "solicitation" of the Youth League but could not avoid joining the Labor Union. Even joining only one official organization seems to be a hassle for Mr. Y. He will have to be presented at Labor Union's events, such as a ceremonial photoshoot with labor union staff during the Autumn festival.

The very curriculum of cadre training is not primarily designed by someone with at least some political obligation or devotion is a fascinating characteristic of training marketization. Admittedly, the final version of the curriculum must be approved by the local government officials who participate in training and possibly the university coordinator.[22] However, the university administrators I interviewed hinted that he would only occasionally check the curriculum drafted by the training management companies to make sure nothing is "inappropriate" (HG 2019-101). This is especially the case when the university has developed a stable relationship with the training management companies. As shown in Table 3.1, proposals designed by the training management companies will be submitted to relevant local government departments for consideration, with a brief description of training topics targeting specific cadre groups.[23] These proposals provide a broad overview of the training focus while a specific curriculum on each topic is finalized after signing the training contract. Societal actors with minimal political obligation can track the latest policy development and draft cadre training curriculums on various essential governance topics. This finding, to some extent, attests that the regime's influence in Chinese society is profound, at least in the sphere of the cadre training market. It also suggests that even without a party cell that structurally penetrates all societal agencies, the CCP can still significantly influence some types of private enterprises,

[20]Constitution of the Communist Party of China.

[21]"China's private enterprise party organization construction status analysis report," All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce, May 23, 2019.

[22]It is possible that self-censorship is influencing the design of curriculum. On the other hand, self-censorship may not be necessary if the courses are carefully designed to avoid "inappropriate" content.

[23]Source: materials shared by training agencies during the author's fieldwork.

such as those in the cadre training market. On the other hand, this dynamic of curriculum design also reflects the "power of customers" in the cadre training market. Since university training is essentially a competitive business, the business operators are motivated to meet the needs of their potential customers, in this case, local government and its cadres.

Table 3.1: Sample proposals of marketized training program, 2016

Training Topic	**Targeted Cadre Group**
The rule of law in the industrial and commercial sector	Cadres in Administration for Industry and Commerce
County and township People's Congress and grassroots democracy	Cadres in People's Congress at county and township level
Government budget system and bidding practice	Cadres in local Department of Finance
Emergency management and media relations	Cadres in local Emergency Response Office
Public-private partnership (PPP) project management	Cadres in local Development and Reform Commission, Legal Affairs Office, and Finance Bureau
Management of illegal land use and illegal construction in urban areas	Cadres in local Department of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, Office of Land and Resources, and City Urban Administrative and Law Enforcement Bureau
Improve performance of Local People's Congress and Committee on Education, Culture, and Health	Cadres in local People's Congress and Committee on Education, Culture, and Health
The household registration system reform	Cadres in local Public Security Bureau
The mechanism for overseeing and supervising food and drug safety	Cadres in local Food and Drug Administration
Practices and skills in administrative review work	Cadres in local Legal Affairs Office
Reform of the letter-and-visit system	Cadres in local Bureau of Letters and Visits
Network security management by Public Security Bureau	Cadres in local Public Security Bureau

Another interesting detail of the training proposal concerns the registration requirement. To provide a list of trainees within seven days before the starting date means that in 7 days or less, the training provider must complete all the training arrangements, such as transportation, accommodation, venue rental, coordination with instructors , and miscellaneous logistics.[24] This management speed of training management companies further emphasizes the difficulties for party schools or universities to be competitive if they plan to rely on their personnel to manage cadre training. Other institutional arrangements can hardly substitute private companies' efficient allocation of resources in training marketization. As an

[24] The number of trainees is an important factor when hiring instructors. Some high-profile instructors are hesitant to accept the job if the class is too small. (JY 2018-54) In a training contract between the university and a local government department I obtained during fieldwork, the government department promised to sign up for no less than 80 cadre trainees for two 5-day training programs.

university administrator who used to manage the cadre training programs in his department for ten years commented on the difficulties of universities managing training programs by themselves:

"We have to purchase services from companies like this because there is no way that university staff can manage the volume of training programs. Of course, there are risks that some company managers are not doing things correctly and causing problems. For this reason, I tried to hire a few of our own staff to manage such things at one point. But they are too inefficient, and it's pointless. They don't have the resource and connections of those companies."(HG 2019-102)

I commented: therefore, universities basically outsource their cadre training programs? His reply was:

"Not exactly. Outsourcing means granting them (companies) the title (of the university), and they can do whatever they want with it, which is not the case now. In the past, there were cases like that, but there were many problems. They (private companies) use the university title to host many problematic programs, such as degree programs that will not grant a degree from the university since the university did not approve it in the first place. The practice now is to sign an individual training service contract with the company for each training program. It's a hassle, but we don't have much choice."(HG 2019-102)

During my interviews, the private entrepreneurs also repeatedly refer to the inability of universities to manage the amount of cadre training demanded by local government, especially for cross-provincial training programs that require coordination between different sectors such as accommodation, transportation, and instructor travel (JY 2018-42; ZR 2017-30, 32). Flexibility and efficiency made training management company an indispensable part of cadre training marketization.

On the other hand, it would be presumptuous to assume that training management companies can drive universities out of the cadre training market and replace them as the primary provider of competitive training programs. The private entrepreneurs interviewed know full well that the burgeoning business opportunities they enjoyed almost exclusively depend upon their collaboration with academic institutions. More than once have they commented that local cadres "came for the prestige of the university" and "do not respect us," and that "99 percent of the training contracts are signed between government departments and universities, with 1 percent at most signed with other private training providers" (JY 2018-55; HQ 2018-60; ZR 2019-110). Accordingly, universities and training management companies have formed a deep symbiotic relationship, in which none of them can thrive in the cadre training market without each other.

After distributing training proposals to local government departments, interested departments will contact the university (or the representatives from the hired training management companies on behalf of the university) to settle a training plan and sign a contract. Details such as the number of trainees and the cost per person will be specified. In most cases, a service purchasing contrast between the university department and an training management company will be signed after the previous contract, which details the cost of each aspect of training management. Both contracts need to be approved by an office in the university that manages commissioned training programs. It is worth noting that the profit-sharing arrangement is a complicated bargaining process that involves the university, the specific university department that hosts the training, and the private company that manages the program. The exact arrangement differs between universities, departments, and private companies. Sometimes it also depends largely on the preference of specific university leaders. However, one characteristic of cadre training marketization

stands out regardless of the particular profit-sharing deal. Training management companies function as the indispensable facilitator and the most involved societal actor in marketized cadre training management besides academic institutions.

3.5 Content of Marketized Cadre Training

Unlike party school training, where trainees have less control over what courses they receive, marketized training flexibly caters to cadres' learning needs by designing and adjusting course content according to their requirements. Given such opportunity, cadres will likely request courses that can explain and suggest hard-to-solve problems that may negatively affect their performance or seminars that interpret recently issued policies relevant to their policy implementation.

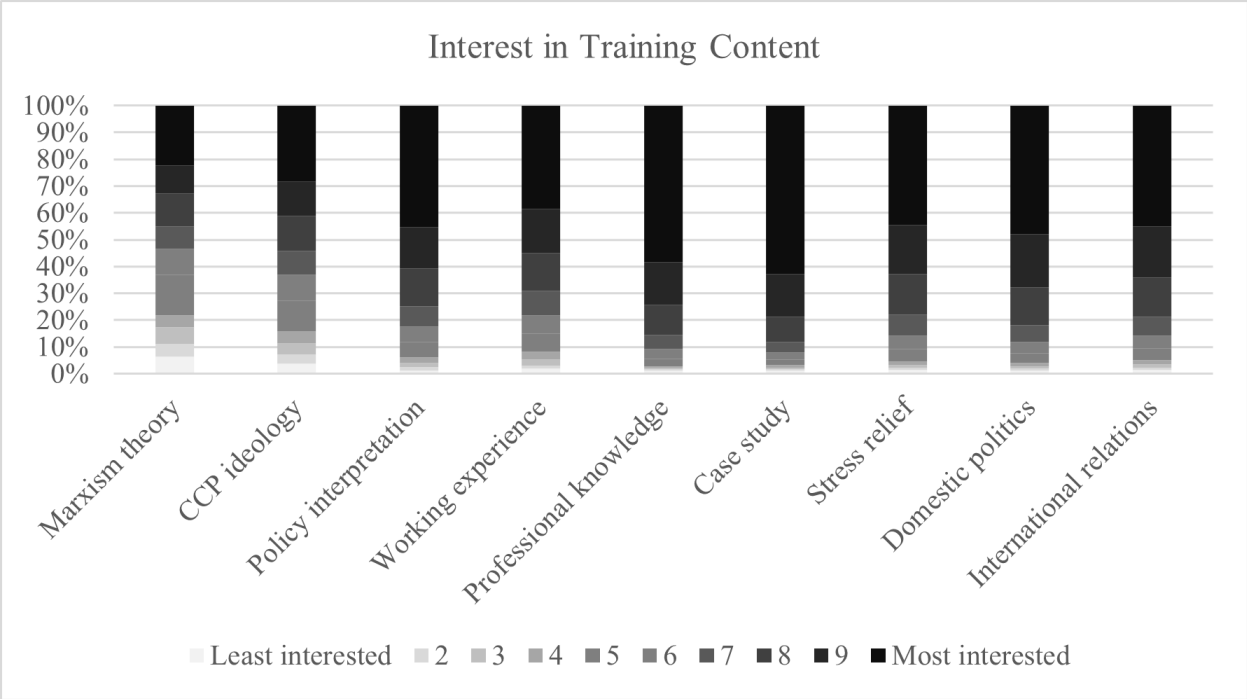

Figure 3.1: Township and county cadres' interest in training content

Figure 3.1 provides some evidence on the potential preference of cadres on training content.[25] The darker colored area in the bars represents more interest, while the lighter color represents less interest. As it shows, content regarding Marxism theory and the CCP ideology received the least amount of interest among local cadres. [26] In contrast, cadres show the most significant interest in courses on professional knowledge and case study. More than 60 percent of the cadres surveyed are also very interested in policy

[25]Data source: author's grassroots cadre training survey dataset.

[26]Interestingly, while cadres show the least amount of interest in ideological content, they hold polarizing views on the impact of deemphasizing ideology training on the CCP's organizational coherence. As Figure C1 in the Appendix shows,

interpretation, work pressure relief, and domestic and international relations. Interestingly, seminars inviting government officials to introduce their own working experience are not particularly popular among cadres. This attitude corresponds with my fieldwork observation during some marketized training programs. Cadres who participated in university training programs seem to be more interested in the intellectual inspiration and fresh perspective from university professors and experts. They show a significant amount of respect for professors' academic prestige. In comparison, a government official who lectures about his work experience brings little new knowledge for local cadres who have plenty of local knowledge themselves.

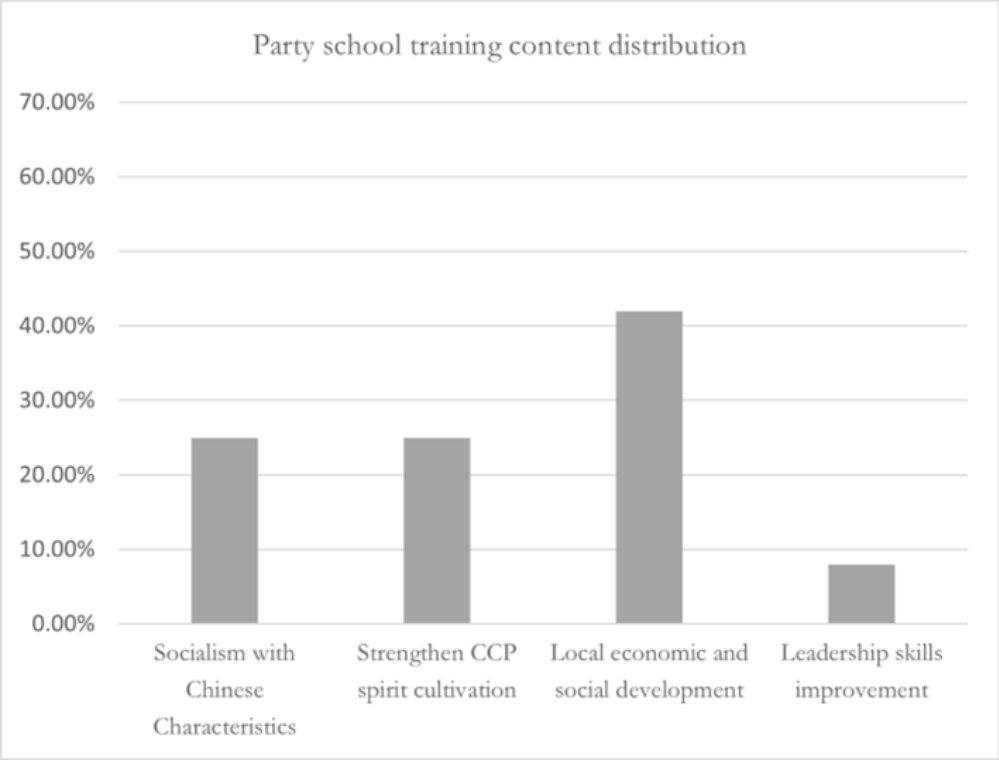

Figure 3.2: Party School training content distribution

Figure 3.2 and 3.3 presents a distribution of curriculum content from party school and marketized cadre training programs. [27] The first noticeable point is that courses focused on CCP spirit cultivation take

roughly 11 percent of cadres strongly agree that deemphasizing ideology in training content will challenge the CCP's cadre-building practice. In the meantime, approximately 37 percent of cadres either agree or disagree with the statement. Overall, more cadres in the survey agree that de-emphasizing ideology training will weaken the connection between the Party and its governing agents. This data suggests that while it's common to assume traditional cadre training as boring and undesirable, a considerable portion of cadres think that ideological training –the primary focus in party schools – is crucial for the connection between the Party and its cadres.

[27] The cadre training curriculums are collected during my fieldwork in China from 2017 to 2019. Specifically, they are shared by party school instructors and university training providers. I also supplement those materials with cadre training curriculums published by universities and party schools online. The coding scheme follows the common categorization of course content in the curriculums. For example, "socialism with Chinese characteristics" category includes courses such as "actively

up a very little, if not negligible, part in marketized training. In sharp contrast, the same type of content accounts for roughly 25 percent of the party school curriculum. Also noticeable is that local economic and social development content accounts for more than 65 percent of marketized training curriculum, while such content takes up around 40 percent in party school training. The amount of economic and social development class in party school training, while still less than the total amount of the more ideological and theoretical content, provides evidence for scholars' observation that party schools are attempting to incorporate more practical training into their curriculum (G. Tian & Tsai, 2021). At the same time, it is relatively straightforward that marketized training primarily focuses on the content most relevant to local economic and social development. Meanwhile, it deemphasizes content regarding the CCP's political cultivation. Thus, although local cadres recognize the importance of ideology training in general, a more relevant curriculum to local governance concerns is preferred for marketized training that can meet their demand more flexibly.

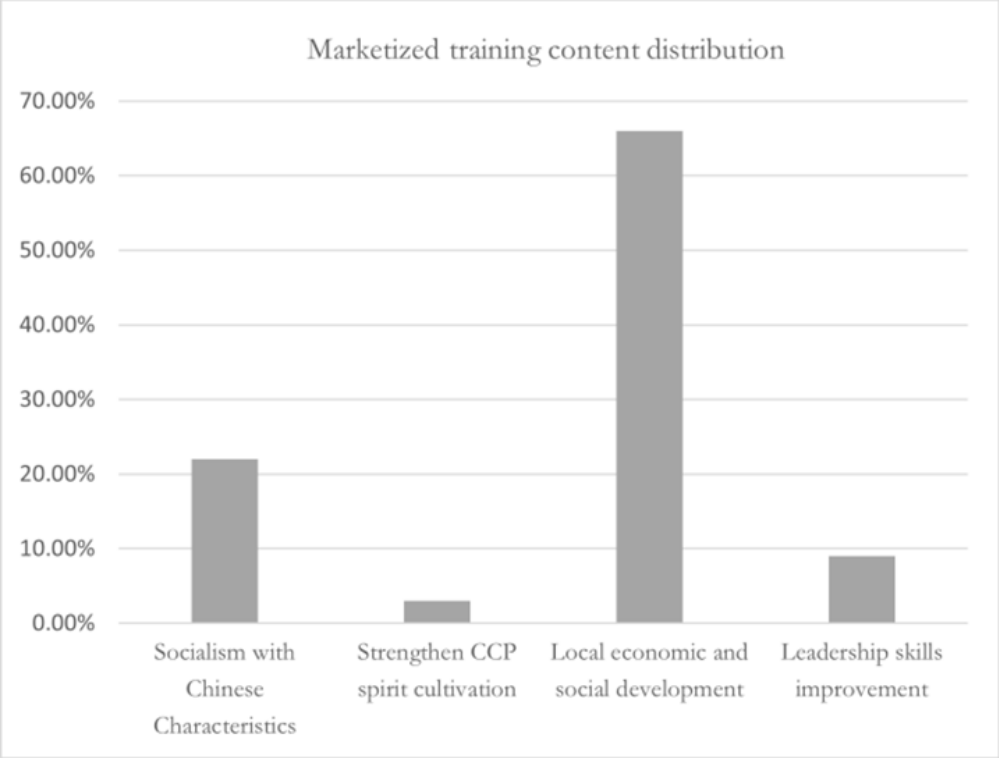

Figure 3.3: Marketized training content distribution

and steadily promote the reform of the political system" or "strengthen soft power and realize the China Dream"; "strengthen CCP spirit cultivation" category includes courses like "interpreting the latest CCP Constitution passed at the 18th National Congress of the CCP" or "the glorious achievement of the CCP"; "local economic and social development" category includes courses such as "the new normal of XX city industrial transformation and investment attraction" or "the transformation of the function of XX city government"; "leadership skills improvement" category include courses such as "public opinion guidance for emergencies" or "leading cadre stress management."

As shown in the sample marketized training curriculum in Table 3.2, a university cadre training program features practical policy interpretation and implementation regarding local economic development and social governance.[28] Most university training sessions share a similar structure. According to some instructors, local cadres are in dire need of such knowledge (FH 2017-10). Many cadres with lower education levels are not confident in interpreting and implementing complex policy reforms at the local level. Moreover, the frequency of higher government issuing policy mandates and the ever-changing local conditions makes it increasingly challenging for cadres to keep up with all the policy reforms. [29] An example is that after the central government issued the national supervision system's reform plan in 2017, university training that focuses on this reform surged, where cadres from all over the country poured into such training sessions to learn how to implement this reform at the local level properly (FH 2017-10). In other words, university training serves as an essential channel for local cadres to update their knowledge on recent policy reforms and governing strategies.

Table 3.2: Curriculum of a 18-day Cadre Training Program at University Z

Instructor	**Course Content**
Professor of Philosophy (University R)	Scientific World View and Methodology
Professor of Law (University Z)	Interpreting the revised *CPC Disciplinary Measures*
Professor of Political Science (University Z)	Social stability, social transformation, and social management innovation in China
Professor of Law (University Z)	Interpreting the *General Provisions of Civil Law*
Professor of Economics (University F)	Capital market development and the financing choices for small and medium-sized enterprises
Professor of Economics (University F)	Analysis of the financing environment and the internal and external factors of enterprises
Professor of Economics (University D in Germany)	Interpreting "Made in China 2025"
Professor of Economics (University C)	Management, analysis, and supervision of tax sources

Continued on next page

[28] While university training focuses primarily on the "competence" aspect, such focus is not exclusive. For instance, it is common for university training programs to include a few courses that focus on communist and Marxist ideology, such as the "Scientific World View and Methodology" course in the university training curriculum or the interpretation of President Xi Jinping's governing principles. Similarly, party school training programs also frequently include courses that aim to improve cadres' competence. Accordingly, neither political loyalty nor economic and social development component is utterly absent in either type of training. Nevertheless, traditional and marketized training curriculum structures indicate that their primary focus is on political loyalty and governing performance, respectively.For example, Liu finds that debt problem in local government is of crucial concern for township cadres(Y.-L. Liu, 2012).

[29] Author's interview, 2019, Beijing. Zhan and Qin also provide evidence on the pressure of lower-level cadres to interpret policies from upper levels (J. V. Zhan & Qin, 2017).

Table 3.2 – continued from previous page

Date	Course Content
Professor of Economics (University C)	Analyzing the core industries and enterprises in the Growth Enterprise Market (GEM)
Associate Professor of Economics (University F)	The wealth effect of going public for enterprises and entrepreneurs
Professor of Economics (University C)	Impact of replacing business tax with a value-added tax on tax system
Professor of Law (University Z)	Construction of a legalized business environment
Professor of Economics (University C)	Managing debt limit and budget in local government
Professor of Public Administration (University P)	Innovation management and cadres' investigational and research ability
Professor of Philosophy (University Z)	Chinese culture and the art of governance
Professor of Economics (University C)	Relevant policies for financial promotion
Professor of Economics (University C)	Derivative financial instruments and their application in risk management
Professor of Economics (University C)	Risk prevention and risk control in corporate finance
Professor of Economics (University Z)	The financial market, financial technology, and credit management
Professor of Psychology (University T)	How should cadres relieve work pressure
Associate Professor of Economics (Party School A)	The development of Chinese finance and capital market
Professor of Communications (University A)	Negotiation technique
Professor of Computer Science (University S)	Big data and government management
Professor of Law (University T)	Environment Protection Law interpretation
AI Researcher (Technological Company P)	Artificial intelligence and its applications
Professor of Architecture (University T)	Urban planning and design

Marketized training programs typically include many courses on local economic development, such as the management of local small and medium-sized enterprises, tax reform, and government debt and budget management. Compared to the party school training curriculum in Chapter II, it is worth noting that while both types of training deal with broad topics such as local socio-economic development, the courses offered by party schools tend to be less specialized and limited in subjects. In contrast, university training provides a much broader range of specialized courses on specific areas of socio-economic topics. For example, party schools would offer courses such as "actively and steadily promote the integration of urban and rural development," or "define the boundary between the market and the government and

maximize the vitality of the market." Meanwhile, universities tend to provide courses such as "impact of replacing business tax with a value-added tax on taxes" or "managing debt limit and budget in local government." It seems that universities are doing much better on addressing the specific need of local cadres in finding solutions to concrete problems encountered during the governance process.

In the meantime, university training also covers various topics crucial for other aspects of local administration, such as social governance strategies at the local level, interpretation of the Environment Protection Law relevant to local environmental protection, and the application of new technology on innovative regional government management. To some extent, this content reflects the comprehensive knowledge and skills local cadres are expected to master, especially in fields related to local economic development and social governance (Y. Wang, 2018). It also points to one of the potential sources of local cadres' capability to deal with complex governance issues while still promoting the local economy. As the sample curriculum shows, successful local governance's complexity goes beyond economic growth, which led to marketized training's emphasis on cadres' knowledge base, comprehensive social governance ability, and the capability to promote local development.

Admittedly, how much effect university training has on cadres' actual performance is impossible to measure. However, some circumstantial evidence suggests that marketized training enhances local cadres' governing capability. First, on-site observation of the interactions between cadre trainees and instructors during fieldwork finds that cadres highly respect instructors' expertise. They pay significant attention to the course content and are eager to consult the instructors about policy interpretations and specific problems they encounter in their work. A high level of cadre-instructor interaction suggests that this learning experience is likely to contribute to cadres' understanding of policy implementation, at least to some extent.

Second, many instructors voluntarily share their personal contact information with cadre trainees and explicitly recommend that they reach out when they encounter questions at work within the instructors' expertise. For example, during a seminar, a law professor shared several stories of past trainees who sought expert help from him long after attending his course. This post-training interaction pattern provides suggestive evidence that university training's impact on cadre competence could extend well beyond the training session itself. Even after training, cadres can still be "tutored" by experts. Such a fringe benefit is certainly unavailable for cadres who have not participated in university training.

Third, cadres' feedback on training programs also indicates that they perceive university training as a means of competence improvement, especially for potentially disadvantaged cadre groups. For example, the following comment on university training from a cadre trainee indicates that cadres from underdeveloped regions are in desperate need of such competence-advancement opportunities:

"*Training needs to be deepened. As a cadre who has participated in the workforce for ten years, this is the first time I can participate in training at this level/rank. Therefore, I suggest that in future training plans, cadres at the county and township level should have more training, which gives grassroots cadres from the remote mountain area an opportunity to expand their horizon and think big picture.*"[30]

[30] Grassroots cadre training survey, 2018, provided by a Chinese university that conducts cadre training. This cadre training quality control survey anonymously records cadre trainees' biographic information, training history, and their evaluation of the training programs.

3.6 Re-centralizing Cadre Training System

Several developments in recent years indicate a trend of recentralizing the cadre training system. Such developments include incorporating the National School of Administrations into the party school system, emphasizing grassroots party school development discussed in Chapter II, and designating 13 universities as the officially recognized national cadre training university base. In addition to these top-town measures, findings in my fieldwork also suggest that marketized cadre training is being increasingly regulated both by the Party and the market actors themselves.

The designation of the 13 universities in 2009 as the first group of national cadre training base marks the latest official attempt of the Chinese government to expand training capacity and recognize extra-party cadre training agencies outside of the traditional training system (C. Lee, 2015; Pieke, 2009a; Xu, 2014). Given cadre training's previous preference for international academic institutions, it also indicates a potential shift to relying more on the domestic intellectual resource (C. Lee, 2015, p. 115). According to a news report on the changing landscape of Chinese cadre training, the number of cadre trainees in Singapore – the most popular destination for Chinese cadre training – has decreased since 2012. A then National School of Administrative professor even predicted that such international programs may be "gradually canceled." [31] This speculation is not groundless. Although the *Regulations on Cadre Education and Training Work (Trial)* issued by the central government in 2006 encouraged collaboration with international training agencies, the finalized *Regulations on Cadre Education and Training Work* issued in 2015 removed international training agencies from the recommended training providers' list, and instead emphasized strict monitoring and discipline of cadre training conducted abroad.

Over the past few years, other participants in marketized cadre training also experienced changes toward more regulation and self-discipline. Several factors might have contributed to this development, all related to malpractices in marketized training by different actors. First, learning may not be the only goal of local cadres when attending training programs. According to the private entrepreneurs interviewed, before the announcement of the "Eight-point decision on improving Party and government conduct" (八项规定) in 2012 by the central government, malpractices such as local cadres using training fund for "training tourism" are not uncommon (JY 2018-43; ZR 2019-98). Such practices have largely diminished since 2012, but local officials would still occasionally suggest training locations to be somewhere with tourism possibilities. Second, some training management companies that collaborate with universities may use the university's title to conduct unregistered training programs or hire instructors with a questionable reputation for seminars, which risks damaging the university's reputation and greatly reduces training quality, leading to cadre complaints. Finally, to collect more profit, some university departments may collaborate with multiple training management companies simultaneously, which sometimes leads to chaotic training program management and damage to the university's reputation when local cadres report their discontent to an upper-level government agency such as the Ministry of Education (ZR 2019-99).

One of the signs of tighter regulation is increased involvement in marketized training by the Party organization. According to my fieldwork, the influence of the CCP organization on marketized cadre training

[31] "Singapore's role of Chinese cadre training base weakening," Guancha.cn, May 25th, 2017.

has grown stronger over the years. During the initial stages of training marketization, when supervision on training programs was minimal, some training contracts could be negotiated between leaders of the local government department and universities without being approved by the party committee or organization department of the CCP (ZR 2019-89). Therefore, how training was conducted, what courses were taught, and the training program's budget largely escaped the Party's oversight. However, these practices have decreased in recent years, especially after Xi Jinping came into office. Now, all training programs must be approved by the local Party Committee or Party Organization department. According to my interviewees, after the issuing of the "Eight-point decision on improving Party and government conduct" in 2012, it became a common practice that cadres from the local Party Organizational Department will accompany the trainee team and monitor their conduct during training programs (ZR 2019-99; TL 2019-105). In recent years, cadres from the Commission for Discipline Inspection also accompany trainees in some programs. The increased presence of Party representatives in training sessions suggests that the Party organization is paying more attention to managing marketized cadre training.

In the meantime, some universities are attempting to directly manage cadre training programs and reducing their reliance on third-party private training managers in the entire process of cadre training management due to the problems in market practice mentioned above. For example, the university with which Mr. R has been collaborating for almost three decades recently stopped all collaboration with third-party companies (ZR 2019-98). The intention of university leaders is likely to eliminate malpractices that could harm university reputations and endanger their careers. After all, if complaints about mismanaged training programs are reported to the higher-level government, the university leaders would be the first to take responsibility, even if they know little about the program in advance (ZR 2019-98). However, according to Mr. R, such self-discipline is unlikely to last, and the dynamics may change if a new university leader is in power (ZR 2019-100). The reason is simple: universities simply do not have the management resource, efficiency, and flexibility of training management companies. Moreover, a complete detachment from third-party collaborations will likely lead to a significant decrease in university income, which, in the long term, does not bold well for a university leader's career either. In this case, universities face the tough choice of taking risks for more profit or avoiding any risks for no gain.

Accordingly, training management companies are under more pressure to lose their existing contract with university departments and fiercer competition to sign new training contracts. When asked about the recent changes of policies and regulations regarding the cadre training market, Mr. R commented that:

"(The training market) has been more regulated. Government management is more normalized. Power has also been increasingly concentrated in fewer government departments and fewer people's hands. It's harder to do business nowadays. The problem here is that sometimes they let people who don't know how things work make decisions. The new administrator in the department is a researcher who does not know how training programs operate. "(ZR 2019-98)

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter generates several findings from my archival research, fieldwork, and interviews. Cadre training in China has its historical roots but is undergoing a crucial transitional stage during the reform era. First, bottom-up training collaboration between public institutions and private entrepreneurs and local government departments in a competitive market environment emerged many years before the official acknowledgment from the central government. The marketization process of training is driven by local cadres' demand for a wider variety of customized training programs provided by competitive agencies, given the perceived limitation of traditional party school training, especially at the local level. Compared to training content focusing on professional knowledge and other non-ideological topics, local cadres are less interested in orthodox Marxist theory and CCP ideology. This preference is reflected in the curriculum design of marketized training programs, in which professional and technical content regarding issues of economic development and social governance is emphasized. At the same time, the CCP ideology is largely deemphasized.

Second, societal agencies such as academic institutions and private training management companies are significant contributors to this marketization process. Universities' abundant intellectual resources made them the ideal provider of the types of training demanded by local cadres. Nevertheless, universities are constrained by their lack of training program management resources. Training management companies, in this case, became the ideal provider of management resources due to their flexibility and efficiency in operating cadre training programs. During this process, universities and training management companies formed a deep symbiotic relationship, without which neither of them can thrive in the cadre training market. However, this collaboration also brings uncertainties to the impact of marketized cadre training due to the division of labor: since universities are mostly nominally involved in cadre training program management, private entrepreneurs with minimal political obligation and devotion became the *de facto* decision-maker in crucial elements of training, such as curriculum design, instructor assignment, and interaction with local governments and cadre trainees.

Third, while the CCP seems to be acknowledging the diversification of the cadre training system, it shows no sign of losing its grip on traditional training agencies. On the contrary, recent years have seen a trend of recentralizing the conventional training system. This re-centralization, together with the development of marketized training, led to an intriguing co-existence of the traditional and marketized practice of cadre training. In the meantime, although the early stage of training marketization went through a period of under-regulation, recent years have seen increased Party regulation on and societal actors' self-discipline in marketized training practice. Two reasons may have contributed to these latest developments. First, problems occurred during the under-regulated period of training market growth, such as tourism in the name of training, a prevalence of low-quality training complained about by local cadres, and mismanagement of training programs due to profit-seeking behavior of training providers. This prompted the central government to update its regulation of cadre training practices and implement tighter discipline on training practices. Second, the tightening of cadre management and discipline during the Xi Jinping administration manifested by the implementation of the "eight-point decision on improving Party

and government conduct" also created a much more restrictive operational environment for marketized training, leading to self-restraint in both public institutions and private training service providers.

Interestingly, findings in my fieldwork suggest that party schools are not overly concerned about the burgeoning market of competitive cadre training. A private entrepreneur of a training service company even commented that it's not uncommon for local party schools to recommend local government departments getting training from universities, which are in some sense their competitor in training provision (HS 2019-87). In addition, instructors from the Central Party School are also frequently hired by private entrepreneurs to teach seminars in university cadre training programs. This phenomenon may seem puzzling given that some local party schools, especially at the grassroots level in less developed regions, suffered from a lack of funding and thus should show more enthusiasm in hosting training programs (C. Lee, 2015; Pieke, 2009a). Nevertheless, considering the financial situation and resource condition in local party schools and the necessary logistic and intellectual resources to manage training programs, it is hardly surprising that party schools lack the motivation and capability to conduct commissioned training programs.

The co-existence of marketization and centralization in the Chinese cadre training system may seem puzzling since marketization in some development areas goes hand in hand with decentralization. However, a look into how China "grew out of plan" and transitioned to a market economy shows that such a dual-track structure was not uncommon in China's development trajectory during the reform years (B. Naughton, 1995). In contrast to Eastern European countries, which predominantly adopted radical economic reforms after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Chinese government adopted a gradualist approach in which the state did not give up all control and state ownership at once. Instead, a dual system came into being. The state gradually reduced the dominance of the established state sectors while tolerating the emergence of a new market sector and allowing its growth. The cadre training marketization and centralization case shares strikingly similar patterns with the dual-track system revealed by Naughton.

Research on the history of the Chinese bureaucratic system could also provide valuable perspectives to understand such a contradiction through China's deeply rooted political culture. According to research on Chinese bureaucratic development during the Qin and Han dynasty, the historical bureaucratic organization in China is simultaneously a functional organization responsible for governance work and an identity organization that determines or reflects social and political hierarchy (Yan, 2009). Accordingly, government officials' behavior will reflect self-interested and altruistic preference, and bureaucratic organizations will have identity accordance and operational efficiency goals. This dual structure of agent preference and organization goal yields a complex balance of identity coherence and functional efficiency in government organizations, distinguishing Chinese bureaucratic practice from the ideal type described in Weberian theory (Ang, 2016). Nevertheless, some features of this dual structure still seem to persist in today's China.

In the case of cadre training marketization, traditional cadre training agencies primarily function as identity organizations that maintain the Party's ideological dominance by reinforcing cadres' political identity. On the other hand, the party schools, especially those at lower administrative levels, are less equipped to contribute to the functional need of the government, which is to improve governance and

create growth in a rapidly changing society. Thus, the marketization of cadre training brings in public institutions and private agencies to aid local governments' functional needs. At the same time, the regime preserved the identity organizations' role of political identity integration. Undeniably, this division of labor between traditional and marketized training agencies entails uncertainties for the regime since it must constantly balance the requirement of identity building and performance enhancement.

This chapter sheds light on the debate of authoritarian resilience and adaptability by showing that marketization processes can contribute to the regime's governance capability and adaptability, with the caveat that it could also downplay the ideological foundation of the party and fragmentize the once centralized elite indoctrination system. The balance between the CCP regime's performance legitimacy and ideological legitimacy remains a challenging task for the ruling party in authoritarian China. Through what mechanism, then, can cadre training affect authoritarian regime adaptability? The following three chapters will examine the relationship between traditional cadre training, marketized training, and the CCP's cadre management mechanism. Specifically, I will explore the association between cadre training and Chinese political selection at the grassroots and elite level and the effect of cadre training on China's political elite discipline practice.

Chapter 4

Cadre Training and Political Selection at the Grassroots Level

"*If a person who is unable to administer a thousand people is given a position as an official in charge of ten thousand people, then this is ten times his capacity as an official. Now the measures of administration arise on a daily basis and a day is available for putting them into effect. But a day does not increase tenfold. Knowledge is required for putting them into effect, but knowledge does not increase tenfold. So, if you give a man an official post requiring ten times his ability, then he will deal with one part but neglect nine parts. Although day and night are joined together for the execution of official business, it will still not be carried out. What is the reason for this? It is because kings, dukes and great officers do not clearly understand the use of exalting worthiness and utilising ability in the conduct of government. But if exalting worthiness and utilising ability are used in government, there is order, as was said before, whereas if there is devaluation of worthiness in the conduct of government,there is disorder, as I have said.*" [1]

—– *Mozi* 墨子, 5th–3rd centuries B.C.

4.1 Introduction

This chapter conceptualizes traditional cadre training experience as a measure for grassroots cadres' political loyalty and marketized training for cadres' competence in governance. Whether loyalty or competence plays a more critical role in the CCP regime's political selection process has been the central concern among Chinese politics scholars. Evidence from various administrative levels seems to yield conflicting results. At the state level, factional and patron-client ties with state leaders tend to overweigh economic growth performance in determining elite cadres' promotion (Doyon & Keller, 2020; Keller, 2016; Shih et al., 2012; Shih & Lee, 2018; J. Zeng, 2013). Findings at the provincial level are mixed. Some show that good economic performance increases provincial leaders' likelihood of promotion. Others indicate that factional ties overshadow performance-based criteria affecting provincial cadres' promotion (H. Li & Zhou, 2005; Opper et al., 2015; S. H.-W. Wong & Zeng, 2018; Y. Zhang, 2014). Still, some studies argue

[1] Mo, D., Johnston, I. (2010). The Mozi: A Complete Translation. The Chinese University of Hong Kong Press, p 71.

that provincial cadres need both patronage ties and performance to be promoted (Choi, 2012; Jia et al., 2015).

Research at the prefecture and county level also reveals a complex picture: economic performance seems to boost the probability of promotion in some studies but not others. More recent findings point to the connection between patronage ties and performance, suggesting the codependence of the two factors in predicting promotion prospects (J. Chen et al., 2017; Jiang, 2018; Landry, 2003; Pang et al., 2018; S. H.-W. Wong & Zeng, 2018; Y. Zeng & Wong, 2020). Puzzled by such inconsistent evidence across the Chinese political hierarchy, scholars compare cadres from provincial, prefectural, and county-level and reveal a "dualist strategy" of political selection in China: merit measured by economic performance is essential for cadres at the lower level of the administrative hierarchy due to states' need to maintain performance legitimacy. At the same time, patronage connections become more crucial at higher levels due to the regime's need to ensure its core state elites' allegiance(Landry et al., 2018).

Other researchers who realized this inconsistency in the promotion study propose another mechanism to account for the regime's effort to balance political control and legitimacy. Pang, Keng, and Zhong insightfully characterize the political selection research agenda as a false dichotomy between an under-institutionalized and over-institutionalized perspective on Chinese politics. The former overemphasizes political control, and the latter overemphasizes political legitimacy. Nevertheless, both camps overlook that both elements are equally crucial for authoritarian regime survival(Pang et al., 2018). Their study of the dual-track promotion system points to China's "selective institutionalization" that emphasizes both control and legitimacy. On the one hand, the state utilizes institutionalized promotion criteria, such as merit, to motivate cadres in achieving performance goals. On the other hand, cadres endowed with "patronage by the regime" are on a faster track to promotion than those without such patronage, indicating a *de facto* violation of the cadre promotion institution. This mechanism presents a more precise political selection mechanism because it considers the cadre management system's crucial role in China (Brødsgaard, 2012; Manion, 1985). Unfortunately, the mechanism of selective institutionalization has only been tested at the prefecture level. Given the potentially different promotion logic between different administrative levels, it is unclear if such a mechanism will be applicable across the bureaucratic hierarchy. In this chapter, I intend to test this mechanism at the lower level of the Chinese administration.

I base my empirical analyses on an unique survey dataset of China's township and county-level cadre training records. The dataset also allows me to use an alternative measure – university training experience – to account for local cadres' merit. Applying a rigorous data-processing method - coarsened exact matching (CEM) allows me to explore the causal effect of cadre training on local political selection. I find that regime patronage – measured by cadres' training experience at party schools – significantly increases township cadres' probability of getting a promotion to the county level. In particular, township-level cadres trained by party schools have an eight percent higher likelihood of being promoted to county-level than cadres not trained in party schools. Cadres trained by universities have a five percent higher probability of being promoted than those without university training experience. In other words, party school training experience has a 60 percent stronger impact on local cadre promotion than university training experience. This finding indicates that regime patronage indeed contributes to promotion at the

lower administrative level, and such effects may even outweigh cadres' merit. On the other hand, further analysis shows that even cadres with regime patronage need merit to get a promotion in practice. Those who are both trained by party school and university are the most competitive group among local cadres.

Additionally, I explore the administrative level's impact on cadres' selection into different training programs to unravel the mechanism behind regime patronage. I find that county-level cadres have a roughly 21 percent higher probability of being trained by party schools than township-level cadres. By contrast, administrative rank's impact on selection for university training is weaker than party school training. Township cadres are 10 percent less likely to be trained in university than county cadres, which is a striking reduction compared to rank's impact on party school training selection. These findings indicate that cadres' opportunity to be "screened" by party schools could be scarcer at the lower administrative level. Given the discussion in Chapter II that cadres at different levels are required to have different credit hours of training and lower levels have fewer hours than higher levels, such finding is hardly surprising. Compared to county cadres, township cadres probably need to strive harder to earn patronage by the regime. Fortunately, training selection is less skewed by rank when it comes to university training. Easier access to university training could allow township cadres to improve their merit, which, to a lesser extent, can also increase their probability of promotion.

4.2 Operationalizing Loyalty and Competence at the Grassroots Level

Promotion patterns of cadres below the county level remain mostly underexplored, and rarely any quantitative evidence has been presented at the township level. This puzzling lack of quantitative research on one of the largest cadre groups in Chinese administration can be partially attributed to limits in data availability at the lower government levels. Common operationalization of patronage and merit in promotion literature becomes an impossible task with the large population of township cadres, leading to an abundance of qualitative case studies but not quantitative research at this level (H. Li & Gore, 2018; Lin & de Jong, 2017; Z. Wang & Ma, 2015). This section describes my operationalization of loyalty and competence at the local level based on existing research and my fieldwork.

Following the existing research approach, I use local cadres' party school training experience to account for cadres' loyalty (C. Lee, 2013; Pang et al., 2018). Extant studies indicate that party schools are crucial in cultivating cadres' allegiance and strengthening the regime's control over its agents (Brødsgaard & Zheng, 2006; C. Lee, 2015; C. Lee & He, 2014; A. Liu, 2009; Pieke, 2009a; G. Tian & Tsai, 2021; Tran, 2003; Yu, 2016). Party school network, the core apparatus for cadre training in China, is regarded by Chinese politics scholars as "one of the most important, but under-researched and least well understood" institutional designs of the CCP regime (Shambaugh, 2008). Shambaugh defines the party school apparatus as "an important institutional agent for conveying ideology and policy reforms to cadres"(Shambaugh, 2008). Liu's account of the curricular development in the Central Party School further substantiated this purpose of training, which shows that "the objective of pedagogy at the CPS is to align the students' identities and beliefs with those of the Party center." The ethnographic study of a local party school in Yunnan province

by Pieke and Duan also concludes that "the main mission of training remains Leninist 'unification of thought'"(Pieke, 2009c). Moreover, the analysis of the party school training curriculum in Chapter II provides sufficient evidence that such training focuses primarily on loyalty cultivation.

Government officials' performance is also an essential criterion for political selection in extant research. Conventional measures of competence or merit in the promotion literature, such as local GDP growth records, could be applicable at higher government levels. However, it could become inadequate to capture the comprehensive performance criteria for township cadre evaluation. [2] Township cadres are the frontline soldiers in state policy implementation at the local level (Ahlers & Schubert, 2015; Thøgersen, 2008). Beyond generating economic growth, they are also responsible for other crucial tasks at the grassroots level, such as party building, education promotion, family planning, and maintaining public order, some of which are not necessarily popular among citizens (Edin, 1998; B. J. Naughton & Yang, 2004; O'Brien & Li, 1995, 1999; Oi, 1992). For example, according to Zhuang and Chen's local labor dispute resolution study, 17 percent of labor disputes in 2010 were mediated by township cadres, significantly higher than the 6 percent by village agencies and 5 percent by county cadres (Zhuang & Chen, 2015). Research on the one-child policy shows that the implementation of family planning policy at the township level contributes to many "incidents of revenge," which are certainly not conducive to township cadres' career advancement (T. White, 1990). Failure to fulfill priority tasks such as maintaining social order would render performance in other fields pointless for evaluating township cadres (Y. S. Cai, 2008; Edin, 2003; J. Wang, 2015). The accountability of township cadres to both upper-level government and grassroots citizens implies that a mere economic growth record may be an inadequate criterion to measure township cadres' merit, both in the theoretical and practical sense (Ahlers et al., 2016; Bernstein & Lü, 2000; Edin, 2003; Heberer & Trappel, 2013; Kennedy, 2007; L. Li, 2002; Manion, 2000; Smith, 2010, 2013; Z. Wang, 2018).

Accordingly, this chapter utilizes an alternative measure – whether a cadre has training experience at academic institutions – as a proxy to account for local cadres' competence. The assumption is that township cadres with training experience in universities will have a better policy understanding and enhanced skillset regarding various governance issues than those without such training. Accordingly, the trained cadres will be more competent and perform better than the untrained. Previous analysis of the content and focus of the university training curriculum in Chapter III provide suggestive evidence for this mechanism.

The preceding discussion on the potential effect of both loyalty and competence on promotion, as well as the operationalization of loyalty and competence at the local level, led to the following hypotheses that will be tested in this chapter:

Hypothesis 1: All else equal, township cadres with party school training experiences have a higher probability of being promoted to county-level than those without such training experiences.

Hypothesis 2: All else equal, township cadres with university training experiences have a higher probability of being promoted to county-level than those without such training experiences.

[2] Zeng and Wong in their research also point out that merit is likely a multi-dimensional concept which consists of more than economic performance(Y. Zeng & Wong, 2020).

4.3 Data and Method

This study utilizes an unique dataset on cadre training records based on an anonymous survey conducted by a university in Beijing that hosts cadre training programs to test the above hypotheses. [3] The survey asked training participants their demographical information, past training experience from different institutions, and other training and work-related questions. Participants of these training programs hold county-level and township-level administrative positions. Since the trainees came from all over the country, the survey recorded cadres from 26 provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities of China. [4] Therefore, the dataset reasonably represents cadres from various localities in China but does not statistically represent the entire local cadre population.

The dependent variable of interest is local cadre promotion, a dichotomous variable with 1 representing cadres promoted from township-level to county-level and 0 representing those who did not get a promotion. Note that when an individual cadre gets promoted, the precise time point is unavailable due to limitations in data availability. This lack of information makes it difficult to account for variables such as the time it takes to get a promotion, which is shown to be important for promotion on and above the county level but lacks empirical evidence for cadres below the county level (Pang et al., 2018; Y. Zeng & Wong, 2020). Also, my empirical analysis focuses on the single-level career change from township to county-level rather than promotion literature's typical measurement of promotion from various lower-level ranks to various higher administrative levels. Unlike some studies that do not explicitly assume a difference in promotion mechanisms between different bureaucratic levels, this study intends to distinguish grassroots cadre promotion mechanisms from promoting higher-level elite cadres.[5]

Party school training and university training are binary variables where 1 represents those with training experience, and 0 represents those without training experience. Table 4.1 presents the summary statistics of other relevant variables in the local cadre training dataset. [6] Compared to township-level cadres, county-level cadres in the dataset tend to be older, male, members of the CPC, have higher education levels, received more party school and university training, and interact with their peer colleagues more frequently.

The above variables are controlled in the statistical analysis to reduce estimation bias. Since the survey did not ask the time it takes for cadres to reach their current rank, age is controlled instead. Education is a

[3] I was gratefully granted access to this survey during my field work in Beijing and other parts of China from 2018 to 2019. During the fieldwork, I participated full-time in training sessions and observed the teachings of instructors, the reactions of the cadre trainees, and the interactions between instructors and cadres. During these training sessions, I was able to conduct interview with grassroots cadre trainees, instructors, and government officials, as well as collecting training syllabus and materials. In order to get a sense of how university cadre training operates logistically, I also volunteered in the facilitating agency that assists the university logistically on cadre training programs and interviewed the managers and assistants of such agency, which gives me valuable first-hand experience in the entire ground-level operation process.

[4] Summary statistics of the variable "province" is provided in the Appendix. Note that due to the distribution of data, most but not all of the provinces are reflected in the regression analysis.

[5] An exception is the research of Landry, Lü, and Duan, which explicitly considers the difference in the promotion mechanisms between provincial, prefectural, and county-level cadres (Landry et al., 2018).

[6] Source: author's grassroots cadre training dataset from fieldwork in China, 2017-2019.

Table 4.1: Summary statistics

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.
Township-level					
Age	3,936	41.10112	8.559943	22	69
Male	3,999	.6779195	.4673321	0	1
Education	3,988	1.876881	.5054378	1	4
CCP member	4000	.79575	.4032029	0	1
Party school training	3,865	.6041397	.489098	0	1
University training	3,866	.5217279	.4995923	0	1
Peer interaction	3,465	3.598846	1.130921	1	5
Superior interaction	3,465	3.948052	1.067125	1	5
County-level					
Age	595	49.14454	6.276938	26	64
Male	606	.7887789	.4085121	0	1
Education	603	2.028192	.489967	1	4
CCP member	606	.9306931	.2541852	0	1
Party school training	589	.8641766	.3428922	0	1
University training	589	.6621392	.4733829	0	1
Peer interaction	540	3.777778	1.025947	1	5
Superior interaction	540	3.996296	1.074232	1	5

four-category variable that includes below college level, college degree, master's degree, and Ph.D. degree. CCP membership is coded as 0 for non-CCP members and 1 for CCP members. This variable is included because some grassroots cadres are non-CCP members, unlike most elite cadres. In this dataset, 18.65 percent of cadres are non-CCP members. This factor may influence the probability of their promotion if CCP membership indicates a closer affiliation with the regime and works as an advantage in the promotion process. Additionally, given the diversity between Chinese localities and its possible influence on promotion prospects, spatial variation is controlled by including cadres' home provinces as dummies.

According to the promotion literature, factional or personalist patronage ties and peer competition are important influencers (Lü & Landry, 2014; Y. Zeng & Wong, 2020). Unfortunately, patronage ties at the local level are next to impossible to observe, and recent research shows that this factor may not matter for promotion at the local level (Landry et al., 2018; Lü & Landry, 2014). Similarly, unlike peer competition among elite cadres, which can be measured by counting the potential competitors at the same administrative level, such as provinces or prefectures, grassroots cadres may have too many potential competitors to be measured in this way. Accordingly, this study utilizes training participants' reported

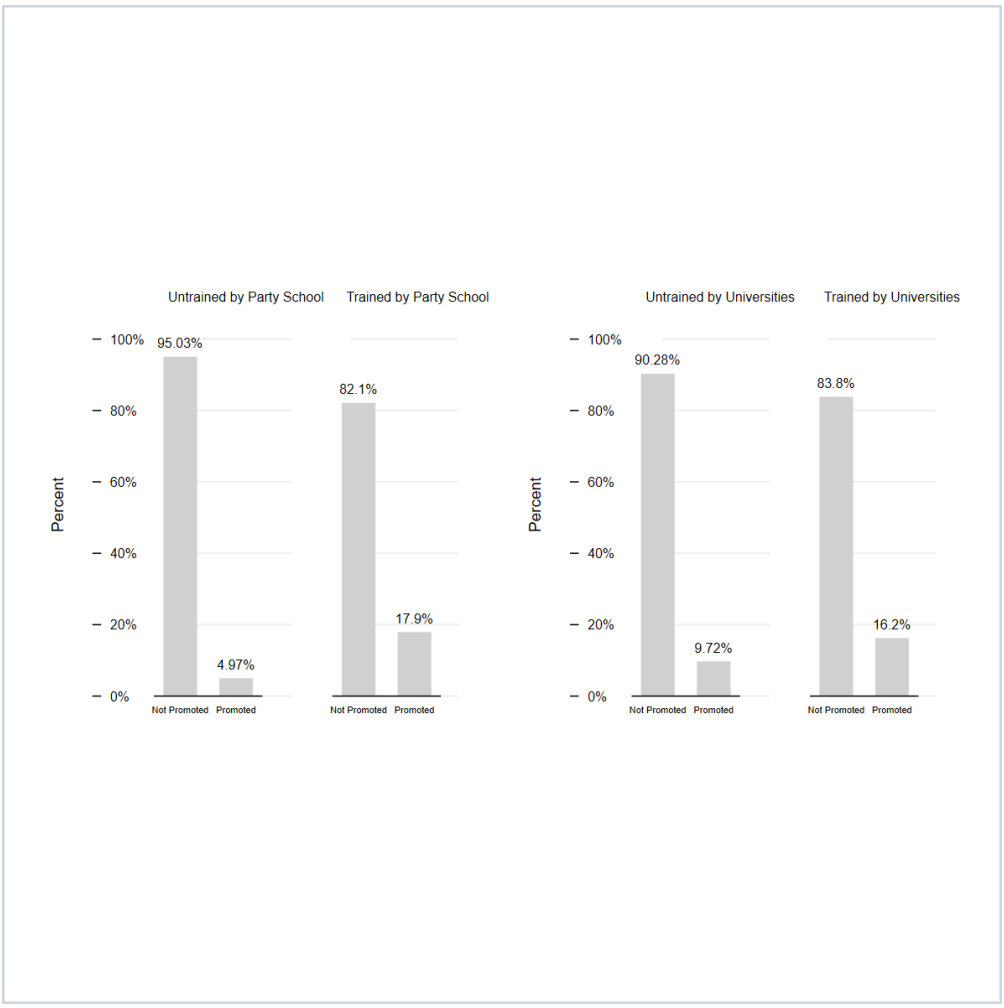

Figure 4.1: Grassroots cadre promotion by training type

frequency of interaction with their peers and leaders at a higher administrative level as proxies to account for local cadres' relationships with their peers and supervisors.[7]

The main concern of this chapter is the relationship between training and grassroots cadre promotion. As shown in Figure 4.1, there are different promotion patterns when it comes to different types of training. The percentage of cadres who did not get a promotion seems higher in groups with no train-

[7] The question asked in the survey is: "Cadre training hosted by various institutions can improve cadres' ability to work independently. However, if you encounter problems that can hardly be solved by yourself, how frequently are you adopting the following approaches? (1) communicate with your peer colleagues; (2) communicate with leaders at a higher administrative level." This leads to two five-category variables with 1-5 representing answers of "never," "rarely," "neutral," "sometimes," "always." Admittedly, these are imperfect measurements of patronage connection and peer competition. However, due to data availability problem at the grassroots level, these variables allow us to control the effect of such factors on promotion at least partially.

ing experience, indicating a possible conducive effect of training on promotion. The difference between cadres who got party school training and were promoted versus those who got promoted without such training is 12.93 percent. For university training, the difference is 6.48 percent. These descriptive statistics indicate that party school training may substantially impact local cadre promotion more than university training. However, such distribution cannot yet prove the link between cadre training and promotion. Further analysis is needed to control relevant factors that may influence such a relationship. Ideally, an experimental setting with cadre training as the "treatment" on the promotion outcome can best predict such a relationship.

While the data in this study was not collected under an experimental setting, statistical methods can help researchers improve causal inference in observational data. For example, researchers can address the selection bias in observational data by applying data-processing techniques such as matching, which allows them to control for the confounding effect of pretreatment variables in the dataset and make causal inferences. The goal of matching is to "prune observations from the data so that the remaining data have a better balance between the treated and control groups"(Iacus et al., 2012). Doing so allows researchers to prune information in an observational dataset and identify a dataset similar to one that would result from a randomized experiment. For example, previous research using survey data to explore the effect of party school training on cadre promotion has adopted one of the most popular matching methods – propensity score matching (PSM) – to address the counterfactual question of whether a cadre in the "treated" group with party school experience is more likely to be promoted than those in the "control" group without such experience (C. Lee, 2013).

However, the PSM method has recently been challenged by scholars, whose research indicates that PSM could increase the imbalance in the data structure and lead to model dependence and biased estimation (King & Nielsen, 2019). On the other hand, Coarsened Exact Matching (CEM) offers an alternative method to reduce data imbalance and model dependence (Iacus et al., 2011, 2012). CEM can either be used by itself or complement other matching methods to achieve better estimation. Accordingly, this study evaluates the results of various matching methods for the local cadre training dataset and adopts a combination of different approaches to achieve the best matching results. [8] The propensity score distribution of pre-matching, PSM-only matching, CEM-only matching, and a combination of CEM and PSM matching are illustrated in Figure 4.2. The use of any matching method significantly reduces imbalance in the original local cadre training dataset. While adopting either PSM or CEM approach leads to almost identical matching results, a CEM method followed by the PSM method performs the best, largely reducing the imbalance in the propensity score distribution between treated and untreated groups. Therefore, the following empirical analysis of this study will be based on a combination of the CEM and PSM method.

Iacus, King, and Porro, in their evaluation of different matching approaches, emphasize the importance of identifying the subset of observations in the matched set to clarify what quantity of average treatment effect (ATT) on the treated is being estimated (Iacus et al., 2011, 2012). Following their recommendation, Figure 4.3 presents a parallel plot that contains such information. Each line represents an

[8] Such a combination of matching methods is recommended by Blackwell, Iacus, King, and Porro (Blackwell et al., 2009).

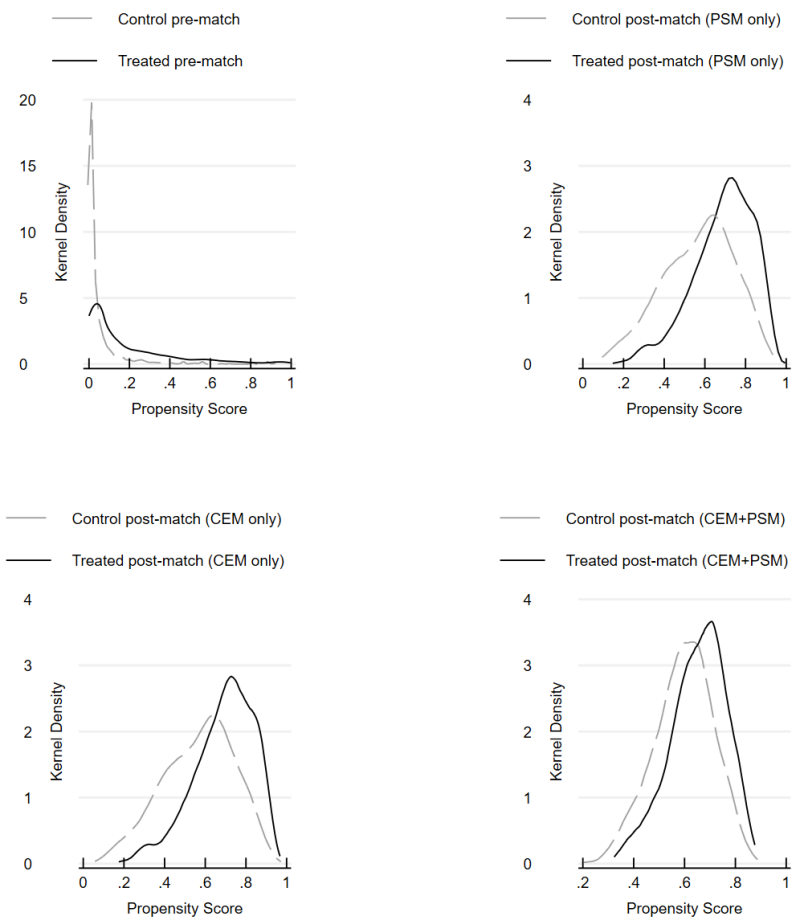

Figure 4.2: Density distribution of propensity score under different matching methods

observation in the original dataset and traces each variable's corresponding values between its minimum and maximum values. The grey dash line indicates those not matched in the dataset, while the solid black line represents those matched. The plot shows that the matched observations accurately represent the original dataset, except for cadres whose age is very high, those with the highest education level, and a few cadres who never interact with superior government officials. This result lends confidence to the adaptation of CEM matching for this dataset and the ensuing causal inference.

Note that coarsening can significantly reduce imbalance for most observational data but will not eliminate it. This potential problem speaks to the need to control for the remaining imbalance through a post-matching statistical model (Blackwell et al., 2009). Since the dependent variable is measured dichotomously, I estimate a series of logistic regression models to account for the impact of cadre training on the probability of local cadre promotion and the strength of such effect when conditioned by other relevant

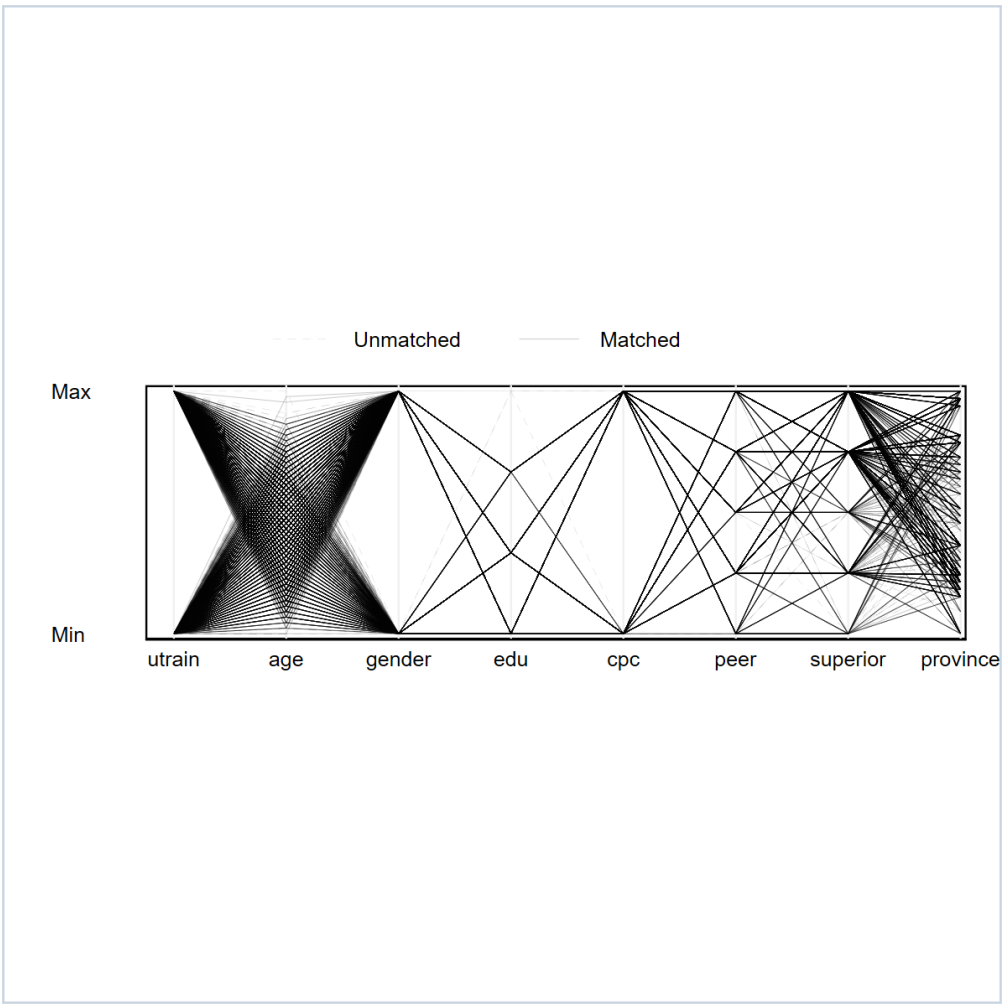

Figure 4.3: Parallel plot of variables for CEM matched units (black) against unmatched units (grey)

factors. The primary logistic model equation is shown below, in which the *i* subscript indexes for each observation in the dataset, and x represents the independent and control variables. This model relates cadre training experience to the probability of local cadre promotion.

$$\Pr(Rank_i = 1|x_i) = \frac{exp(a + bx_i)}{1 + exp(a + bx_i)}$$

4.4 Results

Table 4.2 presents a series of logistic regression models' estimation results, where the dependent variable is a promotion from township-level to county-level.[9] Model 1 gives the primary model results without any interactions between covariates, and Model 2 presents the outcome of an interaction between party school and university training. Model 3-6 explores the impact of cadre training on promotion conditioned by relevant variables. This study visualizes the empirical results for a more intuitive understanding of the treatment effects due to the difference of interpretation between logistic regression and linear regression.

Is Training Conducive to Grassroots Cadre Promotion?

Model 1 supports the hypothesis that cadre training is conducive to local cadre promotion. The coefficients of party school training and university training on promotion are both positive, while the former's effect is stronger than the latter. Such results indicate that cadres with any training experience are more likely to be promoted than those without training. On the other hand, township-level cadres with party school training are more likely to be promoted to the county level than those trained by academic institutions.

Table 4.2: Cadre training and grassroots cadre promotion

Promotion	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model6
Party school training	1.147**	0.908**	3.842**	0.691	4.300**	4.425**
	(7.54)	(3.39)	(3.16)	(0.98)	(5.23)	(4.89)
Marketized training	0.772**	0.552*	0.786**	0.770**	0.773**	0.790**
	(4.77)	(2.13)	(4.85)	(4.75)	(4.74)	(4.85)
Education	1.100**	1.096**	1.129**	0.977**	1.082**	1.022**
	(5.68)	(5.67)	(5.79)	(3.65)	(5.57)	(5.26)
Gender	0.110	0.113	0.104	0.112	0.104	0.106
	(0.56)	(0.57)	(0.53)	(0.57)	(0.52)	(0.53)
Age	0.200**	0.200**	0.237**	0.200**	0.202**	0.200**
	(14.69)	(14.68)	(10.85)	(14.68)	(14.71)	(14.63)
CCP membership	0.020	0.017	-0.015	0.018	0.041	0.060
	(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.13)	(0.19)
Peer interaction	0.432**	0.437**	0.428**	0.431**	0.945**	0.468**
	(4.60)	(4.63)	(4.55)	(4.58)	(5.72)	(4.89)
Superior interaction	0.012	0.012	0.009	0.016	0.038	0.531**
	(0.12)	(0.13)	(0.09)	(0.16)	(0.39)	(3.07)
Province	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes

Continued on next page

[9]Note: Dependent variable is promotion. Results are from logistic regressions. Standard errors in parentheses. *AIC* = Akaike information criterion. * Significant at p<.05 (two-sided); ** Significant at p<.01 (two-sided).

Table 4.2 – continued from previous page

Promotion	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model6
Interactions						
PsT*UT		0.343				
		(1.07)				
PsT*Age			-0.056*			
			(2.25)			
PsT*Edu				0.231		
				(0.66)		
PsT*Peer					-0.758**	
					(3.96)	
PsT*Superior						-0.757**
						(3.72)
Constant	-16.672**	-16.491**	-18.500**	-16.430**	-18.937**	-19.010**
	(14.08)	(13.83)	(12.57)	(13.29)	(13.90)	(13.70)
N	2,942	2,942	2,942	2,942	2,942	2,942
AIC	1416.055	1416.923	1412.837	1417.619	1401.577	1403.455
Prob. > χ^2	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001

Figure 4.4 illustrates this effect. All else being equal, township-level cadres trained by party schools have an eight percent higher probability of being promoted to county-level than cadres not trained in party schools. This effect is weaker than the 15 percent advantage on the promotion of trained cadres found in Lee's study. Still, her research does not focus exclusively on local cadre promotion from the township to the county level (C. Lee, 2013). Cadres trained by universities have a five percent higher probability of being promoted than those without university training experience. In other words, party school training experience has a 60 percent stronger impact on local cadre promotion than university training experience. In unreported analysis, when university training is the treatment, the effect of party school training and university training on the probability of promotion is six percent and five percent, respectively. In this case, party school training still has a 20 percent stronger impact on promotion than university training. Both results imply that party school training experience has more impact than university training on grassroots cadres' probability of promotion. However, such an effect tends to be stronger when the treatment is party school training.

Among the control variables in Model 1, education and age are significantly and positively correlated with promotion, which corroborates the role of professionalism and accumulative experience in receiving a promotion (Figure 4.5).[10] Cadres who have a master's degree enjoy a 16 percent higher probability to be promoted to county-level than those with a lower than college education record. Note, however, that the

[10] While it is uncommon to graphically report the relationship between the control variables and the dependent variable, in this study I choose to report the effect of control variables since these variables are of important concern regarding Chinese

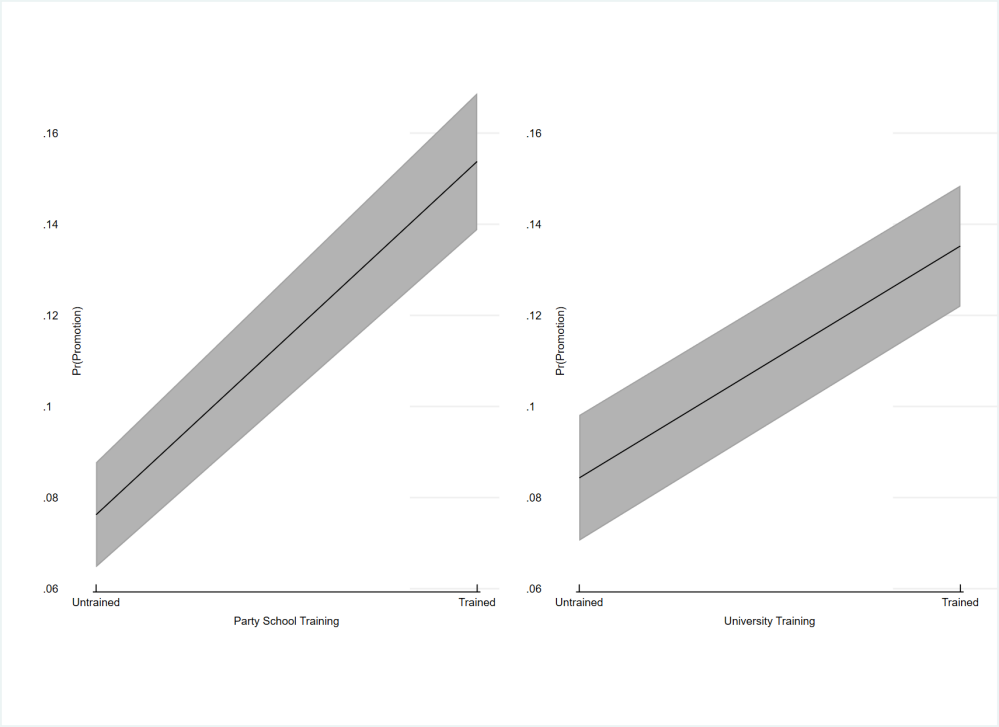

Figure 4.4: Effect of cadre training on the predicted probability of grassroots cadre promotion

positive relationship between cadres' age and promotion at the local level stands in contrast with evidence from elite cadres such as those at the provincial and municipal levels. This result makes sense given the difference in the mean age of different cadre groups, where provincial cadres in previous research have a mean age of 60. In contrast, the township-level cadres in this dataset have a mean age of only 41 years old, far from the "glass ceiling" of promotion to a higher level. [11] On the other hand, being a male does not significantly increase one's probability of getting a promotion, indicating an absence of gender bias in the likelihood of local cadre promotion based on this dataset. This result is consistent with extant findings on provincial political elites, presumably indicating a systemic lack of discrimination against women along the Chinese administrative hierarchy (G. Fu et al., 2018).

Interestingly, CCP membership is not a statistically significant predictor for promotion at the local level. This outcome suggests that party affiliation is not necessarily crucial in determining whether a township-level cadre can advance to the county level. Extant research finds that non-CCP members have a lower chance of moving to top cadre ranks and are thus underrepresented in leadership positions at the provincial and municipal levels. The result implies that non-CCP members are at least equally likely to

cadre management in existing literature, and some of the control variables in this study have been treated as independent variables in the literature.

[11] According to Kou and Tsai's calculation, the ineligible age for portion to county-level position is 45 years old (Kou & Tsai, 2014; H. Li & Zhou, 2005)

be promoted at the local level than CCP members (G. Fu et al., 2018; Y. Wang & Hua, 2020). Figure 4.5 shows that the conditioned effect of a combination of party school training and CCP membership on promotion is even slightly stronger among non-CCP members trained by party schools than the trained CCP members. Considering Lee's finding that a CCP member has a 32 percent higher chance to participate in party school training than a non-CCP member, the implication of this study's result is striking. Even if CCP members are much more likely to be selected for party school training, the effect of training on their probability of promotion tends to be weaker than the non-CCP members (C. Lee, 2013).

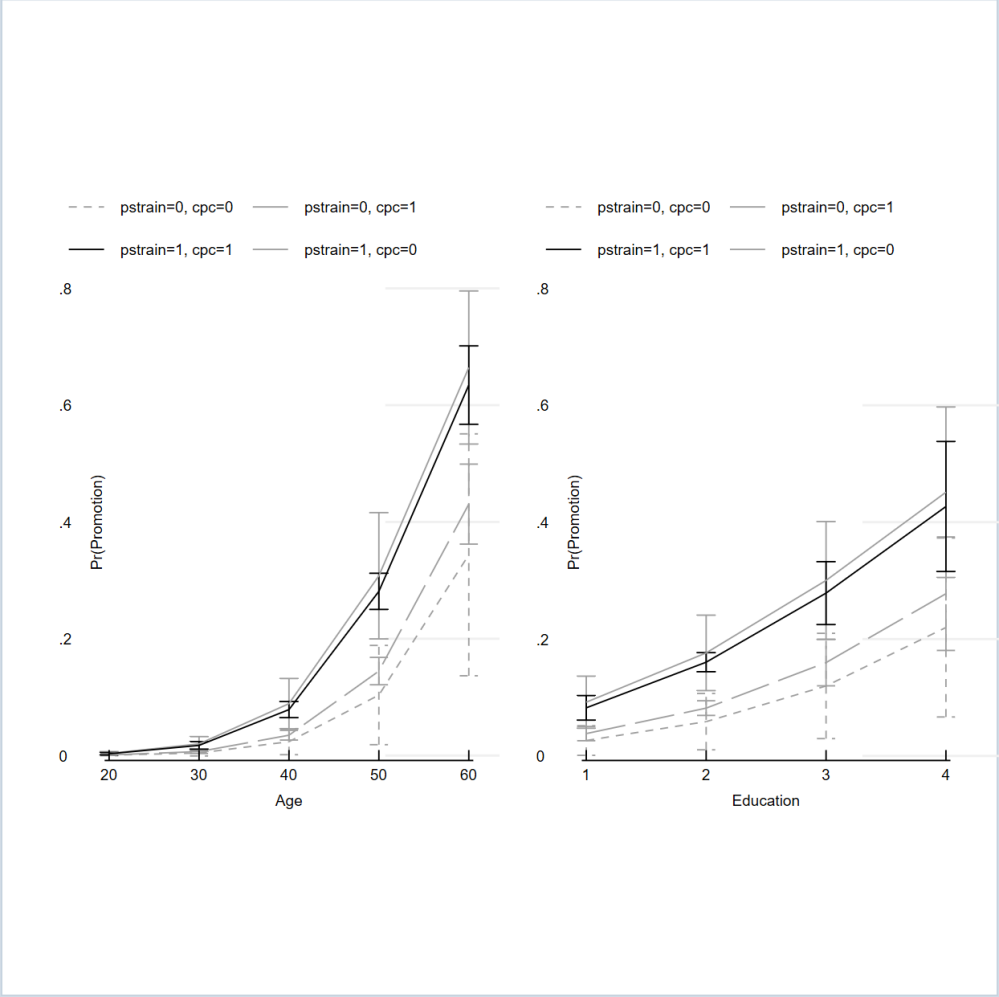

Figure 4.5: Conditional effect of Party School training and CCP membership on promotion

Township-level cadres' interaction with their peers has a significant and positive impact on the probability of their promotion to the county level. Specifically, those who never interact with their peer colleagues when tackling independently un-solvable problems have a striking 10 percent lower likelihood of

being promoted than cadres who consistently interact with their colleagues. [12] This finding provides empirical evidence to Heberer and Schubert's proposition that township and county-level cadres are mutually dependent and must collaborate strategically to improve individual performance and their workplace's overall performance to be considered for promotion (Heberer & Schubert, 2012). The implication is that fierce competition for promotion may not be the only dynamics of cadre interaction among different levels of the Chinese administrative hierarchy. Competition for promotion may become more intense as the administrative rank goes higher. However, cooperation may be as important as competition for cadre promotion at the grassroots level.

On the other hand, interaction with leaders at a higher administrative level does not significantly contribute to cadres' promotion to county-level positions. This result aligns with Landry, Lü, and Duan's finding that individual connections with superiors at a higher rank matter for political selection at the elite level but not at the lower administrative level(Landry et al., 2018). It indicates that the "strong party organization that ensures cadre control and discipline" instead of personal connection with individual superior may be more salient in influencing the outcome of local cadre promotion (Heberer & Schubert, 2012, p. 245). Further analysis of the statistical model provides at least partial support for such possibility. In this study, party school training's conditional effect on promotion becomes weaker as local cadres interact more with superiors, as shown in the lower right graph of Figure 4.6. Note that trained cadres still enjoy a higher probability of being promoted than untrained ones. However, a combination of party school training and more frequent superior interaction negatively affects promotion.

The home provinces of Chongqing, Inner Mongolia, Jilin, Ningxia, Xinjiang, and Yunnan are positively related to township cadres' promotion, while Shandong province is correlated with a negative effect on promotion. This result partially corroborates scholars' observation of a spatial pattern of cadre selection, such as a concentration of cadres from western provinces in higher ranks (Ang, 2012; C. Lee, 2013). However, several provinces listed above are not located in the west region. Moreover, as Lee points out, there still lacks a well-established empirical study on why and how some localities may impact promotion in a specific manner (C. Lee, 2013).

The findings so far suggest that party school and university training positively affect the probability of promotion with varying degrees. Would a cumulative experience of both training types further boost local cadres' likelihood of getting a promotion? Figure 4.7 illustrates various types of training's combined effect on local cadre promotion conditioned on different factors. The results clearly indicate that those who have both party school and university training experience enjoy the highest probability to be promoted, even when conditioned by age, education level, and interaction with peers and superiors. The content of training in party schools and academic institutions implies that cadres who received both types of training are likely to be both loyal to the party organization and more competent. A combination of regime patronage and a higher merit level make this group the most competitive among local Chinese cadres. Unsurprisingly, individuals who receive neither training are the least likely to be promoted. This finding

[12] This does not necessarily indicate that peer interaction has a stronger impact on promotion than cadre training, because the variables are measured differently: peer interaction has 5 categories, while party school and university training are dichotomous variables.

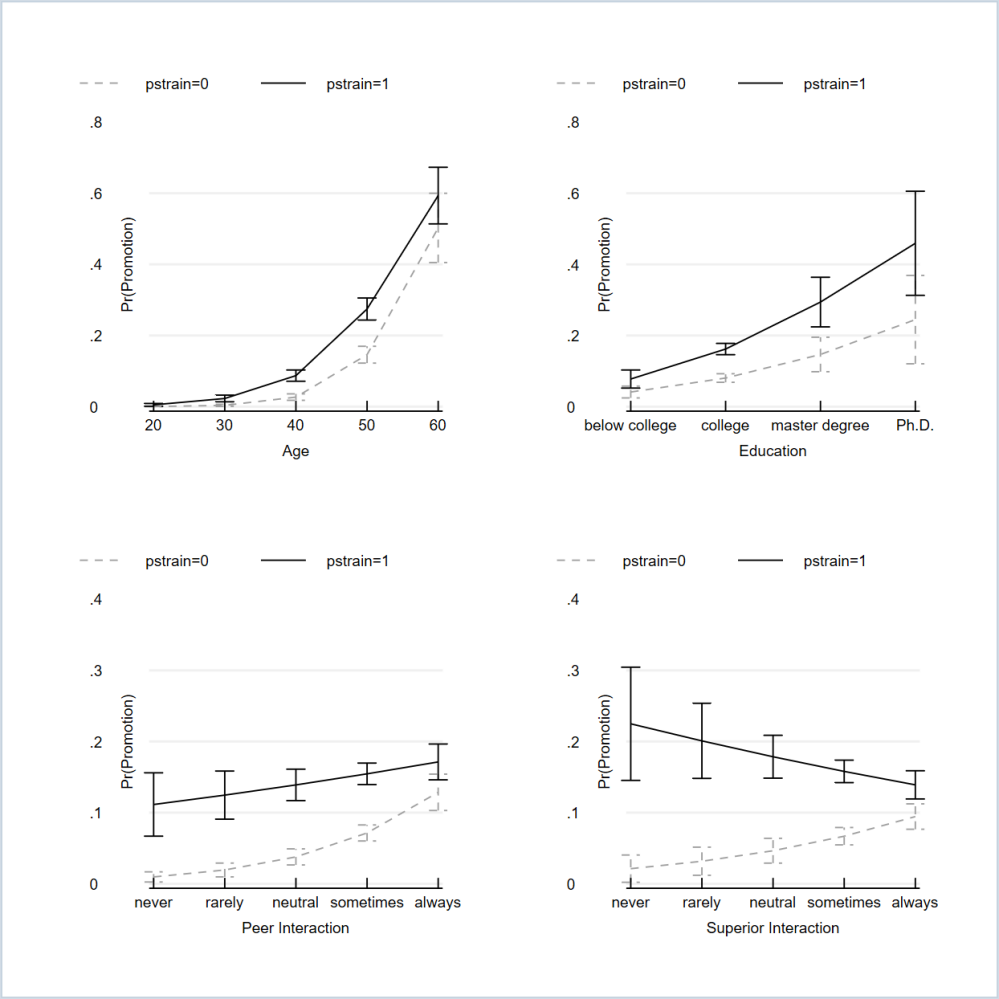

Figure 4.6: Conditional effect of Party School training on the predicted probability of cadre promotion

indicates that it is hard for cadres to advance their career from the lower end of the Chinese administrative hierarchy without regime patronage and a reasonable level of expertise.

Interestingly, as shown in Figure 4.7, among cadres who received either type of training, those trained by party schools only have a slightly higher probability of being promoted than those trained by universities. That this difference is not more considerable suggests that the more substantial impact of party school training on promotion found in the above analysis may only manifest itself in a hypothetical context where the leader faces the problem of either promoting a loyal agent or a competent agent. In such circumstances, loyalty could outweigh expertise, probably because a disloyal agent may cause more damage to the regime than an incompetent one. In practice, where leaders need to balance agent allegiance and competence and choose from a pool of potential candidates with various training records, it seems that party school training does not grant individual cadre a distinct advantage over university training.

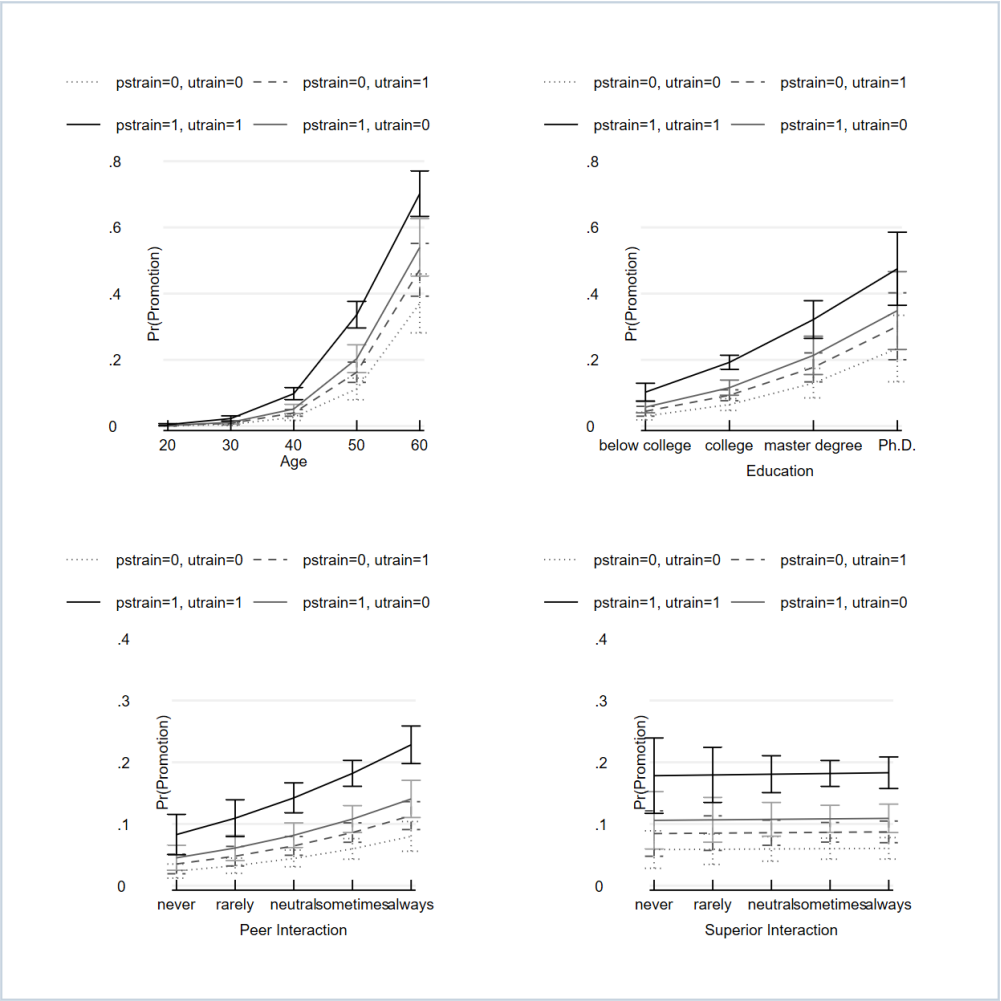

Figure 4.7: Conditional effect of cadre training on the predicted probability of cadre promotion

Another interesting pattern that can be found from a comparison between Figure 4.6 and Figure 4.7 is that when conditioned by interaction with superiors, the probability of promotion for cadres who got both types of training does not decrease as the interaction frequency increases among all patterns of training combination. On the contrary, when conditioned by superior interaction, party school training alone leads to a decreased probability of promotion as the frequency of interaction with higher-level leaders increases. This finding helps explain why individual patronage ties tend not to contribute to promotion at lower Chinese Administration levels (Landry et al., 2018). Even if local cadres can establish connections with higher-level leaders and receive patronage from the party organization, their probability of promotion will likely decrease without an adequate level of expertise. The improved level of merit from university training appears to mitigate the negative effect of patronage ties on local cadre promotion. This mitigation effect provides evidence that both patronage and expertise at the township level play an

important role during the promotion process. In the meantime, a combination of personalist and regime patronage may be conducive to promotion only when local cadres also have a high competence level.

Who Are More Likely to Be Trained?

The empirical analyses in the preceding section support the hypothesis that cadre training contributes to grassroots cadre promotion. On the other hand, one may also wonder which rank is more likely to be selected for cadre training in the first place. For instance, Lee touched upon this issue by showing that factors such as party membership, interaction with higher-level officials, and some provincial-level dummy variables are correlated with a cadre's likelihood to attend party school training. However, one of the most critical potential influencers – cadres' administrative rank – was not tested in her study. This factor is essential because an insignificant impact of administrative level on cadre training assignment implies that training selection patterns are consistent at lower ranks. By contrast, cadre rank's significant effect on training participation indicates different training selection patterns between the township and county-level.

Table 4.3 presents the tests for such a relationship, where during the data-processing stage, the treatment is cadres' administrative level.[13] Here, the dependent variable of interest is whether a cadre has training experience, and the independent variable is cadres' administrative level. The results of Model 1 show that all else equal, cadres' administrative rank has a significant and positive impact on an individual's selection into party school training programs. Specifically, county-level cadres have a roughly 21 percent higher probability of being trained by party schools than township-level cadres, as seen in Figure 4.8. This relationship becomes statistically insignificant when conditioned by cadres' education level (Model 2) but remains significant when conditioned by peer interaction (Model 3).

Table 4.3: Administrative rank and cadre training

Promotion	**Model 1**	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**	**Model6**	**Model 7**
Administrative rank	1.469**	2.295	2.040*	0.559**	2.143*	-0.447	1.118
	(6.24)	(1.91)	(2.37)	(3.16)	(2.37)	(0.34)	(1.37)
Party school training	0.284	0.284	0.276				
	(1.19)	(1.18)	(1.15)				
Marketized training				0.342	0.341	0.342	0.357
				(1.23)	(1.22)	(1.23)	(1.28)
Education	0.707*	0.899*	0.720*	0.937**	1.359**	0.934**	0.952**
	(2.25)	(2.15)	(2.29)	(3.89)	(3.96)	(3.87)	(3.93)
Gender	0.305	0.308	0.294	-0.464	-0.448	-0.465	-0.468
	(1.02)	(1.03)	(0.99)	(1.67)	(1.60)	(1.67)	(1.69)
Age	0.035	0.034	0.036	0.069**	0.070**	0.060**	0.070**

Continued on next page

[13]Note: Dependent variable is party school training. Results are from logistic regressions. Standard errors in parentheses. *AIC* = Akaike information criterion. * Significant at p<.05 (two-sided); ** Significant at p<.01 (two-sided).

Table 4.3 – continued from previous page

Promotion	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model6	Model 7
	(1.83)	(1.76)	(1.85)	(4.34)	(4.40)	(2.94)	(4.35)
CCP membership	0.699	0.721	0.719	0.079	0.088	0.080	0.085
	(1.49)	(1.53)	(1.53)	(0.17)	(0.18)	(0.17)	(0.18)
Peer interaction	0.399**	0.401**	0.469**	-0.055	-0.043	-0.053	-0.049
	(3.19)	(3.20)	(2.90)	(0.49)	(0.38)	(0.48)	(0.43)
Superior interaction	0.160	0.159	0.157	-0.327**	-0.315**	-0.329**	-0.260
	(1.37)	(1.36)	(1.33)	(3.27)	(3.14)	(3.28)	(1.89)
Province	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Interactions							
Rank*Education		yes			yes		
Rank*Peer			yes				
Rank*Age						yes	
Rank*Superior							yes
Constant	-5.496**	-5.849**	-5.801**	-2.979*	-3.986**	-2.500	-3.340*
	(3.54)	(3.58)	(3.59)	(2.16)	(2.67)	(1.66)	(2.27)
N	695	695	695	786	786	786	786
AIC	659.71	661.2115	661.2254	913.3249	912.0738	914.7318	914.8326
Prob. > χ^2	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001

A higher level of education and more frequent peer interaction is also conducive to cadres' selection into party school training, as shown in Figure 4.8. In contrast to previous research, CCP membership, interactions with superiors, and provincial variables have no significant effect on whether or not a cadre receives party school training (C. Lee, 2013) This result contradicts Lee's finding that cadres who frequently interact with superiors have a 16 percent higher likelihood of being selected for party school training than those without such interaction. This outcome is probably because past research does not consider the impact of cadre's rank on training selection. While factors such as CCP membership and superior connections are probably impactful without considering rank, once rank is introduced, its effect could be so strong that some other variables lose their significance. This finding indicates that cadres' administrative level may outweigh party affiliation and personalist patronage connection when it comes to selection for party school training.

How much does rank matter when it comes to the selection for university training? Model 4 in Table 5 shows that administrative rank's impact on university training selection is weaker than party school training. For example, township cadres are 10 percent less likely to receive university training than county cadres. This is a striking reduction compared to rank's impact on party school training selection. Model 5 shows that, when conditioned by education, rank still significantly impacts university training selection.

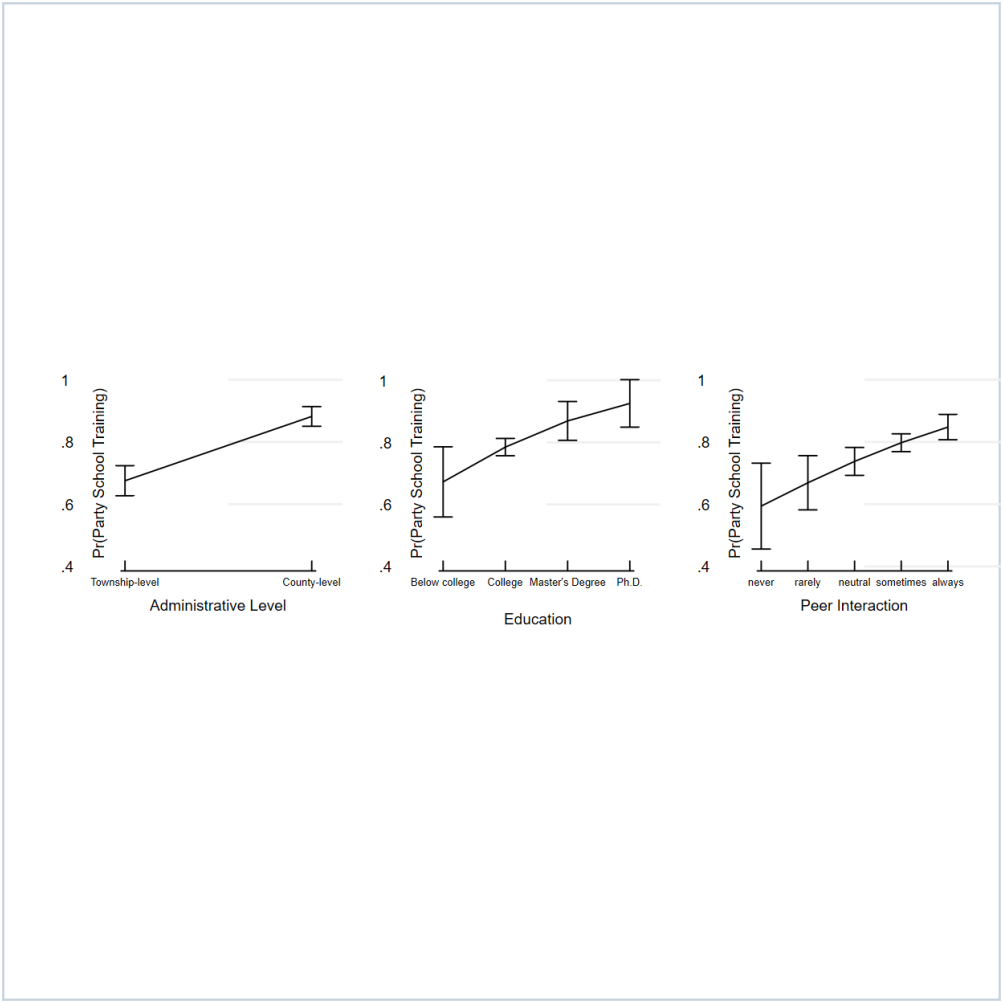

Figure 4.8: Factors that influence the selection for Party School training

However, such an effect becomes insignificant when rank is conditioned by age and interaction with superior (Model 6-7).

Figure 4.9 illustrates various factors' effects on university training selection. Higher education levels and older age both increase the probability of getting university training. That age positively impacts selection for university training indicates that the need to improve expertise lasts throughout grassroots cadres' careers. Such a trend is different from the party school case, where an age increase has no significant impact on training selection, possibly due to a combination of party school's screening role in the political selection and the "glass ceiling" effect of age requirement on promotion. It is likely that local cadres who have reached or are close to the age limit for promotion will not even be considered for party school training but continues to participate in university training. Interestingly, a cadre with more frequent interaction with their superiors is less likely to be selected for university training. One possible explanation could be

that a cadre who signals a stronger preference for personalist patronage ties is less interested in expertise improvement and less likely to be considered for training that aims to enhance cadres' skills and merit. However, further research is needed to substantiate this potential mechanism.

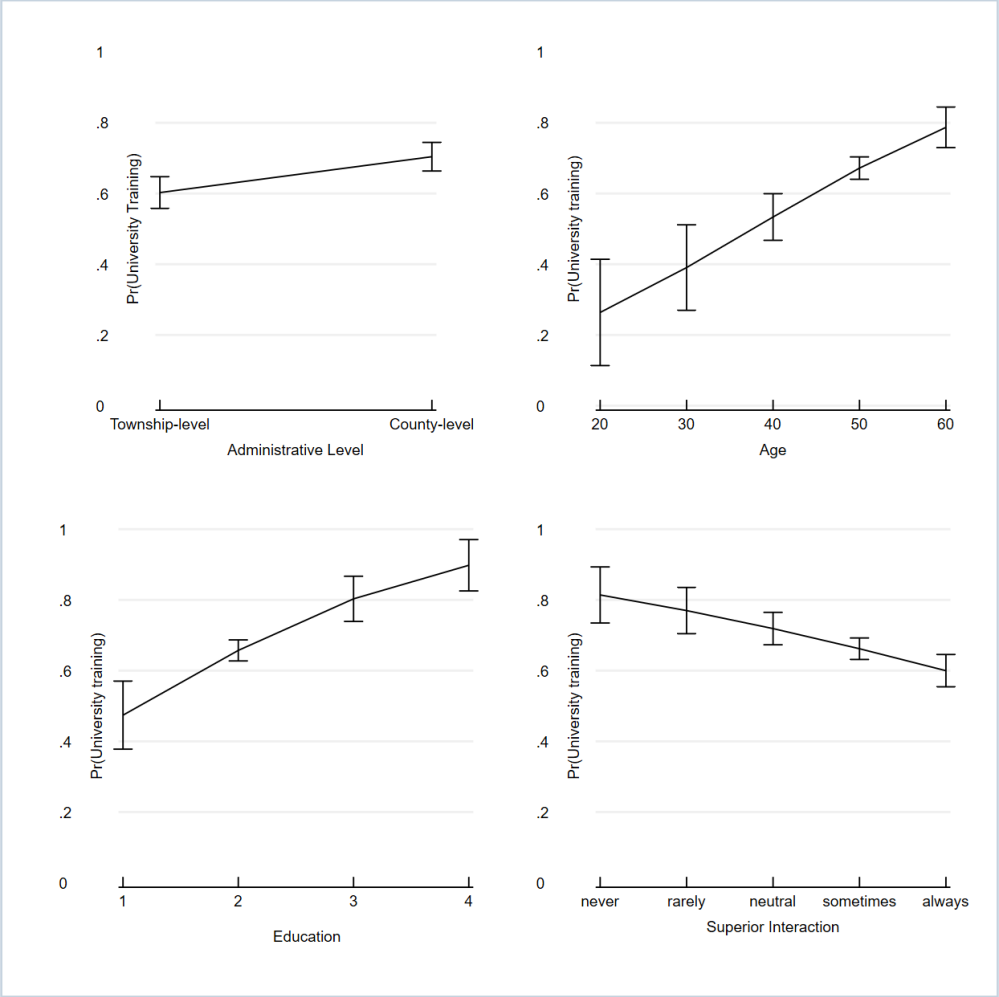

Figure 4.9: Factors that influence the selection for marketized training

Taken together with these findings and the results from the previous section, an interesting pattern between cadre training and promotion at the local level emerges. Township cadres are less likely to be selected for cadre training than county cadres; those who are eventually selected for training are more likely to be promoted to county-level than the untrained. Note that since this study's specific focus does not evaluate the probability of county cadres' promotion to a higher elite level, it is unclear if trained county cadres are also more likely to be promoted than those untrained. Nevertheless, the findings do indicate that the opportunity to be "screened" by party schools could be scarcer at the lower level. [14] Compared to county cadres, township cadres probably need to strive harder to earn the "patronage by the regime" (B. Li

[14] Lee argues that party school training provides a screening mechanism for political selection in China(C. Lee, 2013). However, her study does not address the potential difference of such screening function across the Chinese administrative hierarchy.

& Walder, 2001; Pang et al., 2018). Fortunately, training selection is less skewed by rank when it comes to university training. This could provide local cadres an opportunity to improve their merit, which, although to a lesser extent, can also increase their probability of promotion.

Robustness

I conducted several modified analyses to check the empirical findings' robustness to ensure robust statistical results. My approaches include analyzing the logistic regression models using only CEM-matched or PSM-matched data, specifying alternative coarsening patterns to set a different maximum level of imbalance in the dataset, and using logit instead of the default probit method to estimate the propensity score during the PSM stage. The results are robust to these checks.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter contributes to our understanding of cadre promotion mechanisms at the lower level of Chinese administration by exploring the causal relationship between loyalty, competence, and local cadre promotion. While research on promotion at higher levels of the Chinese government abounds, rarely any quantitative evidence has been presented below the county level. Scholarly debate on the role of patronage and merit in cadre promotion yields conflicting evidence among different administrative levels in China. While merit rather than personalist patronage seems more critical for lower-level cadre promotion, the selective institutionalization framework based on prefecture-level evidence suggests that the regime's patronage also contributes to promotion. Using an unique dataset on local cadres' training records and a rigorous data-processing method, I examine the impact of loyalty and competence on township-level cadres' promotion. The results broadly support the hypothesis that loyalty and higher merit increase the probability of promotion for township cadres. On the other hand, personalist connections failed to contribute to promotion at this administrative level. They may even decrease lower-level cadres' likelihood of promotion if the cadre does not possess a certain level of competence.

These findings are conducive to a nuanced understanding of the mechanisms behind authoritarian regime resilience. The promotion mechanism revealed by this study represents the regime's balancing effort between delivering performance and maintaining political control at the local level. By cultivating local cadres that are more familiar with and likely more supportive of CCP's policy doctrines through the party school apparatus, the Party-State strives for political authority and dominance in China's complex bureaucratic system. However, only when accompanied by competence can allegiance to the party contribute to local cadres' career advancement. Such an emphasis on both allegiance and competence indicates that even at a level that seemingly has a mere indirect impact on state elites, the regime is still trying to keep its feet on the ground.

This chapter's empirical analysis also demonstrates that regime patronage may not be distributed evenly across different administration levels. For example, county-level cadres are more likely to be selected into party school training programs than township cadres. In contrast, selection into university training is less skewed by administrative level, indicating that lower-level cadres can still increase their probability of promotion by focusing on competence improvement even if they are less likely to receive

regime patronage than their counterparts at a higher level. These findings have implications for the heterogeneous promotion pattern between various administrative levels in China. While Landry, Lü, and Duan argue that personalist connections and merit play different roles in promoting cadres along the bureaucratic hierarchy, my findings suggest that the state's patronage may also contribute to cadres' promotion to various levels of government differently. Overlooking the heterogeneous effect of loyalty in a polity characterized by a tightly organized party institution may lead to an inaccurate evaluation of multiple factors' impact on China's political selection.

In the next chapter, I will shift the focus to testing the relationship between cadre training and the prospects of prefectural leader promotion. As the highest administrative level not under direct monitoring of the central government, prefectures enjoy considerable autonomy in policymaking and implementation, and shoulder important governance responsibilities. Therefore, the promotion of prefectural cadres is one of the most important aspects of Chinese cadre management practice and has significant implications for China's local governance.

Chapter 5

Cadre Training and Political Promotion at the Prefecture Level

"*Good government and bad depend upon the various officers. Offices may not be given to men because they are favourites, but only to men of ability.*" [1]

*—– the Books of Shang (*尚书*)*

5.1 Introduction

Political elite management in China is crucial for regime legitimacy and has been the focus of academic research for decades. Given its Leninist nature, the CCP has over the years developed a complex mechanism of cadre evaluation and monopolizes personnel management at all government levels. Such monopolization, however, does not necessarily transfer to a unified standard of cadre evaluation at different administrative levels along the bureaucratic hierarchy. As pointed out in Chapter IV, researchers' findings on the mechanism of Chinese cadre promotion yielded mixed results when it comes to different government levels. Such lack of consensus could be attributed to cadres' distinct characteristics and functions at different administrative levels.

In China's central government – province – prefecture – county – township political pyramid, cadres at each level perform distinctive role given their scope of responsibility and power. Closest to the center of political power, politicians at the provincial level and above tend to engage intense power struggles and have strong incentives to advance their careers(Shih & Lee, 2020). On the one hand, such career incentives can lead to bureaucratic radicalism and governance tragedy during extraordinary times, as shown in the study of the positive relationship between political rank incentive and excess death rate during the Great Leap famine(Kung & Chen, 2011). Research using data from China's reform and opening period, on

[1] Legge, James (1865). The Chinese Classics, volume III: the Shoo King or the Book of Historical Documents. London: Trubner, p 256.

the other hand, indicates that political connections and its entailed broader advantages can frequently predict high-level political promotion (Doyon & Keller, 2020; Shih et al., 2012; Shih & Lee, 2020; J. Zeng, 2013; T. H. Zhang, 2019). Studies further show that while economic performance may contribute to provincial and higher-level elite promotion, its effect tends to be inconsistent and complementary to political connection (Choi, 2012; Jia et al., 2015; Landry et al., 2018; M. Y. H. Wong, 2021; S. H.-W. Wong & Zeng, 2018).

At the opposite end of the bureaucratic hierarchy, grassroots cadres at county and township level and below face different, but in some sense equally challenging, obstacles for promotion. As discussed in Chapter IV, grassroots cadres play a crucial role in comprehensive policy implementation at the local level. Consequently, their capabilities and performances are regularly evaluated by the cadre responsibility and evaluation system, the outcome of which will largely determine their promotion prospects (Edin, 2003; B. J. Naughton & Yang, 2004). However, the sheer number of grassroots cadres and the multifaceted nature of their responsibilities post challenges for an accurate understanding of their promotion mechanism(Ang, 2012). Regardless of the difficulties in accessing the grassroots cadre group, recent research on the promotion mechanism of county-level cadres confirmed the positive effect of economic growth on county leader promotion (G. Guo, 2007; Landry et al., 2018; T. Zhang et al., 2019). Additionally, my analysis in Chapter IV provides valuable quantitative evidence regarding cadre training's role in township cadre promotion. Overall, studies on grassroots cadre promotion tend to confirm the positive impact of performance and find no consistent significant effect of political connection.

In contrast to the study of high-level and grassroots-level cadre promotion, in which researchers seem to be gradually reaching a reasonable consensus, findings regarding prefecture leader promotion mechanisms remain inconsistent. This may be because prefectures have "the highest level of local authority not under the direct control of central authorities" and "substantial autonomy and authority in spending, policymaking, and implementation"(Zuo, 2015, p. 956). The scope of power, autonomy, and responsibility in prefecture leadership means that cadres at this level are crucial to a better understanding of the Chinese cadre management system. So why haven't researchers reached a consensus on this cadre group's promotion mechanism?

In this chapter, I attempt to answer this question by using an original Chinese prefecture cadre training and career history dataset from 1999-2019 to test factors that may contribute to promotion at this level. While most promotion studies regarding prefecture leaders focus on the effect of performance and patronage, a few studies have recently brought attention to the role of other factors, such as party school training, in affecting political promotion. Following this line of research, my analysis shows that party school training has a positive and statistically significant effect on prefecture leader promotion. More importantly, university training also significantly increases the probability of promotion. Echoing the findings in Chapter IV regarding grassroots cadres, evidence from this chapter shows that cadres who have both types of training experience have the highest probability of being promoted at the prefecture level. Moreover, these effects remain significant even after controlling for performance and patronage. Thus, my analysis provides ample evidence on additional factors at play, which have been largely overlooked by existing research and potentially led to the lack of consensus in prefecture-level promotion studies.

The next section of this chapter will briefly review the literature on prefecture leader promotion and its limitations, followed by the sections of empirical analysis and conclusion.

5.2 Prefectural Cadre Promotion in China

5.2.1 The performance factor

Many scholars attribute China's impressive economic growth in the past few decades to Chinese local political leaders' incentive structure, competition, and performance (H. Li & Zhou, 2005; Maskin et al., 2000; L. Zhou, 2007) . For instance, Luo, She, and Chen (2015) found a positive association between promotion and prefecture economic growth rate in their study of prefecture leaders between 1999 and 2009 (Luo et al., 2015). In addition, Qiao finds a similar pattern between promotion and performance in a larger dataset, including prefecture leaders from 1978-2010 (Qiao, 2013). These findings support scholars' argument of "performance legitimacy" as the foundation of Chinese regime resilience (Yang & Zhao, 2015; Zhao, 2009; Y. Zhu, 2011).

Research also shows that as the definition of performance evolves with the central government's policy orientation, other aspects of performance came into play in influencing prefecture leader promotion. For example, Zuo's study of municipal leaders from 2003-2010 shows that social welfare provision increases prefecture mayors' probability of promotion (Zuo, 2015). In addition, Gao and Lei, based on a sample of leaders in 67 Chinese cities from 2001-2011, find that reducing pollution in industrial structures significantly increases prefectural cadres' probability of promotion (Gao & Lei, 2016).

Despite these findings, the impact of performance on prefecture-level promotion has been challenged in other studies. For example, in a sample of prefecture mayors from 1990 to 2000, Landry finds little performance impact on promotion (Landry, 2003). Landry, Lü, and Duan also do not find evidence supporting the positive relationship between economic growth and promotion using a dataset of prefecture cadres between 1999 and 2007 (Landry et al., 2018). More importantly, many of the findings supporting the positive relationship between performance and prefectural leader promotion did not consider the role of political connections. Can researchers accurately evaluate the effect of performance on prefectural leader promotion without considering political connections in the Chinese political context?

5.2.2 The patronage factor

Recent studies challenge the independence of performance from political connection and provide evidence on the relationship between performance, political connection, and their impact on prefecture leader promotion. For instance, Jiang, using data between 2000 and 2011, finds an association between patronage ties with provincial leaders and the better economic performance of prefectural cadres (Jiang, 2018). As Jiang argued, this finding supports a positive interpretation of patron-client networks and presents evidence that political connections can promote performance under some circumstances. Similarly, based on a dataset from 1997 to 2015, Wong and Zeng find an immediate increase in prefectural

cadres' economic performance if a provincial insider became their leader after a provincial leadership transition (S. H.-W. Wong & Zeng, 2020). However, a provincial outsider was not associated with such a performance boost.

What does this mean for prefectural leader promotion? Unfortunately, the results have been mixed when scholars consider both performance and political connection. For example, Zuo finds that political connections enhance promotion prospects for some prefectural leaders but not others (Zuo, 2015). However, as exemplified in the study of Landry, Lü, and Duan, once political connections are considered, neither economic performance nor connections significantly influence promotion at the prefecture-level(Landry et al., 2018). Focusing on the time it takes for cadres to receive a promotion – a crucial aspect considering the age limit of leadership promotion in China, Zeng and Wong find that political ties do not significantly affect the time it takes for prefectural cadre promotion(Y. Zeng & Wong, 2020). The effect of economic performance is "generally insufficient to help local leaders overcome the age ceiling for promotion" (Y. Zeng & Wong, 2020, p. 23). It seems that after years of research and testing and after recognizing the potential role of political connection, scholars are still unable to agree on the mechanism of prefectural cadre promotion.

5.2.3 What else influences prefecture leader promotion?

Such a lack of consensus has led some scholars to doubt the value of studying leaders based on graphical localities and suggest a re-orientation to "non-territorial leadership positions"(Y. Zeng & Wong, 2020, p. 48). Nevertheless, given China's hierarchical administrative structure fundamentally based on localities, territorial political cadres are a group too large to ignore. Before shifting research focus to different types of cadres, perhaps we should look harder into what might have been missed in the study of promotion mechanisms.

In Chapter IV, I briefly mentioned Pang, Keng, and Zhong's analysis of the problematic trend of under-institutionalization and over-institutionalization in the study of Chinese politics, and their proposal of a "selective institutionalization" model that can inform the understanding of Chinese cadre promotion (Pang et al., 2018). According to their framework, the economic performance factor overemphasizes the level of institutionalization in the promotion mechanism, while the political connection factor overemphasizes the informal aspects in Chinese cadre management. Accordingly, the lack of consensus in extant prefectural promotion literature is likely the result of the regime's practice of selective institutionalization. As Chen points out, the Chinese cadre management system not only includes hierarchical assessment and performance evaluation, but also emphasizes the crucial role of the CCP institution(X. Chen, 2018).

By revealing the dual-track promotion mechanism in China with a dataset covering prefectural leaders from 1998-2012, Pang, Keng, and Zhong bring attention to the CCP institution's role in providing "regime patronage" to cadres deemed worthy of promotion(Pang et al., 2018). Specifically, compared to those without CCP party school training experience, prefectural cadres with such training tend to have shorter tenure lengths before promotion. This finding further confirms other scholars' observation of cadre training institutions in cultivating future political leaders (C. Lee, 2013; Pieke, 2009a; Shambaugh, 2008). More importantly, this line of research points to the necessity of reevaluating previous promotion studies

with systemic cadre training data, which is the core empirical goal of this chapter. Based on the analyses and findings in the earlier chapters, this chapter will also examine the role of university-hosted cadre training, given its crucial role in complementing the traditional party school training. The following hypotheses will be tested in the next section:

Hypothesis 1: All else equal, prefectural leaders with party school training experiences have a higher probability of receiving a promotion than those without such training experiences.[2]

Hypothesis 2: All else equal, prefectural leaders with university training experiences have a higher probability of receiving a promotion than those without such training experiences.

5.3 Data and Method

The empirical analysis in this chapter is based on an original dataset of cadre training and career history of prefecture Party secretaries and mayors from 1999-2019 in China. The list of past and current prefecture leaders was obtained from provincial and city yearbooks. Leaders' training and career history was collected from published biographical and career records online and supplemented with information from provincial and city Organizational Department websites and yearbooks. Other data regarding prefecture-level control variables such as annual GDP growth rate and population are collected from China City Statistical Yearbooks. A total of 334 prefecture-level cities and ethnic districts (diqu 地区, meng 盟) in 27 provinces and ethnic autonomous regions were included in the dataset. In 2018, these 27 provinces and ethnic autonomous regions were home to over 1.27 billion people. They had a total GDP of over 73 trillion RMB (approximately 11 trillion USD based on the average exchange rate in 2018). [3]

The observation unit in the dataset is cadre-tenure, with a sample size of 13,840 observations. The coding of cadres' career changes largely follows the practice of Landry, Lü, and Duan, which includes promotion, (same rank) transfer, retirement, prosecution, demotion, and death (Landry et al., 2018). [4] In this dataset, 72.64 percent of the observations experienced no career change in the next year, while 10.19 percent received a promotion and 13.26 percent were transferred to a position at the same administrative rank. Figure 5.1 presents the geographical distribution of the percentage of cadre being promoted during 1999-2019. The average age of prefecture leaders is 51 years old. Notably, the average tenure of prefecture leaders is only 2.7 years, slightly more than half the length of the stipulated appointment tenure of 5 years. This is even shorter than the findings from Landry, Lü, and Duan, as well as Kou and Tsai, indicating

[2] The hypothesis tested here is different from Pang, Keng, and Zhong's study (Pang et al., 2018). While Pang, Keng, and Zhong tested whether party school training leads to a shorter term length, my study concerns whether cadre training is conducive to promotion, regardless of cadres' term length.

[3] Data obtained from 2018 Chinese Provincial Yearbooks.

[4] Different from Landry, Lü, and Duan, I created an additional career change category of "nominal promotion," in which a cadre is nominally advanced to a higher rank, but such position does not grant the cadre substantial decision-making power (Landry et al., 2018). For example, a change from the prefecture Party secretary or major to the vice chairman of provincial CPPCC (sheng zheng xie fu zhu xi 省政协副主席) shows a rank advancement from prefecture-level to vice-ministerial level (fu bu 副部), however, such change is qualitatively different from a rank change to the vice governor of a province (fu sheng zhang 副省长), which is also a vice-ministerial level position but entails significantly more decision-making power.

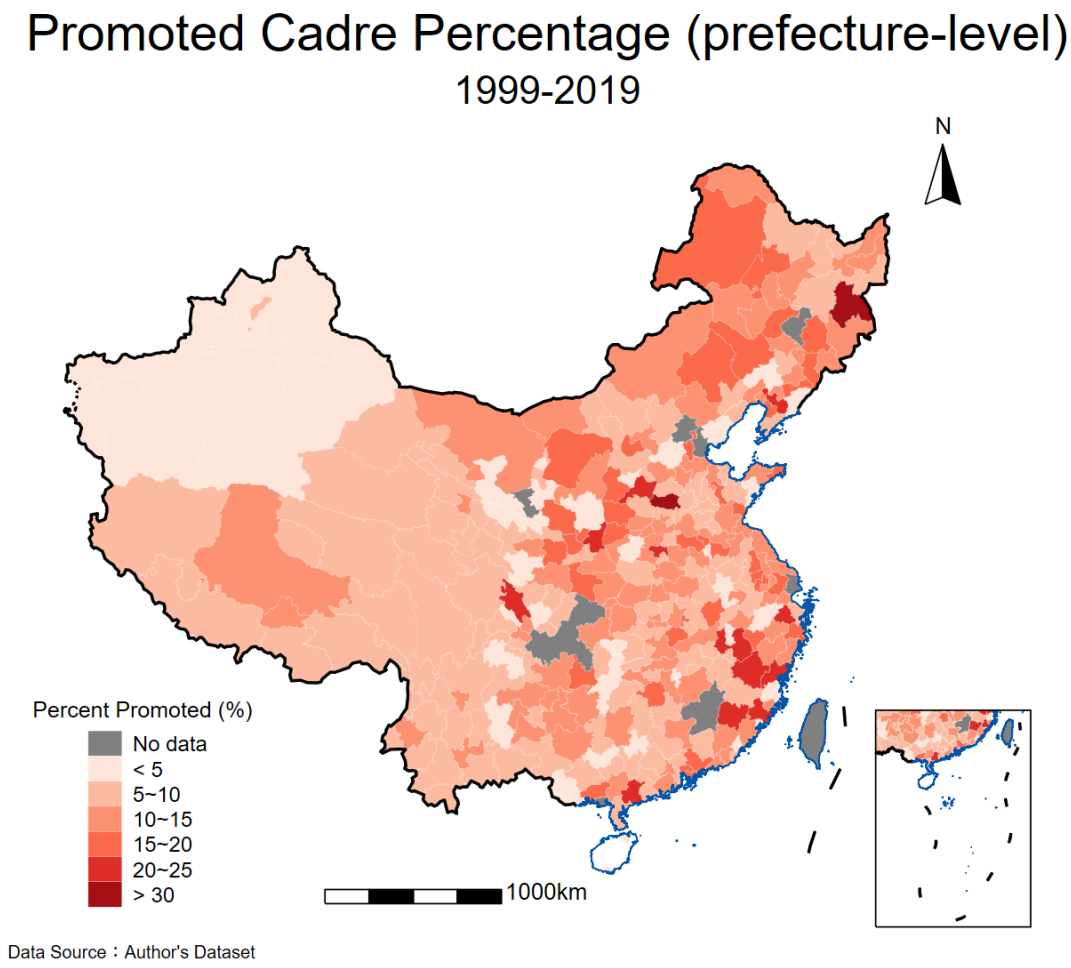

Figure 5.1: Percentage of prefectural cadre promotion, 1999-2019

a long-term trend of accelerated career change in Chinese bureaucracy possibly due to concerns of a promotion "ceiling" defined by age limit(Kou & Tsai, 2014; Landry et al., 2018).

The dependent variable in this analysis is whether or not a prefecture-level cadre was promoted to the next administrative rank, with 0 indicating no promotion and 1 otherwise. The independent variable is cadre training, which includes party school training and university training. Both variables are coded by the number of training programs participated by a cadre throughout their career. Almost all training happened before a cadre advanced to the prefecture-level, indicating that training is more likely to be an *ex-ante* than an *ex-post* factor for promotion. Additionally, I created a variable that simply indicates

whether a cadre has no training, either training, or both training to measure the effect of overall training (compared to types of training) on promotion prospects.

According to the descriptive data in Figure 5.2, more cadres with one to four party school training experiences are promoted than those without such training.[5] Furthermore, compared to those with no university training, the percentage of promotion in cadres with any university training is higher. For example, 23.5 percent of prefecture cadres with three university training records are promoted, and 40 percent are promoted if they have four university training experiences. These observable patterns indicate the possibility of a positive relationship between cadre training and promotion that will be statistically tested in the following analysis.

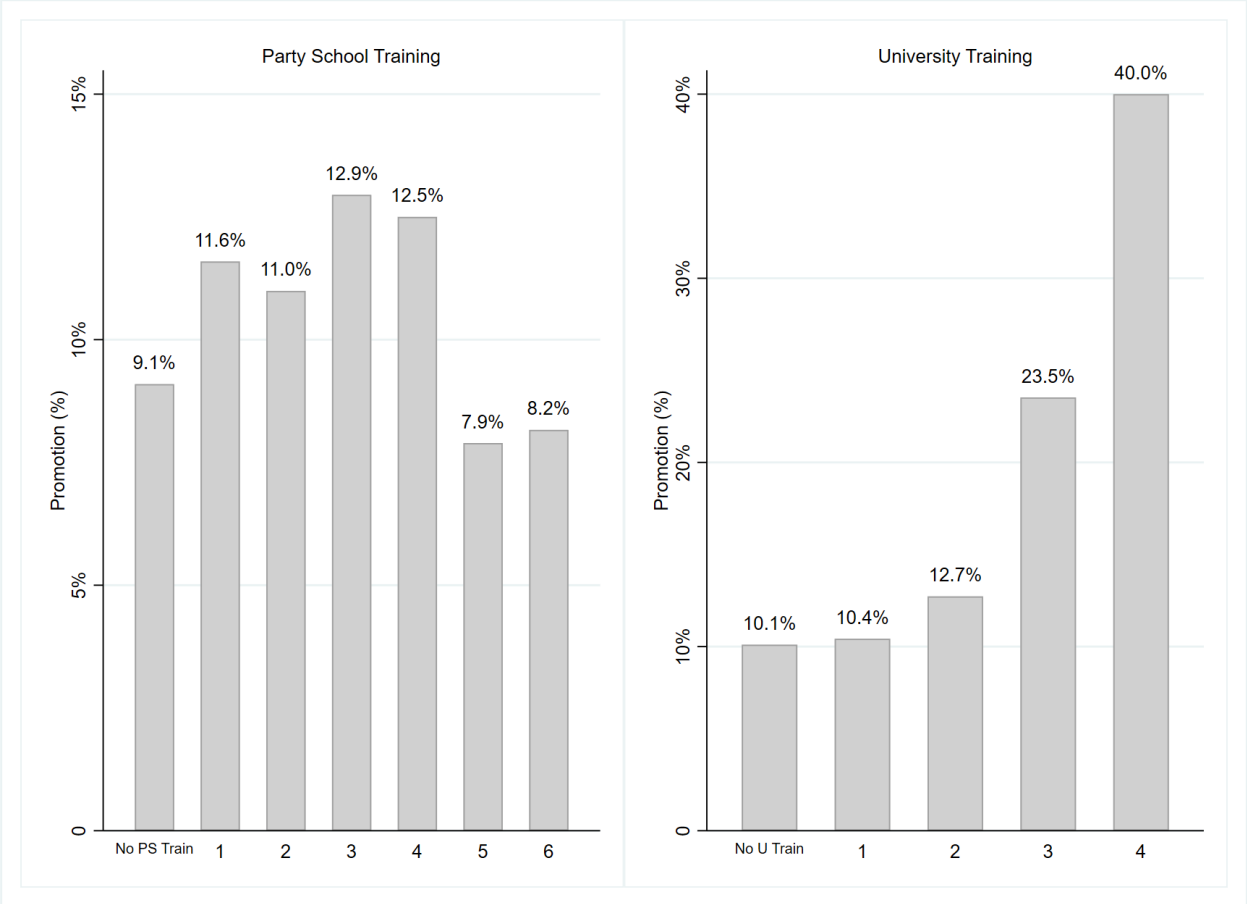

Figure 5.2: Cadre training and political promotion, 1999-2019

[5]Interestingly, the percentage of promotion decreases after party school training reaches five and six times. One possible explanation of such phenomenon is that while few party school training experiences establish a cadre's loyalty to the Party, too much such training tends to expose cadres' faults as their exposure to the Party superiors increases. Nevertheless, more study is needed to verify this mechanism.

Following the practices of extant studies, I include various control variables in the analysis. Distinguished from most previous literature that treats economic growth and political connection as independent variables, in this study, I utilize them as main control variables to test my hypotheses. If cadre training is important in influencing promotion prospects, it should be significantly associated with promotion even after controlling for cadres' performance, patronage ties, and other confounding variables. In other words, if economic performance, political connection, and other variables such as age and education are the only factors that influence promotion, then we should observe an insignificant relationship between cadre training and promotion.

I concur with Landry, Lü, and Duan that annual GDP growth rate rather than levels of GDP should be used to measure cadres' economic performance, given the endogenous concern that connected cadres may be appointed to economically advanced localities in the first place and later got promotion more easily (Landry et al., 2018). However, due to the time it takes for the economic indicator to reflect a cadre's performance after starting their post, I follow the practice of Jiang to use the GDP growth rate at t+2 to measure performance (Jiang, 2018).

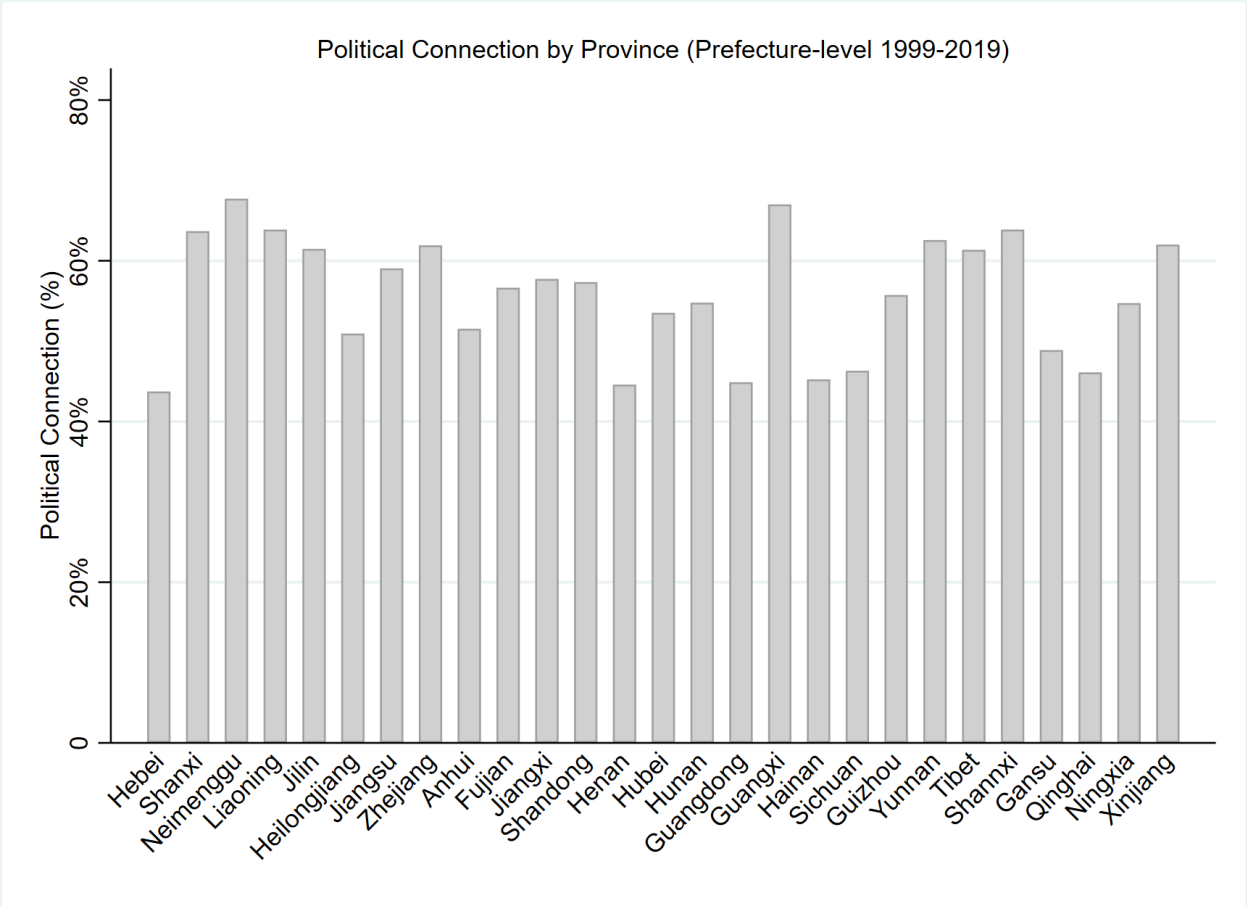

Figure 5.3: Political connection at prefecture-level in China, 1999-2019

I also utilize Jiang's method of identifying patronage ties at the prefecture-level, which captures a political connection only if a prefecture cadre was "first promoted to a city leadership position (as city secretary or mayor) from within the province" when a provincial leader was already serving as the provincial Party secretary of the same province (Jiang, 2018, p. 989). The traditional measurement of political connection developed by Victor Shih and adopted by some scholars emphasizes cadres' overlapping birthplace, college education experience, and workplace. While such measure indeed has its merits, the nature of relationships developed through shared birthplace, college, or workplace remains vaguely defined and suffers from uncertainties that could produce estimation biases (Keller, 2016; Landry et al., 2018). The measurement developed by Jiang, on the other hand, more precisely captures the patronage relationship along the Chinese bureaucratic hierarchy. Therefore, it serves as a reliable indicator of prefecture cadres' political connection with their superiors (Jiang, 2018). I code political connection as a binary variable with 1 indicating the existence of political connection and 0 otherwise. As Figure 5.3 shows, all provinces in my dataset have a political connection rate of over 40 percent from 1999 to 2019. More than 60 percent of cadres have patronage ties with provincial leaders in some provinces.

In addition to economic growth rate, I also control for population, a prefecture's distance to the provincial capital, the type of prefecture city, and a prefecture leader's potential number of competitors at the prefecture-level. Distance to the provincial capital is included to control for the possibility that leaders of a city closer to the provincial capital may receive better information and preferential treatment regarding promotion. The type of prefecture city, such as an open coastal city or cities in a special economic zone, may also influence cadres' promotion because a higher-level government may treat prefectures differently due to their political or economic importance (Landry et al., 2018). According to Lü and Landry, the number of prefecture leaders within the same province may influence a cadre's promotion prospect due to the intensity of same-level competition (Lü & Landry, 2014). Therefore, I control for competitor pool size to see if cadres' probability of promotion decreases when the number of competitors is larger.[6] I also include dummies for Jiang Zemin, Hu Jintao, and Xi Jinping administrations to control for potential differences in the political environment concerning promotion during different administrations.

Besides controlling the characteristics of the prefectures, I also control for several other cadre-level variables that have been proved to affect elite cadre promotion. One of the crucial factors in Chinese cadre promotion is age. Studies on promotion mechanisms repeatedly show that age significantly influences cadres' promotion prospects. The probability of promotion tends to decrease as cadres' age increases, and they approach the "glass ceiling" of further career advancement (Landry et al., 2018). Following previous studies, I also include the squared terms of age and tenure to measure their nonlinear effects on promotion. Education is also a related factor in promotion studies, as research shows that higher education levels tend to be associated with a higher probability of promotion (Shih et al., 2012; Zang, 1998). Although study shows that gender and ethnicity do not significantly influence provincial elite promotion, and Chapter

[6] "Competitor pool size" variable has a minimum of 2 because although Hainan province has 4 prefecture-level cities, some of them are recently established and lack data.

Table 5.1: Summary statistics

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.
Cadre-level variables					
Promotion	13,840	.1018786	.3024995	0	1
Party School training	13,840	.7001445	.9734387	0	6
Marketized training	13,840	.1056358	.3555594	0	4
Total training	13,840	.5424855	.6078359	0	2
Political connection	13,794	.5548064	.4970052	0	1
Age	13,552	51.09578	4.099094	36	62
Gender	13,825	1.045931	.2093437	1	2
Ethnicity	13,774	1.140192	.3471984	1	2
Education	13,323	1.84463	.7453193	0	3
Tenure	13,826	2.729567	1.64744	1	12
Prefecture-level variables					
GDP growth at t+2 (log)	12,331	6.176712	1.31404	1.004302	10.02
Population (log)	13,751	5.650358	.8521697	1.987874	7.313221
Distance to provincial capital (log)	13,840	4.864886	1.555744	0	7.140503
Prefecture type	13,840	3.175578	1.142538	1	7
Competitor pool size	13,840	13.79422	3.933822	2	21

IV's analysis of grassroots cadres also didn't find gender's impact to be significant, the effect of such factors on prefecture leaders remains underexamined and is worth exploring (G. Fu et al., 2018). The summary statistics of the dependent, independent, and control variables are presented in Table 5.1.[7]

The cadre-tenure structure of the prefecture promotion dataset allows the adoption of event history analysis and, specifically, the discrete-time logit model estimated by the maximum likelihood method (Long et al., 1993). The dependent variable is whether a cadre was promoted to the next rank and precisely how many years it took to receive a promotion if there is any. The baseline specification is as follows:

$$\Pr(promotion)_{it} = \frac{1}{1 + exp\{-\alpha' t - \beta' x_{it}\}}$$

The expected probability of prefecture cadre promotion is a function of time and the independent and control variables at a given time. The subscript *i* indicates individual cadre, and the subscript *t* indicates the year when a cadre is in a certain rank. *x* represents the group of explanatory variables. The *alpha* represents the variation of promotion probability over time for different values of the explanatory variables, and the *beta* represents the effect of variables that influence cadre promotion. I use clustered standard errors by prefectures to account for correlation within each locality. I also include provincial and year fixed

[7]Source: author's dataset of Chinese prefecture leader training and career history, 1999-2019."Competitor pool size" variable has a minimum of 2 because although Hainan province has 4 prefecture-level cities, some of them are recently established and lack data.

effects to account for unobserved characteristics of promotion mechanism due to differences in high-level jurisdictions at a particular year (Jiang, 2018; Landry et al., 2018).

5.4 Results

Table 5.2 presents the effects of cadre training on prefecture leader promotion using the discrete-time logit model.[8] Model 1-3 use party school and university training as independent variables. Following the practice of Jiang, I start the estimation with a baseline model excluding most of the prefecture-level and prefecture leader controls (Jiang, 2018). I included economic growth performance, political connection, and tenure in the parsimonious Model 1 because these factors have been the major focus of extant literature on promotion.

Table 5.2: Cadre training and prefectural leader promotion

Promotion	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model6
Party school training	1.129***	1.132***	1.075**			
	(0.0346)	(0.0348)	(0.0303)			
Marketized training	1.157*	1.161*	1.159*			
	(0.0998)	(0.100)	(0.101)			
Either training				1.293***	1.320***	1.144*
				(0.0794)	(0.0817)	(0.0729)
Both training				1.537***	1.569***	1.428***
				(0.179)	(0.186)	(0.174)
Economic growth	1.045	1.168**	1.190**	1.035	1.160**	1.187**
	(0.0503)	(0.0742)	(0.0809)	(0.0499)	(0.0737)	(0.0804)
Political connection	0.881*	0.840**	0.800***	0.886	0.844**	0.802***
	(0.0670)	(0.0654)	(0.0642)	(0.0674)	(0.0658)	(0.0644)
Province-year FE	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Prefecture-level controls		yes	yes		yes	yes
Prefecture leader controls			yes			yes
Years in rank	2.048***	2.016***	2.091***	2.047***	2.014***	2.090***
	(0.169)	(0.166)	(0.174)	(0.169)	(0.166)	(0.174)
(Years in rank)^2	0.934***	0.937***	0.941***	0.935***	0.937***	0.941***

Continued on next page

[8]Note: This table presents the effects of cadre training on prefecture-level cadre promotion prospects. Results are odds ratios from discrete-time logit models. The dependent variable is *Promotion*. Prefecture-level controls include *Log GDP Growth, Log Population, Log Distance to Prefecture Capital, Prefecture Type, Competitor Pool Size*, and dummies for Jiang Zemin, Hu Jintao, and Xi Jinping administration. Prefecture leader controls include *Political Connection, Age, Age-squared, Gender, Education, Ethnicity*, and *Years in Rank* and *Years in Rank-squared*. Robust standard errors clustered at the prefecture level are reported in parentheses. FE = fixed effects. AIC = Akaike information criterion. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1 (two-tailed test).

Table 5.2 – continued from previous page

Promotion	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model6
	(0.00984)	(0.00989)	(0.00979)	(0.00986)	(0.00991)	(0.00980)
Number of prefectures	333	333	333	333	333	333
Observations	12,281	12,222	11,912	12,281	12,222	11,912
AIC	7437.622	7383.060	7102.369	7437.155	7380.855	7102.734
Prob. > χ^2	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001

The results from Model 1-3 show that, all else equal, party school and university training consistently have a significant positive effect on prefecture cadre promotion. Notably, the impact of cadre training is significant even after controlling for cadres' performance and patronage connection. Specifically, in Model 3, where all control variables are taken into account, one additional record of party school training increases the odds of promotion by 7.5 percent. Likewise, one additional experience of university training increases the odds of promotion by 15.9 percent.

In the meantime, the effects of both economic performance and political connection are statistically significant. While a unit increase in GDP growth rate increases the odds of promotion by 19 percent, having a patronage connection decreases the odds of promotion by 20 percent. The effect of tenure is statistically significant but shows a nonlinear pattern: although one additional year in the current rank increases one's odds of promotion by 109.1 percent, such a positive effect eventually fades if a cadre stays in the same rank for too long because the square term of tenure is negatively associated with promotion.

I use an aggregate measure of cadre training in Model 4-6 to analyze the overall effect of training experience on prefecture leader promotion. The findings show that compared to those with no training experience of any kind, prefecture cadres who have either party school or university training and those with both training experience are significantly more likely to be promoted. Specifically, having either type of training increases the odds of promotion by 14.4 percent, and having both types of training increase the odds of promotion by 42.8 percent. The effects of economic performance, political connection, and tenure are roughly the same as in Model 1-3.

To better understand the effect of cadre training on promotion prospects, I use the logistic model estimates from Table 5.2 to calculate the predicted probability of cadre promotion and plotted the results. As shown on the left side of Figure 5.4, both party school and university training increase the predicted probability of promotion until a cadre's tenure reaches six years. In the first year of staying at the prefecture rank, the probability of promotion for a party school-trained cadre is .003, while for a university-trained cadre, the probability is .005. The probability of promotion shows an upward trend when a prefecture cadre stays in the same rank until year six and starts decreasing afterward. At year six, university training is associated with a .019 predicted probability of promotion, while party school training is associated with a .009 probability of promotion.

As for the aggregated measure of cadre training, the right side of Figure 5.4 shows that having both types of training significantly increase the predicted probability of promotion by .032 compared to being

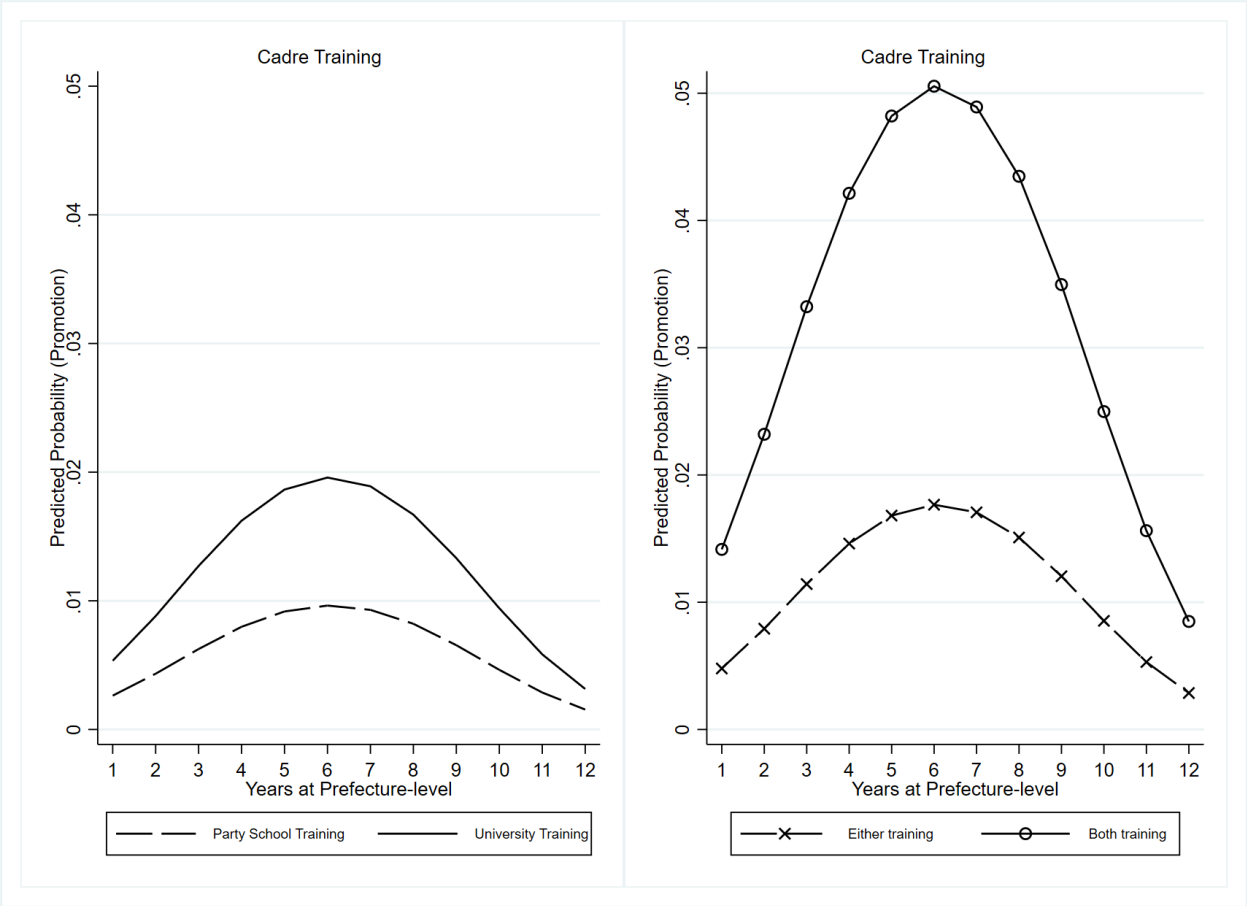

Figure 5.4: Cadre training and the predicted probability of prefectural leader promotion

trained in either party schools or universities at the tenure of 6 years. For example, in year one, cadres who received both types of training have a predicted probability of .014 to get a promotion, and the probability increases to .05 at year six before it starts to decrease. This indicates that a trained cadre must work in the same rank for several years for the highest probability of promotion but remaining in the same rank for too long will eventually decrease the likelihood of promotion. Cadres with no training experience, on the other hand, are the least likely to be promoted throughout the tenure compared to cadres with either or both training.

Figure 5.5 illustrates the effect of economic performance and political connection on prefecture cadres' probability of promotion. Consistent with most findings in the promotion literature, better economic performance is associated with a higher probability of promotion. Specifically, at the lowest level of economic growth rate, a cadre's probability of promotion is .035. The promotion probability shows a sharp upward trend as the growth rate increases and reaches around .15 at the highest GDP growth rate.

This finding provides one possible explanation for China's economic miracle in the past decades: local political leaders are promoted based on their ability to achieve higher economic growth.

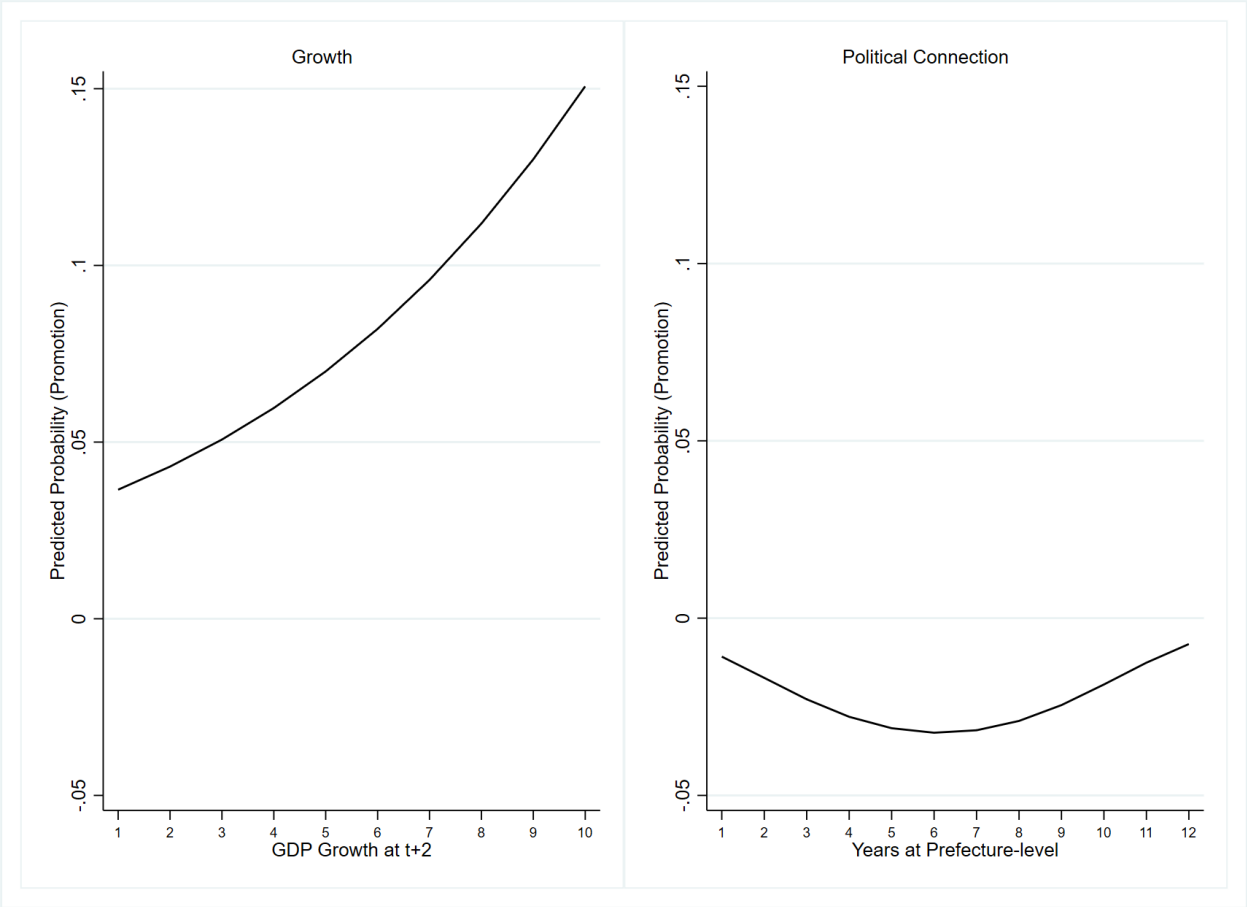

Figure 5.5: Performance, patronage, and the predicted probability of prefectural leader promotion

Regarding political connection's effect on promotion, Landry, Lü, and Duan find no significant relationship between the two variables in their study (Landry et al., 2018). The result here clearly shows a substantial and negative effect of political connection on the probability of promotion at the prefecture level. The result remains consistent across all models analyzed in this study. As Figure 5.5 shows, at year one, the predicted probability of promotion for a cadre who has patronage ties is -.011. After that, the probability shows a downward trend and decreases to -.032 at year six before increasing again. However, the predicted probability of connected cadres is always negative at any year of the tenure. Since the dataset includes all prefecture leaders in China from 1999 to 2019, this finding provides the most comprehensive evidence regarding the relationship between political connection and promotion so far. It shows that patronage ties are not conducive to cadre promotion at the prefecture level.

Scholars have long recognized the effect of age on Chinese cadre promotion. As Figure 5.6 shows, prefecture cadres' age has a nonlinear relationship with their promotion prospects. At year one, the

predicted probability of promotion is .019, and it increases to .068 at year six before declining. Since the average age of cadre in this data is 51 years old, this finding makes sense because a prefecture leader who are over 57 years old has a small chance to be promoted to a higher rank. The average tenure of 2.7 years in this dataset also indicates that the initial years of a prefecture-level position are crucial for cadres' promotion. However, it is worth noting that while tenure's association with promotion is statistically significant, age's effect on promotion is not statistically significant.

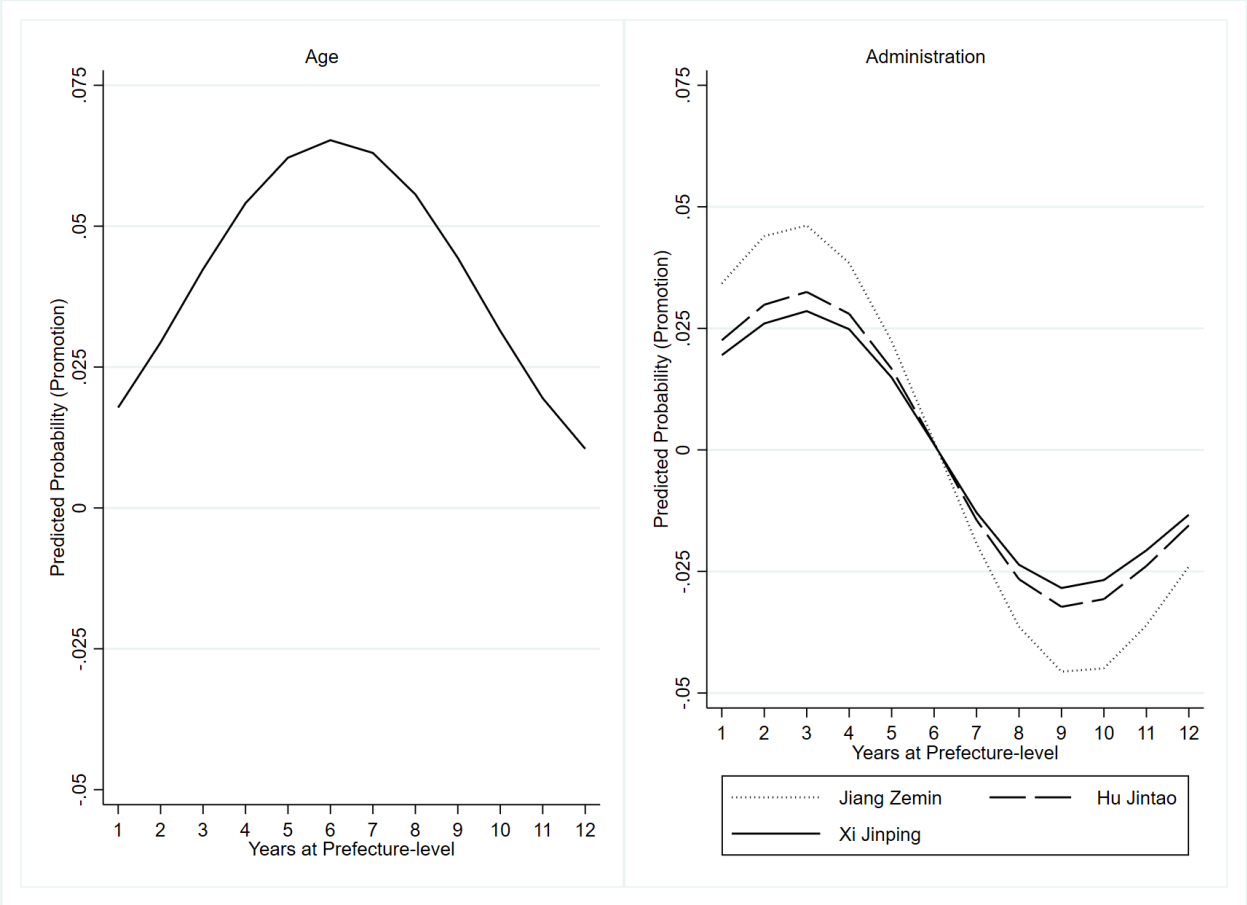

Figure 5.6: Effect of age and national leadership on prefectural leader promotion

Figure 5.6 also exhibits some interesting promotion patterns of Chinese prefectural cadres during different administrations. Since the dataset spans from 1999 to 2019, it allows this study to access potential differences between the Jiang Zemin, Hu Jintao, and Xi Jinping administrations regarding local cadre promotion. The results show that cadres during the Jiang administration enjoy a higher promotion probability than the Hu and Xi administration during the initial few years of their tenure. The promotion pattern during the Xi administration is statistically different from the Jiang administration, and cadres during the Xi administration are less likely to be promoted. Specifically, at year three, a cadre working

during the Jiang administration has a .046 probability of getting a promotion, while such probability is only .028 during the Xi administration.

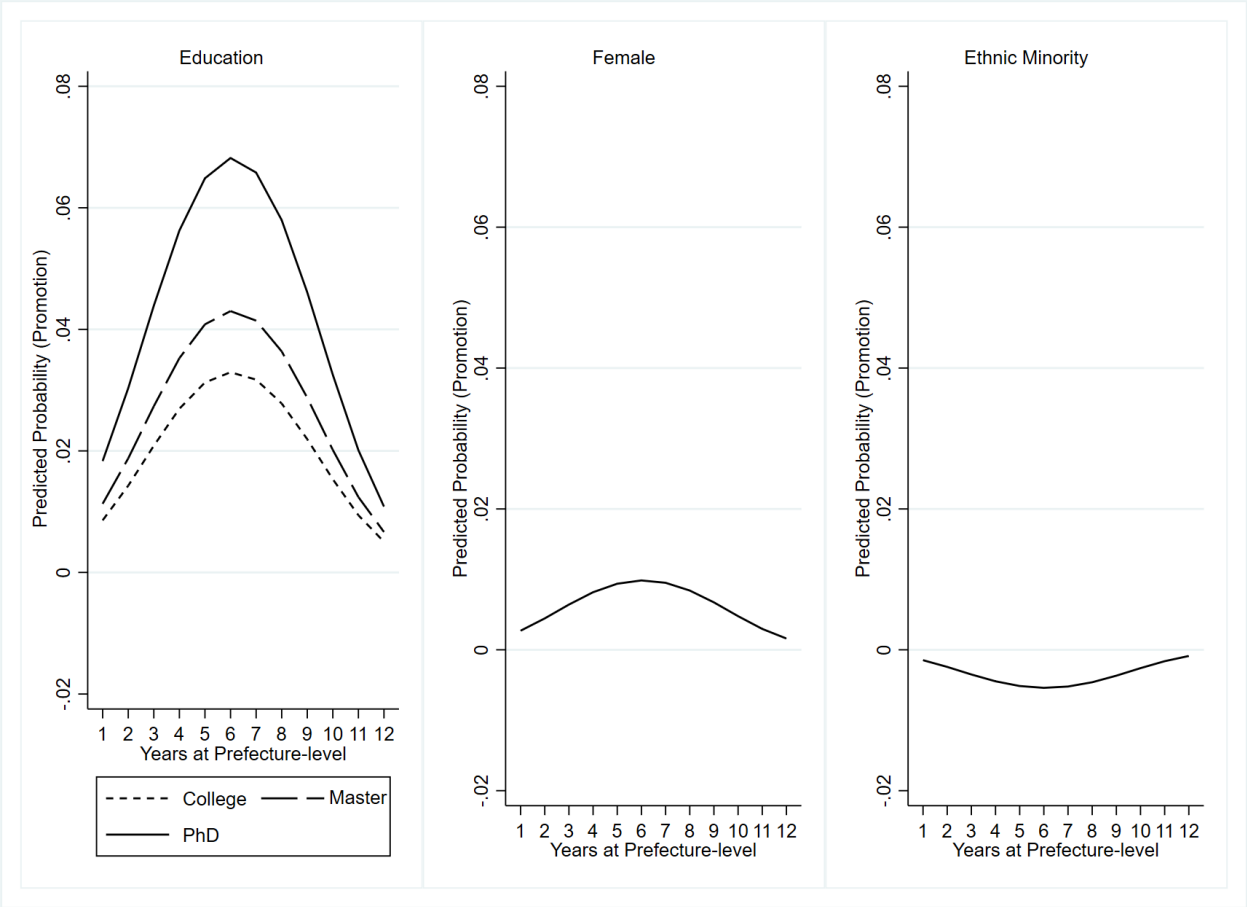

Figure 5.7: Effect of education, gender, and ethnicity on prefectural leader promotion

The reason for such difference can be multifold. Still, one of the possible explanations is that the deterrence effect of the vigorous anti-corruption campaign during the Xi administration has qualitatively affected the characteristics of Chinese cadres and reduced the proportion of capable cadres eligible for promotion (Jiang et al., 2022). Even if the anti-corruption campaign has created a few vacancies at the higher level, such vacancies could make minimal differences in the possibility of promotion given the vast amount of lower-level cadres on the wait-list. Notably, the evidence here indicates that findings from previous research regarding Chinese cadre promotion based on data from earlier periods need to be interpreted with a grain of salt since different national leadership may indicate distinct patterns of cadre management, and patterns found in previous studies may be inaccurate for the current administration (Zuo, 2015).

Both gender and ethnicity are not statistically significant in their effect on prefecture cadre promotion. As Figure 5.7 shows, being a female cadre is associated with a .009 probability of promotion, a relatively

negligible effect. The effect of ethnicity is even smaller, with a maximum predicted probability of -.006 at year six for cadres of an ethnic minority group. These findings indicate that being a female or having an ethnic minority background does not give a prefecture cadre a significant advantage or disadvantage regarding promotion prospects. Such findings diverge from evidence at the provincial level, where ethnic minorities seem to enjoy modest benefits due to the policy design of inclusion and diversity in promotion (Shih et al., 2012).

Cadres' education level, however, is significantly and positively associated with their probability of promotion. According to my dataset, for Chinses prefecture leaders from 1999-2019, the percentage of them having college, Master's, and Ph.D. degree is 22.63 percent, 56.16 percent, and 16.51 percent, respectively. Only 4.71 percent of cadres have an education level lower than college. Furthermore, the statistical analysis shows that having a Ph.D. degree is associated with a .068 probability of promotion at year six, while the predicted probability is only .033 at year six for those with a college degree. In other words, all else equal, a prefecture leader with a Ph.D. degree is twice more likely to be promoted to vice ministerial level than a prefecture cadre with a college degree as their highest level of education. This finding provides evidence for the emphasis of professionalization and technical skills in Chinese cadre management in the past few decades.

Overall, the main results from my analysis provide consistent evidence that both party school and university training have statistically significant effects on prefecture leader promotion in China. These effects remain significant even after controlling for the well-established factors for promotion – economic performance and political connection – and other confounding variables. The findings enhance our understanding of Chinese politics by providing evidence for important supplementary mechanisms of elite political promotion in China. More importantly, this evidence indicates that various societal actors can influence Chinese political elite management without direct participation in formal political processes by providing cadre training outside of the party school system.

5.5 Conclusion

With few exceptions, previous studies have predominately focused on the impact of economic performance and patronage connections on prefecture-level political promotion in China. Interestingly, compared to research on high-level and grassroots-level officials in which scholars seem to gradually reaching a consensus, findings regarding the mechanism of prefectural cadre promotion remain mixed. The lack of consistent evidence regarding this cadre group has even prompted some scholars to argue that political selection study on local territorial leaders is "unwarranted," and researchers should shift their attention to non-territorial political leaders (Y. Zeng & Wong, 2020).

Nevertheless, the latest research on Chinese local cadre promotion and some previous studies on Chinese cadre management point to the potential omission of key elements in current promotion studies. Just as "merit is likely a multi-dimensional concept" (Y. Zeng & Wong, 2020, p. 47), promotion is likely a multi-step process. Before the final promotion decision is made, some selected cadres are cultivated through the cadre training institution, who tend to serve shorter term lengths before promotion than

those untrained. Extant literature on political promotion in China has largely overlooked this crucial mechanism, which could explain the lack of consensus in prefectural promotion studies. In this chapter, I utilize the cadre training factor to reevaluate existing findings on the mechanism of prefecture leader promotion.

Based on an original prefecture cadre training and promotion dataset between 1999 and 2019, the analysis in this chapter shows that all else equal, both party school training and university training are conducive to prefecture-level leader promotion. Echoing the findings in Chapter IV on grassroots cadres, prefecture leaders who have both types of training experience have the highest probability to receive a promotion, while those with no training record are the least likely to be promoted. Notably, the effects of cadre training remain significant even after considering cadres' patronage connections and economic performance. The results also support the contributing role of economic performance on prefectural leader promotion but find no significant impact of political connections.

Taken together, the findings in this chapter suggest that cadre training serves as an important element in the CCP's promotion mechanism at an administrative level with a considerable amount of autonomy and responsibility. They also provide evidence for societal actors' influence on Chinese political elite management without direct participation in the formal political process. By providing flexible training services catering to the need of local officials, universities and training management companies actively participate in the CCP regime's project of professionalizing and modernizing its governing agents. In the meantime, the Party still monopolizes the ultimate decision of political promotion.

However, societal actors' participation in cadre training could also entail uncertainties for political development of the regime, given the flexibility of marketized cadre training content and its relative independence from Party supervision. In the next chapter, I will examine this potential uncertainty by exploring the association between cadre training and China's anti-corruption practice.

Chapter 6

Dual-track Training and China's Anti-corruption Practice

"*We must fight corruption and promote political integrity. Not for a day or two, or a month or two, we must do it throughout the entire process of reform and opening up.*" [1]

—– Deng Xiaoping, 1989

6.1 Introduction

The corruption problem and its impact on Chinese politics, economy, and society have long been one of China's central concerns for empirical and theoretical reasons. However, as Wedeman's research insightfully pointed out, China's rapid economic growth in the past decades is accompanied by paradoxically widespread corruption, which defies the conventional wisdom that high levels of corruption lead to economic stagnation or degeneration (Wedeman, 2012). This paradoxical phenomenon raises questions about the explanatory power of earlier studies such as that of Lü which takes a static view on the CCP institution and argues that corruption in China is caused by the "organizational involution" of the Party and is therefore unlikely to be solved by addressing individual corruption cases (Lü, 2000).

Meanwhile, structural changes in the forms of corruption in China suggest the need for updated investigation of mechanisms of corruption and anti-corruption (Gong, 2006; Hao et al., 2020; Ko & Weng, 2012; Osburg, 2018). In addition, the unprecedented anticorruption campaign in China since the beginning of Xi Jinping administration also prompt a new wave of scholarly interest in corruption research in China (Carothers, 2020; T. Chen & Kung, 2018; Jiang et al., 2022; H. Li et al., 2016; Manion, 2016; Walder, 2018; Y. Wang & Dickson, 2022; Q. Zeng & Yang, 2017; J. Zhu & Zhang, 2017).

Scholars divide over their assessment of China's anticorruption efforts. Concerning the efficacy of anticorruption attempts, on the one hand, studies based on evidence during China's early stage of economic reform tend to argue that China's anticorruption enforcement was weak, and the form of corruption

[1] Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping, 1993. People's Publishing House, Volume 3, pp 327.

evolved with the economic reform, which led to increased and intensified corruption (Gong, 2002; Manion, 2004; Pei, 2008; Wedeman, 2004). In addition, campaign-style anti-corruption enforcement may temporarily control low-level corruption but is less likely to terminate high-level corruption (Wedeman, 2005). Besides formal enforcement of anti-corruption measures, research on Chinese local officials' selective reporting of online complaints about corruption indicates that there may still be loopholes in monitoring the behavior of lower-level governing agents (Pan & Chen, 2018). Recently, a study on specific anti-corruption measures proposed by Xi Jinping argues that its efficacy is limited, especially for non-economic types of corruption (T. C. Lee, 2018).

On the other hand, a more comprehensive analysis indicates that China's level of corruption has been reduced due to the enforcement of the regime's anti-corruption agency. Since the beginning of the economic reform, the Chinese government has been battling state agents' tendency to pursue particularistic gains (Wedeman, 1997). Wedeman posits that such enforcement efforts have controlled the growth of corruption in China to a reasonable level (Wedeman, 2012). In addition to the role of anti-corruption agencies, recent research also emphasizes the impact of powerful political leaders on achieving effective anti-corruption results in authoritarian contexts (Carothers, 2020). Compared to studies that emphasize the strength of institutional elements such as anti-corruption agencies, Carothers brings attention to the conducive impact of power centralization and personalization on anti-corruption practice in authoritarian contexts – by reducing the number of veto players who may block reform and relying on a narrow winning coalition, a strong leader like Xi Jinping can promote the anticorruption campaign with less resistance and more efficiency (Choi et al., 2021).

Research also comes to different conclusions regarding the role of anti-corruption agencies in China. While studies on the CCP's Discipline Inspection Commission (DIC) system, in general, show that the institution has contributed to progress in anti-corruption efforts, albeit with institutional and political constraints (Yong, 2012; Young, 1984), a review of the CCP's Central Discipline Inspection Commission cast doubts on its effectiveness in curbing corruption (X. Guo, 2014). The recent establishment of the National Supervision Committee system during the Xi Jinping administration, done by absorbing the Party's Discipline Inspection Commissions, creates an ever-powerful anti-corruption agency in China that strengthened the Party center's control on anti-corruption enforcement and likely contributed to the capture of high-stake corruption cases (G. Chen, 2017; Deng, 2018; L. Li & Wang, 2019).

Recent studies start to explore other factors that may influence the Party's cadre disciplinary results, focusing on officials' political connections, factional ties, and informal networks. Based on an analysis of over 500 provincial cadres during the Xi Jinping administration, Zeng and Yang find that having informal ties with incumbent members of the Politburo Standing Committee reduces the probability of investigation for provincial officials (Q. Zeng & Yang, 2017). In their study, Zhu and Zhang find that when incumbent provincial leaders and their predecessors have ties with competing strong factions, the selective corruption prosecution increases by up to 20 percent (J. Zhu & Zhang, 2017). These findings indicate that while ties with higher-level officials may protect provincial leaders, the power competition between potential factions behind these ties could lead to selective anti-corruption enforcement (L. Liu, 2021; J. Zhu & Li, 2020). Meanwhile, studies on the impact of anti-corruption campaigns at the local level

find that the deterrence effect led to the decline of local patronage networks – an important element in local investment attraction and economic development (P. Wang & Yan, 2020).

Despite its contributions to our understanding of the corruption problem and the regime's anti-corruption practice in China, extant literature falls short in several aspects. First, possibly due to the challenges in collecting systemic corruption and prosecution data, corruption study relies heavily on qualitative case studies, policy interpretation, and historical analysis. As a result, many presumptions in the literature remain untested and lack systemic empirical evidence. For example, while it is widely believed that anti-corruption campaigns have significantly intensified during the Xi Jinping administration, most existing evidence concerns senior officials or "tigers" who have been investigated, while systemic data regarding lower-level officials' prosecution has been lacking. [2] Thus, it is unclear whether findings of the role of political connections in corruption prosecution at the higher level can be generalized to lower-level officials or the entire Chinese bureaucracy.

Second, existing studies tend to suffer from selection bias problems. Due to the challenge of identifying a complete pool or a representative sample of officials regardless of prosecution status, only officials being prosecuted will be analyzed (Geddes, 2003; Q. Zeng & Yang, 2017). Such a problem reduces the explanatory power of corruption research because by only selecting prosecuted officials, the research question is essentially "what are the differences in corrupted officials," instead of "what makes some officials corrupt but not others." Related to my next point, the selection bias problem renders important factors such as the regime's corruption prevention efforts irrelevant or immeasurable since we don't know how many officials are deterred from conducting corrupt activities due to corruption prevention measures.

Third, and perhaps most critically, literature on Chinese anti-corruption practice pays insufficient attention to the regime's corruption prevention efforts. There is no systemic empirical evidence on the efficacy of the regime's corruption prevention effort. To be fair, corruption prevention was likely not among the Chinese government's policy priorities in the early reform years. For instance, Manion observed that the Chinese government did not emphasize corruption prevention until the early 2000s (Manion, 2004). There is also a belief that the CCP has preferred an enforcement-centered anti-corruption practice instead of prevention-centered (Pei, 2018). Several scholars have noticed the recent shift in the emphasis of anti-corruption from punishment to prevention, but only limited empirical evidence beyond policy analysis or descriptive data was provided (Gong, 2015; T. C. Lee, 2018; L. Li & Wang, 2019). Besides, research on corruption prevention largely focuses on individual policy measures, such as Xi Jinping's Eight-point Regulation (Ba Xiang Gui Ding, 八项规定), while providing little, if any empirical evidence on systemic and institutionalized forms of corruption prevention.

This chapter addresses the limitations mentioned above in extant literature by examining the effect of the CCP's cadre training institution on corruption prevention among Chinese local political leaders. I overcame the selection bias problem by using a dataset that includes all prefectural leaders in China from 1999 to 2019, which records information of both prosecuted and unprosecuted officials who served prefectural leadership positions during Jiang Zemin, Hu Jintao, and Xi Jinping administration. To test the

[2] An exception is Chang's research, which reveals corruption patterns based on social network analysis among Chinese officials from multiple ranks (Chang, 2018). However, like most other corruption studies, Chang's research is based on a sample that potentially suffers from selection bias since only prosecuted officials were analyzed.

generalizability of findings based on high-level officials, I also include an indicator of political connections between the prefectural leader and their provincial supervisors, using the most accurate definition and measurement of patronage ties adopted in recent literature (Jiang, 2018).

I argue that cadre training institutions affect the CCP regime's anti-corruption practice. Specifically, traditional cadre training assists the government's corruption prevention effort by providing detailed information on representative corruption cases and emphasizing the consequence of and punishment for corruption. The deterrence effect is further enhanced by other features of party school training that cultivate political loyalty and consolidate Party authority and cadres' political identity. Meanwhile, due to the lack of political education and corruption deterrence content in its curriculum and the potentially emboldening effect of competence training, marketized cadre training does not necessarily deter officials from malpractice. In the next section, I detail the observable implication of cadre training for anti-corruption practice, followed by the section of data and method used to test the hypotheses. The following section presents the analysis results and their implications. The last section concludes this chapter.

6.2 Dual-track Training and its Implication for Cadre Discipline

A few scholars have mentioned the potential relationship between cadre training and the Party's anti-corruption and cadre discipline practice (C. Lee, 2015; Pieke, 2009a). Still, the extant literature has not offered systemic empirical evidence regarding such an association. As Pieke noted, the Chinese government's ability to concurrently maintain an extraordinary speed of development and a relatively stable social and political environment in the past few decades has a lot to do with its "unique administrative structure, with a finely struck and negotiable balance between centralization and devolution, and between selfish (and often corrupt) behavior of officials and party discipline" (Pieke, 2009a, p. 4). Pieke's study on China's cadre training institution has important implications for the impact of training on the functioning of the government but did not directly test these implications. Specifically, he proposed the question "does cadre training and better education make cadre less corrupt" as an important direction for future research. Similarly, Lee also noticed that given its broad reach in Chinese administration, party school training serves as an important arena to transmit the Party's anti-corruption policy to its governing agents (C. Lee, 2015). This indicates that cadres who went through traditional training programs are more exposed to the regime's anti-corruption message and more likely to be deterred from corruption and malpractice.

An ethnographic study on corruption provides useful angles to consider the relationship between political education and corruption prevention. According to Prasad, Silva, and Nickow, three challenges lead to the persistence of corruption: the resource challenges due to people's necessary needs; the definitional challenge due to uncertainty in what constitutes corruption; and the alternative moralities challenge due to diverse perception of morality (Prasad et al., 2019). To some extent, corruption prevention measures such as political education address the latter two types of challenges. For instance, the anti-corruption content in a party school training textbook analyzed in Chapter II includes detailed information of corruption cases that may significantly reduce cadres' confusion or uncertainty about what constitutes corruption and what some may have considered as moral – such as taking care of one's relatives through abusing gov-

ernment power or resource – is immoral and corrupt in the sense of government administration. Moral education constitutes an important element of China's past and present anti-corruption campaigns (He, 2000).

Figure 6.1: Word cloud of party school training curriculum by frequency of word appearance

My analysis in Chapter II substantiates the role of anti-corruption education in party school training programs. The three-month Young Cadre Training program presented in Chapter II includes both in-class seminars such as "innovate anti-corruption mechanisms and promote probity in political development" and on-site teaching activities such as visiting the Integrity Alert and Education Base, both types of teaching aim at alerting cadres about the regime's resolution and effort to fight corruption and the consequence of corrupt behavior. Anecdotal stories from my fieldwork interviews about an invitation for cadre trainees to stay overnight at detention center cells also suggest that at least in some localities, anti-corruption education was taken very seriously.

In addition to courses aimed explicitly at anti-corruption education, the curriculum of party school training focuses overwhelmingly on ideological cultivation and political education, which could also strengthen the perceived authority of the regime and further enhance the deterrence effect of anti-corruption campaigns. Figure 6.1 presents a word cloud of keywords in the party school training curriculum collected during my fieldwork, with larger words indicating a higher frequency of appearance. [3] Corresponding to the findings in Chapter II, party school training stresses CCP's leadership and Party spirit, focuses heavily on classical theories such as Marxism and policies of the CCP Secretary General Xi Jinping such as rigorous governance over the Party (Cong Yan Zhi Dang, 从严治党), and organizes group learning activity through CCP's hierarchical organization structure such as the Party branch.

Figure 6.2: Word cloud of marketized training curriculum by frequency of word appearance

By contrast, marketized cadre training provided by universities focuses primarily on professional skill development and local governance issues while largely overlooking the political education of officials, a pattern observed in research of cadre training in China's most prestigious universities (Pieke, 2009a). According to the word cloud of university cadre training curriculum in Figure 6.2, words like "local,"

[3]Data Source: party school training curriculum obtained during the author's fieldwork in 2017-2019 and published curriculum on local party school websites.

"capability," "skill," "method," and "mechanism" are among the most frequently appeared concepts in the marketized training curriculum.[4] However, content such as CCP ideology or classic theory, major political theories of CCP leaders, or anti-corruption and cadre discipline campaigns are rarely included in marketized training. This is likely due to the "division of labor" between traditional party school training and marketized training discussed in Chapter III: while traditional cadre training emphasizes ideological education and political cultivation and promote Party policies, marketized training provides skills and knowledge cadres needed in local governance while focusing less on the CCP's ideological priorities.

Accordingly, compared to traditional training, which explicitly deters corruption and malpractice, marketized training tends not to deter trainees from future corruption. Following Wedeman's discussion of a cadre's expected value of misbehavior and the expected value of probity, it's likely that without stressing the severity of punishment and raising the stakes of corruption, marketized training will not reduce corruption (Wedeman, 2012). One can also argue that since marketized training aims to improve cadres' competence and governance skills, it may embolden some officials who think they are competent or skilled enough to evade punishments, increasing corruption. Moreover, since marketized training content pays relatively less attention to strengthening the political authority and ideological dominance of the CCP, it is less likely to increase cadres' loyalty to the Party or enhance the deterrence effect of the anti-corruption campaign. The lack of group activities based on the Party's organizational structure also suggests that marketized training is unlikely to strengthen cadres' Party identity or attachment to the Party organization.

The above discussion leads to the following hypotheses regarding the relationship between cadre training and cadre discipline practice:

Hypothesis 1: All else equal, cadres with party school training experience are less likely to be prosecuted for corruption or malpractice than those without such training.

Hypothesis 2: All else equal, cadres with marketized training experience are more likely to be prosecuted for corruption or malpractice than those without such training.

6.3 Data and Method

My analysis is based on the original dataset of Chinese prefectural leaders' training and career history from 1999 to 2019 used in Chapter V. In addition to the cadre training record, the dataset documents whether a prefecture leader was under investigation in the next year right after they left the current post, as well as the time of delayed prosecution if they were investigated some years after serving prefecture-level leadership positions.[5] The prosecution record was obtained through career history published on the Chinese website Baidu Baike (百度百科), supplemented by reports from the Commission for Discipline Inspection at different government levels. To my knowledge, this dataset provides the most comprehensive sample to date on prosecuted local cadres who served prefectural-level leadership positions during 1999-2019.

[4]Data Source: university training curriculum obtained during author's fieldwork in 2017-2019 and published curriculum on university websites.

[5]I record all prefectural cadres who left their government position and are under investigation of misconduct or corruption. Since the investigation and trial time varies for each cadre, not all prosecuted cadres are convicted by the time of this study.

Significantly, this dataset greatly reduces the selection bias problem in corruption studies by including all prefectural leaders regardless of their prosecution status.

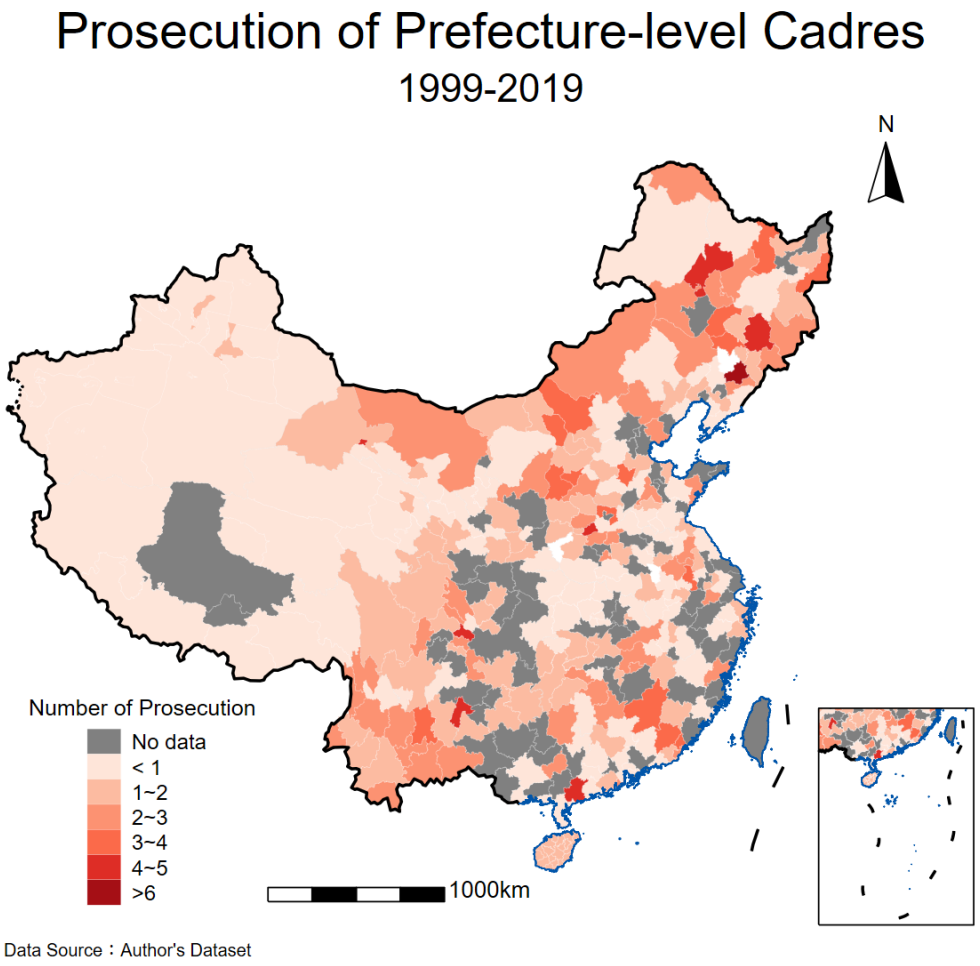

Figure 6.3: Prosecution of Chinese prefectural leaders, 1999-2019

Figure 6.3 presents a geographical distribution of the prosecuted cadres in the dataset. Darker color indicates a higher number of prosecuted officials. As can be seen, more prefectural leaders from cities in Eastern China are prosecuted than prefectures in the Western part of China. Prosecution cases also tend to be concentrated in a few prefectures in northeast and southwest China. This phenomenon does not necessarily indicate that political leaders from some localities are more likely to be corrupted than officials from other places. However, it may suggest that specific features of localities, such as natural resource endowment in the north and northeast part of China, tend to be correlated with officials' tendency of corruption due to vested interests and the amount of power in the hands of cadres in managing the

resources. The specific relationship between resource endowment and official corruption is beyond the scope of this study, but it can be an important question that guides future research.

In Table 6.1, I present the summary statistics of the prefectural cadre prosecution and training dataset.[6] The observation unit is cadre-year, with a sample size of 13,840 observations. The dependent variable is whether or not a prefecture-level cadre was prosecuted or under criminal investigation, with 1 indicating prosecution and 0 otherwise. In the dataset, 1.08 percent of officials were prosecuted while still serving as prefectural leaders or in the next year when they had just left the leadership position. However, if we include cadres who were prosecuted some years after working as a prefectural leader, the prosecution percentage rises to 3.53 percent. To my knowledge, this is the first study in which next-year prosecution and later prosecution are distinguished from each other. Such differentiation helps examine the vigor and determination of the cadre discipline practice, as will be discussed next.

Table 6.1: Summary statistics

Variable	**Obs.**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**	**Min.**	**Max.**
Cadre-level variables					
Prosecution (next year)	13,840	.0108382	.1035445	0	1
Prosecution (all)	13,840	.0352601	.1844432	0	1
Party school training	13,840	.7001445	.9734387	0	6
Marketized training	13,840	.1056358	.3555594	0	4
Political connection	13,794	.5548064	.4970052	0	1
Age	13,552	51.09578	4.099094	36	62
Ethnicity	13,774	1.140192	.3471984	1	2
Education	13,323	1.84463	.7453193	0	3
Tenure	13,826	2.729567	1.64744	1	12
Localist	13,840	.7877168	.4089391	0	1
Centralist	13,840	.045448	.2082921	0	1
Prefecture-level variables					
Prefecture type	13,840	3.175578	1.142538	1	7
Pre/post Xi Administration	13,840	.3334538	.4714641	0	1

The descriptive data of the next-year prosecution rate of prefectural leaders in the dataset can be found in Figure 6.4. A noticeable trend is that before 2013, the percentage of prosecuted prefectural cadres never exceeded 1 percent. [7] However, the percentage of prosecuted cadres rose sharply after 2012. At the

[6] Source: author's dataset of Chinese prefecture leader training and career history, 1999-2019.

[7] The 0 percent of prefectural cadre prosecution in 2011 (which indicates the actual prosecution time of 2012) could potentially be due to the period of leadership transition between Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping. It is likely that during the preparation for leadership transition, the Commission for Discipline Inspection (CDI) has delayed or paused some of its work. A similar example is 2018, when the next-year prosecution rate drops sharply, possibly because President Xi Jinping is entering the second term of his presidency and the term transition has disturbed the CDI's workflow.

highest point in 2015, the next-year prosecution rate was 3.8 percent, which means that 3.8 percent of the prefecture cadres left the leadership position and were under investigation or being prosecuted in 2016. 2018 was the only year after 2012 where the next-year prosecution rate was below 1 percent. This trend indicates that the Chinese government's cadre discipline practice intensified since the beginning of Xi Jinping administration, a pattern widely observed in the academic community (Brown, 2018; Bulman & Jaros, 2021; Z. Wang & Zeng, 2016; Q. Zeng & Yang, 2017).

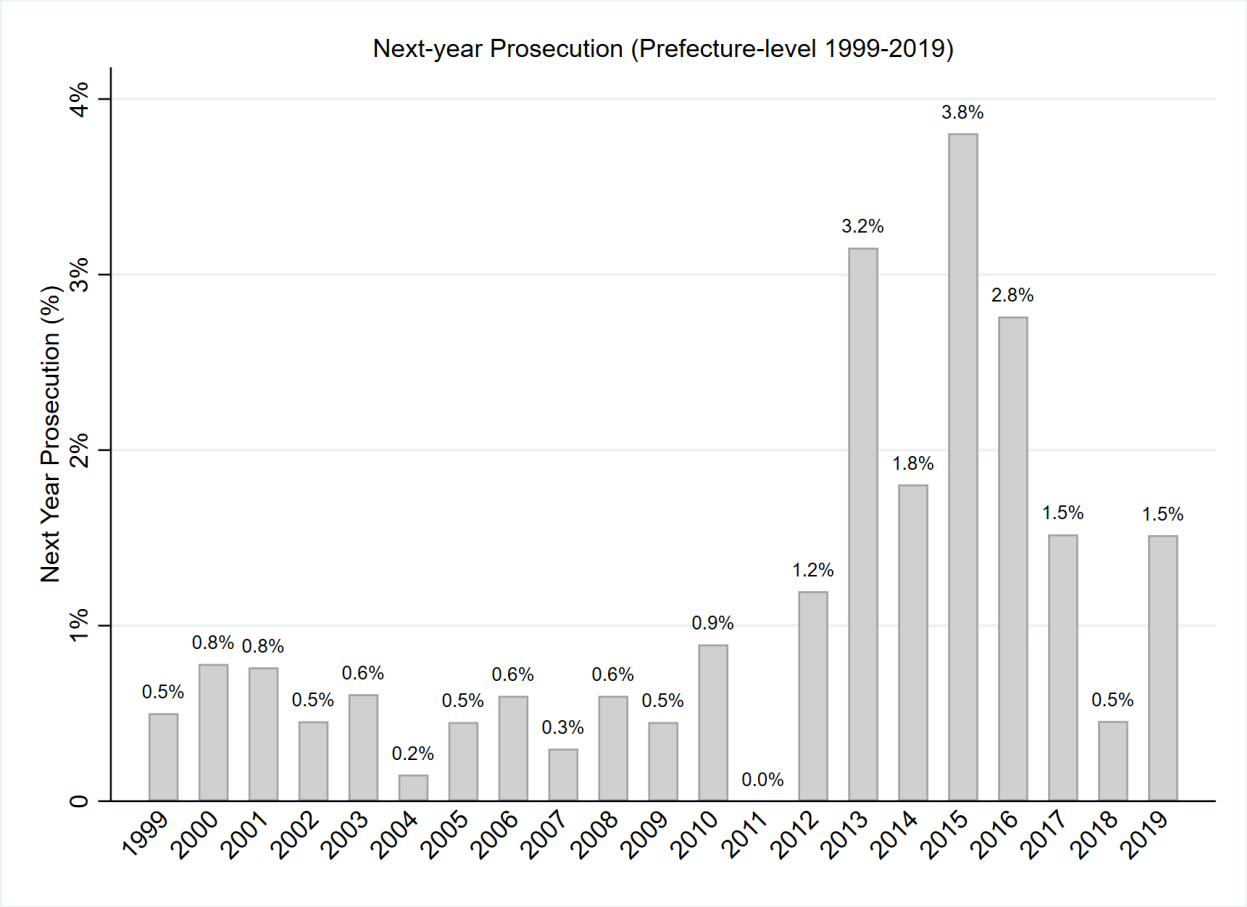

Figure 6.4: Next-year prosecution of Chinese prefectural leaders, 1999-2019

Compared to corruption cases identified immediately after a cadre left their leadership position, tracing and revealing corruptive practices that happened in the past requires more government resources and determination. Thus, it can be regarded as a measure of vigor, scope, and intensity of anti-corruption practice. For example, from 2020 to the end of 2021, the Autonomous region of Inner Mongolia prosecuted 69 prefecture-level cadres in the Coal industry during the campaign of "tracing back 20 years," many of whom have already retired and left their post years ago. [8] This campaign's main target was corruption cases

[8] "69 prefecture-level cadres investigated during Inner Mongolia 'tracing back 20 years' campaign," https://news.sina.com.cn/c/2021-11-06/doc-iktzqtyu5771663.shtml, 11/06/2021.

related to coal resource management, one of Inner Mongolia's leading industries. For example, the Party secretary of Ulanqab City, Du Xuejun, left his position in July 2020 and was confirmed to be prosecuted in 2021 due to coal-related malpractices. [9] In addition, the deputy chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress in Ordos city was prosecuted after she was retired for three years. [10] Such practice of tracing back illegal and corruptive activities has also been adopted by other provinces to deal with other issue areas, such as Heilongjiang's campaign of rooting out corruption and malpractices in the local prison management system.

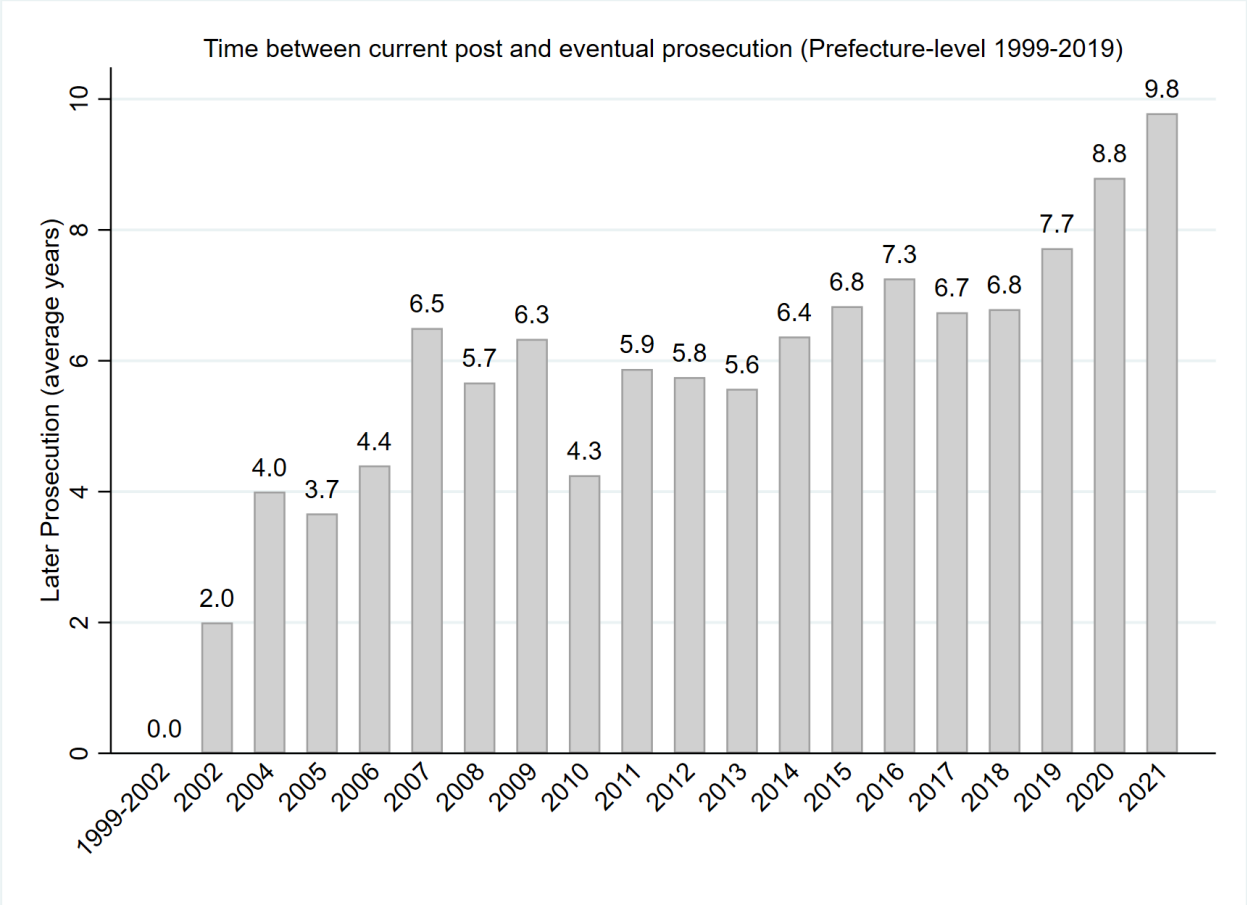

Figure 6.5: Time between prefectural leadership position and later prosecution

As Figure 6.5 shows, the average years between cadres' prefecture leadership post and their eventual prosecution increased between 1999-2009, then maintained a relatively high level during the first term of the Xi Jinping administration and exhibited a sharp upward trend during Xi's second term. This corresponds with the existing finding that corruption cases' average latency period became longer after 1992 (Y. Guo, 2008). The average length of time between prefectural leadership position and prosecution reached

[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid.

a historical record of 9.8 years among cadres who were prosecuted in 2021 but worked as a prefecture-level leader during 1999-2019. The longest gap between serving as a prefectural leader and eventual prosecution in the dataset is 20 years. In other words, the current anti-corruption campaign has exposed more deeply rooted corruption cases, which showcases the intensity and determination of the ongoing cadre discipline practice during the Xi Jinping administration.

The independent variable is the number of cadre training experiences at party schools and universities, respectively. According to the descriptive data in Figure 6.6, 4.3 percent of prefectural leaders with no party school training experience were prosecuted, a sharp contrast to the percentage of prosecution among those who are trained in party schools. As the number of party school training records goes up, the prosecution rate decreases. University training experience, however, seems to increase the rate of prosecution. Specifically, 3.4 percent of cadres with no university training were prosecuted. The percentage of prosecution rises sharply to 17.6 percent for those with three records of university training.

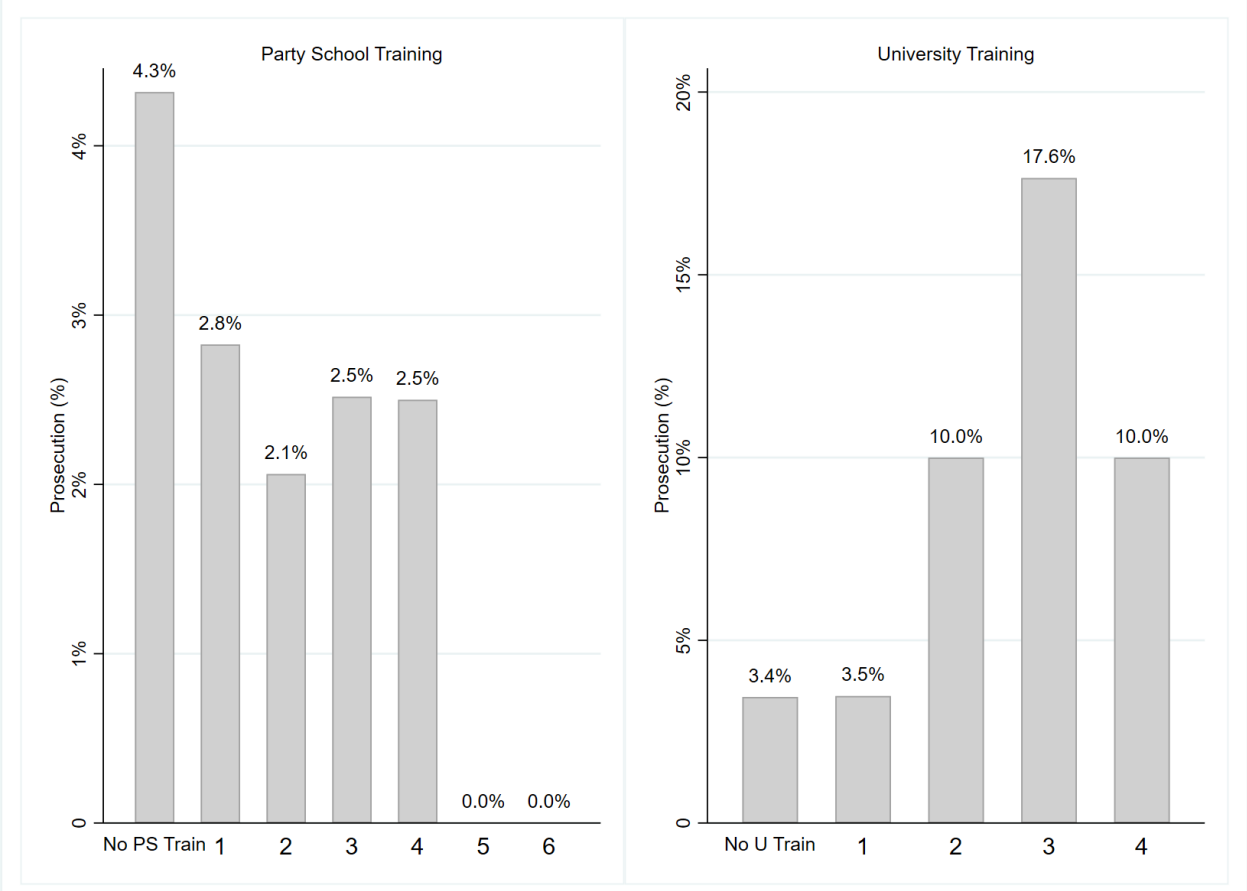

Figure 6.6: Cadre training and the percentage of cadre prosecution

These observable patterns indicate a complex relationship between types of cadre training and the prospect of prosecution. Unlike the case of promotion, not all training has the same effect when it comes

to cadre discipline. As discussed in the previous section, while party school training stresses the grim consequence of corruption and CCP discipline and is likely to produce a significant deterrence effect on corruption, anti-corruption course content is practically absent in marketized training curriculum that primarily focuses on problem-solving skills and professional skills knowledge. These empirical implications will be tested in the following analysis.

Based on the practices of previous literature, I include several control variables in the analysis (Jiang, 2018; Q. Zeng & Yang, 2017). Due to the difficulty of identifying and recording the exact time frame and location of cadre malpractice or illegal behaviors, corruption studies lack a consensus on what structural-level covariates should be controlled. In this study, two prefectural-level variables are being considered: the type of the prefecture and potential difference in the political environment during the administrations of different national leaders. As discussed in Chapter V, different types of prefectures may provide unique opportunities for official malpractices. For example, open coastal cities or cities in special economic zones may offer more opportunities for rent accumulation and cadres' mismanagement of foreign investment than a prefecture without such status (B. Zhu, 2017). In that case, controlling the type of prefecture could reduce the confounding effects caused by such factors.

In addition to prefecture-level covariates, I also control for several other cadre-level variables that other scholars have considered to influence the probability of cadre discipline, such as age, ethnicity, and education level (Q. Zeng & Yang, 2017). Another potential factor affecting cadre discipline is cadres' political connection with higher-level officials. As previously mentioned, although ample studies have examined the effect of political connections on official prosecution regarding provincial and state-level officials, the role of political connections in prefectural leader prosecution remains underexplored (Shih & Lee, 2020; Q. Zeng & Yang, 2017). As in chapter V, the analysis in this chapter controls for prefectural cadres' political connections using the strict approach of Jiang to identify prefecture-level patronage ties (Jiang, 2018).

Inspired by recent research regarding the characteristics of the anti-corruption campaign during the Xi Jinping administration, I also include measures to account for prefectural cadres' career paths. According to Bulman and Jaros, one of the goals of Xi Jinping's anti-corruption drive is to curb localism in Chinese bureaucracies (Bulman & Jaros, 2021). Zeng and Yang also note that the campaign may disproportionately target localist cadres (Q. Zeng & Yang, 2017). Accordingly, by reviewing cadres' entire career history in the dataset, I created two dummy variables to distinguish "localist" cadres from "centralist" ones. Specifically, cadres who worked exclusively in one province in their entire career are categorized as localist officials and coded 1 for the "localist" variable, 0 otherwise. In the meantime, cadres who have substantial experience working in the central government before being assigned to a prefectural leadership position are categorized as centralist officials and coded 1 for the "centralist" variable, 0 otherwise.

There is no evidence supporting using a different methodology in analyzing promotion and prosecution. Therefore, the method described in chapter V will be adopted here to test the hypotheses. Specifically, I utilize the discrete-time logit model estimated by the maximum likelihood method (Long et al., 1993). The dependent variable is whether a cadre was prosecuted and the tenure of their prefectural leadership before the prosecution. The baseline specification is:

$$\Pr(prosecution)_{it} = \frac{1}{1 + exp\{-\alpha' t - \beta' x_{it}\}}$$

The expected probability of prefecture cadre prosecution is a function of time and the independent and confounding covariates at a given time. The subscript *i* indicates individual cadre, and the subscript *t* indicates the year when a cadre is in the prefectural rank. The *x* represents the group of explanatory variables. The *alpha* represents the variation of prosecution probability over time for different values of the explanatory variables, and the *beta* represents the effect of variables that influence cadre prosecution. I use clustered standard errors by prefectures to account for potential correlation within each prefecture. I also include provincial and year fixed effects to account for unobserved characteristics of prosecution outcome due to different features in provincial jurisdictions at a particular year (Jiang, 2018; Landry et al., 2018).

6.4 Results

I conduct four sets of analyses for the total prosecution of prefectural leaders served during 1999 and 2019 and repeated the calculations for the next-year prosecution subset. The dependent variable is total prosecution in Model 1-4, and next-year prosecution in Model 5-8. The baseline model excludes prefectural-level and cadre-level controls. In Model 4 and Model 8, I also include an interaction of party school and university training to gauge the combined effect of different types of training. The results are reported in Table 6.2.[11]

The analyses from Model 1-3 show that all else equal, both party school and university training have a statistically significant relationship with the probability of prefectural leader prosecution. Nevertheless, unlike the results in Chapter V, where both types of training are conducive to promotion, the effects on prosecution are opposite when it comes to a different type of training. Specifically, after taking all control variables into account, the results of Model 3 show that one standard deviation increase in the number of party school training reduces the expected odds of prosecution by 24.3 percent. However, one standard deviation increase in the number of university training increases the expected odds of prosecution by 69.1 percent. These results are statistically significant even after controlling for prefecture-level factors and personal characteristics.

[11]Note: This table presents the effects of cadre training on prefecture-level cadre prosecution prospects. Results are odds ratios from discrete-time logit models. The dependent variable in Model 1-4 is *Overall* Prosecution, the dependent variable in Model 5-8 is *Next-year* Prosecution. Prefecture-level controls include *Prefecture Type* and dummies for Jiang Zemin, Hu Jintao, and Xi Jinping administration. Prefecture leader controls include *Political Connection, Age, Education, Ethnicity, Centralist, Localist, and Years in Rank and Years in Rank-squared*. Robust standard errors clustered at the prefecture level are reported in parentheses. FE = fixed effects. AIC = Akaike information criterion. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1 (two-tailed test).

Table 6.2: Cadre training and prefectural leader prosecution

Prosecution	**Model 1**	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**	**Model6**	**Model 7**	**Model 8**
PS.train	0.755***	0.753***	0.757***	0.721***	0.712**	0.704**	0.747**	0.693**
	(0.0585)	(0.0585)	(0.0611)	(0.0634)	(0.104)	(0.105)	(0.110)	(0.122)
M.train	1.695***	1.705***	1.691***	1.230	1.609	1.628	1.580	1.021
	(0.263)	(0.263)	(0.262)	(0.285)	(0.587)	(0.585)	(0.562)	(0.386)
PS.train×M.train				1.264**				1.430**
				(0.135)				(0.244)
Patronage			0.827*	0.830			0.802	0.806
			(0.0942)	(0.0943)			(0.166)	(0.167)
Centralist			0.831	0.780			0.396	0.380
			(0.329)	(0.318)			(0.296)	(0.288)
Localist			1.720***	1.721***			1.550*	1.578*
			(0.286)	(0.286)			(0.412)	(0.421)
Prov.-year FE	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Pref. ctls.		yes	yes	yes		yes	yes	yes
Cadre ctls.			yes	yes			yes	yes
Tenure	1.886***	1.888***	1.708***	1.712***	1.655***	1.640***	1.421**	1.408**
	(0.172)	(0.173)	(0.162)	(0.163)	(0.231)	(0.227)	(0.212)	(0.211)
Tenure^2	0.961***	0.960***	0.969***	0.969***	0.975*	0.976	0.984	0.985
	(0.0101)	(0.0102)	(0.0103)	(0.0104)	(0.0148)	(0.0146)	(0.0154)	(0.0156)
No. of pref.	334	334	334	334	322	322	322	322
Observations	13,826	13,826	13,241	13,241	12,681	12,681	11,561	11,561
AIC	3919.447	3919.050	3739.725	3736.706	1533.411	1527.362	1418.166	1417.043
Prob. > χ^2	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001

After including an interaction between the two types of training, the negative effect of party school training on prosecution stays roughly the same. University training still has a positive impact on prosecution, but the relationship is no longer statistically significant. Meanwhile, the interaction term has a positive and statistically significant impact on the probability of prosecution. In Model 5-8, where only next-year prosecution is considered, the effect of party school training on prosecution remains statistically significant and negative. Possibly due to the reduction of cases in the next-year prosecution subset and the subsequent decrease in analytical power of the statistical models, there is no statistically significant association between university training and next-year prosecution. However, university training is still positively correlated with prosecution. Overall, the results from the analyses suggest that party school training has a consistent negative association with prefectural leader prosecution. Marketized training, however, is positively correlated with prosecution.

Political connections are negatively correlated with the probability of prosecution across all models, but the effect is only statistically significant in Model 3. This indicates that political connections may offer some protection against prosecution at the prefectural level, but such an effect tends to be inconsistent. For example, the results from Model 3 show that one standard deviation increase in political connection is associated with a 17.3 percent reduction in the odds of prosecution. However, this is a relatively small effect compared to the impact of cadre training.

The cadres' career path results provide some valuable insight into the characteristics of China's cadre discipline practice. Localist career path has a consistent, statistically significant, and positive correlation with prosecution in all models. Specifically, being a localist increases one's odds of prosecution by a staggering 72 percent. Meanwhile, a centralist career path is negatively correlated with prosecution, but the estimates failed to reach statistical significance in all models. Being a centralist decreases a cadre's odds of prosecution by 16.9 percent. These findings provide evidence for scholars' observation of the central government's "long-running fight against 'localism'" (Bulman & Jaros, 2021, p. 1). Moreover, it shows that prefectural cadres who worked exclusively in one province are more likely to become the target of discipline practice both in next-year prosecution and long-term prosecution. Having central government background will likely offer some protection against prosecution, but such protection is unlikely to have a significant impact.

Interestingly, the relationship between tenure and prosecution exhibits a similar pattern to the time structure between tenure and promotion. The effect of tenure is statistically significant in all models but shows a non-linear pattern. For example, in Model 3, one standard deviation increase in term length is associated with a 70.8 percent increase in the odds of prosecution. This makes sense, given that a newly appointed prefectural leader who just started their position is less likely to have the opportunity, resource, or intention to risk their career with malpractices. On the other hand, the square term of tenure is negatively associated with the odds of prosecution, which suggests that the positive effect of tenure on prosecution is likely to fade if a cadre stays in the prefectural rank for a very long time. Nevertheless, such a non-linear relationship is a modest one: one standard deviation increase in the square term of tenure is associated with a 3.1 decrease in the odds of prosecution. In other words, while a longer-term length is associated with a sharp increase in the odds of prosecution at the beginning of one's tenure, staying in the same prefectural rank for a very long time will only modestly, rather than sharply, decrease the odds of cadre prosecution.

For a more intuitive understanding of the relationship between cadre training and other covariates' correlation with prefectural cadre discipline, I use the logistic estimates of Model 3 from Table 6.2 to calculate the predicted probability of cadre discipline and present the results in the following figures. The left side of Figure 6.7 shows the conditional effects of cadre training on the expected probability of prosecution. Specifically, in the first year of a prefecture leader's tenure, party school training is associated with a -.003 predicted probability of prosecution. In contrast, university training is associated with a predicted probability of .006. Such effects reach the peak in year eight, where party school training is correlated with a prosecution probability of -.017, while university training is correlated with a predicted

prosecution probability of .032. These results clearly show the negative effect of party school training and the positive impact of university training on the probability of prefectural cadre prosecution.

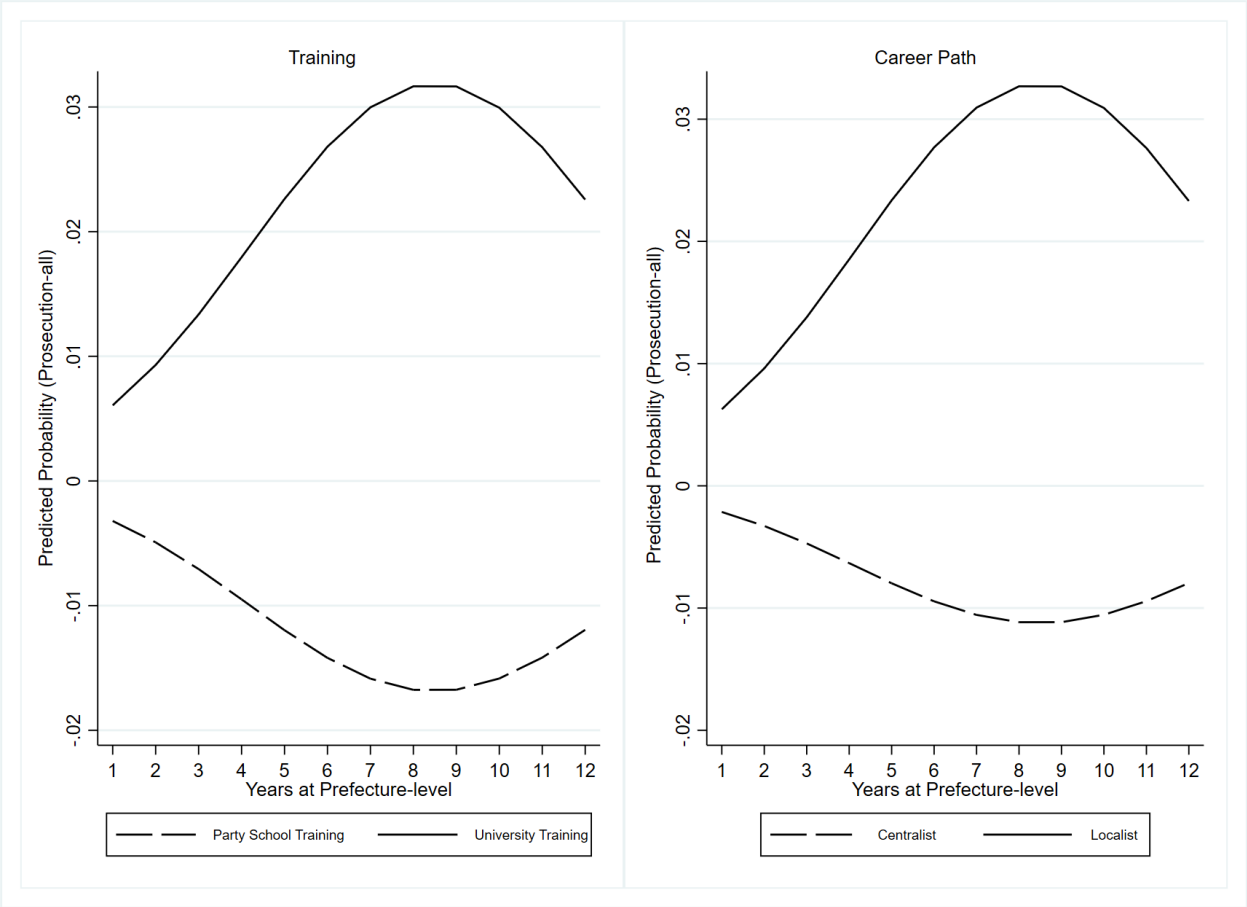

Figure 6.7: Training, career path, and cadre prosecution

As shown on the right side of Figure 6.7, centralist and localist career paths also have the opposite effect on the predicted probability of prosecution. In year one, the predicted probability for centralist and localist is -.002 and .006, respectively. In year eight, centralist cadres have a predicted probability of -.011 to be disciplined, while localist career path is associated with a predicted probability of .033 to be prosecuted. This evidence confirms researchers' observation of a focus on localism during China's anti-corruption campaign. Importantly, since such findings are based on a comprehensive dataset of prefectural leaders from 1999 to 2019, it provides evidence for a long-term target on localism in China's cadre discipline practices regardless of the national leadership transition.

Figure 6.8 presents the relationship between cadres' tenure and the predicted probability of cadre prosecution during different national administrations. As the left side of the figure shows, prefectural cadres during the Jiang Zemin administration are generally less likely to be prosecuted before years 8-9 compared to the Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping administrations. Interestingly, in the 4th year of their tenure,

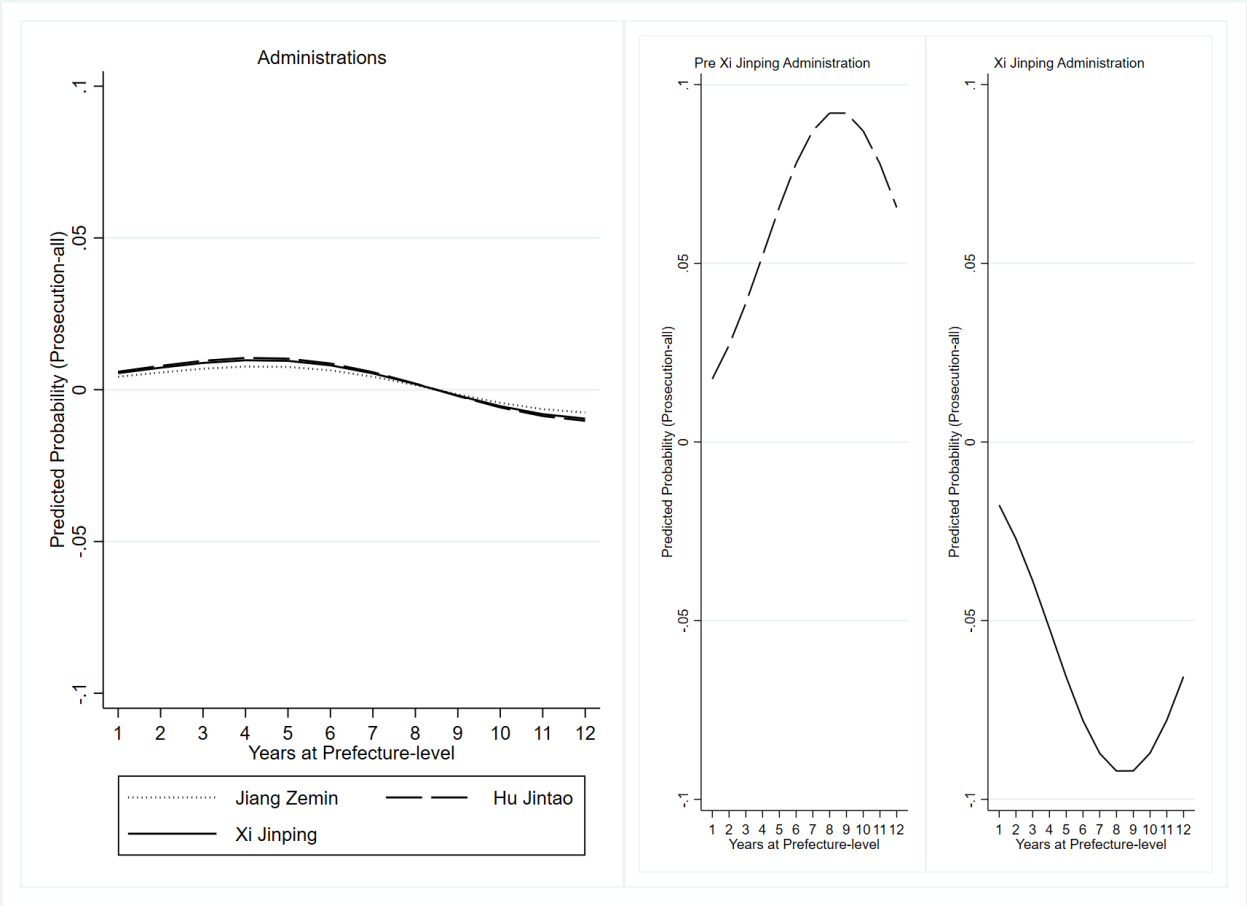

Figure 6.8: Cadre tenure, national administrations, and cadre prosecution

prefectural cadres who worked during the Hu administration have the highest probability of being disciplined. Such difference between Hu and Jiang administration is statistically significant. On the other hand, the difference in the predicted probability of prosecution between Jiang and Xi administration is not statistically significant. Taken together, this indicates that cadres who started their prefectural leadership position during the Xi Jinping administration do not suffer a significantly higher risk of prosecution compared to cadres who started their prefectural career during the previous administrations.

The right side of Figure 6.8 illustrates similar information in a slightly different form. As can be seen, the predicted probability of prefectural cadre prosecution shows a downward trend before year 8 during the Xi administration, while the trend before the Xi administration is upward before year 8. One possible explanation of this phenomenon is that newly appointed prefectural leaders went through extra scrutiny or background checks during the Xi Jinping administration, given Xi's political agenda of cadre probity and national-wide anti-corruption campaign, as well as institutional reforms aiming to curb localism

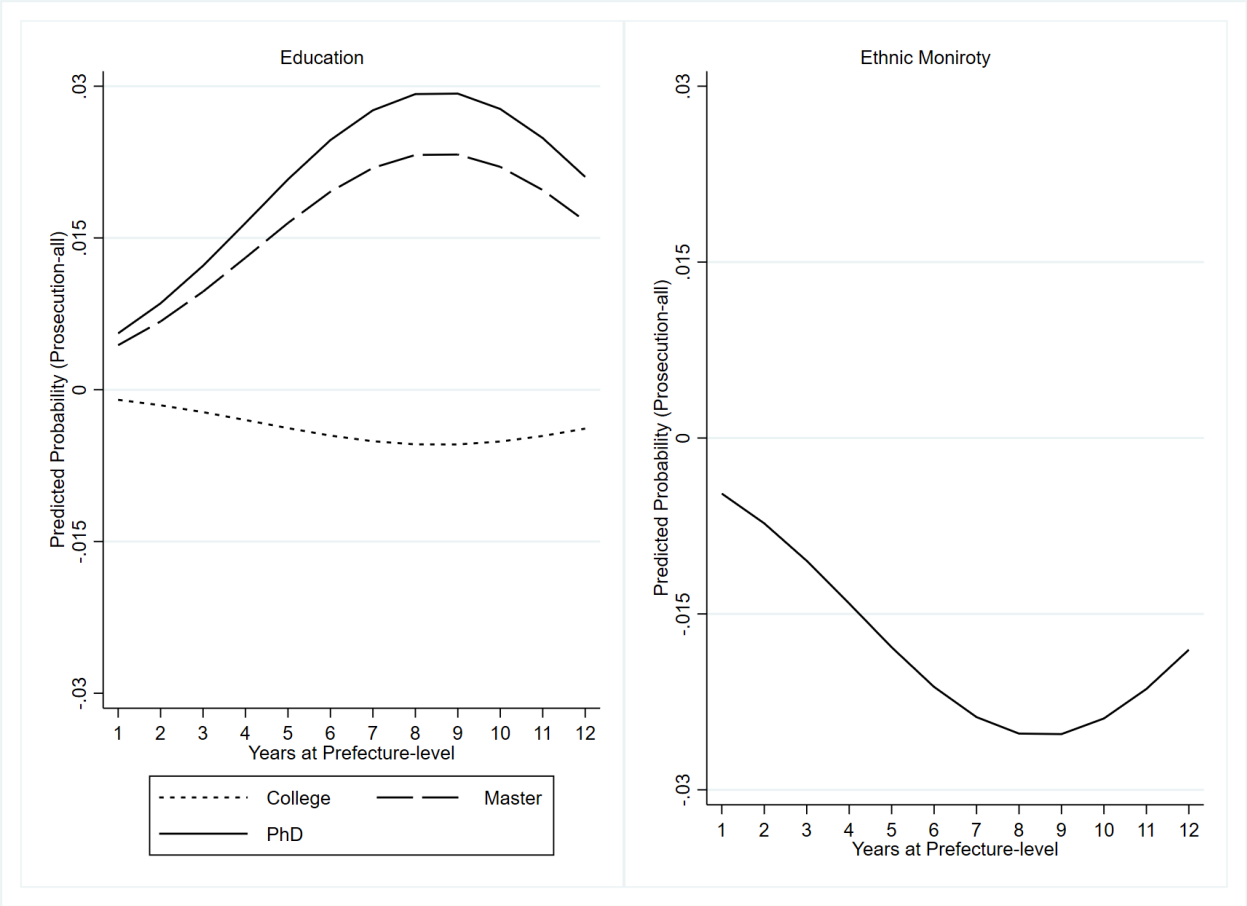

Figure 6.9: Education level, minority status, and cadre prosecution

(Bulman & Jaros, 2021). However, another more classical explanation, from the perspective of Wedeman, is that rigorous enforcement and severity of punishment during the unprecedented anti-corruption campaign initiated by Xi Jinping significantly reduced the expected value of committing corruptive activities and increased the expected value of probity for cadre who started their tenure during the Xi Jinping administration (Wedeman, 2012).

Both education level and ethnicity have a statistically significant relationship with the prospect of prefectural leader prosecution. Interestingly, a higher level of education tends to be associated with a higher probability of prosecution (Figure 6.9). For example, a one standard deviation increase of education level increases the odds of prosecution by 21.3 percent. Specifically, while a college degree is correlated with a negative predicted probability of prosecution, both Master's and Ph.D. degrees are associated with positive predicted probability. At year nine, the expected probability of cadre discipline for cadres with Master's or Ph.D. degrees is .023 and .029, respectively. As for ethnicity, being an ethnic minority reduces

the odds of prosecution by 38.6 percent. Figure 6.9 shows that from year one to year eight, cadres with minority background experiences a drop in predicted probability of prosecution from -.005 to -.028. This finding indicates that there is no sign of minority-targeting in China's cadre discipline practices, at least for the 1999-2019 prefectural leader dataset used in this analysis.

6.5 Conclusion

Extant literature proposes many assumptions and hypotheses regarding the driving force behind China's corruption problem and the government's attempts in fighting corruption but provides limited empirical tests on those hypotheses. This chapter explores the role of cadre training in the Chinese government's long-term cadre discipline practice at the prefecture level. A closer look at the content and focus of different types of cadre training indicates that training programs provided by party schools and universities may influence cadres' political behavior differently.

As discussed in Chapters II and III, while party school training emphasizes political loyalty to the CCP, ideological compliance, and warning consequences of corruption, marketized training focuses more on professional skills, management capability, and problem-solving strategies. Compared to the curriculum design of party school training, which facilitates the development of cadres' Party identity and their attachment to the Party organization, marketized training provides no such opportunities. Accordingly, cadres trained in universities may be more capable in local governance but are not necessarily more loyal to the Party or more deterred by the consequence and punishment of malpractices than those trained in party schools. Therefore, party school training is likely to be negatively associated with cadre prosecution, while university training is positively associated with cadre prosecution. I use prefecture-level cadre training and prosecution data from 1999-2019 in China to test these hypotheses. The empirical evidence shows that all else equal, party school training is negatively associated with prosecution. Conversely, marketized training is associated with a higher probability of prefectural leader prosecution.

Recent research finds that intensified anticorruption enforcement lowers the average ability of newly recruited cadres (Jiang et al., 2022). To improve the capability of these cadres, further cadre training could become even more necessary. However, given the findings in this chapter, marketized training that aims to improve cadres' competence also tends to be positively associated with prosecution, which may lead to a negative feedback loop of "anti-corruption – lower ability of recruited cadres – more competence training – more corruption prosecution." Admittedly, some efforts adopted by the regime, such as the recent recentralization and expansion of party school training analyzed in Chapter II, may counteract the above-mentioned vicious cycle by reinforcing the deterrence effect of the anticorruption practice. Still, the long-term impact of anticorruption practices on the Chinese cadre management mechanism is far from being comprehensively understood and warrants further study. In the next chapter, I will summarize the findings from this dissertation and point to directions for future research.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

> *"The world is changing everyday, new things keep coming up, new problems keep coming up, we cannot close the door, we cannot carry on without thinking and always fall behind."* [1]
>
> —– Deng Xiaoping, 1978

7.1 Summary of Findings

Some authoritarian regimes persist in today's world despite waves of democratic transition turning many autocracies into democracies. The sources of such persistence, however, have been contested. Some scholars of authoritarianism have argued that research should focus on regimes' ability to accomplish performance goals such as economic growth and social governance to appease the masses (Yang & Zhao, 2015; Y. Zhu, 2011). Yet, scholarship on authoritarian cooptation and repression has noted that performance alone can hardly eliminate the divergence or conflict between the ruling group and societal actors who are marginal in or excluded from the political process (Dickson, 2000). However, little work has thoroughly examined societal actors' role in contributing to the authoritarian regime adaptability outside of formal political channels (Hou, 2020). As a result, scholarship endorses a narrative that confines the state-society relationship in authoritarian contexts to cooptation or repression, leaving little room for other types of state-society interactions. Without an adequate analysis of the alternative ways societal actors interact with the authoritarian regime, we undervalue their impact on the adaptability of authoritarian regimes, ultimately leading to an incomplete conceptualization of societal actors' importance and potential.

Focusing on political-institutional development in China, this dissertation traces the intriguing coexistence of a traditional cadre training system subject to ever-tightening political control and a bourgeoning, if not a full-grown competitive market of cadre training actively participated by public institutions such as universities and private actors such as training management companies. The finding that the process of authoritarian institutional transition can be driven locally and promoted by societal actors without themselves being directly incorporated into the formal political institution has important implications

[1] Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping, 1993. People's Publishing House, Volume 2, pp 128.

for our understanding of the dynamics of authoritarian regime adaptability. While conventional frameworks that explain authoritarian resilience have demonstrated the importance of cooptation in the ruling elite circle and means to address societal resistance and discontents, my research emphasizes a primarily collaborative mode of interaction between societal actors and the authoritarian regime that contributes to the regime's relationship with both the masses and the elites.

This dissertation started with reviewing the state of traditional cadre training institutions in China. The traditional institution continues to play a crucial role despite its disadvantages, thanks to the CCP's consistent emphasis that it stays as an integral part of the CCP organizational structure. As a result, it still functions as one of the regime's most important institutions in maintaining political cohesiveness among its governing agents at various local levels (Chapter II). Meanwhile, the regime tolerates, acknowledges, and utilizes the development of marketized cadre training facilitated by public academic institutions and private training management companies with the goal of improving its governing agents' performance in economic development and social affairs management (Chapter III).

The CCP regime has utilized this dual-track training system in its cadre management process – one of the essential mechanisms of its regime adaptability – to select, promote, and discipline its governing agents based on political cohesiveness and capability to perform. First, by choosing township-level grassroots cadres who are trained both in party schools and universities, the regime emphasizes both political allegiance and competence to perform at a level that seemingly has a mere indirect impact on state elites (Chapter IV). Second, after considering political connection and economic performance, both party school training and university training are conducive to prefecture-level leader promotion, indicating that cadre training is an important element in the CCP's elite promotion mechanism complementary to those researched before (Chapter V). Third, due to divergent focuses on training content, traditional and marketized training tend to correlate with cadre prosecution differently. While party school training is negatively associated with prefectural cadres' probability of prosecution, marketized training is positively associated with such probability, indicating a certain level of uncertainty in the implications of the dual-track cadre training system (Chapter VI).

7.2 Contributions, Constraints, and Directions for Future Research

Extant studies of authoritarian politics tend to focus on the following analytical units: institutions regarding the party-state and political elites (Dickson, 2016; Fewsmith, 2001; Fewsmith & Nathan, 2019; L. Gore, 2010; Lü, 2000; Nathan, 2003; Pei, 2008; Shambaugh, 2008; Shih et al., 2012; Svolik, 2012; Zheng, 2009), social organizations (Dickson, 2003, 2008; D. Fu, 2017; Hildebrandt, 2013; Reny, 2019; Shue, 1994), and grassroots citizens (Gallagher, 2017; C.-K. Lee & Zhang, 2013; Lorentzen, 2014; O'Brien & Li, 2006; Ong, 2019; Shi, 1997; W. Tang, 2016; Tong & Lei, 2014). However, the intermediary role of local cadres at different levels of government is relatively understudied despite some exceptions (Edin, 2003; Jiang, 2018; Manion, 1996; Truex, 2016; Walder, 2004). Yet this group may contribute most to the adaptability and stability of the party-state (Y. S. Cai, 2008). Moreover, as Wang points out, local cadres in China

serve multiple principles, including citizens, local government, and central government (J. Wang, 2015). Consequently, improving local cadres' performance in public service delivery is crucial for maintaining authoritarian regime legitimacy and popular support. My research focuses on the institutional change that is most relevant to this intermediary political group. To my knowledge, this is the first empirical study dedicated to the inner workings of marketized extra-party cadre training and the resulting dual-track training system in China. It aims to make contributions and inspire future research in the following aspects.

First, this study contributes empirically to our understanding of China's evolving cadre management institution and serves as an indispensable addition to existing research on cadre training in China. Based on various unique data sources, it offers several new empirical designs and findings on Chinese cadre training institutions. The cadre trainee survey data utilized in this study, while not statistically representative of the entire Chinese cadre population, is by far the most geographically representative of Chinese township-level grassroots cadres. Given the considerable diversity among Chinese localities, this study offers a least-biased evaluation of cadre attitudes compared to the rest of the research on this subject. I also created an original prefectural cadre training dataset that includes all Chinese prefecture-level leadership from 1999 to 2019. These data enable me to test some core hypotheses on cadre training that were left untested in previous studies, possibly due to data limitations. My analysis in Chapters IV and V suggests that extra-party cadre training programs operating outside of traditional party schools constitute a vital supplement to party-state's disadvantaged conventional cadre training institutions through the CCP's cadre management procedures.

Meanwhile, the analysis in Chapter IV is constrained by the data availability of economic indicators and political connection records at the township level. Although I could utilize some proxies to account for such variables, a precise evaluation of the effect of cadre training on grassroots cadre selection would benefit from a better measurement of grassroots officials' governance performance and political ties with supervisors. This empirical challenge requires a significant amount of data collection and rigorous research design in future studies. On the other hand, the original prefectural cadre training dataset used in Chapters V and VI provides abundant opportunities for future research. For example, in future works, I plan to examine whether marketized training is positively associated with local officials' performance on governance tasks that requires more professional and technical knowledge, such as environmental protection or pollution reduction, or local industrial innovation. A recent study shows that SOEs with leading executives who have party school education backgrounds tend to engage in less innovative activities (Beladi et al., 2022). Future research should examine the relationship between training experience and local cadres' performance on different governance tasks.

Second, by revealing a dual-track process of authoritarian institutional adaptation, this study contributes theoretically to the advancement of authoritarian adaptability, accommodation, and resilience thesis (L. L. P. Gore, 2019, 2015; Nathan, 2003, 2009, 2020). Contrary to the static "involution" view that the CCP institution cannot adapt to changing socioeconomic context (Lü, 2000), it suggests that authoritarian institutional adaptation can be dynamically inspired by market development, which originated from bottom-up demand rather than top-down command. Short of formal representative institutions

that are crucial in democratic systems and hailed as drivers for institutional change, authoritarian regimes can still make the institutional adjustment to adapt to changing circumstances through channeling the potential of the public and private actors in the market. The source of authoritarian resilience, in this case, originates from the interactions between the agents of the regime and agencies within the society: societal agencies such as universities and private training management companies, by competitively catering to local cadres' learning demand and actively participating in cadre training marketization, become instruments of regime adaptability. When the goal of the Party-State is improving the competence of its agents to address governance challenges, as this case study shows, societal actors' active participation can contribute to state adaptability and resilience.

Nevertheless, my findings in Chapter VI also point to the potential uncertainties brought about by the dual-track training system. As the analysis shows, while traditional party school training negatively correlates with prefectural cadre corruption, marketized training is positively associated with prosecution. This indicates that the improvement of cadres' competence could be a double-edged sword: as cadres enhance their governance capability, some may also be emboldened by their competence and are more prone to malpractice. In other words, although dual-track cadre training enlarges the pool of competent officials for the regime to select from, it may also increase the possibility of officials' malpractice. However, the mechanisms behind marketized training's positive correlation with cadre prosecution require further empirical research, which entails significant methodological and practical challenges due to the unpredictability of cadre prosecution and the related difficulties in identifying and collecting relevant data *ex-post*.

Third, this dissertation provides additional evidence to the potential advantage of a gradualist approach in political-economic reform in changing societies (B. Naughton, 1995). In the case of cadre training, a radical market reform would likely lead to the decline of political cohesiveness due to marketized training's de-emphasis of political education, which is the ultimate danger if the regime aims to maintain its ideological dominance and concentrate its power. The evolution of Higher Party School in post-communist Russia provided a perfect example for such a possibility (Huskey, 2004). By complementing, instead of replacing the training programs of traditional cadre training providers, the partial marketization led to a more efficient allocation of resources in the Chinese cadre training system without severely threatening the ideological dominance of the ruling party. Both the regime and the societal actors benefited from the dual-track training system transition in this process. Specifically, the regime ended up with a larger pool of capable agents to create economic growth and address social governance issues. At the same time, societal actors profited from providing competitive cadre training programs by amplifying their advantages. Admittedly, just like other areas in the initial reform stage where rules and regulations were not well-defined, this partial market is not free from malpractices, especially in the early years of development. However, as I have shown in Chapter III, there are signs that the CCP is in the process of regulating the cadre training market, which has already eliminated some malpractices in marketized cadre training and led to a more regulated training system. Nevertheless, whether regulation will turn to another extreme of strangling the vitality of the training market remains to be seen.

Recent development in the state's regulation of marketized cadre training suggests that the partial market of cadre training is undergoing further transformation. On November 11th, 2021, the Ministry of Education in China issued the *Regulations on the management of non-academic education held by the institution of higher education (Trial)*, with a specific stipulation that "entrusted leadership and cadre training programs are not allowed to be delegated to societal training agencies or co-host with societal training agencies." [2] Presumably, this new regulation is driven by the malpractices in marketized cadre training analyzed in Chapter III. On the surface, this regulation will severely undermine private training management companies' involvement in training marketization. Nevertheless, upon following up with some owners of such companies, they are confident there are ways to work around the regulations and maintain a collaborative relationship with the universities, albeit with more constraints. Their confidence is not entirely groundless: the deep co-dependence between universities and private agencies on training management uncovered in Chapter III indicates that regardless of whether societal agencies are allowed to participate in marketized training, most universities consistently face a shortage of personnel and resource to independently manage competitive cadre training programs without outside help. In other words, public academic institutions' capacity to provide cadre training will be significantly impaired if such regulations are implemented strictly, an outcome the regime may not want to see. Future studies will benefit from exploring the level of implementation of such regulations in evaluating the future path of dual-track cadre training in China.

It seems appropriate to conclude this dissertation with a comment on cadre training policy from one of my interviewees, the owner of a private training management company. After working in the cadre training business for over 30 years, his description of the policy implementation process not only summarizes the dual-track institutional transition of the cadre training system in China but may also apply to the study of Chinese political-economic reform in general:

"*It is unclear how many things that the government says people cannot do are truly prohibited. If people do everything according to policy, then barely anything can be done in China; however, if completely ignore policy, people may end up in trouble. Flexibility is the key in Chinese policy implementation.*" (JY 2021-15)

[2] Regulations on the management of non-academic education held by institution of higher education (Trial), 2021.

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Appendix A

Summary of interview and fieldwork

During my fieldwork in China between 2017 to 2019, I conducted semi-structured information-gathering interviews with cadre trainees, training program instructors, university administers, private training company managers and assistants, as well as local government officials regarding cadre training policy development and the operational procedure of marketized cadre training. No personal identifiable information, thoughts, opinions, attitudes, or perceptions are collected. The total number of interviews is 127, conducted mainly in Beijing but also include multiple other locations in China. An interview is considered a new one if it's with the same interviewee but at different times and locations. To protect the identity of the interviewees due to the potential sensitivity of some interviewed topics, I assign a unique identification number for each interviewee instead of using their names. The citation of interviews in this dissertation follows Ang's approach of identification number followed by the date of interview (Ang, 2016).

The Human Subject Office at the University of Georgia has determined that this project is not research involving human subjects as defined by DHHS and FDA regulations. The proposed project is designed as research to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge, but the project does not involve human subjects. The study ID is: PROJECT00005605.

Appendix B

Sample interview questions

B.1 Demand-side

How is training budget determined? Is it determined in the previous year's budget plan for next year, or through other mechanisms?

Which department is responsible for collecting training information and approving training plan? Is it the organizational department or discipline committee?

What are the criteria for choosing from different training programs? Does it depend on faculty, prestige of the university, or budget of training program?

According to the policy regarding training, what types of cadres require training? How frequent are policies regarding cadre training updated?

Is training volunteered or required by the department?

Are there accompanying personnel from the department to ensure training quality?

Are written reviews required after training program?

According to training policy, does cadre training closely related to cadres' practical work?

What are the differences between university cadre training and Party School cadre training?

B.2 Supply-side

Approximately since which year are university training programs emerged?

What are the differences between training management and policy in the 1990s and present days? Any changes in recent years?

How are training plan and content planned? Is it mainly catering to the requirement of local government, or planned by the university?

What are the criteria in hiring teachers for training programs?

What are the changes in central policy regarding cadre training throughout the years?

Are there many university cadre training programs? Is there a geographical distribution of training programs between different universities?

What are the policy constraints for university cadre training programs? Any examples?

Are different universities focusing on different types of training?

How are central government policies influencing university training?

What is the relationship between university cadre training and the prestige of university?

What are the university policies made by university administrators regarding such cadre training programs?

Since which year are you invited to give seminars for university cadre training programs?

What content would you teach in such training programs? Is it closely related to your discipline and research focus?

What do you know about the policies regarding university cadre training programs?

Are you provided with brief information about the cadre trainee before each seminar?

Are there interactions between teacher and cadre trainees after the training program ended?

Appendix C

Survey descriptive statistics

Table C.1: Cadre trainee affiliation

Department/Organization	Frequency	Percentage
Ministry of Justice	940	22.75
Health and Family Planning Commission	655	15.85
NPC	334	8.08
Court	286	6.92
Ministry of Public Security	278	6.73
Political and Legal Affairs Commission	219	5.3
Ministry of Supervision	175	4.24
Office of Legislative Affairs	170	4.11
Procuratorate	152	3.68
CPPCC	115	2.78
Administration of Industry and Commerce	99	2.4
Other	85	2.06
Taxation Administration	71	1.72
Ministry of Education	46	1.11
Office of the Government	46	1.11
Party Committee	33	0.8
Health and Family Planning Commission	30	0.73
Ministry of Agriculture	29	0.7
Ministry of Culture	25	0.61
Propaganda Department	24	0.58
Ministry of Constructions	22	0.53
Administration of Radio, Film and Television	18	0.44

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Table C.1 – continued from previous page

Department/Organization	Frequency	Percentage
Ministry of Water Resources	16	0.39
Ministry of Finance	15	0.36
Ministry of Transportation	15	0.36
Public Complaints and Proposals Administration	15	0.36
Notarial Office	15	0.36
Ministry of Civil Affairs	13	0.31
Environmental Protection Administration	13	0.31
Food and Drug Administration	13	0.31
Ministry of Personnel	12	0.29
Bureau of Trade	12	0.29
Ministry of Labor and Social Security	11	0.27
Forestry Bureau	11	0.27
Ministry of Security	10	0.24
Statistics Bureau	9	0.22
Arbitration Commission	8	0.19
Urban Management Bureau	7	0.17
Audit Bureau	7	0.17
Ministry of Land and Resources	6	0.15
National and Religious Council	6	0.15
Administration of Press and Publication	6	0.15
Bureau of Quality and Technical Supervision	5	0.12
Administration of Work Safety	5	0.12
Commission of Industry and Information	5	0.12
Urban Management and Law Enforcement Bureau	4	0.1
Ministry of Sport	3	0.07
Ministry of Economic and Technological	3	0.07
Organization Department	3	0.07
Policy Research Office	3	0.07
Development and Reform Commission	3	0.07
United Front Department	3	0.07
Weather Bureau	3	0.07
Earthquake Bureau	3	0.07
Price Bureau	2	0.05
Ministry of Science and Technology	2	0.05

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Table C.1 – continued from previous page

Department/Organization	Frequency	Percentage
Labor Union	2	0.05
Urban and Rural Planning Bureau	2	0.05
Subdistrict Office	2	0.05
Ministry of Land and Resources	1	0.02
Administration of Provincial Government	1	0.02
Department of Planning	1	0.02
Revolutionary Committee of Kuomintang	1	0.02
Party School	1	0.02
Cyberspace Administration of China	1	0.02
Chinese Communist Youth League Committee	1	0.02

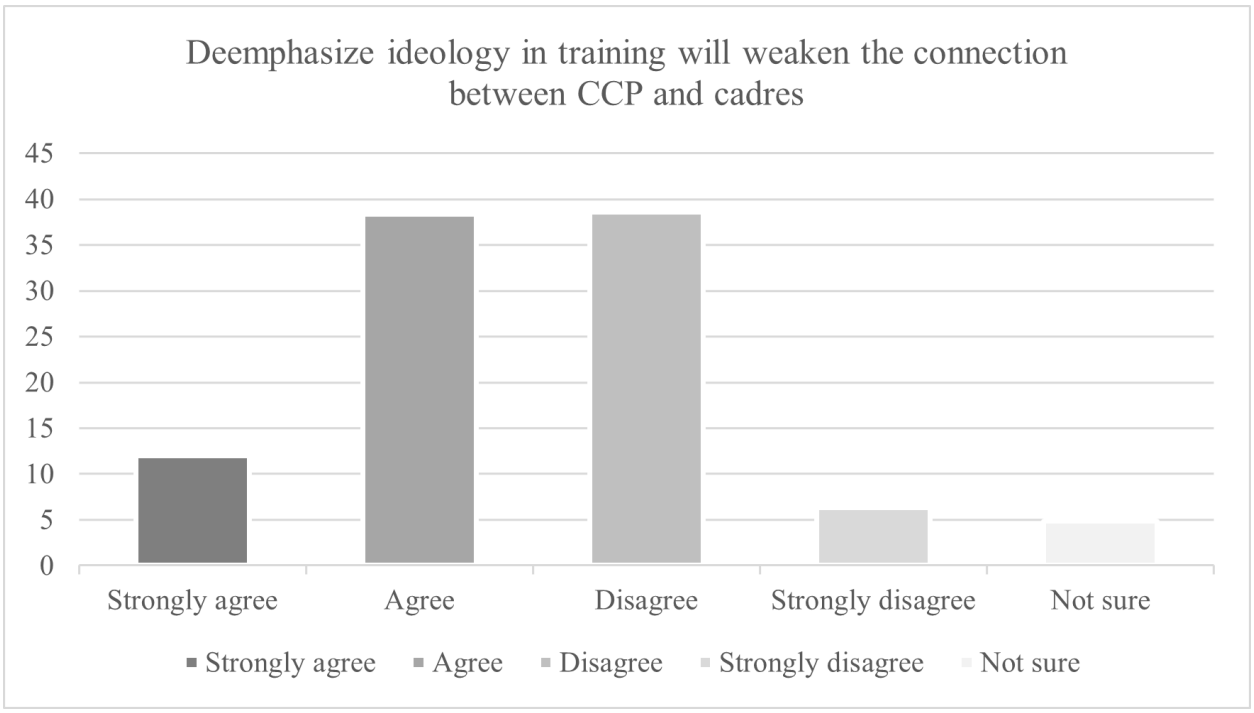

Figure C.1: Will deemphasizing ideology challenge CCP cadre training?

Table C.2: Survey sample representativeness

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Female	1,216	29.94
Male	2,845	70.06
Age		
22-29	354	8.65
30-39	1,217	29.74
40-49	1,563	38.20
50-59	925	22.61
60-69	33	0.81
Education		
No formal education	2	0.05
Elementary school	1	0.02
Middle school	8	0.19
High school or equivalent	77	1.85
Junior college	716	17.25
Undergraduate	3,004	72.37
Graduate	338	8.14
Ph.D.	5	0.12
Party Membership		
CCP member	3,311	80.46
Communist Youth League member	136	3.30
Democratic Party member	109	2.65
Independent	559	13.58
Administrative Rank		
Division Director	136	3.76
Deputy Division Director	364	10.07
Section Chief	1,072	29.66
Deputy Section Chief	890	24.63
Staff member	537	14.86
Other	615	17.02
Government Level		
Township level	325	8.30
County level	2,162	55.20
Prefecture level	1,0485	26.76
Provincial level	255	6.51
National level	36	0.92
Other	91	2.32
Ethnicity		
Ethic minority	521	12.53
Han	3,636	87.47
Hukou Status		
Rural	278	6.71
Urban	3,862	93.29

Table C.3: Cadre trainee provincial distribution

Province	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Anhui	142	3.41
Chongqing	17	0.41
Gansu	217	5.21
Guangdong	129	3.10
Guangxi	363	8.71
Guizhou	323	7.75
Hainan	44	1.06
Hebei	245	5.88
Heilongjiang	13	0.31
Henan	893	21.42
Hubei	9	0.22
Hunan	126	3.02
Inner Mongolia	74	1.78
Jiangsu	143	3.43
Jiangxi	1	0.02
Jilin	60	1.44
Liaoning	21	0.50
Ningxia	51	1.22
Qinghai	45	1.08
Shaanxi	49	1.18
Shandong	182	4.37
Shanxi	274	6.58
Sichuan	272	6.53
Xinjiang	34	0.82
Yunnan	298	7.15
Zhejiang	142	3.41