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The Policy Network of Foster Care in Guangzhou, China:

Structure, Interaction, and Governance

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_____ (Signed)

_____LU Wei_____(Name of student)

To my son and all people who understand love

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Abstract

Ever since foster care was formally implemented by the central government in 2000 as an important component of China's child welfare reforms, many cities have developed their own models according to local contexts. Non-governmental welfare agencies and related professional and social groups participate actively in foster care programs and contribute significantly to the government-led child welfare reforms. However, coordination among these agencies and groups has become an urgent issue that needs to be tackled.

Employing an analytical framework derived from policy network and new institutionalism, this study investigates the relationships among government agencies, non-governmental organizations, professional bodies, and social groups in providing foster care services in Guangzhou. The research addresses four questions. First, who are the actors in the foster care policy network and what are the characteristics of the network structure? Second, how do the actors in the policy network interact with each other and under what action logics? Third, can features of the policy network structure explain the network institutional system, based on each actor's action logics? Finally, to what extent have the conditions of network governance been achieved in the sub-network of government purchase of foster care services in Guangzhou?

The research is an explanatory and instrumental case study of the foster care system in Guangzhou. Qualitative data were collected through participant observation and in-depth interviews with the four core actors in the foster care policy network: the Guangzhou Child Welfare Institute (GCWI), the Half the Sky Foundation (HSF), the Growth Dynamics Social Work Professional

Development and Resources Centre (GDC), and a group of foster parents. Archives in the three agencies were also reviewed. The data were synthesized and coded to describe the features of the policy network and the interactions of its core actors, to reveal each actor's action logics, and to explain the logics of the institutional system and the network governance.

The foster care policy network in Guangzhou features three major structural characteristics: clear boundary of membership, moderate but efficient network cohesion, and structured and stable resource allocation. The core actors in the policy network act based on different logics: GCWI—administration; HSF and GDC—survival; and foster parents—employment. The actors' multi-logics interact and form the multi-logical institution system, which can be attributed to the three characteristics of the policy network structure. Concerning policy network governance, among the three conditions of interdependence, standardization, and autonomy, only interdependence is fulfilled in the sub-network of government purchase of foster care services in Guangzhou.

This study reveals that although the foster care policy network in Guangzhou was formed during the child welfare reforms, coordination and management of the network are far from the level required by network governance. The findings stress the importance of integrating the structure and behavior perspectives in understanding how the policy participants' interactions at the micro level reflect the network structure's characteristics at the macro level. Further, the research demonstrates the value of this integrative approach for analyses of other policy domains during the socialization of social welfare reform in China.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

On the morning of January 4, 2012, a cruel accident happened in Lankao County in Henan Province. A fire started in Ms. Yuan Lihai's house. Seven children, who were among the more than one hundred orphans raised in this family, died in this accident. The "foster care" of one hundred orphans by Ms. Yuan was not legal, but Ms. Yuan said that during the previous ten years she had been taking care of them not out of any personal interest but rather from mercy towards orphans on the street. The fire was a sudden accident, and the local government responded that it was hard to ascertain where the responsibility lay for the death of the seven children (China News, 14 January 2013). "Who indeed should be held to account for the poor dead children?" Nearly all public and private media asked the same question like above. However, the weak child protection system and its flimsy legal mechanisms in China could not give the seven children a good answer.

According to the Statistics Communiqué on the 2012 National Social Service published by the Ministry of Civil Affairs (Ministry of Civil Affairs, 2012), there are 573,000 orphans under the age of 18 with both parents passed away or without substantial care giving. Some 95,000 orphans are raised in public institutions and 475,000 are widely scattered in society. In society, some

104,000 live in social welfare agencies, some 27,278 are adopted by social families, and the rest are cared for by relatives or other guardians. Because the number of orphans outside in society is increasing, the question of who should be responsible for this group of children has become an urgent issue on the policy agenda.

In Chinese traditional customs, an orphaned child is transferred into a relative's family without any formal legal procedure or declaration to local government. This strong sense of family to a great extent helped solve the problem of orphans becoming vagrants. Things get changed since the policy of providing a living standard for orphans, Principle of Enhancing Protection for Orphans, was promulgated by the State Council General Office in 2010 (No. 54 [2010]). Its crucial contribution is to provide the basic living insurance allowance for orphans: at least 1000 Yuan per month for those in institutions and at least 600 Yuan per month for those in society. X. Y. Shang and Chen (2006) reports that after the policy was first implemented in local regions, relatives gradually declare the orphans they were caring for to the government because they want to get the basic living insurance allowance. Along with this policy change, the looser family ties in today's society push more responsibility for the care of orphans from distant relative families or informal guardians onto the government. If the government is not able to take responsibility for orphans and abandoned children, problems such as discrimination, abuse, and even tragic events like the deaths described at the start of this chapter will continue to

happen.

The central government is performing its duty but systematic support of child welfare in China is not yet in existence—we lack a specific child welfare administration department, child welfare law, and a comprehensive child protection system. The Principle of Enhancing Protection for Orphans (No. 54 [2011]) mentioned above provided a 2.5 billion Yuan special fund for raising orphans nationwide in 2010. What needs more attention is not the amount of money but the extension of financial channels into child care in society beyond traditional institutions. In the subsequent Outline Program for Development of Chinese Children (2011-2020) released by the State Council in July 2011 (No. 24 [2011]), the government tries to transform the child welfare system into a universal model instead of filling the gap as before. The universal model requires building up a comprehensive child welfare service system for all children in need, not only those now being raised in institutions.

This ideology of a universal model to support children living outside of institutions is a critical turning point for child welfare in China. Foster care, as a means of sending children out of institutions, has seen rapid development since the model was applied in local regions. The research on foster care, as reported in this thesis, thus responds to both the research and practical needs of child welfare reforms in China.

1.1 Research Inquiries

To implement welfare policy under the ideology of a universal model, the most advantageous channel is to rely on technical and human resources from social welfare agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in society to provide professional services at the micro level (S. B. Wang, 2009). Only when the executive mechanisms with these agencies and NGOs are well organized, can the universal model for comprehensive child welfare system achieve its goal of taking good care of children in China.

Why does the government need to involve NGO partners in providing public services? According to Salamon's third party government theory, NGOs' participation in public management not only enhances the government function in public welfare provision, but also avoids large government bureaucracies from emerging (Salamon, 1980). NGOs' service provision is mostly at the community level. Many countries take NGOs as the frontline of social welfare implementation.

Many western developed countries have already gone through the process of market-oriented public service reform, which means that government progressively turns into a licensor of public goods supply or a financial provider instead of directly providing public services. As a result, social groups, individuals, and NGOs, as actors, are all participants in the provision of public service based on contracts and agreements. The services NGOs mainly focus on are education, elderly support, care for people with disabilities, public sanitation, employment, housing, and so on (Hatton-Yeo, Ohsako, & Bostrum, 2000).

Developing countries are also following the same trend. NGOs are involved in providing public services and operate mainly by relying on contracts with government (Salamon, 1995).

Since the market-oriented economic reforms in the 1980s, civil administration departments have been exploring ways to promote the socialization of social welfare in China (The State Council, No. 19 [2000]), trying to change the traditional pattern of government-monopolized or enterprise-run welfare provision to the cooperation between government and social organisations or individuals. After years of practice, the government now serves as the main funding provider, whereas the responsibility of welfare service provision has been shifted from the government to "society." Individuals, social groups, NGOs, and enterprises are mobilized to share the role and responsibility of public services provision.

Ever since foster care was formally implemented by the central government in China in 2000 as an important component of child welfare reforms, many cities have developed their own models according to their local contexts. Various non-governmental welfare agencies and related professional and social groups participate actively in the foster care programs and significantly contribute to the government-led child welfare reforms. Coordination and management among these agencies and groups has become an urgent issue that needs to be tackled.

The relationship between government and NGOs when collaborating to

provide public services is complicated. However, the analysis cannot be reduced to a few types of collaboration as classified in existing literature (Gidron, Kramer, & Salamon, 1992; Kuhnle & Selle, 1992; Najam, 2000; Yao, 2003). Particularly, when different types of NGOs collaborate simultaneously with government in one policy network and when the collaboration features in different forms, a network perspective is needed so that each participant involved can be examined as well as their collaboration.

Based on theories of policy network analysis and neo-institutionalism, this study develops an integrated analytical framework for empirical research of policy network. This integrated analytical approach allows us to look deeply into the various actors in the policy implementation process, to figure out their relationship in the network, and to understand how network structures and interactions affect the institutional system, which may eventually influence the policy implementation.

Using this analytical framework, the analysis investigates the relationships among government agencies, non-governmental organisations, professional bodies, and social groups in providing foster care services in Guangzhou, the capital city of Guangdong Province of China. Three specific empirical questions are addressed. First, who are the actors in the foster care policy network and what are the characteristics of the network structure? Second, how do the actors in the policy network interact with each other and under what action logics? And third, can features of the policy network structure explain the

network institutional system, based on each actor's action logics?

In addition, as government purchase of services is going to be the main collaborative approach between government and NGOs, this study further examines the sub-network formed by actors involved in the government purchase of foster care services and addresses the fourth research question: to what extent have the three conditions of network governance—interdependence, standardisation, and autonomy—been achieved in the sub-network of government purchase of foster care services in Guangzhou?

1.2 Structure of the Thesis

The thesis consists of eight chapters. Chapter 1 is the introduction. In Chapter 2, I present a brief history of the development of foster care in China in general and the case of Guangzhou in particular. I discuss the benefits of NGOs entering into child care and highlight the new development of government purchase of foster care services. Chapter 3 reviews the theoretical frameworks of policy network analysis and neo-institutionalism and elaborates the integrated analytical framework that I developed for empirical research of policy network. Chapter 4 explains the rationale for an explanatory and instrumental case study of the foster care system in Guangzhou, the research methods used to collect data with the four core actors—the Guangzhou Child Welfare Institute (GCWI), the Half the Sky Foundation (HSF), the Growth Dynamics Social Work Professional Development and Resources Centre (GDC), and a group of foster

parents—in the policy network, and the specifics of data analysis based on the analytical framework.

Chapters 5 to 7 report the findings of this study. Chapter 5 presents three major structural characteristics of the foster care policy network in Guangzhou: clear boundary of membership, moderate but efficient network cohesion, and structured and stable resource allocation. Chapter 6 first identifies the different logics based on which the core actors in the policy network act: GCWI—administration; HSF and GDC—survival; and foster parents—employment. The chapter then discusses how the actors' multi-logics interact and form the multi-logical institution system, which can be attributed to the three characteristics of the policy network structure. Chapter 7 focuses on policy network governance and examines whether or not the three conditions of network governance—interdependence, standardisation, and autonomy—are fulfilled in the sub-network of government purchase of foster care services in Guangzhou.

Finally, Chapter 8 is the conclusion, in which I summarize the research findings, discuss the study's contributions and implications, and conclude with a discussion of directions for future research.

Chapter 2

Foster Care in China: History, Issues, and New Development

For most countries, foster care results when bio-families become unable to take care of their children, and the children are not willing to be adopted or cannot be adopted. Foster care thus serves as an alternative way to protect children who cannot stay in their bio-family after the family has sought all supplementary support (Pecora, 2005). In China, however, if a child has a bio-family, it is almost impossible to transfer the child into a foster family, especially if the bio-family is still intact. Foster care in this context refers to sending children (orphaned, abandoned, mentally or physically disabled, etc.) raised in child welfare institutions out into the society (Ma, Hu, & Luo, 2009). Children in institutional care are selected by child welfare institutions to match appropriate foster families in terms of age, gender, health status, intelligence, and so on. There is no change of custody: the foster child's household registration (*hukou*) remains in the institution. Foster families provide daily care to these children. Local government provides funding to cover the costs of daily living, medicine, and education. The foster care that operates in China has three characteristics: family style care giving, de-institutionalised care giving, and flexible term of care giving under contract (Cheng, 2003).

How was this type of foster care initiated and developed in China? What are the benefits and issues associated with the Chinese foster care system? Are

there any new development trends in reforming the foster care system? This chapter reviews the history of foster care in China, discusses issues in current foster care practice and the involvement of NGOs in foster care provision, and introduces the new development of government purchase of foster care services in the case of Guangzhou.

2.1 History of Foster Care in China

Foster care was originally developed in the United States and Europe at the beginning of the 20th century. Its rationale was based on the theory of psychological attachment developed by Bowlby (1951), who argues that an infant or young child should experience a warm, intimate, and continuous relationship with his or her mother (or permanent mother substitute) in which both find satisfaction and enjoyment. The lack of such relationship may have significant and irreversible consequences for the child's mental health. The psychological attachment theory raised the necessity of a normal family life for children.

Bowlby (1951) further argues that child welfare institutions and social workers should operate from the perspective of the parent-child relationship when providing foster care services. Accordingly, the purpose of foster care is to establish an alternative parent-child relationship, so as to cultivate foster children's attachment to foster parents. Through their interaction with foster parents, foster children's emotion, cognition, and socialisation are expected to

improve.

Foster care was officially approved as a formal child welfare service approach in 1899 at the US National Conference on Therapy and Charity. It was further confirmed and supported in the first US White House Conference on Child Welfare in 1909 (Cheng, 2003). Now there are various kinds of foster care programs available all over the world, including the five-days-per-week foster family (foster children go back to their bio-family each weekend) and the weekend foster family (foster children only stay with the foster family for the weekend).

In the early stages of the People's Republic of China, the government set up child welfare institutions in large and medium-sized cities to settle orphans, abandoned babies, and disabled children. In small cities or regions where child welfare institutions either were not established or could not accommodate all those children without families, foster care was the main service. For instance, in the famous "nanny village" of Datong City of Shanxi Province, villagers have raised more than 1,000 orphans (only 4% of whom were healthy) from the Datong child welfare institution since the 1960s, getting very little subsidy from the local government (X. Shang & Wu, 2003).

The practice of foster care was reduced nationwide in the 1960s for three reasons, the first of which was foster families' worsening economic situation. Poverty was widespread across the country in the 1950s and 1960s. Foster families in many small cities or villages could only meet the basic survival needs

of foster children; some could not even achieve this. Second, more social welfare institutions were developed. Along with social welfare programs, child welfare institutions were gradually expanded and services were improved. In the meantime, the number of disabled orphans increased and foster families were unable to provide corresponding services. So, more and more foster children were sent back to welfare institutions. The third factor was labour demand in the Great Leap Forward movement. Few family members could stay at home taking care of foster children. Institutions appeared to be more advantageous in providing intensive care. As a result, until the 1990s there was no longer any government policy encouraging foster care, although there was still foster care practice in some localities (X. Shang & Wu, 2003).

Since the 1980s, debate has emerged about foster care and institutional care. Policymakers, policy executors, scholars, and child welfare researchers have joined in the discussion. Some argue that foster care can benefit orphans' socialisation process and improve their physical health. Others maintain that institutional care can cultivate a stronger sense of collectivism and is also more convenient for provision of rehabilitation services for disabled children (Cheng, 2003). While institutional care has been questioned, new conceptions of child welfare from abroad were absorbed into the Chinese society, along with the Open Door Policy in the 1980s. For instance, the British Save the Child organisation introduced the new idea of community-based care for foster children. Meanwhile, child welfare program reforms in China started to take

child-based services in a new direction emphasising comprehensive care and exploration of children's potential instead of traditional survival care. Special children's happiness and mental health have become more and more important.

The debate lasted for nearly 10 years. On December 30, 1999, the Ministry of Civil Affairs promulgated the "Temporary Administration Methods on Social Welfare Institutions" (Ministry of Civil Affairs, No. 19 [1999]). The central government encouraged foster care but with no clear policy or implementation support. Local governments have to probe their own way regarding local practices. In 2003, the Ministry of Civil Affairs further announced the "Interim Measures for the Administration of Foster Care" (Ministry of Civil Affairs, No. 144 [2003]), which came into effect on January 1, 2004. This government document eventually legitimised the new foster care system in China.

The first new foster care program was initiated by the Beijing Children's Welfare Institute (BCWI) in 1987. Children from BCWI who had little hope of adoption were sent out to foster families recruited from the society. The aim was to expose these children to the normal processes of socialisation. The Beijing municipal government was very satisfied with the changes observed in the foster children. Other local governments followed Beijing's lead: Shanghai launched foster care in 1997, followed by Kunming, Nanjing, and Guangzhou (Ministry of Civil Affairs Department of Social Welfare and Social Affairs, 2000).

As the foster care program spread nationwide, the procedure for a social

family to finally become a foster family gradually formed a standardised process. Applicants go through a series of procedures of recruitment, assessment, and selection as described below:

(1)   Registration: applicants complete forms about their basic family situation and are registered with the child welfare institution.

(2)   Training: selected families are required to take part in training about parenting and caregiving skills and to study psychology and special pedagogical knowledge.

(3)   Home Visit: child welfare institution staff and social workers will visit families on the waiting list in their homes and assess local environment, humanistic environment, as well as applicants' characteristics. The visit is normally repeated several times.

(4)   Examination and Approval: the child welfare institution examines records arising from registration and home visits and gives approval.

(5)   Contracting: after approval, candidate families will sign a contract with the child welfare institution. The contract stipulates rights and obligations, and marks out clear service rules, requirements, targets, and so on.

Since 2000, many cities have instigated reforms to their child welfare system in keeping with their local contexts. Some cities have created their own model of foster care, for example, Shanghai's urban model (S. P. Zhang, Lu, &

Zhang, 2001), Beijing's rural model (C. G. Wang, 1999), and Hubei's staff/family model (S. X. Lu, 2009), while others are still at the developmental stage. As a result of the reform process, more stakeholders are involved in the foster care policy implementation. They form a policy network that requires extensive coordination of interest sharing, information exchange, and resource allocation.

2.2 Benefits and Issues of Foster Care

Children in institutional care usually fall behind in physical, intelligence, and characteristics development because of the lack of family life, maternal love, and normal attachment relationship. Special children particularly need a compensatory family life to get back the loss of parenting. This is also the ultimate target of the foster care service in China. Compared to other service channels, foster care benefits orphans in several ways, especially those who are disabled.

First, foster care improves children's physical health and physical development. Because the caregiving style changed from "one-to-many" in institutions to "many-to-one" in foster families, orphans—especially disabled orphans—obtain more considerable care to meet individual needs. According to the records of many local child welfare institutions, after one year of family life in a foster home, foster children developed in basic life skills, habits, verbal ability, etc. In 2000, a survey of 100 foster children who had one year of foster

family life was carried out in Shanghai. All 100 children grew more than 5cm in height; 94 children increased more than 2kg in weight; 62 children behaved better and had good life skills; 80 children were willing to obey family education; 16 children improved in self-sufficiency from totally relying on others previously; 24 children had greater interest in study interest and gained more knowledge; 20 disabled children received remarkable rehabilitation; and 52 children achieved a good level in comprehension competence assessment (Zhu & Zhou, 2002).

Second, foster care results in noticeable progress in children's mental health. Once in foster families, foster children's social roles change and diversify, which gives them more opportunities to engage with community and society. In this way, foster children's mental health and socialisation achieve more noticeable progress. Y. B. Wang and Zhao (2006) report that children who used to be introverted become cheerful, lively, and outgoing after living in a foster family. Initially aware of their own social position and identity, 98% of children in their study behave with propriety, are polite to strangers, learn to have ego enhancement, manage their own stuff, and distinguish their own belongings from others'.

Third, children's sense of "home" is strengthened by foster care. When orphans live in a foster family, their attachment relationship transfers from the nurses in the institution to "father" and "mother," and even "brother" and "sister" at "home." They feel proud of their new identity and also eager to show it to

others, which may cause them to take more positive action to adapt to society. They are also trained to do housework, and to take care of young brothers and sisters. Some foster children even have a strong sense of duty to their foster parents (Y. B. Wang & Zhao, 2006). As proposed by family therapy theory, family life has inherent superiority in personal behaviour restriction, management, and adjustment. Through the "bridge" of family, foster children can have more opportunity to contact with peers, friends, and teachers. It is a very necessary condition for these children's healthy personality and socialisation.

Furthermore, the foster care program also eases the financial burden of local government. For many reasons, the financial support for child welfare programs is limited at this stage. There is only enough financial support to cope in the current context, but it is hard to satisfy all the current needs. For example, on average, 259 orphans are sent to BCWI per year. If all these children were to be kept in the institution, an additional 500 beds would be needed every two years, costing 40 million Yuan in foundation facility investment, plus 10 million Yuan in human resources fees for each child. When children are sent out of the institution to the foster care program, fees are cut in half. If foster children live in rural areas, their daily needs cost only one third of those in urban areas (Cheng, 2003).

Even though foster care has a long history, it is becoming more widespread in China only recently. Since foster care has been in place nationally,

systematic management and supervision have been urgently needed in local practices. In particular, there are common problems and deficiencies requiring professional investigation, the first of which is insufficient legal support. At present there is only one central document, the "Interim Measures for the Administration of Foster Care" announced by the Ministry of Civil Affairs (No. 144 [2003]), which came into effect on January 1, 2004. Apart from that, legal support for foster care can only be found in the constitution, criminal law, compulsory education law, law of protection of minors, adoption law, and law of protection of disabled people. No unified national legislation exists, even though local practices of foster care have been in place for a while. The interim measures lack specific instructions to refine the whole foster care procedure. Many problems emerge during implementation, such as how to define legal responsibilities for foster parents, what are the standards for evaluations of, and home visits to, foster families, and at what level of training a foster family can be confirmed as qualified. The gap between the practice and the policy causes a lack of efficient daily management and supervision of foster families. It is also hard to scientifically and accurately assess the effectiveness of foster care. What's worse is that when foster children have conflicts with foster parents, or foster parents do harm to foster children, no particular foster care law can be used to solve the problem.

Another problem is the lack of qualified foster families. To give an orphan a warm home is the primary motive of foster care. Therefore, a qualified

foster family is the essential condition for successful service provision. In practice, however, foster family selection usually encounters difficulties because of inadequate availability of qualified families, especially in urban areas. In contrast to the traditional family framework in rural districts, in urban families few members are surplus to the labour force. Women go out for work; few can be available at home as the full-time care giver. Further, as foster family assessment usually requires a separate room for foster children, many urban families cannot meet the requirements. In addition, while one or two family members might want to take care of an orphan, other family members may not support the fostering of children. Free time and energy are used for tourism, vacation, adult education, rather than taking care of a disabled orphan.

There are also confusions about the roles of foster parents in foster care practice. Once children are transferred into foster families, foster parents take the role of parenting but they do not have all the rights of birth parents. Foster parents are not granted custody of the foster child. The foster care relationship is not the same as the legal relationship between the supporter and the supported in a natural family. After years of living together, deep feelings between foster children and parents make the roles easy to confuse. How do foster parents exert parental control, and to what extent?

Holman (1999) categorizes foster families into two kinds: "exclusive" and "inclusive." Exclusive foster parents treat foster children as their own, take foster care as pre-adoption, and exclude other relations. They don't welcome

home visits or other supervision from child welfare institutions. In contrast, inclusive foster parents are very clear that they raise foster children for the government; they always hope for more home visits and for help from the child welfare institution. Both types exist in foster care practice in China and directly impact foster children's lives outside of institutions. If foster parents cannot get correct awareness of their roles in foster care, they will further fail to manage relevant resources, ultimately may result in conflicts between the roles. Services such as coordination and training provided for foster parents are still not adequate.

Other problems impacting foster care in China include the need for professional knowledge and skill training; the need for personnel in the areas of the psychology of the disabled, education, special education, rehabilitation medicine, and especially social work; the fact that medical facilities to support foster children in rural places are seriously short in availability; a situation of few foster children of school age being accepted by local schools because of their identity as orphans; and foster children's future options such as employment (Ma et al., 2009; C. G. Wang, 1999; S. P. Zhang et al., 2001).

2.3 Involvement of NGOs in Foster Care Provision

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are having a bigger and bigger presence in China. In the Outline of the National Plan for the Development of Philanthropy (2011-2015), the Ministry of Civil Affairs releases data showing

that by 2010 a total of 440,000 social organisations had been registered in China's civil affairs departments, of which 243,000 were social groups, 195,000 were people-run non-enterprise units, and more than 2,600 were foundations. The number is double of what it was 10 years ago. In March of 2011, the national "12th Five-Year Plan" puts forward that China should foster support and legal management for social organisations, and guide them to participate in social management and services (Ministry of Civil Affaire, No. 209 [2011]). It is the first time that the government specifically mentioned "social organisation" on the national development agenda.

Social organisations together with enriched social resources form a network joining into the foster care service provision. These social networks bring in resources into the foster care service provision, promoting positive foster care outcomes. A number of evaluative studies have assessed foster children's development in the areas of physical health, mental health, education, and socialisation, and all stress the importance of social networks and social support. Zeng (2002) reports that the social resource system (welfare agencies, schools, rehabilitation centres, etc.) provides foster parents with timely and effective professional help. The more social support a foster family has, the more comprehensive care the foster children receive, and the better the relationship between foster children and parents. Other studies also confirm that a large network is likely to provide social support, and different connections provide different types of support (Y. B. Wang & Zhao, 2006; Wu, 2005).

Subsequent research focuses on how to integrate social resources into foster children's networks: should integration occur through government agencies or through NGOs? S. B. Wang (1994) argues that NGOs have greater flexibility and capacity to mobilise social resources and make effective use of them. NGOs thus can fill the gaps created by scant government resources. They are more aware of the "blind spots" missed by government institutions.

Since the first foster home village, which was set up in 2003 in Zhengzhou City and sponsored by the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) (W. M. Wang, 2009), cities with well-established NGOs have launched new foster care programs and brought in professional social workers in various forms such as government purchase of services. Many non-governmental welfare agencies are participating in these new foster-care programs and have assumed critical positions in the government-led child welfare system in China. As the role of government changes from hierarchical control to a contractual relationship with non-governmental service providers and foster parents, issues of coordination and monitoring become critical. Next, I am going to use the case of Guangzhou as an example to illustrate the involvement of NGOs in foster care provision.

Guangzhou is the capital city of Guangdong Province. In the beginning of 2005, the Civil Affairs Bureau of Guangzhou launched a pilot scheme of foster care for orphans in the Guangzhou Child Welfare Institute (GCWI). The GCWI is the main executing agency in charge of the entire procedure from

foster parent recruitment to foster family matching, including assessment, training, and home visits. Orphans selected by GCWI for this project all have mild physical or mental disabilities. Three phases of foster care reform can be defined according to the different forms of foster family matching in the case of Guangzhou.

Phase I (2005–2006): "Natural" Foster Families Run by GCW I

From 2005 to 2006, GCWI collaborated with the social work departments of universities to create an internship program. Disabled children and orphans from GCWI were matched with foster families for a one-year trial period, followed by a three-year contract. Foster centres were established in rural villages where foster families lived in close proximity. Social work students were involved in foster family assessment, training, and home visits.

Phase II (2006-2010): Family Village with Half the Sky Foundation

Recruiting "natural" foster families to provide foster care proved to be difficult, especially in urban areas. Starting in 2006, a new form of foster home named "Family Village" was put into operation. GCWI collaborated with the Half the Sky Foundation (HSF) on the program. A total of 12 foster homes were formed, each with a full-time mother, a working father, and four or five children. GCWI provides comfortable apartments in its staff dormitory. HSF provides training and financial support for the foster parents. Parents working in the foster

homes are responsible for raising the children until adulthood, enabling them to enjoy the life and love of a family. While living in the foster home, foster children receive health care services from GCWI and participate in the education and enrichment programs provided by HSF. For the children's safety, all couples involved in the program must have a guarantor who works in the government.

Phase III (2010-present): Foster Centre with GDC

In keeping with the rapid increase in governmental purchase of services, in 2010, GCWI purchased foster care services from a social welfare agency named Growth Dynamics Social Work Professional Development and Resources Centre (GDC). Social workers from GDC provide professional services in a community foster centre (normally composed of four or five foster homes located in one residential district). Two social workers are assigned to each centre. Their salaries and expenses are paid by GCWI. The Guangzhou Civil Affairs Bureau, together with the Housing Administrative Bureau, ensures that low-rent housing is available to increase the number of foster homes every year.

More and more participants have joined foster care to form a policy network, making coordination among government, NGOs, and other relevant interest groups increasingly critical. Coordinating the efforts of all the participating parties in the policy network is an urgent necessity, but it must be approached thoughtfully. The aim of the collaboration of government,

government agency (GCWI), NGOs (HSF and GDC), and foster parents in the case of Guangzhou is to provide foster care services in a privatised, market-based context, in which other relevant organisations such as schools and volunteer groups can also participate. During the implementation process, many problems have been noted in the coordination among these actors. The most critical is that the participants have no clear guidelines to follow. There is a lack of order in the implementation of policies.

2.4 New Development: Government Purchase of Foster Care Services

Before the government purchase of services, it was the residents' committee—the grass-roots organisations of self-governance by residents in urban China— that implements social service provision at the community level. Residents' committees undertake more than 130 types of management and service work, including social assistance, employment, reemployment, and family planning. Committee members can only try their best to accomplish these tasks in quantity and have no time to spend on the quality of services (S. H. Zhang, 2006).

The purpose of government purchase of services is to establish a contract-based relationship between the government and social organisations. The government monitors the service provision according to the contract and evaluates the performance of social organisations. Social organisations operates independently, making decisions and fulfil responsibilities based on the contract.

Since the Chinese government launched its pilot project of government purchase in 1996, there have been four main development stages (Jia & Su, 2009): (1) start-up stage of pilot projects (1996-1998); (2) scale-up stage of pilot projects (1998-2000); (3) transforming stage from piloting to comprehensive promotion (2000-2002); (4) developing stage to normalization and legalization (2003-present).

Since 2005, provisions of public services such as education and medical care have become the focus of government purchase of services in local practices (Han, 2009). The new model of cooperation between government agencies and non-governmental organisations in the form of government purchase of social services has also developed rapidly during the child welfare reforms. Next, I am going to use the case of Guangzhou to illustrate the new development of government purchase of foster care services from NGOs.

Guangzhou started the government purchase of social services in 2008, much earlier than in many other cities, and has moved a big step each year. The funding for government-purchased services was 4 million Yuan in 2008, 20 million Yuan in 2009, and 80 million Yuan in 2011. In 2011, Guangdong Province promulgated the "Decision on Strengthening Social Construction" and a series of supporting documents. On June 7, 2012, Guangdong published the "Catalog of Social Organisation Services Purchased by the Provincial Government in 2012 (First Batch)." In 2012, Guangzhou City arranged 2.6 billion Yuan for the government to purchase social services, in addition to

another 4 billion Yuan that Tianhe District would arrange by itself. In the same year, the National Service Organisation of Social Work Experience Communication Summit held in Guangzhou reveals that Guangzhou has built 132 integrated family service centres. By the end of June 2013, almost each street district has at least one integrated family service centre. Guangzhou City ranks the first among big cities nationwide both in the number of community service centres and the amount of government purchase of services (Tan, 2012).

Along with the rapid increase in government purchase of social services in Guangzhou, GCWI started to purchase foster care services from GDC in 2010. GCWI and GDC collaborate based on contract. GCWI takes charge of financial and administration supervision, paying 9,000 to 10,000 Yuan for each foster care centre per month, mainly covering social workers' salaries and administrative expenses. Social workers from GDC provide professional services in five foster centres: four in urban communities, one in a rural village.

As the government changes from an approach of hierarchical control to a more contractual relationship with non-governmental service providers and foster parents, coordination and monitoring become critical policy issues. Many problems emerged when these three actors engaged with one another under the new approach. Many scholars have defined NGO participation in government purchases as a form of public-private partnership. They gave "private" a broad definition, namely all the organisations beyond government (Savas, 2000). However, NGOs are different from other profit organisations in its purpose of

providing public service to empower citizens, government-NGO cooperation cannot be simply understood as a public-private partnership. Based on my pre-field observations, three problems are particularly prominent concerning the foster care provision in Guangzhou.

First, GCWI is pushed by local government to respond to their orders but often cannot meet the expectations. The local government has gradually become tired of the high expense and showed a tendency to back off, only fulfilling the roles of funder and searcher for potential collaborative agencies. The welfare institution is pushed by local government to be a supervisor for all the staff, taking responsibility for the entire foster care process, such as parent recruitment and selecting and sending foster children out, but the institution is not equipped well to deal with the situation. The absence of detailed and standardised rules of service procedure often makes staff feel lost during the policy implementation process.

Second, social workers cannot get sufficient support from foster parents when they offer professional services. When social workers provide foster parents with professional or participatory training (so that they can meet the cretiria of foster parents and receive the certificate), parents who are hired by the institution do not show any synergy. Similarly, social workers and volunteer groups also think they are only responsible to agencies or organisations that they belong to, and when institution staff made any suggestions to them, it always took a long time for things to finally settle down.

Third, foster parents complain that foster children still cannot completely integrate into the community or school. Lack of communication and unclear distribution of responsibilities block the service channel for foster children. Resources from the community, school, and other child-related organisations are still not included in the program. Foster parents can only give physical care to foster children. Foster children who live together tend to be isolated by other children in the community as an "abnormal" group.

Since the entry of NGOs into social services is an emerging trend in social welfare reform, these problems might also appear in other cities using the same practice. The Guangzhou case thus can be treated as representative of foster care, and take into research as reference for many other cities in China.

Chapter 3

Theoretical Framework

Chapter 3 is a review of theoretical framework of the relevant topics. I begin with the discussion of the development of policy network analysis, followed by the discussion of the two approaches in neo-institutionalism to explain how institutions work to direct human behaviors. I then integrate policy network analysis with neo-institutionalism, pointing out the common mechanism of rational in the two areas, redefining the mechanism from policy network structure to network interaction, and then formalizing the network institutional system. The last section of this chapter outlines the analytical framework of the present study, including concepts of network structure, network interaction, network institutional system, and network governance, as well as the causal relationships among them.

3.1 Policy Network Analysis

Public policy research was dominated by the phases approach or policy cycle study for a considerable period of time after political science became a separate academic discipline at the beginning of the 1900s (Freeman, 1986). However, the phases approach lacked a generally accepted definition of the roles of policy actors in each phase and was not able to clarify what roles each policy actor plays. In the 1950s, policy researchers simply distinguished several

analytical dimensions, such as programs, policy issues, and policies (Freeman, 1986). Since the 1970s, policy network theory has become popular and has brought the new perspective of network analysis into the fields of political science and public administration.

Policy network theory proposes that public policy process is embedded in networks formed by interactive actors (Blom-Hansen, 1997). A typical definition of policy network clarifies that policy network is a kind of union of one or several groups of organisations featured in resource interdependence (Benson, 1982). Through policy network analysis, various types of structures in diverse policy domains, such as inter-governmental relations, iron triangles, or policy networks concerning a particular issue, can be explored to interpret policy process in different ways.

Policy network opens a new way to policy process analysis. It breaks with the traditional methods focusing primarily on the state or bureaucracy. The research objects are broadened to include the network composed of government, social organisations, and individual actors—whichever actors are involved in the policy issue. From a "bottom to top" perspective, policy network analysis criticises the hierarchical administration model as "top to bottom" policy implementation, emphasising that policy actors exchange with each other in order to coordinate and collaborate instead of simply following orders or rules.

Since the 1990s, the focus of policy network analysis has changed from a concern with the relationships among individual organisations to examining the

multidirectional interactions of the entire network, such as the discussion of how to carry out public policy through networks of cooperating service providers (Agranoff, 1991; Alter & Hage, 1993; Jennings & Ewalt, 1998; O'Toole, 1997). Empirical researchers using sophisticated network analysis techniques tried to understand how exactly agencies coordinate and integrate their activities, emphasising the differences in network structure and governance (Bolland & Walson, 1994; Laumann & Knoke, 1987; Provan & Milward, 1995). What was lacking in the research during this period, however, was an examination of the relationship of these inter-organisational network characteristics and activities with measures of policy outcomes.

A policy network is composed of a relatively stable set of public and private actors. The linkages between the actors serve as channels for communication and for exchange of information, expertise, trust, and other policy resources. Rhodes and Marsh (1992) point out five key resources in a policy network: authority, money, legitimacy, information, and organisation. Hanf and Scharpf (1978) identify interdependency as the critical factor for the formation and maintenance of a policy network: in order to survive and develop, organisations depend on resources from each other through exchange and coordination. Kenis and Schneider (1991) articulate that the boundary of a given policy network was not determined by formal institutions in the first place but resulted from a process of mutual recognition dependent on functional relevance and structural embedding.

Marsh (1998) points out that the type of network could be used as the independent variable to explain policy outcomes (the dependent variable). Different types of network may result in different policy outcomes. Other scholars construct different network types to elaborate the relationships among the actors involved. For instance, Waarden (1992) presents eight network models according to their actors, functions, structure, institution, regulation, power relations, and strategies: bureaucratic network, clientelistic network, triadic network, pluralistic network, participatory statist network, captured network, corporatist network, and issue network. Among the eight types, interactions in the bureaucratic network were led by the state, whereas in the issue network the leading actor came from the society; the other six types fell in between.

The most representative view of the typology of policy network comes from Marsh and Rhodes (1992a), who propose five types of policy network—policy community, professional network, intergovernmental network, producer network, and issue network—according to five indicators: membership, interest cohesion, vertical interdependency, parallel interdependency, and resource allocation. They put the five types of policy network on a continuous spectrum from dense to sparse. At one extreme is the policy community with frequent interaction and high cohesion, whereas at the other extreme is the issue network with infrequent interaction and low cohesion. Actors in the other four types of policy network fall in between: those with tighter structures tend to be more like the policy community, while those with loose structures perform more

like the issue network. To facilitate their analysis, Marsh and Rhodes (1992a) further define policy community and issue network as the two typical policy networks based on scope of actors, degree of cohesion, power, and resources.

Policy network analysts have sought to explain the formation of state-society network composed of related interest groups, their persistence, changes over time, and the consequences of network structure for outcome policies. Since the 1970s, three schools in different countries have emerged in the development of policy network theory. American scholars have emphasised research from micro level into routine relationships among government, bureaucracy, and interest groups (Howlett & Ramesh, 1995). German academics take policy network as a governing structure to see the relationship of the state and the civil society from macro level (Kenis & Schneider, 1991), whereas British scholars treat it as an intermediary model of interest groups, to criticize the pluralism and the corporatism (Howlett & Ramesh, 1998). These three perspectives soon developed to a lengthy debate about the theoretical role of the policy network approach.

The initial focus of policy network theory is the policy process, emphasising the structural effects of policy network on policy outcomes. It assumes that if policy analysts could identify significant features of the network structure (i.e., relational pattern), then to what extent the network structure influences policy implementation would be explained and predicted. In Marsh and Rhodes (1992a) survey of several public policies of the British government,

including agriculture, health education, and human resources in youth employment, highly integrated policy networks had a predictable policy outcome, whereas those with weak links resulted in the opposite. Marsh and Rhodes (1992a) further maintain that policy community and issue network were not only different types of policy network, but also had inherently different network characteristic features. These features limited actors in the policy process, defined their roles, determined issues on the agenda, and eventually shaped the actors' behaviour. As these behaviours were constantly repeated, the policy process was institutionalised, policy preferences were shared, the actors' participation pattern and the allocation of policy resources were gradually consolidated, and the policy results were consequently influenced (Klijn, 1997). Hence, as long as a policy network exists, its policy process and policy result will be shaped and become predictable.

This view of "structure—the outcome" was soon criticised as seriously neglecting human activities in the policy network by solely emphasising structural determinism. Dowding (1995) argues that the independent variable for policy outcomes is not the structure itself but rather the actors. Based on rational choice theory, he advocates that policy outcomes are the bargaining results of network participants. Later on, Marsh and Smith (2000) admit that network structure cannot provide the chance for or set restrictions on actors' coordination automatically; rather the actors have their own ability to learn, interpret, and influence the network coordination. As a result, the policy outcomes depend on

the actors' interaction strategies. McPherson and Raab (1988) also mention that interactions make it possible to exchange resources, shape the relationship among network actors, and eventually form the policy process. As a result, policy network theory gradually shifted from "structure—the outcome" to "behaviour—the outcome." The school of behaviourism in policy network has two distinctive features: on the one hand, it considers that it is the sum of individual behaviours that leads to the overall network performance; on the other hand, it further defines policy network behaviours as the outcome of participants' self-interest calculations.

Scholars also made efforts to build a kind of "integrated" theory between structuralism and behaviourism, but they were not quite successful. Marsh and Smith (2000), for instance, develop a dialectical model attempting to explain the reciprocity among structure, behaviour, and context. Unfortunately, the dialectical model was only a theoretical ideal. No substantial research has applied this model to any particular policy network to explain its specific consequences.

Despite a rich history of descriptive research findings, policy network analysis has been criticised as being only an exploratory tool. As Dowding (1995) notes, network explanations "fail because the driving force of explanation, the independent variables, are not network characteristics but characteristics of components within the networks" (p. 37). Other theories need to be integrated to foster the practical utility of policy network analysis. Network analysis should

not only be a process of identification and definition of involved actors' network relationship. If appropriate theories can be incorporated, policy network analysis can further look into how actors decide their interest exchange and resource sharing.

3.2 Neo-institutionalism

Institutional analysis starts with the discussion of the concept of "institution." Neo-institutionalism takes institution as a crucial point in its theory development, but there is not a commonly accepted definition of institution. The most commonly used definitions are from Coadse, Alchain, and North (1991) and North (1990). According to Coadse et al. (1991), institutions are structures and mechanisms of social order and cooperation governing the behaviour of a set of individuals within a given human collectivity. North (1990) further elaborates:

> Institutions are the rules of the game in society or, more formally, are the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction. In consequence they structure incentives in human exchange, whether political, social, or economic…. Conceptually, what must be clearly differentiated are the rules from the players. The purpose of the rules is to define the way the game is played. But the objective of the team within that set of rules is to win the game…. Modelling the strategies and skills of the team as it develops is a separate process from modelling the

creation, evolution, and consequences of the rules. (pp. 3-5)

Following North (1990), the term "institution" is commonly applied to customs and behaviour patterns important to a society, as well as to particular formal organisations of government and public service. Structures and mechanisms of social order among humans and institutions are one of the principal objects of study in social sciences, including sociology, political science, and economics. A historical approach to examining the creation and evolution of institutions is a primary topic in the field (Batley & Rose, 2011).

According to Williamson (1985), neo-institutionalism no longer discusses institutional effects that may occur through static structure; instead, it takes on a dynamic perspective and assumes that institutional origin and evolution are action strategies created by social members as resolutions for uncertain situations. Hall and Taylor (1996) label three schools of thought for neo-institutionalism: historical institutionalism, rational choice institutionalism, and sociological institutionalism. For all three schools, the aim of institutional analysis is to figure out how institutions affect the behaviour of actors. The underlying mechanisms can be categorised into two modes, the "calculus approach" and the "cultural approach," whose rationales are "logic of consequence" and "logic of appropriateness," respectively (March & Olsen, 1998).

Historical institutionalists use both calculus and cultural approaches to specify how institutions affect action. Rational choice institutionalists emphasise

the calculus approach to illustrate the strategic interactions among actors at the micro level. Sociological institutionalists pay more attention to the cultural approach to interpret the meaning, scripts, and symbols at the macro level. Both approaches seek to elucidate the institutional impact through answering three questions (Hall & Taylor, 1996): "How do actors behave? What role does the institutional system play? Why does the institutional system persist over time?" (p.939)

In response to these questions, the calculus approach is used to see how resources (authority, money, legitimacy, organisation, and information) are used as transaction costs during the coordination and constraining process among actors. Actors behave in an instrumental and strategic interaction so as to maximise their preferences to finally reach equilibrium via calculation. This approach is obviously based on individualism and is further developed by rational choice institutionalism, which emphasises the role of strategic interaction in the determination of political outcomes. Here, the institutional effect is considered as the contract based on fixed rules to reduce uncertain loss or influence. As Hall and Taylor (1996) elaborate, institutions structure interactions by affecting the range and sequence of alternatives on the choice agenda or by providing information and enforcement mechanisms that reduce uncertainty about the corresponding behaviour of others and allow "gains from exchange" (p.945), thereby leading actors toward particular calculations and potentially better social outcomes.

The calculus approach is inevitably weak when it encounters inefficiency and trans-rational phenomena. Cultural approach under the logic of appropriateness is more insightful. According to March and Olsen (1989), actors are presumed to "follow rules that associate particular identities to particular situations, approaching individual opportunities for action by assessing similarities between current identities and choice dilemmas and more general concepts of self and situations" (p.951). Actors' interaction thus is associated with identities more than with interests, and with the selection of rules more than with individual rational expectations. Sociological institutionalism prioritises this approach based on an understanding of culture as shared attitudes or values. Institutions are defined as "not just formal rules, procedures, or norms, but the symbol systems, cognitive scripts, and moral templates" (Hall & Taylor, 1996) (p.947). Institutions position themselves as filters of morality and cognition, guiding actors' conduct preferences, identities, and self-images during networking.

Although the three schools of thought for neo-institutionalism tend to develop in separate spheres, March and Olsen (1998), who define the two approaches, argue that the two logics are not mutually exclusive: "Political actors are constituted both by their interests, by which they evaluate their expected consequences, and by the rules embedded in their identities and political institutions" (p.952). They calculate consequences and follow rules, and the relationship between the two is often subtle.

Both calculus and cultural approaches may be involved in the analysis of particular policy actions, either in the form of one dominating the other or the two alternating in different phases. In this case, investigation of the multi-logical actions of actors involved in the policy network becomes essential. A multi-logic institutional analysis assumes that the institutional system rarely changes based on any one mechanism but rather evolves during a process based on actors' multiple logics. When actors interact with one another, some may change their action logics, which together may lead to a different policy outcome.

3.3 Integrating Policy Network Analysis and Neo-institutionalism

According to Birkland (2005), the policy process in policy analysis involves various aspects including agenda setting, policy formation, formulation, deliberation and adoption, policy implementation, and policy evaluation. While the whole policy process is always dynamic and involves policy re-formulation during implementation, the foster care policy network that this study examines mainly involves the policy implementation stage of the policy process. As introduced in Chapter 1, the existing policy network structure and the interactions within the network are the research objectives. The network structure is the static form for the policy implementation, whereas the interactions and their logics are the dynamic performs of the policy implementation. The analysis is focusing on more on the 'implementation' rather than the 'formulation' process of 'policy analyses.' Policy network analysts

propose that policy network is a model of interactive relationship between the nation and social actors in the policy process (Waarden, 1992). Neo-institutionalism declares that institutions constrain and refract politics but they are never the sole cause of outcomes, instead, they point to the ways that institutions structure these battles and in so doing, influence their outcomes (Steinmo, Thelen, & Longstreth, 1992). These two theoretical approaches are concerned with the same issue but from different perspectives: policy network analysis focuses on the structure of the interaction models in political life, whereas neo-institutionalism focuses on how these models are maintained.

Scholars such as Blom-Hansen (1997) suggest that the neo-institutionalist perspective might be brought into policy network analysis, so as to understand the policy network as an institution. This integrated approach views policy network as a functioning variable between the interactive relationship and the institutional system. Accordingly, the linkage between policy network and policy outcome changes from "structure—the outcome" and "behaviour—the outcome" to "policy network—the institutional system—the outcome" and "the institutional system—policy network—the outcome."

Unlike the traditional policy analysis approach, the integrated approach does not insist on using the structuralism of network analysis to explain the policy outcome, but rather employs individualism to explain the network behaviours embedded in both the network structure and the institutional system. On the one hand, the network behaviours are embedded in the policy network

formed around a specific issue, which provides the platform for the actors to interact. On the other hand, the network behaviours are embedded in the institutional system; each actor can only take actions according to the institutional system's principles and institutions. Depending on the action arena, the action context, and the corresponding action logics, analysts can forecast the actors' behaviours in the policy network and the consequences, so as to annotate how the policy network determines the policy outcome.

Empirical analysis based on neo-institutionalism focuses on explaining how regulations are established during interaction and what motivates actors to continue the game. First, institutions reflect social members' approval of a stable game regulation for collective action. The regulation is constructed by custom logics through repeated practice, so as to reduce the transaction cost in collective actions (North, 1990). Second, neo-institutionalism switched the research approach from scientific explanation to contextual interpretation (D. Y. Chen, 2002), which can enhance the explanatory capacity of network structure when analysing the policy network.

In policy network analysis, in order to join the collective action, actors must accept the action logics appropriate for the networking. These logics reflect the network structure characteristics. They undergo the process of institutionalisation and become part of the institutional system (March & Olsen, 1989). To maintain the relationship in the policy network, actors choose to continue to input resources, keep playing, and create new games (Hajer, 1989).

Therefore, the network structure and the actors' interactions based on the actors' cognition, strategies, and action logics together can explain the institutionalisation process in the policy network.

Thus, by integrating policy network analysis and neo-institutionalism, I further propose that the analytical framework for empirical research works as follows. The regulation in the policy network is the custom logics resulting from actors' collective actions. These logics reflect the characteristics of the network structure, so that they are appropriate for the networking process. Actors who wish to continue in the policy network will have to accept and follow the regulation. The process of acceptance is the process of interplay of multiple logics during collective actions. Once all actors accept the regulation, the institutional system is established and will further direct each actor's subsequent actions. The whole process moves forward in a spiral, and this explains how the institutional system is established and why it works.

3.4 Foster Care Policy Network and the Present Study

Since the 1990s, in the U.S. and other developed countries, the provision of services to foster children and their families have increasingly privatized through purchase-of-service partnerships between the public and nonprofit sectors. State-level child welfare agencies implement policies by contracting with and monitoring nonprofit agencies to ensure compliance with legislative statutes and regulations (Brown, Potoski, & Slyke, 2006; Slyke, 2003). There are

national foster care associations in the UK and the U.S., who play a very important role in foster care management (O'Brien, 1997). They are funded by central governments, by local authority service contracts and by the income from sales of publicity materials, training service contracts and by the income from sales of publicity materials, training courses, grants, and donations. The NFCA produces major training programs, a wide range of publications, telephone advice line, mediation, and insurance cover.

In UK, an authoritative publication by A. Jones and Bilton (1994) proposed that "The separation of purchasers from providers offers a whole new range of opportunities for fragmentation." (p.39). The authors assert that daily care providers often have the best insight into children's needs and artificial separation from care managers is likely to be unhelpful. Greater fragmentation of roles may also endanger effective communication between professionals, which could have important consequences for child protection (Berridge & Brodie, 1998). Furthermore, the Welsh authorities revealed that respite care arrangements for children with disabilities were usually managed within adult rather children's services and provided by the voluntary sector. It was responsible for childcare plans or placement reviews (Pithouse, Young, & Butler, 1994).

Child welfare research in this vein has identified relationships between organisational culture and caseworker job satisfaction and service effectiveness (Glisson, 2007), staff attitudes and inter-organisational collaboration (B. D.

Smith & Mogro-Wilson, 2007), and caseworkers' perceptions of parents and parental participation in program services (Littell & A.Tajima, 2000).

These studies suggest that considerable differences may exist in how service providers respond to managed care and other performance-based reimbursement systems. No study to date, however, has estimated the magnitude of inter-organisational service disparities from the perspective of policy design within or across child welfare system.

Policy network approach is rarely applied in research on foster care in China. Most studies are either project evaluations or textual analysis. Little is known about the details of the policy implementation process and how to coordinate the child welfare agencies and social organisations involved. The few studies about foster care policy lack in-depth analysis based on empirical data. For instance, Wu and Han (2006) present five dimensions for the development of foster care policy: resources, participants, focus groups, targets, and context. He identifies capital, human resources, technical support, and management as the key factors for policy implementation. Zeng (2002) proposes that clear policy targets would lead to service effectiveness, and problem-oriented policy should be widely applied.

Actors involved in foster care policy include government, social service agencies, and foster families. During the socialisation of social welfare reform, when government transfers the care of orphans to families and agencies in the society, government functions in the field of child welfare are those of

administration and supervision rather than provision of direct services to foster families and other participants. In this policy process, government and other participants connect in a managerial relationship that should have clearly specified obligations and rights of each party, documented in the foster care contract.

For many years of foster care policy implementation in China, local government remained responsible for funding, policy design, and management, even though welfare agencies and other social organisations had been involved in the policy network for a long time. Since this kind of government-centred practice was rooted in the old administration system, it substantially obstructed the development of foster care service grounded in the new era of "socialisation of social welfare." Diversified policy subjects and complicated interests make traditional administrative orders or state-centred control measures out of date.

Referring to government's policy orientation, different social organisations and interest groups with diverse functional resources have participated in the foster care policy implementation process. They are mutually independent as well as mutually related, forming a policy network. In order to achieve the policy outcome, each actor's roles, their corresponding responsibilities, the rules generalised during the policy process, and the institutional system need to be clarified. It is therefore necessary to introduce policy network analysis into the field of child welfare research in China. The analysis should focus on the relationships among participating actors and their

interactions during the policy implementation process, emphasising that the policy issues should be resolved through the network governance instead of the hierarchical bureaucracy. When applied to the field of child welfare, policy network analysis clarifies the roles and functions of each actor and better reflects the relationship among government organisations, foster families, and relevant NGOs during the reform process. Such analysis cannot be reduced to the properties, or attributes, of individual agents (Scott, 1991).

3.5 Analytical Framework

Policy network in this study is defined as a kind of relationship among a set of autonomous but interdependent actors with common interests involved in the process of policy implementation. By introducing the calculus and cultural approaches from neo-institutionalism to policy network analysis, I interpret the policy implementation process through examining both the network structure and its actors' multi-logic interactions.

3.5.1 Structure

Rhodes (1988) identifies four dimensions of policy network structure: interests, membership, interdependence, and resources. Waarden (1992) specifies seven dimensions for the typology of policy network: (1) number and type of actors, (2) function of networks, (3) structure, (4) institutionalisation, (5) rules of conduct, (6) power relations, and (7) actor strategies. Considering these

earlier discussions, this study focuses on the following three dimensions that characterise policy network: membership, degree of cohesion, and resource allocation.

Membership. For membership, while considering the policy context, attention will also be paid to the most active participants in the policy process, through checking their motivations and conditions. Rhodes and Marsh (1992) propose two dimensions of membership conditions for actors in a network: number of actors and interest cohesion. Interest cohesion is a kind of characteristic on the network level but not on actors' individual level. It means that through inherent properties of networking, an individual participant's particular resources will be redistributed and that participant's personal character becomes structural.

In the policy community, the number of actors is very limited; some groups are deliberately excluded from the decision making process. The motivation and basis of actors' willingness to join the network are simply those benefits embedded in the network. On the other hand, the issue network contains a large number of actors with no obvious boundaries and limits for new members. The interest cohesion is weak, embracing several forms of interest or even conflict among members.

Degree of cohesion. Degree of cohesion means density, persistency, whether there is a consensus among all core actors, and how they deal with conflicts. Density in this policy network analysis will not be computed as a

number, as social network analysts often do (Borruso, 2005). In this study density refers to how well connected the actors in the policy network are relative to the connections that are possible. Density is intended to give a sense of how capable communication channels in the network are of exchanging resources among the network's participants. An ideal, fully connected network would have the highest density for each actor's contact in high frequency. Network density is intended only as a rough guide to connectedness and needs to be interpreted intelligently with other items like persistency and consensus.

In Marsh and Rhodes (1992a) ideal policy network of policy community, actors interact in high frequency and quality. Their membership, value, and policy output persist in strength and length, and they can normally achieve a certain consensus in value system and faith identity. The other ideal type of issue network, because of its wide range of participants, has unstable frequency and its persistence varies in relation to different issues. In addition, there is no or a low threshold for membership, so actors' entrance is too free to achieve consensus; even when they do, conflicts always exist.

Persistence is defined as the strength of connection in network, and is used to test the stability of the policy network. Persistence exists when the relationships among actors can always preserve the previous status no matter how other conditions are modified. Analysis of actors' relationship persistence can reveal the strength or weakness of each actor's contribution to the persistence of the whole policy network. These strong or weak contributors can

be further analysed to see under what kind of conditions they contribute to the persistence of the relationship (Saavedra, Stouffer, Uzzi, & Bascompte, 2011). Persistence on an individual level may not always contribute to network-level stability. When persistence between actors at the individual level shows an opposite direction to network-level interest, persistence may damage the policy network process. Only when consensus presents at the same time can the whole policy network achieve significant persistence.

Consensus means a policy-networking process that seeks the consent of all actors. Consensus may be defined as an acceptable resolution, one that can be supported, even if it is not the "favourite" of each individual. Consensus is, first, general agreement, and second, network solidarity of interest or sentiment. Couzin et al. (2011) claim that outcomes of the consensus process include better decisions, because through including the input of all stakeholders the resulting proposals may better address all potential concerns; better implementation, because a process that includes and respects all parties and generates as much agreement as possible sets the stage for greater cooperation in implementing the resulting decisions; and better group relationships, because a cooperative, collaborative group atmosphere can foster greater group cohesion and interpersonal connection.

Resource allocation. Resource allocation refers to the power relationships among core actors and the distribution of authority that can explain the policy outcome. Analysis of resource allocation focuses on two facets: what

kinds of resources each actor owns and how they are allocated. Rhodes and Marsh (1992) propose that organisations exchange assets for their own interests and tasks in the network. These assets include: (1) authority—the power of policy decision and to authorise other organisations, institutions or groups, normally exclusive to government; (2) money—financial resources; (3) legitimacy—basis of public opinion or representation of certain interest groups; (4) information—obtaining or ability to obtain conditions for policy making; and (5) system—human resources, techniques, facility, land, etc.

In the policy community, each actor owns certain resources and keeps exchanging with others to form a stable structure. Resource allocation is decided by the leader in the network, illustrating a hierarchical relationship. The leader and other actors interact in either close or loose relations. In the issue network, actors' resources show huge disparity; some own very limited assets. Resource distribution is based on negotiation, not fixed in the structure as in the policy community. As a result, the network fails to standardise its interaction, and the relationship among actors cannot be stabilised.

3.5.2 Interactions

Actors in a policy network interact with one another based on multiple logics. The logics can be summarised from each actor's behaviour in terms of how service is offered, how problems during process are typically solved, whether there is any deviation between the institution and practice, and why and

how. When special logics have formed to direct each actor's behaviour, they embed in collaboration to further form a multi-logical institutional system of policy network. Therefore, multi-logical actions lead to the multi-logical institutional system. This multi-logical institutional system is identified with network level purpose and permanence. It transcends individual actors' logics and functions in the interplay of multi-logics, which means that the institutional system rarely changes based on any sole mechanism but rather evolves during a process based on actors' multiple logics. The institutional system then makes and enforces the rules of the network governing cooperative network behaviours.

Actors involved in the network take the structure of the network as the action arena. Only those logics suitable for the network structure are selected to finally form the institutional system. Like actors in a stage play, their performance is limited to the arena in terms of shapes, sizes, furniture, and equipment. To figure out why the network institutional system always keeps working to guide actors' interaction, it is necessary to bring in features of the policy network structure point by point—membership, degree of cohesion, and resources allocation—to explain the underlying causal relationship. For instance, how does membership define each actor's roles so as to influence their actions in the network? To what extent does degree of cohesion affect actors' exchange of resources in the network? Can resource allocation determine how each actor acts and interacts in the network and according to which approaches?

3.5.3 Governance

With NGOs increasingly assuming prominent positions in the public policy network, the effectiveness of traditional forms of governance has been questioned. In addition, forms of exchange in the policy network have become more social (i.e., more dependent on relationships, mutual interests, and reputation) and less subject to formal structures of authority (S. R. Smith & Lipsky, 1993). Network governance thus becomes essential during the policy implementation process.

Network governance is most commonly applied to the provision of social services by partnerships between the government and NGOs (Vogenbeck, 2007). The success of network governance has been well documented (Wagenaar, 2003). What is lacking is an examination of how network governance emerges and thrives.

Analysis of network governance relies on two key concepts: patterns of interaction in exchange relationships and the flow of resources among independent units. The patterns may be lateral or horizontal patterns of exchange (Powell, 1990), long-term recurrent exchanges that create interdependencies (Larson, 1992), informal inter-firm collaborations (Kreiner & Schultz, 1993), or reciprocal lines of communication (Powell, 1990). Some studies highlight the patterns of relations among individuals, groups, and organisations (Dubini & Aldrich, 1991), strategic long-term relationships across markets (Gerlach &

Lincoln, 1992), and bonds among a collection of firms (Granovetter, 1994).

The flow of resources is mainly among non-hierarchical clusters of organisations that are legally separate and independent (Alter & Hage, 1993; Miles & Snow, 1986; Perrow, 1992). According to C. Jones, Hesterly, and Borgatti (1997), network governance relies on a structured association of autonomous firms and non-profit agencies that are engaged in creating products or services. The association is based on implicit and open-ended contracts, which allow the parties involved to adapt to environmental contingencies and to coordinate and safeguard exchanges.

The relationship between the government and NGOs especially in the government purchase of service form has been discussed as a 'public-private' relationship for a long time (Kouwenhoven, 1993; Osborne, 2002). Since public relationship generally refers to the government-oriented, and the private relationship is market-oriented from the economic area. NGOs, described as the third party government by Salamon (1980), got the permission from the state to enter into the public service arena and carried the expectation of borrowing advantages from the market-oriented private relationship into the public political arena. As I have already stated in Section 1.1, many western developed countries have already gone through the process of market-oriented public service reform, and China has also been exploring ways to promote the socialization of social welfare.

Network governance is an ideal mechanism of the market management

to avoid the classic disadvantage of market failure. The two key concepts that I discussed above are representative conditions for network governance. Since NGOs are required in government purchase of service to show their superiority over the market private relationship management, network governance is also the best choice in 'public-private' relationship, as well as the ideal management mechanism between NGOs and governments. Based on these arguments, I conceive that three conditions are necessary for network governance to emerge and thrive: interdependence, standardisation, and autonomy.

Interdependence. Interdependence is crucial to the creation of a structure. By working interdependently over time parties create familiar patterns of exchange that are facilitated by the network and in turn create and recreate the network structure (C. Jones et al., 1997). Network governance is a dynamic process because the environment is rarely stable and predictable, and the demands of interested parties are always uncertain. Interdependence requires that exchanges within the network are not completely random or stiflingly uniform but always meet actors' uncertain demands in a stable way. Frequent contact is also important because it embeds the structure, providing a foundation to coordinate and safeguard exchanges effectively. Interdependence in terms of a stable supply of assets for diverse demands and frequent interactions is a basic condition. Parties must frequently exchange resources and power in a common pursuit and rely on each other.

Standardisation. Standardisation ensures a structured network. Such a

network has clear goals and patterns of interaction that represent a clear division of responsibilities and rights. The level of standardisation often determines the success of the networking process. It allows network governance to achieve effective outcomes by means of formal and well-defined operational rules. When the network is under pressure from many sources, standardisation meets these demands with a series of efficiently assigned tasks. It reduces behavioural uncertainty, guarantees resources, and provides governance that is knowledgeable about the relations between interested parties. The extent of standardisation is an important way of distinguishing one form of network governance from another.

Autonomy. Autonomy refers to each party's independence and equality among all parties. Autonomy comes from a high level of asset specialty and systematic self-management, which requires independent control of assignments, obligations, and responsibilities. Networks are not merely resource-sharing platforms but also resource markets. In relationships that involve purchases, there must be accurate transaction cost calculations. In order to be legally independent units in network governance, parties are required to be autonomous. Autonomy equalises all parties during exchanges and fosters competitiveness. Network governance relies on the autonomous interactions of involved parties.

No single condition propels the emergence of network governance; rather, a combination of conditions is required for network governance to emerge, thrive, and attract interests due to its comparative advantages over markets and

hierarchies. Based on the integrated analytical framework defined above, this study takes the entire foster care policy network of Guangzhou as the research objective, describes features of the network structure, analyses the actors' action logics, and discusses whether the network structure and its actors' interactions enable policy to be implemented as designed. The analysis consists of three steps: first, to describe the foster care policy network in Guangzhou, identify actors involved, and specify network structure features of membership, degree of cohesion, and resource allocation; second, to explore network interactions, and to figure out each actor's action logics and their reciprocal influence; and third, to explain the current institutional logics based on features of the network structure. In addition, the research also investigates to what extent the conditions of network governance have been fulfilled in the case of foster care in Guangzhou and whether this policy network can thrive in the current social and political context of China.

Chapter 4

Research Methods

4.1 Case Study of Guangzhou

A case study approach was adopted as the main research method. Robert K. Yin (1993) identifies three types of case study: exploratory, explanatory, and descriptive. Exploratory cases are a prelude to research. This type of case study is used to explore those situations in which the intervention being evaluated has no clear, single set of outcomes (Robert. K. Yin, 2003). Explanatory cases are often used for causal investigations. This type of case study would be used if you were seeking to answer a question that sought to explain the presumed causal links in real-life interventions that are too complex for the survey or experimental strategies. In evaluation language, the explanations would link program implementation with program effects (Robert. K. Yin, 2003). Descriptive cases must reflect a descriptive theory, developed before starting the project. This type of case study is used to describe an intervention or phenomenon and the real-life context in which it occurred (Robert. K. Yin, 2003). Stake (1995) proposes another three classifications of case study: intrinsic (when the researcher has an interest in the case), instrumental (when the case is used to reveal otherwise unseen depths), and collective (when a group of cases are studied). Using Yin's (1993) and Stake's (1995) classifications, the present case study can be described as explanatory and instrumental. It is

explanatory because the study is searching the causal link between the network structure, interaction, and its institutional system during the policy implementation process. It is also instrumental because it is supportive and helpful to provide insight into the foster care policy network in Guangzhou and trying to redefine some integrative concepts and trying to develop a theory.

Guangzhou was chosen as the focus of the study. Foster care in Guangzhou underwent a transition from reliance on foster families to reliance on simulated foster homes—a common trend in foster care reform in China. However, Guangzhou is unique in its trial of government purchase of foster care services, which has not been the practice in other cities. Since the government initiated foster care reform in 2005, Guangzhou has gained a wealth of experience in running various foster-care programs. It is therefore a good candidate for analysis and comparison.

Case studies tend to provide in-depth information and intimate details. They are well suited to the examination of the implementation of policies at the micro level and the realisation of expected outcomes. Since the main purpose of this study is to look closely at foster care policy implementation, the case study method is appropriate. It allows us to examine the details of a policy network and the interactions among actors in a specific context. Moreover, there are currently few parties involved in the policy network of foster care in Guangzhou. A case study is particularly appropriate when the sample size is known to be small.

Qualitative analysis applied in this case study aims to gather an in-depth understanding of human behaviour and the reasons that govern such behaviour. The qualitative method investigates the why and how of decision-making, not just what, where, and when. Hence, smaller but focused samples are more often needed than large samples. In the conventional view, qualitative methods produce information only on the particular cases studied, and more general conclusions are only propositions (informed assertions).

As Mahoney (2007) proposed that qualitative analysis has three distinct advantages: it emphasizes 'with-in case analysis', in which smaller but focused samples are more often needed than large samples (Collier, Mahoney, & Seawright, 2004); it has advantage in conceptual definition and redefinition, which is a process of matching exact evidence to the context of conception (Elman, 2005; George & Bennett, 2005); and case-oriented and close observation avoid big bias or data error when doing measurement and understanding the case (Brady, 2004). Since the present thesis is based on case study and the purpose of research is to investigate the relationships among government agencies, non-governmental organizations, professional bodies, and social groups in foster care service policy implementation in Guangzhou, qualitative analysis is more appropriate.

4.2 Selection of Respondents

To decide who are the core actors in the policy network, I relied on the

name lists provided by relevant actors during my field work. The interviewees from welfare agencies were selected according to the name lists provided by the Guangzhou Child Welfare Institution (GCWI), Half the Sky Foundation (HSF), Growth Dynamics Social Work Professional Development and Resources Centre (GDC), and by the group of foster parents according to their answers to the question: "Who do you think are the important institutional partners in running the foster care programs in Guangzhou and why do you think so?" GCWI was the first to provide me with an agency list, and I then posed the same question to those agencies whose names were mentioned on the list. Only those agencies common to all the lists provided were considered as core actors in the policy network and included in the study. Through interviews with spokespeople from the agencies in the name lists, I identified four main participants as the core actors in the foster care policy network in Guangzhou: one government agency (GCWI), two NGOs (HSF and GDC), and the group of foster parents.

In practice, there is another participant, the volunteer group, which frequently acts with social workers in the foster care network. However, the core actors described above did not name this group as a main partner in the name list. Except for GDC, the other core actors do not think the volunteer group makes a particular contribution to foster care policy, and it has no professional assets to exchange with others. When asking other actors about this, GCWI's answer was the most representative:

Volunteer group is everywhere in our institution, they didn't come

particularly for foster children. Their appearance is random and never

specifically mentioned in foster care policy or rules. They aren't

profession, just some students and warm-hearted people in society.

(Interview 2)

Even GDC who listed volunteer group in the name list also said that

"Indeed, volunteers help us a lot, we are trying to manage them as our members,

but people show in the centre always change, their membership is not significant"

(Interview 4). Therefore, the volunteer group is not identified as a core actor in

the policy network nor included in this study.

A total of 20 in-depth interviews were conducted between 2010 and 2013.

The interviewees were three GCWI chief officers, one HSF director, two GDC

directors, four GCWI staff members, one HSF staff member, three GDC staff

members, five foster parents, and one government officer. When selecting these

respondents, I tried to recruit staff members at different ranks in order to have a

more comprehensive understanding of the daily operation and policy

implementation in those agencies. I was able to get in touch and interview every

core actor involved in the three phases of foster care reform in Guangzhou. The

five foster parents were recruited from different foster centres run by HSF and

GDC, two from HSF and three from GDC respectively. Some are from rural

natural foster families and some from urban foster homes. To group foster

parents in diverse backgrounds: hired couples in urban foster homes are mostly

migrant couples from other cities with low income; those rural nature foster

families are also with low income, and have their own children together with foster children. One of the three couples as foster parents in GDC foster centres was nature foster family served in rural foster centre. Since foster parents in rural natural foster families were chosen by GCWI at initial stage to be homogeneity in purpose, the one natural foster parent was thought to be representative enough in this study.

4.3 Date Collection

Data were collected through participant observation and in-depth interviews conducted between 2010 and 2013. Actually my participant observation has started very early ever since the phase I of foster care reforms in Guangzhou. I was appointed as the project organizer for the first group of 50 foster children sent out of GCWI in 2005. I was involved in the whole process of home visiting, selecting and evaluating foster families, and matching foster children into those families. The experience was described in my master thesis (W. Lu, 2006). In 2010, I began my follow-up fieldwork at GCWI, observing new foster parents undergo the entire process from registration to settling down in the neighbourhood with a foster family. I was then employed as a student staff member in a community service centre run by GDC. I worked alongside the social workers and participated in all their daily activities, including home visiting, case consultation, and staff meetings. I also conducted home visits to a family village run by HSF, located in the GCWI staff residential district. In 2013,

I spent two months interning in the Department of Social Work of the Guangzhou Civil Affairs Bureau and collected further data about the new development of government purchase of social services in Guangzhou.

The interviews were semi-structured. Chief Officers and directors were asked the same questions about background information, collaboration procedure, internal regulations, difficulties encountered during the collaboration process, and hopes held for the future. Questions for staff members and foster parents went more deeply into details of daily activities, such as how service was offered, how problems were typically solved during the collaboration process, whether there was any deviation between the institution and practice, and why and how. Front-line staff members were asked to tell some typical stories about provision of services. I also observed a number of group discussions among staff members about their work experience and among foster parents during training sections. Towards the end of the field work, I interviewed the Director of the Department of Social Work in the Guangzhou Civil Affairs Bureau to check the data I had collected from the welfare agencies and foster parents. The interviews ranged in length from 30 minutes to more than 2 hours; on average they took 1.5 hours. The interviews are cited in this study by means of an interview number. No names or means of identification are provided except for those in particular administrative or management positions. For a complete list of the interviews, please see Appendix A.

In addition to the data collected from participant observation and

in-depth interviews, archive data from GCWI, HSF, and GDC were also consulted. The archive data in this study include three types: relevant child welfare policies, project agreements and job contracts, and foster family records, work reports, meeting minutes, etc. Since files could not be copied or removed from the agencies, I read through the files and the evaluation reports concerning foster children and took notes. For a complete list of archive documents, please see Appendix B.

4.4 Data Analysis

Data from the different sources were synthesised and coded to highlight the mutual relationships and the corresponding actions of the government and the various child welfare agencies during the reform process. A series of key words were first identified based on the analytical framework that I developed from policy network analysis and neo-institutionalism (for the list of key words, please see Appendix A). According to these key words, I then examined the policy network structure, the multi-logical institutional system, and their interactions based on data from relevant observation, interviews, and archives. Data collected through different approached were triangulated to ensure credibility and confirmability (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). The actual analysis was conducted in three steps as described below.

The first step was to examine the policy network structure and features of the network. The analysis was based on data from the semi-structured

interviews with administrators in charge of the welfare agencies: the head of GCWI, the executive director of GDC, and the district consultant of HSF. Three dimensions of policy network—membership, cohesion, and resource allocation—were coded and highlighted, in terms of density, persistence, consensus, etc. For membership analysis, foster family records were browsed to know about the backgrounds of foster parents, relevant policies were learned to understand requirement for the core actors involved in the policy network. Project agreements and job contracts were reviewed to see how responsibilities of each actor in the policy network were defined on paper. I compare the foster care policy network in Guangzhou to Marsh and Rhodes (1992a) two extreme ideal policy networks—policy community and issue network—and discuss which ideal the Guangzhou foster care policy network is most likely to resemble. The findings are reported in Chapter 5.

The second step, which focused on network interactions, investigated how actors in the policy network exchange and under what kind of institutional system. Interview data embracing the diversion between policy design and implementation were coded to reveal how the micro-level policy implementation diverted from the macro-level policy design during the process of service provision. I presented the typical stories of how difficulties and conflicts were resolved in the policy network. These stories were reconciled based on the information I collected when participating in the meetings of foster parents and staff members from HSF and GDC. Work reports and meeting minutes were also

checked to know more about practical interaction among actors, and to confirm the problems during service coded from interview data. Meanwhile, records of discussions during foster parent training sessions were checked to determine whether the responsibilities defined in the project agreements and job contracts were actually carried out. In my analysis, I paid a great deal of attention to the participants' solutions and considerations which embody in their either cultural or calculus approach. I analysed new rules settled during the conflict resolving process as the equilibrium resulting from the participants' multi-logic interactions under either appropriate or expected consequence logic. In doing so, I presented the multi-logical institutional system pertaining to the core actors' constant interactions. The findings are included in Chapter 6.

The third step of the analysis was to check how the network structure features reflect on the multi-logical institutional system and figure out the causes for the logics of the institutional system. Based on the findings from the analysis in the first two steps, I investigated whether there were any elements of the network structure that influenced how the core actors decided which logics they would like to choose when interacting with one another. I report these findings in Chapter 6 as well.

I also analysed the network governance in the government purchase of services in the sub-network of foster care policy in Guangzhou, which I discuss in Chapter 7. Because government purchase of services is going to be GCWI's main service model, the form of GCWI's current cooperation with HSF will

soon be replaced by one the same as that with GDC. Analysis of the sub-network (consisting of GCWI, GDC, and foster parents) is therefore necessary for the network's further development.

The three parties involved were given roles—GCWI as provider, GDC as producer, and foster parents as consumers—in order to clarify the public vs. private relationship involved in purchasing such services. Data from various sources were combined and coded to highlight the three conditions for network governance: interdependence, standardisation, and autonomy. The analysis focused on how these three conditions were fulfilled (or not) during the most recent foster care reform in the case of Guangzhou.

Analysis for interdependence relied primarily on interviews with chief officers, directors, and foster parents, by discovering their demands and frequency of exchange. For standardisation, archive data such as project agreements and job contracts were reviewed to see how responsibilities were defined on paper. Staff members were asked about the typical problems encountered during the process of collaboration, and records of discussions during foster parent training sessions were checked to determine whether the responsibilities defined in the project agreements and job contracts were actually carried out. For autonomy, a number of typical decision-making cases were cited to illustrate how authority was allocated in the policy network. The analysis was primarily based on interviews with administrative staff members, who were asked how they dealt with funding distribution, authority allocation, supervision,

and so on. Archive data like administration rules were also consulted to supplementally understand the status of autonomy of the involved actors.

Chapter 5
Network Structure

This chapter examines the structure and features of the foster care policy network in Guangzhou. The three dimensions of network structure—membership, degree of cohesion, and resource allocation—are discussed. The typology of the policy network is determined: whether it is more like the policy community or the issue network defined by Marsh and Rhodes (1992a).

5.1 Membership

In order to figure out how membership works in the policy network of foster care in Guangzhou, the core actors and their interest cohesion should be examined first, that is, who are they, what are their motivations, and do their individual interests achieve consensus when networking?

5.1.1 Core actors

As described in chapter 4, I identified four main participants as the core actors in the foster care policy network in Guangzhou: one government agency (GCWI), two NGOs (HSF and GDC), and the group of foster parents.

GCWI was founded in 1957, replacing the Canada Missionary Sisters of Immaculate Conception Orphanage established in 1933. As a government

agency, GCWI receives funding from the municipal government and is under the direct supervision of the Guangzhou Civil Affairs Bureau. Its 1,000 beds are intended for mentally and physically disabled children (particularly those who are not likely to be completely rehabilitated) and children with no parents as a result of death or abandonment. GCWI also supports the teenagers who were raised at the institute. It combines the characteristics of a shelter with those of a hospital, housing advanced medical equipment and comprehensive health care facilities.

In 2005, GCWI set up a separate office to administer the new foster care program, with six staff members acting as supervisors in addition to their normal administrative duties, and five community foster centres providing professional social work services. There are now around 250 foster children being raised outside GCWI in society, more than half living in 26 natural families in two rural villages along with foster parents' own children. Around 100 are living in 31 foster homes located in 6 foster centres. HSF services 11 homes, and 20 homes are serviced by GDC. There are also hundreds of foster children being raised by social organisations like the XinFu Child Institution, in the form of institutional foster care. This is also a kind of collaboration of the government with NGOs; but since it is still in the form of institutional care rather than family care, it is not covered in this study.

HSF is the first NGO to launch the foster family program with GCWI. It was established in 1998 by a group of American parents who adopted Chinese

orphans. It has been planning and operating programs that provide one-on-one, nurturing caretaking, early education, and individual learning opportunities for children in China's welfare institutions, supplementing the basic care provided by the Chinese government. HSF currently provides such care, which neuroscientists have found is crucial for children's healthy development, for 3,000 children in social welfare institutions all over China. It operates all its programs in collaboration with the Ministry of Civil Affairs. Since September 15, 2005, HSF joined the China Center of Adoption Affairs (CCAA) to help implement the Chinese government's ambitious new initiative of expanding the care for orphaned children to include nurture and individual attention as well as food, shelter, and medical care. "We are giving our full support to help bring about this new era in child care in Chinese social welfare institutions," says HSF's executive director Jenny Bowen (Half the Sky Foudation, 2005).

According to the home website of HSF as the district consultant shown, the four main programs HSF collaborates on with the local civil affairs bureau are: an infant nurture program offering stimulation and individual attention to enhance healthy development; a preschool program offering an innovative child-centred curriculum to prepare children to enter community schools at a level with their peers; a youth program providing preparation for independent living through esteem-building mentorships, vocational training, and university sponsorships; and a family village program providing permanent loving families for children whose developmental and physical challenges make adoption

unlikely. HSF also offers special care for special needs through approaches to integrating children with special needs into HSF-inspired programs and, through its China Care Home, medical treatment and pre/post-operative nurturing care for babies and toddlers with life-threatening conditions (Half the Sky Foudation, 2012).

HSF first collaborated with GCWI in 2006. The foster care office welcomed the idea of family village. GCWI soon combined the idea of family village with its foster care project in the form of foster home on a trial basis. HSF sponsored 12 GCWI foster homes at the beginning, each with 4 children and a hired couple—a full-time mother and a working father. HSF provides both financial and professional training support for these foster homes. Each pair of foster parents will get 2100 Yuan as a caring subsidy from HSF, and around 1200 Yuan for each child covering their daily life expenses from GCWI. GCWI needs to arrange housing to accommodate the newly formed families. The 12 foster homes sponsored by HSF form a foster family village located in the dormitory district where GCWI staff members live. During the development of this model of foster care, one foster home was dropped because it failed to perform the required duties, and the children were sent to other foster homes to be given better care. The remaining 11 foster homes are well run to date.

GDC is a branch of the Boys' and Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong (BGCA) in Guangzhou. Its main jobs in mainland China are collecting for charity for poverty and disaster alleviation, fostering local social workers, and

providing professional social work service mainly to children and adolescents. GDC was formerly a consulting service agent established as a pilot project, which provided supervision for students' field work for the Department of Social Work of Sun Yat-San University from 2005 to 2008. It registered as a limited company in December 2008. In October 2011, it was formally registered as a civil non-enterprise entity, under the supervision of the Guangzhou Civil Affairs Bureau.

Since collaborating with GCWI in the government purchase service program in January 2010, GDC provides professional social work services to five foster centres: one is a natural foster family village in rural Guangzhou, and the other four are foster home centres in the city which include 20 foster homes, 152 children, and 44 foster parents. GCWI "provides money and hardware facilities, we offer software—human resources and professional skills," said Zhou, Director of the GDC Social Work Service Office (Interview 4). "There are two social workers to each foster centre to ensure that there is always a social worker on duty during work hours." (Interview 12) It is the only provider of professional social work services to GCWI to date.

The group of foster parents is composed of two types: foster parents of natural families and hired couples for foster homes located in low rent apartments offered by GCWI. Natural family foster parents normally have their own children living with them, while the hired couples are mostly laid-off workers or retired couples whose children are living outside the family. Foster

parents need to ensure at least one person taking care of foster children full-time, usually the mother. Most natural families are from rural districts in Conghua City in Guangzhou. Foster parents in these rural districts are all local peasants with little land. Couples hired as foster parents in the city are mostly non-local residents.

All foster families and foster homes currently receive a monthly subsidy of 1260 Yuan from GCWI (825 Yuan initially in 2004) for one child, of which 860 Yuan is for foster children's food, clothing, and medical expenses, and the remaining 400 Yuan rewards the foster parents for raising the child. Hired couples living in the 11 foster homes serviced by HSF also receive an additional 2100 Yuan monthly per home sponsored by HSF.

Each hired couple working in foster homes must have a guarantor who works in the government to strengthen responsibility for the foster children. Both natural family foster parents and hired couple foster parents are required to pass a series of assessments (accommodation situation, education, age, income level, own children's status, etc.) and foster care training before signing the contract. There is a three-month qualifying period for both foster parents and the children to get familiar with each other, and to see whether there is any maladjustment for children living for the first time outside of the institution.

5.1.2 Interests cohesion

On average, GCWI has to accept 2 to 3 orphans every day, sent by public

security units. While GCWI worries about the manpower pressure, the huge financial burden became a particular concern for the local government. After the launch of the pilot foster care program in 2004, the local government gradually withdrew from administration of the program and subsequently acted only as funding supplier and searcher for potential collaborative agencies. GCWI took responsibility for the entire foster care process including parent recruitment and assignment of foster children, but it is unable to deal with the situation. In interview, the Chief Officer of GCWI identified the absence of detailed, standardised rules of service procedure and systems as problems:

> The government funding is adequate to cover our foster care programs. Money for us is not a problem. I need someone to help me in professional management and caring for children. Government assigns us this task. I have to show our success, and the success is indicated by those children's happiness. Foster parents in rural districts do give our children a home, but I am worried about the children's education and social ability development, which those peasants cannot provide. (Interview 2)

> Sometimes we were tired of visiting so many foster families within one or two weeks, the most boring thing was no clear guidance for us to follow, what are we supposed to do in home visits? (Interview 7)

> Foster parents in the HSF family village are very hard to deal with, they has strong GuanXi in government, and what worse is that we have no

punish rules. (Interview 9)

To get out of the dilemma of local government pressure and uneven quality of care, GCWI is eager to strengthen its power by finding some new partners who can improve both management at the administrative level and professional skills at the service level. This kind of motivation directly reflects GCWI's interests in accomplishing the task set by local government with high quality. For them, the success means children-centred caring for orphans as well as orderly administration.

HSF has many child centres located in 51 child welfare institutions throughout China.

> The foster village program is only part of our collaboration with GCWI, which also involves three other programs for various ages of orphans. HSF's plan to join the foster care network of Guangzhou is part of its routine development. (Interview 6)

It could also be motivated by HSF's particular ideology at its current stage of development. After two pilot programs in China in 2000, along with many sceptics and no guarantees, HSF spread its service over an increasing number of provinces in China. At the same time, more and more programs were set up to prove HSF's staff competence in developing deep emotional bonds with children living in institutions that are crucial for children's healthy development, and to make infants and pre-schoolers living in institutions thrive under the care of HSF's trained, loving nannies and teachers as they do in

families. HSF even started the A Million Rainbows program, to provide a one-to-one trained caregiver to each of a million orphans in China, and this has been their main goal since 2010.

HSF's interest demands focus on its professional reputation and wider influence on more orphaned children. When asked about the most important goal to achieve in the program, the HSF district consultant in charge of the Guangzhou district answered in this way: "To enrich the lives of orphaned children in China, this is the mission statement of HSF, I may be short of words myself, but I totally agree with this. "(Interview 6)

HSF family consultant also expressed feeling as:

I grew up in GCWI, my parents work here. I played with orphan in this institution for many years. I never found any different of these children to me. To the opposite, they may need more love than those normal ones outside. I was always wondering to do something for these orphans, and now I can. I am very happy about this. (Interview 14)

This ideology matches GCWI's hope for a children-centred caring model. Thus, these two participants' interests reach consensus.

For GDC, development in mainland China started at the time when it joined the foster care network in Guangzhou. According to the running model of BGCA in Hong Kong, as a new entity GDC needs to "sell" service to local government in order to survive. Even though they can live on BGCA's special funding support, GDC still needs a good relationship with local government to

prepare for future government purchase of services, and to establish its stable development. As a result, funding support and gaining the trust of local government are the main motivation and interest demands for GDC to join the foster care program. The trust of local government may be even more targeted. GDC came to GCWI with a well-prepared proposal and the wish to gain the trust of GCWI because local government strongly and consistently pushes the foster care program, and local government authorised GCWI to execute the whole plan. For GDC, the only way to gain the trust of GCWI is to efficiently provide professional social work service, which is also the crucial responsibility that GCWI wants a new partner to share. From this perspective of taking good care of children, GDC's consensus with GCWI is also achieved.

For foster parents, motivation varies according to different family backgrounds but focuses on two main facets—loving care and income. Foster parents in the foster care program are mostly from low income families, both those hired couples of foster homes living in urban apartments and those natural foster parents of foster families living in a rural district. Hired couples are mostly migrant families from other cities. Because of their low-income background, it is plausible that most couples applied to become foster parents in order to have a 'job' and income. Some, like retired couples, show "loving care" more than income desire: "We have raised our son. But then, with no children in our home, I had a hole in my heart. My new children fill that hole" (Interview 19).

I retired earlier, my children have been out of home and have their own

families. I was always wondering whether there is anything I can do for

the society. It (foster care) can help to enrich my life, and the most

important is that children need a home. My home need children, those

orphans need a home, so we are together here. (Interview 15)

Others, like laid-off worker couples, have to admit that income is the first

attraction but insist that, "…at least during the initial contract period, patience

and a strong heart are the crucial aspects" (Interview 17). Some peasants in

villages have a big interest in raising foster children just because many women

in their village formed a foster parents' group and they do not want to be isolated,

as one foster mother said:

Since the mayor of the village had two foster children in his family, there

were more and more neighbours applied to be foster parents. Foster

children always play together in the mayor's home, the neighbours are

also there to chat and have activities sometimes with social workers. So I

thought, maybe I can be a foster mother, too. They seem happy together.

It is a new thing here in our village. (Interview 19)

Foster parents' motivations were also revealed in the interviews with

GCWI staff who have rich experience in recruiting new foster parents. They

emphasised that foster parents' motivations keep changing during the whole

contract period. Raising four or more children (some are disabled) with

assessment for such a long time is a big challenge for each parent. If income is

their only motivation, they need to make a tremendous effort for around 2000 Yuan "love subsidy" monthly, which is insufficient to motivate them to continue in foster care (Interview7, 8, 9). It is responsibilities and obligations that inspire them to insist on caring for orphans. "I love them, but feel more responsibility on them. I raise them for the government. I can't afford any accident," says foster father Chen (Interview 16). In addition, even a primary motivation of increasing the quality of their own life exits at the very beginning, it gradually disappears as members of the foster family get along better and better and the family is more like a natural family. As a whole, foster parents' interest demands are more about caring for children than about their own monetary interests.

In summary, the membership in this network is limited by clear boundaries, as other participants like the volunteer group cannot access the decision-making process. The network has structural restrictions for actors in relation to legitimate involvement and particular roles in the policy process. It presents three prominent characteristics: first, the network threshold focus on professional issues, that is, only those who have relative experience or background can take part; second, actors involved all have or intend to have strong relationship with local government, even before they enter the foster care network; and third, all actors' motivations and interest demands fall into one direction to reach a basic level of consensus in practice, even though actors came into the network with different purposes and motives. Individual level interests

embed in network structure, and integrate into the network level.

5.2 Degree of Cohesion

A high degree of cohesion means that different actors in the network fit together well and form a united whole. It is an important feature of the structural level to show the state of coherence in the network. Actors in a high degree of cohesion gain substantial trust with each other and hold a strong sense of belonging. The density of interaction, persistence, and consensus in a particular network are normally utilised as items to test how coherently actors are involved in the policy network. Below I discuss in detail the three perspectives of density, persistency, and consensus concerning the degree of cohesion of the foster care policy network in Guangzhou.

5.2.1 Density

Density reflects to what extent the actors communicate. In this case, except for the hired couples, all actors already had informal dialogues with each other before they entered into the foster care network, which become a pre-condition for the later formal networking. HSF and GCWI started their collaboration in December 2006. Before that, GCWI heard about HSF's very successful programs with other government child welfare institutions in China. They expressed their wish to invite HSF to join the foster care project to their superior in the Guangzhou Civil Affairs Bureau, and soon got support.

HSF also showed great interest in GCWI for its strength in hardware facilities and other respective advantages. After HSF and GCWI finally settled on the collaboration, their formal and informal contact was to a basic standard, as HSF does in other cities. Both HSF and GCWI felt that this collaboration form was effective enough. HSF authorised GCWI to enrol a family consultant to service all 12 foster homes in the foster care family village located in the GCWI staff dormitory district. The family consultant is under the administration of GCWI by contract but receives her salary from HSF. There is also a district consultant from HSF in GCWI's foster care project. She is a skilled trainer in charge of programs in Guangzhou and nearby cities. She conducts supervision and job training either monthly or quarterly (depending on program demands). She does not have to submit formal reports to GCWI, only to her supervisor from HSF. The family consultant reports to the district consultant four times every year, and if she runs into any difficulties or demands in her daily work, she would turn first to GCWI and then to HSF if the problem is really serious. "I think informal communication and trust between us and GCWI is more effective than any formal report. Being understanding and patient is the most important thing in cooperation," says Li, the district consultant in charge of the Guangzhou program from HSF (Interview 6).

GDC and GCWI did not know each other before the Social Work Department of Guangzhou Civil Affairs Bureau introduced them. GCWI developed considerable trust of GDC right after GDC demonstrated their rich

experience of adolescent orphan service in a professional survey proposal for foster care service. "They (GDC) did a pre-investigation, the report is so thick and detailed, I was satisfied with this, and we took only two months to go from negotiation to final contract" (Interview 1). GDC quantified the following services as their responsibility in the one-year contract: 100 child psychology and parenting skills training sessions, 96 family visits or one-on-one sessions with foster families, 48 sessions with the group supervisor for foster centres, 100 development training sessions for foster children, 192 advisory meetings for foster children, and so on. GDC also provides social work training for GCWI's administrative staff every two months. GCWI does an evaluation of each foster child once a month and of GDC's work (service delivery, outcomes, finances, planning) every six months. It requires GDC to submit an annual proposal, which, once approved, requires strict compliance. Every quarter, GDC provides GCWI with a self-assessment report. In addition to these formal contacts, staff members at GCWI and GDC tell me that they can freely ask each other for help, especially when arranging activities for the foster children.

All foster parents are required to sign foster contracts with GCWI before children are sent to their homes, but there are no formal contracts between foster parents and HSF or GDC. The only contract is between foster parents and GCWI. Here foster parents are required to give GCWI an account of each foster child's status every four weeks (or six months if the child is older than seven). Annually, GCWI does a comprehensive assessment for the foster children, to evaluate

foster parents' performance. Foster parents are encouraged to communicate with GCWI, HSF, and GDC staff during home visits. Home visit is random and frequent, and foster parents, especially hired couples, often complain that they do not need the social workers' suggestions. Some of them even refuse to attend GDC training, saying that "We have already raised my own children without any problems" (interview 16) and that "social workers are too young to give us any advice" (Interview 11). Some even said "how could they (social workers) know what these children need, they have no experience in this thing. They are students just graduate from university! What do you say?" (Interview 18) To solve the problem of foster parents' resistance, one noticeable change in a formal policy issued by GCWI is that foster parents are required to cooperate with GDC social workers and HSF supervisors, and this requirement was soon included formally in the contract.

5.2.2 Persistence

GCWI has always had strong willingness to have HSF as a partner. Even though HSF is currently at a turning point in its service model, both organisations are willing to maintain their current relationship to help orphans. In 2010, HSF announced its intention to transition to training and mentoring over the next several years. "We plan to train a million one-on-one caregivers for the one million orphans in China" (Interview 14). HSF managed to open three new Model Children's Centers, to train dozens of caregivers and orphanage

directors, and to operate more than fifty existing Children's Centers across China. HSF informed GCWI that between 2011 and 2015, they will gradually transfer the management of all four types of programs to GCWI and they will only provide training and mentorship after 2015. This means that the 11 foster homes in the GCWI staff dormitory district will move out into communities in society, and each home will lost the 2100 Yuan of funding from HSF. Financial arrangements for this program will be the same as those for other foster homes serviced by GDC. GCWI did not express any concern about the funding loss. "Government financial support for our foster care project is stable enough to cover the program even though they (HSF) won't give us money anymore... Training and mentoring is more likely what we need," said the Director of the Foster Care Office of GCWI (Interview 2).

GDC gained substantial trust on the part of GCWI through its daily work and systematic self-evaluation during the contract. Chen, the Vice Head of GCWI, has a good personal relationship with Cheung, the Executive Director of GDC. GCWI was satisfied with their pilot move into government purchase of services. High quality communication between these two actors makes network persistency stable. However, in the context of rapid development of government purchase of services in Guangzhou—150 family service centres and 160 social work service agencies have been set up in the past four years, GCWI chose to invite a bid for foster care service after the end of their contract with GDC. They will publish their requirements for bidding through local government and let

social service agencies compete to fulfil their demand of achieving a more efficient service.

Therefore, persistence of linkage between GDC and GCWI is weaker than how it performs between HSF and GCWI. From GDC's perspective, the persistence relationship with GCWI is strong willingness but with possibility of being unfulfilled. Continuing to be purchased by GCWI for social work service is vital for GDC's professional development in mainland China. As one of the 160 social work agencies operating in Guangzhou, GDC is facing cogent "market" competition. From GCWI's perspective, the willingness of persistency is weaker in the context of the new policy environment. Working with GDC was a good trial for GCWI of using social workers in the professional care of children. They now trust social workers and have started to consider the costs and benefits of further cooperation with a social work agency. At the same time, 160 social work agencies have been established to provide GCWI with more choices.

The foster parent group's persistency of linkage with HSF and GDC depends on how it goes with GCWI, especially in the case of hired couples, who have always regarded themselves as "employees" of GCWI because of their labour contract with GCWI. The foster parents did not cooperate positively with social workers from GDC at the start. Parents who had enrolled before the involvement of the social work service kept a stable relationship with GCWI because they all have "*Guanxi* (connection)" with some guarantor working in

the government, but this kind of stable persistence greatly troubled GCWI, GDC, and HSF. Staff in the GCWI foster care office complained that parents—especially those sponsored by HSF with additional 2100 Yuan—are very hard to manage. GCWI wants to break this stable but unreasonable relationship by seeking help from GDC. Social workers are now required in their contract with GCWI to join in selecting foster parents with professional assessment, and they are also authorised to report any parents they think unqualified. During this reform, the group of foster parents went through the optimisation process: six couples were matched with fewer foster children, and some were "fired" because of neglecting their duties.

The network between foster parents and GCWI now persists in a weaker but healthier way. Relationships between GDC and foster parents have also improved and persisted well when social workers offer more and more useful professional help via daily contact. Foster parents sponsored by HSF have also changed their over-reliance on HSF because they know that HSF eventually will not offer financial support.

5.2.3 Consensus

Consensus among GCWI, GDC, HSF, and the group of foster parents relies mainly on the values shared by the government agency and non-government organisations. "All for the children" is a required premise of the foster care policy network, and also the assumed common target for all actors at

the network level. Even though actors joined into the network with various motives, but with the common context and respective roles inherent in the network structure, those whose motivation deviated from this central task have been adjusted into one direction to reach a basic level of consensus, like some foster parents' money motives and GDC's pure professional influence in its motto. Those finally couldn't reach the consensus were driven out sooner or later during the network function completing process, such as in the case of those foster parents who are not good at their duty leaving the network. During the interviews, I happened to find that the standard for actors to appraise one another is the same: whether foster children under its service are growing up healthily and happily.

Contracts with clear responsibilities and rights are signed as a guarantee of consensus. It is also easy to feel the trust between GCWI, GDC, and HSF. GCWI trusts GDC and HSF for their professional orphan service, while GDC and HSF rely on GCWI because it is a government agency owning vast resources that NGOs find hard to access by themselves. Foster parents' consensus with other actors is more likely inhibited. However, the situation is improving, as the group of foster parents has been optimised through more strict standards. Later, when more and more parents come from the motivation of "all for the children," higher consensus will be achieved among all core actors in the policy network.

In summary, the foster care policy network in Guangzhou has the following features regarding its degree of cohesion:

(1) A moderate level of density, referring to exchanges among the four core actors. Actors interact in different frequencies and with different patterns. HSF and GDC both have efficient exchanges with GCWI, but they do not have any exchange with each other. Foster parents are more often in interaction with GCWI, less in interactions with HSF, and reluctant to interact with GDC.

(2) A moderate level of persistence. GCWI and HSF have strong willingness to keep long-term relations, while GCWI wants GDC to compete with other agencies for future collaboration. Foster parents' connection with other actors has been optimised from unhealthy but stable to efficient and flexible.

(3) High consensus. Under a common value of "all for the children", issues under discussion can basically gain consensus, which also results in a more effective policy implementation.

5.3 Resource Allocation

Resource allocation show the resources required by those activities and the scheduling of activities while taking both the resource availability and the network limit into consideration. In strategic planning, resource allocation is a plan for using available resources to achieve goals of the network. A plan has two parts: the basic allocation decision and the contingency mechanism. By

checking the status of resource allocation in our case, we can establish which type of resource allocation plan would perform against the two extreme types of policy network.

In the Guangzhou foster care policy network, resource exchanges fall into three types. The first is that, NGOs as new public service providers, their market-orientated operation system, resource diversity, and financial autonomy can supplement the local government's weakness in these respects. HSF's funding for the family village program with GCWI was a big encouragement for GCWI to explore the new foster home model when the initial stage of natural foster family form ran into obstacles. GCWI also thanks HSF very much for their extensive experience in orphan care provision. Taking HSF as a bridge, GCWI entered into a big international family, sharing and learning more about experiences of orphan care. Children also have more peers through HSF's 51 children centres nationwide.

GDC also cooperates very well with GCWI in its professional social work service. After GDC joined, GCWI became aware for the first time of many kinds of service skills and assessment items regarding professional social work. GDC's annual self-evaluation reports are treasured by GCWI as a work reference. Since GDC is the Guangzhou branch of Hong Kong BGCA, it can exchange more assets through its wide network in Hong Kong. Li, director of the foster care office of GCWI, says:

I have never seen these kids so happy before they got the opportunity to

go to Hong Kong Disney Land. GDC found enough funding to cover our tour expense from a Hong Kong Company. One hundred children went out at that time. We didn't try this before. They (GDC) arranged the whole schedule. Kids' safety and management were all well organised. (Interview 2)

The second kind of resource exchange is that foster parents, GDC, and HSF are all working on the front line to serve foster children. They have professional legitimacy and knowledge (GDC and HSF), and also first-hand experience in taking care of children (foster parents) to influence foster care policy direction while GCWI technically cannot. Through social workers' and parents' daily service delivery, foster children's demands and service effects can be explored in more detail than GCWI's own staff did previously. These demands and effects can actually be considered by GCWI as the practical basis of policy improvements, which illustrates that, through these kinds of exchange of professional legitimacy and knowledge, not only is GCWI more intimately involved in policy development, but also foster children's needs and demands may have a greater impact on policy decisions.

The third resource exchange is that GCWI represents local government as a political power executor. Its leading authority, information embedded in its historical administration system, and stable financial support from the social welfare special budget confirm its leading position in the foster care network. GCWI decides who can be actors involved in the network. Participants from

different relevant domains who want to integrate as actors into the policy network all need formal contracting with GCWI. GCWI signs contracts with GDC in the form of government purchase of service, with HSF in the form of program collaboration, and with the group of foster parents in the form of labour employment. GCWI is authorised by local government to make the policy and set the schedule of policy implementation. Other actors are encouraged to put forward suggestions, but never to the decision-making table. GDC staff members even refuse to be interviewed without GCWI's permission and presence. HSF's family consultant is paid by HSF but must be recruited by GCWI, under GCWI's management. One foster home in HSF's family village failed in their duty and, after this was confirmed by HSF, GCWI directly cancelled this foster home, asked HSF to recall all relevant support, required that foster parent couple to send back all children, and stopped the contract.

In addition, there have been no serious conflicts in the several minor revisions of contracts. GCWI has changed contracts several times in relation to evaluation mechanisms and measures, specifications of obligations for foster parents and GDC, and clarifications of their own regular staff home visits, all of which are unimpeded.

Correspondingly, resource allocation shows a stable structural feature. Actors' interdependency and shared value consensus formalised the network. GCWI's leading position makes resource distribution still bear some hierarchical characteristics. GCWI has inherent advantage to push the networking, and to

control the access and rules of the system. The key point is that this kind of exchange of resources minimises the cost of substantial problems and solutions. Actors can achieve their own goals and just need to follow the pre-set agenda or explore some possible solutions. All actors can accept policy output, usually under the common values, which suggests that authority distribution in this network is a positive commitment.

5.4 Summary: "policy community" style network structure

In the case of the Guangzhou foster care policy network, the network structure is more like the "policy community" style as defined by Marsh and Rhodes (1992a). In Figure 1, I present the policy network structure of foster care in Guangzhou and the relationships among the core actors involved. The closed circle indicates a strict membership in the policy network. The solid arrows indicate a high level of frequency, persistence, and consensus between the actors at the two ends. The dotted arrows indicate a weaker relationship in frequency, persistence, and consensus between the actors. The authority centre of the policy network is GCWI, and the major recipient is the foster parent group. These two actors keep the most stable relationship, as indicated by the solid arrows going in both directions.
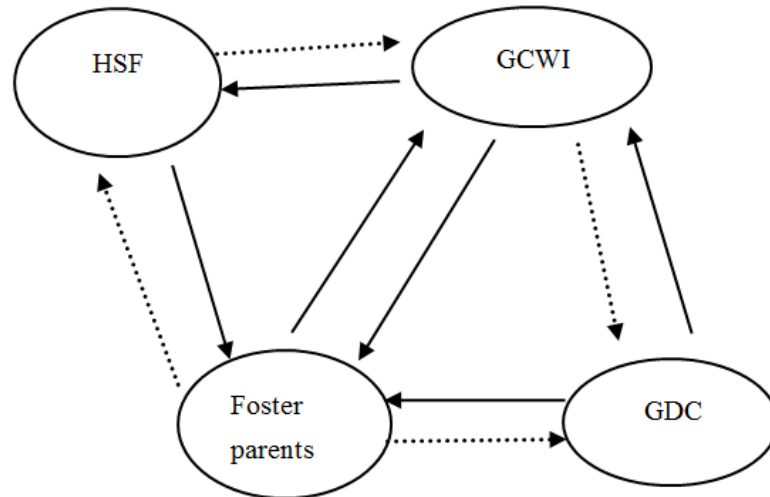
Figure 5.1: Policy Network Structure of Foster Care in Guangzhou, China

The membership in the policy network of foster care in Guangzhou is limited by clear boundaries, and other participants have no access to the decision-making process. Each actor's individual level interests embed in network structure, and integrate into the network level.

Degree of cohesion is at the moderate level but tight enough for efficient utility of network resources to reach the common targets at the network level. In Table 1, I present the level of frequency and persistence between any pair of core actors. Regarding frequency, actors interact in different frequencies with different patterns. Concerning persistence, all actors have strong willingness to maintain long-term relations, except for GCWI to GDC, and foster parents have been optimised from unhealthy but stable to efficient and flexible. Persistence rather than frequency can illustrate greater integration of the network. For example, frequency between GCWI and HSF is less than between GCWI and GDC, but actually the persistence of the latter is much weaker than the former.

Regarding consensus, under a common value view of "all for the children", issues under discussion can basically reach consensus in a peaceful way.

Table 5.1: Frequency and Persistence of Foster Care Policy Network in Guangzhou, China

Structural Features / Actors	Frequency/ Persistence			
	GCWI	HSF	GDC	Foster parents
GCWI		Low/ High	High/ Low	High/ High
HSF	Low/ High		No	High/High
GDC	High/ High	No		High/High
Foster Parents	High/ High	High/High	Low/ Low	

Finally, resource allocation in the policy network of foster care in Guangzhou represents a stable structural feature. Table 2 lists resource allocation of each actor involved in the foster care network, showing a heterogeneous resource group. Each actor has its own assets to exchange with others, making sure of a developing networking process. Resources under each actor are embedded in the actor's background, and get structured after the network is established. They are stable to satisfy actors' demands with little liquidity. The GCWI's leading position in the network makes resource distribution hierarchical.

Table 5.2: Resource Allocation of Foster Care Policy Network in Guangzhou, China

Structural Features / Actors	Resource Allocation
GCWI	Government authority, various information embedding in historical administration system, stable financial support from social welfare budget
HSF	Funding (each family 2100 Yuan, free training), rich experience of orphan caregiving
GDC	Professional social work service, network in Hong Kong
Foster Parents	Frontline work experience, professional legitimacy and knowledge for policy improvement

Chapter 6

Multi-logical Interaction and Multi-logical Institutional System

As discussed at the end of Chapter 2, when actors in the policy network start to exchange and interact according to the original policy design, unpredictable problems continue to emerge until some become really serious to hinder the whole policy process. Inevitable gaps between policy design and implementation must urgently be narrowed. My interviews with participants at the administrative level clearly indicate that there is a common view that management of foster parents is the biggest problem. During the three phases GCWI went through, they kept exploring different solutions and made step-by-step improvements. This improvement process shows how actors typically exchange through their specific logics to alleviate the conflict, to gradually make progress.

In this chapter, taking the issue of foster parents' "non-cooperation" as an example, I first describe all actors' relevant interactions, from the problem emerging, to the trouble caused, the process of finding a solution, and gradually solving the problem. Then, under these interaction behaviours, I further check each actor's action logic in the policy network during a micro-networking process based on logic of consequentiality from a calculus approach and logic of appropriateness from a cultural approach, and how these action logics interplay to form the multi-logical institutional system. Finally, I discuss how the

multi-logical institutional system is rooted in the network structure described in Chapter 5.

6.1 Multi-logical Interactions

6.1.1 Foster parents to GCWI, HSF, and GDC

Foster parents in community foster care centres are reluctant to cooperate with other actors except GCWI. When they encounter any difficulties, foster parents turn to staff from GCWI rather than talking to social workers in the foster care centre, even though the foster centre is right downstairs. Some new foster parents may refer to social workers more often, only because GCWI do not trust that they can take care of so many children with a range of disabilities at once and thus refer the children to social workers in the foster centre. Foster parents take this as a requirement and normally obey.

Foster parents from natural foster families were said to cope very well with GCWI staff. Those that live in the same district (one village) spontaneously form a group and make the head of the village, who has foster children in his family, the leader. The leader is appointed by the group to be an intermediary to deliver requirements from GCWI to foster parents, and also to convey requests from foster parents to GCWI. This demonstrates that foster parents trust GCWI and even pay much attention to the manner of communication with GCWI. They want to rely on a skilful channel to express their performance and feelings, and they wish that those could be more positive and less negative. They define

requests as negative things, because they think a request means something they cannot handle, which GCWI may think reflects their incompetence to do the job. Consequently, foster parents rarely make requests except in one situation, which is that when a family in society adopts a foster child the foster parents will come to the staff office to find out how much longer the child will stay with them, and to express their sad feelings.

Foster parents show different attitudes towards staff from GDC versus staff from HSF. For instance, foster parents are reluctant to participate in the training programs and are indifferent to any professional suggestions from social workers from GDC. Even staff members from GCWI sometimes feel hard to control over the situation:

I think I am qualified. Every foster child in my family has reached the standard they (GCWI) required in the contract. I have done my job. Other things (training, group experience sharing, etc.) are extra, not necessary," says foster mother Liu. (Interview 15)

In contrast, those foster parents sponsored by HSF are very friendly to the family consultant from HSF because they perceive that she is under the administration of GCWI. When the district consultant from HSF comes to do home visits for the parents in the HSF program, parents are pleased to see her because they think the additional 2100 Yuan subsidy indicates that HSF is as important an employer as GCWI. But the motivation to participate in the training is still low. The interesting thing is that some foster parents even trust

the HSF family consultant more than the GCWI staff, considering HSF "a higher level boss."(Interview 17). The family consultant needs to convey the foster parents anything that GCWI require. For example, whenever GCWI staff do home visits, the family consultant is responsible for notifying foster parents; foster parents would complain if GCWI staff suddenly came without the family consultant notifying them or accompanying the GCWI staff member. "Once they (GCWI staff) come with no inform, there should be something bad, or they don't believe in us, we don't like this" (Interview 19). "They (foster parents) don't like us frequently come, thought we are monitoring them"(Interview 10).

Here we see the clear employee logic of foster parents. They do what the "employer" requires them to do and accomplish what the contract says in order to get their "salary." They scrupulously communicate with "the boss" and rarely make active requests. Suggestions or help from others hardly enter their concern, which makes the exchange between foster parents and other actors blocked. On the other hand, foster parents' employee-style behaviour benefits foster children in that the foster parents feel heavy responsibility for the children because they think that the children being able to pass the evaluation will be the key factor in the parents keeping the job. Foster parents all show great patience in parenting foster children under the strong sense of responsibility from GCWI and local government.

From my observation of the daily life in a foster family, foster parents easily fall into mental suffering, particularly those families with disabled

children in rehabilitation. Foster parents need very strong self-inspiration so as to provide three years or even longer term care with the required qualifications. Enthusiasm at the start is far from enough. But when taking foster care as a job and playing the role of employee, foster parents find a clearer way to figure out their responsibilities and pressures. At this level, foster children can at least avoid being ignored during years of foster care after foster parents' enthusiasm and patience fade away. In this sense, the foster parents' employee logic has positive effect.

6.1.2 GCWI to foster parents, GDC, and HSF

Foster parents' non-cooperation with other actors soon attached importance to GCWI. GCWI tried several solutions to prevent the situation from getting worse, but with little success. "We first authorised one or two foster parents to lead the natural foster family group and required each pair of foster parents to have a guarantor working in the government, trying to find someone else to help execute supervision" (Interview 1). For convenience of management, GCWI also arranged foster families as close together as possible, especially natural families. So, village heads appointed by the foster parents group as leaders were at the same time chosen by GCWI to be in charge of other families. Later they found that these leaders made almost no substantial reports to the office, some because of an inability to discover problems, some because they just covered up problems to maintain the relationship with GCWI for long-term

collaboration. Since then, GCWI has paid more attention to the supervision of new foster parents, requiring them to find a guarantor working in the government. To some extent, having a guarantor did screen out those couples with intentions other than taking care of children, but "when more foster parents join in this way and more "*Guanxihu* (people with connection)" arises, strict rules become increasingly difficult to implement" (Interview 8).

GCWI finally decided to turn to GDC for help, to settle on a series of optimisation exercises for foster parents. They invited social workers from GDC to join the foster parent enrolment process; they sent staff to attend every GDC and HSF training for foster parents; they revised the contract with foster parents, adding an item in parents' responsibilities clarifying that cooperation with social workers on professional caring for foster children is a must; and they referred to HSF and GDC's self-evaluation data to revise their evaluation forms for foster children, in the hope of attracting foster parents who focus on professional caring in addition to the provision of basic living assistance. Based on GDC and HSF's professional assessment advice, foster parents who were evaluated as neglecting their duty were to send back their foster children and some foster parents were fired. "We should do this thing, I am in charge of foster care not long ago, I am not afraid of any *Guanxihu*" (Interview 1).

To better manage the natural foster families, GCWI adjusted the home visit schedule. Supervisors are given more flexibility for visiting arrangements, but also more strict regulations. Home visits are now random but with stronger

purpose. Foster parents that live far way have been brought closer by frequent visits and given higher standards. Later on, GCWI tried to set up more foster centres in districts where natural foster families live close to one another, providing social work service and also administration. Remarkable results soon emerged. More foster parents were present at training, and fewer foster parents complained about rehabilitation problems with disabled foster children. Foster parents got used to having social workers around, and also started to welcome social workers coming to do home visits. "Frankly, they (social workers) did help us sometime, especially when I got sick or in something emergency" (Interview 16). Foster care centres for natural foster families in villages were also gradually set up, "we (GCWI staff) took turns staying there and working to collect more real reports or to do home visits" (Interview 10).

During the whole problem-solving process, GCWI treated GDC and HSF as its think tanks. From personal discussions to formal meetings, GCWI always took HSF and GDC suggestions into consideration. In terms of frequency, however, GCWI contacted GDC far more than HSF, and the level of communication was also different. Staff of GCWI in charge of the foster centres run by GDC said they came to the centres nearly every day until the relationship between the social workers and foster parents got better. The Director of the GCWI Foster Care Office even invited the Director of the Social Work Office of GDC to attend their weekly staff meeting, to ensure that problems in the centre were under control. Whenever there is an enrolment of new foster parents,

GCWI invites social workers to join its group to do assessment. Regularly, GCWI invites social workers from GDC to conduct staff training for GCWI, and this is described as the most effective style for the two actors' exchange of resources to fulfil each other's demands. So, GCWI is getting used to arranging GDC to cope with its new idea or act, with no worries that GDC may reject its request. Its formal relation with GDC relies on the field staff and the middle administrative level.

GCWI's contact with HSF mostly relies on the HSF family consultant. GCWI requires the family consultant to report a work diary for four foster children every week. Since the HSF foster centre is located nearby the GCWI staff dormitory district, it is very convenient for GCWI staff to manage issues with the family consultant. The family consultant was recruited by GCWI but authorised by HSF. GCWI supervises the family consultant as its own staff, rarely treating her as a staff member of HSF. But when GCWI needs to negotiate with HSF, the head of GCWI prefers to turn to the HSF district consultant, which is a kind of high administration-level communication. The district consultant has no obligation to report to any level of GCWI, but the head of GCWI usually positively asks her if there is anything in need of improvement. In the problem of foster parents' non-cooperation, the head of GCWI contacted the district consultant directly for details, discussion of solutions, and task distribution. Since the problem was not as serious as what happened in the GDC foster centre, this kind of high-level communication was not frequent. Or, like

what GCWI said, "it is no more than normal contact." (Interview 1)

From the perspective of management, the collaboration mechanism between GCWI and HSF is more mature and equal than it is between GCWI and GDC. The particular issue does not influence the way of communication between GCWI and HSF too much, which can be attributed to HSF's sophisticated cooperation system with so many child welfare institutions in China.

It is clear that GCWI's action deeply depends on an administrative logic. GCWI acts under strong power of authority, playing an administrative role. However, different from government bureaucratic actions, GCWI did not use the power privilege directly to terminate the relationship with foster parents or punish them, but rather repaired the relationship with foster parents first before turning to other actors, finally adjusting the policy according to exchanges with others. This demonstrates a positive process of authority negotiation among the four actors. The network is in hierarchy style with a leader but no dictation. The leader GCWI is not given sole authority for decision-making but rather is given powerful support from other actors.

6.1.3 HSF to GCWI, foster parents

HSF takes GCWI as partner. GCWI foster centre care run by HSF is provided as HSF's 25th Children's Center, opened in November 2005, serving with a Baby Sisters Infant Nurture Program and a Little Sisters Preschool

Program. In November 2006, a Youth Services Program and Foster Family Village were added. HSF has two staff that report to GCWI: the family consultant in the foster family village and the district consultant. The family consultant stays working in the foster family village in GCWI, while the district consultant is not always in the children's centre in GCWI and her job is making rounds among the supervisors in all six of the children's centres in Guangdong Province. The family consultant reports to the foster care office of GCWI, according to staff regulations. The district consultant has no obligation to report to GCWI, but she would report informally to the head of GCWI when she has concerns.

When the HSF district consultant noted the problem of foster parents' non-cooperation with the family consultant, they had several staff meetings discussing the solution. At the same time, the HSF family consultant also reported the problem to the GCWI foster care office. The HSF district consultant soon informed GCWI that "the problem was related to the training plan, and it could be solved if we added more skills in the personalised training of foster parents." (Interview 6).

HSF's services for foster parents are mainly about daily life guidance (by family consultant) and trainings covered in the Baby Sisters Infant Nurture Program and the Little Sisters Preschool Program. Foster parents are assigned into the two programs according to their foster children's age. Normally, HSF trains foster parents as caregivers to learn the art of "responsive care"—paying

close attention to their small charges' needs and interests, even during the most routine activities of the day, that is, by simply recognising that even the tiniest child needs human interaction, caregivers help stimulate attachment, growth, curiosity, confidence, and a child's sense of how s/he fits in the world.

During the problem period, the district consultant made several random visits to the foster family village to learn about foster parents' demands, as she wanted to gain trust from foster parents via fulfilling their demands to the utmost degree. "We have rich experience in training caregivers. This is going to be our main mission in later rainbow program. Consultants always meet with this kind of setbacks, but we have a great team work to share and to solve this. It is very normal," says Li, district consultant in charge of the Guangzhou project (Interview 6).

Later, HSF strengthened the minds of these foster parents as its staff from the local. Parents are trained to act as every parent who has fallen in love with a child intuitively acts—they sing, play, cuddle, hug, and generally dote on their charges. Foster parents help foster children avoid the problems that are so common among institutionalised children. Foster parents with disabled children learn to recognise the signs of developmental delays. They learn simple therapies and the art of responsive care: watching their young charges, listening to them, and providing nurture and stimulation as needed.

In the domain of public service, there are many models of collaboration for government and NGOs in light of the various backgrounds of the NGOs.

NGOs like HSF, which is in a partner role in a government collaboration program, have separate resources and stable self-funding. They run in a mature systematic management style, and they have more decision-making rights. They deal with problems in the program in a normal and regular way without too much anxiety about other actors being incompliant.

6.1.4 GDC to GCWI, foster parents

With a similarly high reputation in child and adolescent services, GDC reacts to the same problem in a completely different way. GDC "sells" social work service to GCWI, but social workers concealed foster parents' non-cooperation until staff from GCWI happened to notice it during home visits. They did not actively do anything to change the situation but rather waited for the intervention from GCWI. They thought the best way was for GCWI to pressure the foster parents.

> They (foster parents) don't listen to us, but once staff from GCWI show up in the centre, they appear different. I understand this, they are hired by GCWI. This is the only choice," says the social worker from GDC working in one of the foster centres. (Interview 13)
>
> At first, I thought it was my own reason that maybe I am not qualified enough, but later on I found out they are always like that. (Interview 12)
>
> Things did not change until GCWI invited GDC to do the optimisation exercise. GDC coped positively with GCWI through the whole policy

adjustment process. GDC social workers particularly informed GCWI staff about their training schedule, to make it convenient for GCWI staff to join and check foster parents' participation. GDC provided professional suggestions on the GCWI assessment system for foster parents. Social workers of GDC and BGCA came to GCWI to do staff training, especially for those in charge of supervisors for natural foster families. GDC also took part in revising the contract and regulations with GCWI, highlighting the necessity of a child-centred caring approach and foster parents' spirit of cooperation.

GDC's exchange with foster parents had a weak start but gradually became stronger. Foster parents' non-cooperation did not lead GDC to make any specific changes. Its service for foster parents has never changed from the components in the original contract with GCWI, like setting up foster parents' self-planning document system, guiding their executive targets and self-assessment, training in parenting and child psychological development, case supervision, group sharing, and support network construction. After GDC joined the optimisation exercise for foster parents, its service provision for foster parents changed not in content but in approach. Social workers acted more positively when accompanied by GCWI staff. Many training programs were redesigned to attract more interest from foster parents. When doing home visits, "we social workers paid more attention to foster parents' parenting skills, actively giving suggestions on whatever they assessed as necessary." (Interview 12).

An NGO like GDC is in a producer role in government purchase of services. In this model, government still occupies the leading position in power and influence, especially in aspects of resource control, power distribution, and funding provision. GDC is a new NGO in the local context, with limited funding and fresh experience in collaboration with local government. Facing a market mechanism of government purchase of services, GDC lacked the ability to develop independently, only achieving embedded development relying on the existing administrative system of the Guangzhou Civil Affairs Bureau, with whom it is registered. Government intervention is still strong in its provision of specific services.

6.2 Multi-logical Institutional System

The multi-logical institutional system is formed by the complex logic interaction of all actors involved in the network. Neo-institutionalism provides two modes of institutional approaches: the calculus approach and the cultural approach. The corresponding rationales are termed logic of consequence and logic of appropriateness. In the case of the Guangzhou foster care policy network, the foster parents' employee logic, GCWI's government administrative logic, and the NGOs' survival logic constitute a multi-logical institutional system. To demonstrate how this institutional system is shaped, I first examine what kind of approaches the four actors settle on, and then investigate see how these approaches interplay to result in the institutional system.

6.2.1 Mixed approaches

6.2.1.1 Foster parents' cultural approach

Obviously, the roles and responsibilities marked in the contract guide almost all foster parents' actions in foster care. They use a distinct logic of appropriateness to conduct exchanges with others, but they use less calculus of interests. The cultural approach action is foster parents' first choice. The reward and a signed contract with GCWI increase foster parents' perceptions of being employees of GCWI. Before entering into the big foster care family, each parent has to be assessed. After they pass the assessment, there are continuous routine evaluations. As a result, parents are likely to take evaluation measures as work regulations; once they achieve the standard, they feel self-satisfied and refuse any other improvement. That is why they reject or are indifferent to other actors' help regarding training, supervision, or experience sharing.

To protect foster children, GCWI requires each couple to have a guarantor working in the government. Therefore, those who finally can be foster parents are all *Guanxihu* introduced by someone from the government. This "privileged" background brings them strong sense of superiority over other parents in the society. Even GCWI staff members feel this during daily communication. When they are admitted to the network of foster care, they soon see themselves as successful selected employees and only respect the ones who pay them. They make up their minds based on contextual effects rather than

rational choice.

6.2.1.2 GCWI's mixed approach

GCWI's special administrative logic results from three major reasons showing a combination of culture and calculus approach. The first is the high cost of making changes to the existing group of foster parents. As mentioned, every couple that gets permission to do foster care must fulfil many requirements, and after they join there is also continuous training and job matching. Those enrolled in HSF's program must meet even higher standards. The enrolment of foster parents requires a lot of GCWI manpower, materials, and funding. Especially when the whole process is not yet systematic, changing foster parents means terrible chaos for limited staff in the GCWI foster care office. Second, trust and a convenient channel to make use of HSF and GDC's professional service are assets. HSF and GDC's professional training and standard of orphan care have been demonstrated since the establishment of the foster care network. GCWI has gained a degree of cohesion with these two NGOs in fixed frequency, value consensus, and certain extent of persistence. When GCWI encounters any difficulty in the network, exchanging resources with these two actors is a more economical way to fulfil its demands than relying only on itself. These first two points show GCWI's calculus approach and reasons.

The third point shows its cultural approach, which is related to its leading

position in power distribution. GCWI feels free to arrange other actors to help it to solve problems in the network. Besides, HSF and GDC were both introduced by the Guangzhou Civil Affairs Bureau, and the bureaucracy logic makes GCWI feel comfortable getting help from them.

Government purchase of services in the current context of Guangzhou is still in its initial stage. Autonomy between purchaser and provider is not required. The NGO has to be registered with a government agency. Government usually adopts purchasing service from NGOs in the way of "borrowing" NGOs' advantages to provide more efficient service, like "being used for me." According to this train of thought, GCWI automatically delegates work regarding foster parents to GDC social workers, and GDC accepts this without any disagreement.

6.2.1.3 HSF and GDC's cultural approach

HSF and GDC's opposite approaches to NGO survival logic indicate that their actions differ in their cooperative patterns with the government. This means that NGOs' survival logic is not from its inherent background or characters but from the role and identity in the network structure, representing a cultural approach.

HSF treats GCWI as an equal partner. Partnership means equal rights and obligations. So HSF appears more independent in self-management and decision-making. Whenever problems emerge, both HSF and GCWI have their bargaining power to negotiate the solution. In contrast, GDC regards GCWI as

superior administration. Action from GCWI to GDC is in the form of an order, and from GDC to GCWI is obedience. To increase the possibility of a future contract for government purchase of services, GDC has to obey GCWI's authority and powerful network. GDC reacts positively to every move of GCWI, expressing their advice but rarely entering into the final decision-making.

In summary, the NGOs' different reactions to the same problem reflect the two kinds of NGO survival style: government's partner in one case, and undertaker endorsed by government in the other. Gidron et al. (1992) identified four models of relationship between NGO and government: Government-Dominant Model, Third-Sector-Dominant Model, Dual Model, and Collaborative Model. The collaborative model is further divided into two kinds: the collaborative-vender model and the collaborative-partnership model. In this case, the two survival styles are both like the collaborative model, as both rely on collaboration with the government. But GDC's role as an undertaker endorsed by the government makes its relationship with the government more like the collaborative-vender model. In this model, the NGO almost loses its right of bargain. In contrast, HSF possesses more autonomy and acts with the government mainly according to the collaborative-partnership model.

However, taking Lee and Haque (2009)'s comparative research on non-profit organisations in Hong Kong and Singapore, the "statist-corporatist" model of the relationship between the State and the NGO might be more precise to be a summary to illustrate more clearly about HSF and GDC's cultural

approach. This model regarding the emphasize of the dominance of the "state"
over the NGO operator, or even a patron-client relationship like GDC and GCWI.
No matter how collaborative their relationship appears like HSF and GCWI, the
imbalance of power between the collaborating players- the State and the
NGO—still strongly influenced their interactions.

Therefore, for both NGOs' survival logics, collaboration with
government is the main point. Just like what Zhao (2004) notes, all NGOs in
China rely mainly on local government. NGOs obtain legitimacy through
collaboration with government and reach their organisational goal by
"borrowing" government authority and administrative network. Even for
sophisticated overseas NGOs like HSF, good relationship with government is
definitely the entree to smooth functioning in mainland China.

6.2.2 Interplay of multi-logics

To form the institutional system, logics in the network should not be
isolated from each other but rather should be put into relationships with others.
Different logics' relations and influence are further interpreted.

6.2.2.1 GCWI's administrative logic and NGOs' survival logic

As discussed before, NGOs' survival logic comes from the way they
exchange with GCWI, and different ways get different survival models. GCWI's
administrative logic is embedded in its asset of administrative role as
representative of local government. GCWI is authorised by local government to

choose the form of collaboration with NGOs. Therefore, NGOs' survival logic is decided by GCWI's administrative logic.

At the same time, NGOs' survival logic also influences GCWI's administrative logic. For survival, NGOs try to get trust from GCWI through fulfilling GCWI's demand for professional service, and they succeed. Based on the established trust with NGOs, GCWI choose a calculus approach to save transaction cost by inviting NGOs into decision-making. GCWI's free choice to permit the one they trust to enter the policy process shows its administrative logic.

Under the Chinese government-centred mechanism of social management, NGOs' chance of participation in public service comes from devolution of governmental power. Consequently, the room that NGOs have to develop depends on the extent to which government's power is transferred. There are various types of collaboration available for shift of government power to grassroots organisations. Depending on the type of collaboration, government initially decides the roles and responsibilities of the government and the NGOs. As passive recipients, NGOs deliver performance according to those roles and responsibilities in order to survive. Once NGOs succeed in playing those roles, their influence broadens, followed by more powerful discourse for the collaboration. Some NGOs, such as HSF in this case, can finally struggle into an equal relationship with government and make their own decisions on the way they develop, not simply survive.

6.2.2.2 NGOs' survival logic and foster parents' employee logic

Foster parents' employee logic does not come from NGOs' survival logic, but is pushed and maintained by it. HSF is more independent, so during service provision it can proactively discover foster parents' questions, find solutions, and conduct solutions till the problems are solved. This initiative process makes foster parents take responsibilities seriously, further confirming HSF's employer position. GDC is passive under GCWI's authority. It is indifferent to foster parents' problems, insists on the original service plan and ignores service receivers' non-cooperation. The social workers' attitude changes only when GCWI requires them to change, which makes foster parents further believe that those social workers are "overseen" by GCWI, and that GCWI is their real "boss."

When the Chinese *danwei* style public service provision has fallen apart (Leung, 2003), citizens have to get used to a long adjustment stage for governments find resources to fill the gap. The market is always out of control, so NGOs as the third sector out of the state and the market get the license to join the social welfare provision. But when NGOs enter into a citizen's life, the distance between service provider and receiver always exists. Research from the receiver's perspective propose that the tendency for urban residents to seek help informally but not from NGOs is associated with their refusal to recognize the need for professional help (J. Chen, 2012).

Whereas from service provider perspective, the distance mainly comes

from the role confusion for NGOs, especially those in government purchase of service. To fulfil government's huge demands for service, in some NGO-developed cities, government purchase of public services mushroomed; NGOs rush into the market, finding themselves in a survival position. This situation is emerging in some cities with well-developed NGOs, although it may not be genelizable throughout China yet. They follow market logic to compete with fellow organisations and gain trust from government; it is easy to lose their original identity of advocator for citizens. Service providers are busy fulfilling the service quota in contract, with little intention to establish a stable professional relationship with service receivers. When professional relationships cannot be established, social workers gain little trust from service receivers, making it even harder for social workers to enter into citizens' lives.

In summary, foster parents' employee logic, GCWI's administrative logic, and NGOs' survival logic significantly influence the actors' behaviours in a joint effort, finally producing an institutional system displaying a mixed approach. Cultural approach is the main mode of influence, in which roles and self-images embedded in the network structure direct most of the actors' actions. At the same time, calculus approach also shows its influence, because the actor utilising the calculus approach is in a leading position in the hierarchical style of the policy network.

6.3 Multi-logical Institutional System Reflects Network Structure Features

Next, I am going to elaborate how the policy community style policy network structure impacts the multi-logic institutional system. To figure out to what extent features of the policy network structure explain the network institutional system based on each actor's action logics, the process of how the network structure selects suitable actors' logics should be examined. It is also a process to see how these policy network features guide the building and interplay of the logics. This kind of guidance from network structure to interaction occurs in several ways.

First, clear boundary of membership defines the role and responsibility of each actor and cultivates a unified network culture so that all the actors act according to a context appropriate logic. Strict standards to enter the network make actors rely more on each other and have more sense of responsibility. Individuals' interest demands are successfully unified into the network level to create an encouraging network culture. Especially when self-images of function distribution are fixed in networking, actors' exchange behaviours generalise in an appropriate logic. As a result, the role and the position guide their direction of action. For instance, parents who want to be foster parents have to go through of a series of enrolment, interview, and training before finally signing the contract. The high threshold easily causes them a high level of self-identity, in which they distinguish themselves from other parents in the society.

Similarly, GDC wants to retain the producer role in its purchase service contract with GCWI after the first three years of collaboration, so it chooses to

defer to GCWI's opinion regarding foster parents' non-cooperation instead of dealing with the problem positively itself. In contrast, HSF's autonomous funding and mature running mechanism grant it an equal position in the project with GCWI, which makes HSF feel no hesitation to intervene in the same problem until it is solved.

Second, moderate but efficient network cohesion generates members' sense of belonging to the network and trust among them so that they are willing to act according to a cultural approach rather than a calculus approach. Concentrated consensus fosters more sense of belonging to the network, creating a harmonious network culture. Those who show strong motivation to join the network are more likely to act in a cultural approach, like foster parents act towards GDC and HSF towards GCWI.

Frequency easily guides the actors to turn to one another for help when someone fails in duty, as GCWI does with GDC. However, it is not powerful enough in itself to explain the action approach, because it cannot represent sole contributions in proportion to the degree of cohesion. As discussed before, in this case high frequency is not always in association with high persistence, as in GDC to GCWI, while low frequency is sometimes supported by high persistence, like HSF to GCWI. But, in this specific network, persistence contributes more to actors' behaviour logic than frequency and consensus, because high persistence which does not rely on frequent contacts or exchanges but is resulted from strong demand for collaboration brings in the bargaining power as in HSF to

GCWI, low persistence which holds the hope that frequency can strengthen the relationship, on the other hand, results in obedience, as in GDC to GCWI.

Third, structured and stable resource allocation enables the leading actor with more authority in the policy network, that is GCWI, to act in mixed approaches. Hierarchical power distribution in the network means that actors have different tasks embedded in the network. GCWI, with government authority, stands in the most advantageous position, which allows it to pay more attention to the administrative level, while other actors take charge of other domains regarding their respective assets. NGOs focus more on professional social work services, and foster parents put their attention on children's daily caring.

Structural resource allocation with little liquidity makes GCWI in its leading position feel freer to choose its action approach than others. Its government authority, various information embedded in the administration system, and stable financial support from the social welfare budget allows its action logic to get the legitimacy to be a combination of calculus and cultural approaches.

As NGOs at this stage cannot get enough resources, information, and power for their own development, the only choice is to survive on the basis of professional service by obeying GCWI. NGOs have to act in a cultural approach because of their limited resources at this stage. To further clarify, survival action is indeed instrumental for NGOs minimized their cost and found a way to

maximize their effectiveness for their original purposes. However, if they were not in the imbalanced relationship with the government, they would not calculate. That is to say, the calculate attemption comes from their powerless position in the network, and their well aware of their position and roles is just the main concern which guides them into the cultural approach.

HSF as an NGO with funding support gains more respect in the network because it has one more resource asset to share with GCWI. Having fewer resources is a cost to calculus with other actors in the policy network. At the same time, NGOs' individual level demands are selected by the network structure. Only those fitting to their roles on the network level could remain, and they have to continue to obligate their responsibilities in the network.

Foster parents prefer to take good care of foster children on their own, rather than asking other actors like GDC for help, in order to protect their caring capacity as an asset in an equal exchange with other actors.

It is clear that actors' logics, which interplay as mechanisms of the institutional system, have been filtered by network structure, which can illuminate the systematic networking process. The process of networking is also a process for each actor searching for a suitable approach to exchange. Restricted by particular network structures, all actors' approaches are tested, adjusted, strengthened, and even abandoned in times of interplay. When each actor finally settles on its particular approach and can fulfil both its individual interest and its network level interest, the mechanism of the network is formed

and, at the same time, the basis of the institutional system is constructed. This means that the institutional system of the network is the result of the interplay of the actors' logics of action. It has a mixed approach style, which is at the same time embedded in the network structure and influenced by the characteristics of the network structure. Whenever there is any change in network structure, the initial institutional system will guide actors' actions to develop into a suitable collective action, as the new network structure requires. Meanwhile, the institutional system itself will also develop with new collective action logics, demonstrating its constant influence on actors' performances in the network.

Chapter 7

Network Governance in Government Purchase of Foster Care

Along with the rapid growth in government purchase of service in Guangzhou, GCWI started to purchase foster care service from GDC in 2010. Social workers from GDC provide professional services in community foster centres. Each centre is composed of four or five foster homes located in one residential district. GCWI pays 9,000 to 10,000 Yuan for one foster care centre per month, mainly covering social workers' salaries and administrative expenses. As the role of government changes from hierarchical control to a contractual relationship with non-governmental service providers and foster parents, issues of coordination and monitoring become critical in policy network governance.

This chapter focuses on the sub-network of foster care in Guangzhou (consisting of GCWI, GDC, and foster parents) and analyses network governance in the context of government purchase of service. The three parties involved are assigned roles—GCWI as provider, GDC as producer, and foster parents as consumers—in order to clarify the public/private relationship involved in purchasing such services. Drawing on policy network analysis, I examine the network mechanism and the three conditions essential for network governance to emerge and thrive—interdependence, standardisation, and autonomy—trying to determine whether the foster care policy network in Guangzhou is successful or not in fulfilling these conditions.

Interdependence is an essential condition for parties collaborating in a network. They rely on one another and must be able to respond to various demands. To analyse interdependence, each party's demands are identified and the extent to which they are fulfilled is investigated. Frequency of exchange, both formal and informal, is selected as a measure of interaction and, therefore, of interdependence. This analysis relies primarily on interviews with chief officers, directors, and foster parents.

The extent of standardisation can be ascertained by examining how complex tasks are assigned under usual conditions. Within the normal context of the foster care network, task assignment relies on the roles and responsibilities defined in the network. Therefore, to investigate how tasks are assigned, it is necessary to first identify each party's role and corresponding responsibility. Once these responsibilities are stated in contracts, task assignments should, theoretically, be clear, but this is often not the case in practice. Interaction patterns must be charted in order to detect any discrepancies between the responsibilities laid out in the contracts and the actual practice. Only then can we determine the real level of standardisation. Archival data including contracts are used to see how responsibilities are defined on paper. To determine whether these theoretical tasks are actually implemented, staff members were asked about the typical problems encountered during the process of collaboration. Records of discussions during foster parent training are also analysed.

To determine the autonomy of the parties involved, their particular assets

and areas of specialisation are examined. A specific area of expertise is a basic

factor in determining the independence of an individual in a group; therefore,

each party's area of specialty is examined to prove its autonomy. I cite a few

typical decision-making cases to illustrate how authority is allocated in the

policy network. The analysis is primarily based on interviews with

administrative staff members, who were asked how they dealt with funding

distribution, authority allocation, supervision, and so on. Archival data are also

consulted to supplement the analysis.

7.1 Interdependence

7.1.1 Diverse demand with stable supply

Like the market logic of demand and supply, the demands of producers,

providers, and consumers in the government purchase of service vary according

to particular environments and functions. In keeping with the government's

efforts to invigorate large enterprises while relaxing control over small ones,

some of the government duties have been gradually transferred to privately

owned companies and NGOs. To reduce the cost of reform, the government

maintained the long-standing institutional channels of public management rather

than creating new ones. Maintaining a balance is crucial to the reform outcome.

For a long time, GCWI (the "provider") was under pressure: it was required to

accept 70 new orphans each year. When foster care reform was introduced,

reductions of staff and weak methods of implementation only increased this

pressure. Although the creation of foster homes run by hired couples removed the difficulty of recruiting natural foster families, the supervision and service quality of these homes were poor. Interactions between foster parents and GCWI were confused and disorganised. The accumulation of problems hampered the daily operations of the foster care program. Solutions were often stopgap measures aimed at containing an immediate crisis, adding to the frustration. GCWI, eager to find new resources to help solve these problems, welcomed the inclusion of GDC into the network. After the introduction of GDC, GCWI concentrated on management (e.g., capacity strengthening) and delegation of responsibilities.

In keeping with its motto—"Training, Research, and Service"—GDC ("the producer") was required to meet various demands and adjust to various contexts. One mid-level administrator described its role as follows:

Actually, our core goal is to provide training and experience for local social work students, local social workers, volunteers, or other relevant independent groups, and to promote the indigenisation of social work in mainland China. However, in order to achieve this goal, we have to start as soon as the government purchases a project so as to establish networks with local social resources and particularly with the local government. (Interview 4)

GCWI seemed aware of this, but they insisted to push GDC into competence with others.

I know they (GDC) didn't earn money from this project this year, they are good. But since there are so many agencies in society for choice, we still want to do the bid next year. (Interview 3)

As of June 2012, there were 140 social work service agencies registered in Guangzhou applying for the 260 million Yuan funding earmarked for government purchase of service. GDC must find ways to collaborate with local government in order to build up its reputation in the social work field and meet its financial obligations. Its main source of funding is still a BGCA special fund right now, which is not a long-term or sustainable option.

With regard to the foster families ("the consumers"), F. Zhang (2002) argues that support is provided by a range of social resources: government support is mostly in the form of policies and funding, while child welfare institutions supervisors offer classes in parenting and daily physical care. It was assumed that foster families' demands included policy and funding support and professional supervision. In practice, however, foster parents in Guangzhou are not eager to receive professional help. Instead, they want more practical aid—household articles and caregiving services (particularly for children with disabilities). When asked about their hopes for the future, foster parents say that they want to be more integrated into the local community. They want their foster children to gain the love and respect of their peers. They also feel proud of participating in the program and hope to gain societal recognition. One of the foster parents commented, "Every time there is an outside activity, I feel so

happy to see my foster children play with other, normal, children. I hope there will be more and more of these kinds of activities. It would be better if the public media promoted them" (Interview 15).

The various demands of GDC, GCWI, and foster parents can be satisfied when they combine their resources. GCWI needs qualified personnel to provide professional services and GDC is eager to establish collaborations with local government. When foster parents demand more societal recognition, GCWI raises the profile of the foster care program. Such instances of mutual aid are the fundamental prerequisites of the sub-policy network involved in the government purchase of foster care service in Guangzhou.

7.1.2 Frequency of exchange and common goals

For the providers, producers, and consumers in the policy network of foster care, a common goal is to provide professional service for children. Resources from the society, communities, and families must be integrated to provide a wide range of professional support so that foster families can meet the individual needs of their foster children. Frequency of exchange is a good indicator of commitment to this integration. As discussed in Chapters 5 and 6, frequent exchanges between GDC and GCWI are guaranteed by a one-year contract. In the contract, GDC outlines the frequencies of their service and social work training provided for GCWI's administrative staff. GCWI regularly does evaluation of each foster child and of GDC's work (service delivery, outcomes,

finances, planning), and also requires GDC to submit an annual proposal, which, once approved, requires strict compliance. Every quarter, GDC provides GCWI with a self-assessment report. In addition to these formal contacts, staffs at GCWI and GDC often provide suggestions for each other particularly when arranging activities for the foster children.

Foster parents are more likely to communicate with GCWI staff than with the social workers in the foster centre, though they do share their difficulties with social workers during home visits. Foster parents, especially the hired couples, often feel that they are only responsible to GCWI and that they need not heed the social workers' suggestions. GDC staff members have complained that they do not receive support from foster parents when they offer professional services:

> You just can't imagine how bad these parents' attitudes are when we provide training for them. Some of them refuse to attend, saying that they have already raised their own children without any problems and that our social workers are too young to give them any advice. (Interview 17)

In summary, the foster care network demonstrates a diverse frequency of exchange, as well as a moderate level of interdependence. GCWI and GDC, and GCWI and foster families frequently pool their resources through formal and informal means, respectively, while GDC and foster families are still in a wearing-in period with little frequency.

7.2 Standardisation

7.2.1 Efficient assigning of complex tasks

As stipulated in their contract, GCWI, GDC, and foster parents are assigned specific tasks in keeping with their role. GCWI is responsible for supervisory tasks (evaluations, investigations, and advice as needed); the provision of the quarterly funding for the social workers' salaries and daily working expenses (rent, water, electricity, telephone, Internet, etc.); coordination and communication with the community; and the provision of office space and furniture. More generally, the three main tasks of GCWI are administration, funding, and coordination. As a government agency, GCWI has direct access to government resources and even exclusive benefits, such as priority of access to low-cost housing. Its annual operating costs can be increased whenever there is a need, though the increase must be approved through appropriate channels. GCWI is also qualified to do resource coordination inside or outside the foster care policy network. It provides GDC with the tools for its social work counselling (e.g., case work rooms, training manuals) and pursues sponsors to provide bargains in home decoration furniture and admission to outside activities. The Toyota Group is one of GCWI's biggest and longest-standing sponsors, and has given money for renovations and purchasing furniture for foster homes and centre offices. The areas where GCWI efforts fall short are supervision and evaluation. Since the foster care program started in 2005, they have not

established regular staff visits, rules and guidelines, handbooks, or clear means of evaluation.

GDC is required to establish service centres in selected communities and to ensure that at least one professional social worker is on duty in each centre. These social workers are responsible for monitoring foster children's education and mental health, mentoring, providing entertainment, and keeping administrative records. At the same time, they provide feedback to GCWI, which will inform professional decisions and policy demands.

Professionalism is considered paramount at GDC. Professional services ensure the quality of foster children's care, and professional policy advice is crucial to potential improvements. GDC's contribution has been repeatedly approved by GCWI—evidence that GDC has satisfied its professional requirements. For whatever reason, however, GDC has chosen to take a minimal role in policy discussion. They only attend policy meetings when they are expressly asked to do so by GCWI.

Foster parents' focus is on the care of foster children. They provide guidance and routine reports on the children's physical, mental, and social development. They attend training sessions offered by GDC, especially those dealing with the rehabilitation of disabled children. On a daily basis, foster parents' responsibilities are routine and repetitive; most relate to the children's physical care and rehabilitation. Both GDC and GCWI admit that it is a difficult job to take care of four, sometimes even five, children. Evaluation reports show

that the children are happier after receiving foster care. Still, foster parents are often blamed when the children fail to develop mentally and socially. They are also criticised for showing little interest in addressing these difficulties, refusing to accept professional help, and opposing policy adjustments.

7.2.2 Patterns of interaction

The contract outlining foster care responsibilities is clear, but frontline workers encounter serious problems in actual practice. Six staff members of the foster care office do most of the administration of GCWI's contract with GDC and foster parents. Interactions with foster parents mostly consist of home visits. GCWI tells GDC of any problems encountered during the home visits. There is daily communication between the organisations' staff, and when they find it difficult to agree on a course of action, GCWI has the final say, holding the higher power.

Home visits function as a form of supervision. The guidelines for these visits should be clearly stated in the contract. However, GCWI staff, even its chief officer, have complained about the absence of standard rules for this procedure (Interview 2). Staff conducting supervisory visits often lack a clear purpose and come back without any solid gains. The process can be exhausting because each staff member is responsible for three or four foster centres and some are natural foster families in remote rural districts where there are no social workers to help during the process.

The attitude of GDC towards both GCWI and the foster parents seems both hidebound and somewhat embarrassed. GDC attaches importance to the visits conducted by GCWI staff:

We would like to share every improvement of these children with them; of course, we feel free to raise our needs, mostly they are about outside activity arrangement, furniture, and maintenance fees. (Interview 13)

When GDC staff members encounter difficulties, however, they turn to their GDC leader first and decide whether to contact GCWI later. Many sensitive problems such as foster parents' or foster children's lack of co-operation are therefore not instantly reported to GCWI. GDC is supposed to engage more fully with GCWI; however, in reality, GDC is more likely to obey without question, rather than discuss, the arrangements made by GCWI. The same lack of engagement can be seen in GDC's interactions with foster parents. The parents insist that they are fulfilling their contract with GCWI (e.g., participating in the training, counselling, home visits, etc.). Although the foster parents often appear indifferent or dismissive towards these "so-called professional things" (Interview 16), GDC often does not report such suspected lapses to GCWI.

Foster parents appear to be the most passive of the three parties involved in the policy network. They barely fulfil their contractual obligations and certainly do not participate enthusiastically. Foster parents must undergo a strict selection procedure. Once their status is confirmed by a contract with GCWI, they consider themselves employees under GCWI's management: "They (GCWI)

hired us. We raise those children for the government. I feel strong responsibility. Listening to them is necessary" (Interview 17). Foster parents rarely complain to GCWI or question their directives. If the children are having difficulties in school or the community, foster parents will often not report these problems to the visiting staff. One of the few times that foster parents do take the initiative with GCWI is when one of their foster children is going to be adopted by foreign parents. The foster parents negotiate with GCWI staff in the hopes of extending the process in order to deal with the pain of separation.

Foster parents find it hard to accept that the social workers at GDC have skills that will help them deal with their children's problems. They do not trust the social workers or appeal to them for help; instead, they view them as overseers hired by GCWI. They only started to pay more attention to the social workers after GCWI stipulated in its contract that foster parents were required to co-operate with GDC.

Standardisation, then, is a difficult condition to fulfil because the interactions among the parties involved are not ideal. Behavioural issues and a lack of guarantees with regard to resources and authority have hampered the success of the project. A poor evaluation system and lack of clear supervision of the children's progress exacerbates the situation. There are also few efficient channels of communication. As a result, resources available in the community, school, and other children's organisations have not been incorporated into the project. Foster children still have not fully integrated into community or school

life; "They tend to be isolated as an 'abnormal' group…" (Interview 19)

7.3 Autonomy

7.3.1 Asset specificity

The government benefits the other parties in the policy network because of two inherent characteristics. The first is expedience: government's orders rapidly and efficiently progress through its hierarchy. Resources can be tapped and new management established quickly and efficiently. After the Guangzhou Government Purchase Service Act was introduced in 2009, the number of service centres in Guangzhou residential districts jumped from 1 to 140 in four years. The budget for these facilities also rose quickly from 4 million Yuan in 2008 to 20 million Yuan in 2009 and 260 million Yuan in 2012. The purchase service agreement between GCWI and GDC was also speedily confirmed. GCWI and GDC signed the final collaboration contract two months after their first meeting.

The second beneficial characteristic of government is its ability to shape public policy independently and powerfully. Government leaders not only play a vital role in the existing institutional system but also strategically influence the future. In 2009, Zhang Guangning, Secretary of the Guangzhou Municipal Party Committee, undertook an official visit to Hong Kong to consult with the Hong Kong government, tour community service centres, and learn about public management and governmental purchase of service. After Zhang return to

Guangzhou, purchase of service was discussed and soon made into law (Interview 20). The co-operation between GCWI and GDC can be credited to one person: Yang, Director of the Social Work Department of the Guangzhou Civil Affairs Bureau, who has a good personal relationship with the executive director of GDC. It was Yang who introduced GDC to GCWI as a professional partner when the government showed interest in purchasing foster care service. (Interview 1, 20)

GDC, the producer in the policy network, is rooted in the community and therefore has access to many channels to raise awareness of social concerns. It is capable of developing innovative program models that local policymakers will endorse and promote (through financial aid and integration into government service programs). GDC has BGCA's 60 years of experience in providing services for children and adolescents, and established mechanisms for government co-operation. Its professional social work service has gained the trust of the Guangzhou Civil Affairs Bureau. Upon the Bureau's recommendation, GCWI authorised GDC to devise a means of collaboration and even draft their formal contract. When faced with "task complexity," GCWI provides adequate funding and effective policy implementation, while GDC trains staff from GCWI, provides professional services, and establishes networks for foster families in the society (schools, rehabilitation centres, etc.).

The foster parents themselves have much to contribute to the program because they have a clearer picture of the children's specific needs and can

gauge the effects of various services. Compared to the institutional care offered by GCWI, foster parenting offers more individual attention. Through foster parenting provision, GCWI has become much more intimately involved in the children's lives, and foster parents also contribute to subsequent policy changes.

7.3.2 Self-management

The asset specialties of the various parties involved in foster parenting may be the only factor contributing to their autonomy. GCWI and GDC are, in theory, independent bodies, but in practice this is not the case. At the beginning of this project, I sent separate interview requests to GCWI and GDC. Initially, GDC staff refused to be interviewed and later said that they would only co-operate if GCWI permitted it and accompanied them. This suggests that GDC is still under GCWI's control and has no power to make its own decisions. It also indicates that NGOs are not considered at the same level as government agencies. Their autonomy achieved is still limited by the structured system.

The foster parents also refused to be interviewed without GCWI's permission, but informal chats and a general meeting revealed that they wished for greater self-management. "We are coming from similar backgrounds, perform the same job for the government, we have many things in common" (Interview 19), "We trust each other's advice more than that of the social workers (Interview 18). GDC and GCWI have supported the foster parents' wish to have greater self-management. GCWI once authorised some foster parents to

run a family centre in a rural village, although the initiative was not successfully

carried out in the end. Still, there is a consensus that it would be better if foster

parents could have greater self-direction. Such a trend has been encouraged, but

it has met with obstacles in the form of the foster parents' limited capacities and

the other parties' interference.

GCWI should be most autonomous, playing the role of patronage over

GDC, which then in turn exercises influence on the foster parents; thus

exhibiting a 'hierarchical' structure.

All in all, the whole autonomy of the parties in this network is weak as

table 7.1 shown. Even though each party has its own assets to offer, GDC and

foster parents have yet to achieve self-management.

Table 7.1 Autonomy of the sub-network of government purchase of foster care service

Actors	Asset specificity	Self-management	Autonomy
GCWI	Government's orders rapidly and efficiently progress through its hierarchy; Ability to shape public policy independently and powerfully.	Strong	Strong
GDC	Develop innovative program models that local policymakers will endorse and promote (through financial aid and integration into government service programs)	Weak	Weak
Foster parents	Have a clearer picture of the children's specific needs and can gauge the effects of various services	Weak	Weak

7.4 Reasons for Weak Network Governance

The above analysis indicates that there was some evidence of network

governance in the sub-policy network of government purchase of foster care

service in Guangzhou, but it was inconsistent and not at the level required for efficient organisation. I identify two reasons for the weakness of the network governance: lack of self-management and insufficient standardisation.

The relationship between the government and NGOs is unequal. To maintain independence, both sides of a "connected transaction"—the provider and the producer—must have their own area of autonomy. The government, as the party awarding the contract, should not be able to control the important decisions of its contractors, the NGOs. When the market provides public service, the boundary between public and private is blurred, further complicating the nature of the tasks and responsibilities of stakeholders. Behn (2001) argues that the government has three tasks: financing, maintaining equality, and ensuring efficiency. When the government purchases services, its main task is to initiate a policy network, which allows all parties to maintain their independence and co-operate harmoniously. Since NGOs have the potential to influence public policy by proposing improvements to service delivery, they should be equal partners with the government. They should be able to mobilise resources, offer professional services, and advocate for social policies when their services have been purchased.

In practice, however, the provider and producer involved in the purchase agreement are not completely independent, which is due, in part, to the characteristics of so-called social organisations (i.e., NGOs) in China. Most NGOs like GDC in purchase programs are under the control of local government

department they are registered with. The biggest advantage of governmental purchase of service lies in making the NGO service a part of the system that once excluded it. In China, this is difficult to achieve. The government and the NGOs view the purchase from different perspectives. For government, the purchase is a means of "borrowing" the NGO's expertise to provide more efficient service. The government maintains control over resources, power distribution, supply, and other aspects of the development, while the NGOs, relying on the government's existing administrative system and network, are embedded in the government's context. NGOs, as contractors, thus are heavily dependent on the government.

The second reason for weak network governance is that the service evaluation and supervision system is inadequate and inefficient. Service costs are difficult to control. A service evaluation system has two subdivisions. One is the efficiency evaluation system, which measures whether the money spent on a service is achieving its maximum effect. The other is the service effect evaluation system, which measures the satisfaction of those who receive the service. Usually, however, the government is purchasing services that target the elderly, youth, or other vulnerable groups, who are less able to evaluate the services they receive. Moreover, the effects of "soft services," such as education, nursing, and personal services, are difficult to quantify in order to determine their cost-effectiveness. Once services are purchased, there are few scientific evaluation or supervision systems to monitor them. There is also a dearth of

qualified personnel to deal with technical problems that arise. Without key indicators of output and input, it is impossible to evaluate cost-effectiveness.

The two reasons for weak network governance both arise from the same source: the political reform in China has not reached its intended goal. The governmental purchase of service is an example of decentralisation, but there are still many problems associated with the transformation of the government. Instead of the reform target—"small government, big society," the reality is that the government is holding big power but small responsibility. The government has found it easier to shed responsibility than to let go of power. Government political policy reflects a "selective adaptation": "concentration" happens when power can be increased without assuming greater responsibility and "de-concentration" happens when responsibility is dispersed but the government's authority remains strong. As a result, government has fewer public responsibilities, but its monopoly over resources remains strong. Social organisations were intended to be the vehicles of the "big society," but their power is not autonomous; it depends on the government's assignation.

Williamson (1991) maintains that, in order for network governance to emerge and thrive, it must address the problems of adapting, coordinating, and safeguarding exchanges more efficiently than other forms of governance. These problems certainly have not been solved in the case described above. On the basis of the purchase of foster care service in Guangzhou, the relationship between government and NGOs still has a long way to go before it can meet the

three essential conditions for successful network governance.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

Based on the integrative analytical framework derived from policy network analysis and neo-institutionalism, this study examines the various actors involved in the foster care reforms in Guangzhou and investigates the relationships among government agencies, non-governmental organisations, professional bodies, and social groups in providing foster care services. Policy network, multi-logical actions, and institutional system of mixed approaches are the main concepts used in the analytical framework.

Four questions are addressed in the analysis. First, who are the core actors in the foster care policy network and what are the characteristics of the network structure? Second, how do the actors in the policy network interact with each other and under what action logics? Third, can features of the policy network structure explain the network institutional system formed based on each actor's action logics? And fourth, to what extent have the conditions of network governance been achieved in the sub-network of government purchase of foster care service in Guangzhou?

The findings highlight a circular process of "policy network structure—multi-logical interactions—institutional system," indicating that the foster care policy process is essentially a mutually influencing and dynamic process for all actors involved in the network to solve policy problems through

interactions, exchange of information, and resources coordination. In this final chapter, I next summarize the key findings, discuss the study limitations, contributions, and implications, and conclude with a discussion of directions for future research.

8.1 Summary of Research Findings

The four key findings of this study can be summarised as follows. First, four core actors are identified in the foster care policy network: the Guangzhou Child Welfare Institute (GCWI), the Half the Sky Foundation (HSF), the Growth Dynamics Social Work Professional Development and Resources Centre (GDC), and a group of foster parents. The structure of the foster care policy network features three major characteristics: clear boundary of membership, moderate but efficient network cohesion, and structured and stable resource allocation.

Second, the four core actors in the policy network act based on different logics, that is, GCWI—administration, HSF and GDC—survival, and foster parents—employment. Actors' exchange in the network is guided by a certain institutional system consisting of multi-logics embedded in the network. The logic of actors' interaction is a passive choice constrained in the network between calculus action following consequence logic and cultural action following appropriate logic. The actors' multi-logics interact and form the multi-logical institution system.

Third, the multi-logical institutional system can be attributed to the three

characteristics of the policy network structure: clear boundary of membership defines the role and responsibility of each actor and cultivates a unified network culture so that all the actors act according to a context appropriate logic; moderate but efficient network cohesion generates members' sense of belonging to the network and trust among them so that they are willing to act according to cultural approach rather than calculus approach; and structured and stable resource allocation enables the leading actor in the policy network, in this case GCWI, to have more authority to act in mixed approaches.

Fourth, concerning the policy network governance in government purchase of foster care service, among the three conditions—interdependence, standardisation, and autonomy—only interdependence is successfully fulfilled. Lack of self-management and insufficient standardisation of all three actors in the sub-network make the other two conditions not fulfilled and result in weak network governance.

8.2 Study Limitations

The case study approach is appropriate for examining details of the foster care policy network and the interactions among actors in the specific context of Guangzhou, China. However, case study also has its limitations and a few caveats need to be noted when interpreting the findings of this study.

The first is the limited generalisation of the research findings. The case of foster care in Guangzhou may not be representative enough to generalise to

cases in other cities. Both local natures and social context influence the development of foster care programs. Guangzhou is a migrant city. According the 2010 Census of Population (National Statistical Bureau, 2011), more than half of the population comprises migrants from various other cities and provinces making a living in Guangzhou. Among the hired foster parents are a large number of migrants from other cities. This circumstance may easily guide hired foster parents to take the caring of foster children as a job once they notice the recruitment advertisement and then apply to become foster parents. Since the action logic has strong relationship with the actor's background, analysis of actors' institutional logics may not be able to explain actors involved in foster care networks in other regions. Compared to other cities in China, the local government of Guangzhou is taking a leading role in foster care reforms. Government purchase of service in Guangzhou is ahead of the situation in most other cities. The local government provides strong financial support for these changes. Moreover, the mushroomed development of NGOs in Guangzhou is also well ahead of many other cities. Government purchase of foster care service in other cities may not be launched as fast as in Guangzhou.

Researcher bias in interpreting the data is another limitation. The data that I analyzed and reported in this study were collected during the period of 2010 to 2013. However, my experience with the foster care program in Guangzhou started far back in 2004, along with the first 50 foster children sent out of GCWI into natural foster families. Researcher's bias may influence the

data collection and interpretation. For example, the difficulties in the beginning stage of the program, like limited educational opportunities of foster children in rural villages and few urban families accepting foster children living with their own children, make me always more likely to trust the later foster home centre with social work services than those natural foster families. Although I am very aware about my own policy stance, such personal preference may still influence how I read and interpret the data presented in this study.

A third limitation is restricted access to field work. Field work related to policy or politics is generally restricted in China. It takes time to apply and wait for the permission to enter the field. Particularly, study about government purchase of service in Guangzhou is strongly restricted by the principle of confidentiality because of the bidding process. Through personal networking, I spent months doing internship and volunteer work at GCWI, GDC, and the Guangzhou Civil Affairs Bureau. I finally gained access to the fore core actors in the policy network, and collect as much information as possible to enrich the data. However, more data are still needed to further explain the multi-logical actions for each actor, such as foster parents' personal background of low income, HSF's mature self-management, GDC's concern about elimination in rapidly growing welfare agencies in Guangzhou, GCWI's long-term strategy of government purchase of public service, etc.

8.3 Research Implications

8.3.1 Case study of Guangzhou

This study reveals that the foster care policy network in Guangzhou has been formed under the child welfare reforms, but problems like coordination and management of the network result in the network mechanism being far from the level required by network governance. As a typical case study, the research provides a fresh practical experience of policy decision-making and implementation during the socialization of social welfare reforms. At the macroscopic level, the research indicates two points about the state–society relationship, and provides practical inspection for welfare reform from the perspective of policy networking. First, policy making and implementation are no long decided by the government only, the decision-making process having been replaced by an intercourse among multiple participants from society. Second, policy making and implementation tend to be in the style of negotiation and collaboration inside the policy network instead of command control, although network governance has not been completely achieved in practice.

On the micro level, the study examines network actors' interactions and how they negotiate with each other to reach equilibrium, and to form the institutional system. The analysis from multi-logical interaction to institutional system provides practical experience for predication and assessment of public policy outcomes.

Future research concerning the case of foster care reforms in Guangzhou thus can be further carried from three perspectives. I have plans to dig more

deeply into each actor' multi-logical actions overtime in my further research perhaps with a longitudinal study which mainly focuses on the changes of logics in all actors during the long-term foster caring process. For this, a longitudinal study can be applied to also evaluate foster children's comprehension development as policy outcome. A second avenue of research would be to compare policy outcomes of different collaboration styles between GCWI, HSF, and GDC. Policy network analysis can also be applied as an approach to see how collaboration is embedded in network structure so as to perform as network interaction. And third, there may still be technical gaps in the integration of policy network analysis and neo-institutionalism. The concepts from these two theoretical perspectives could be more deeply compared and combined.

8.3.2 Theoretical contributions and practice implications

Theoretically, the study contributes to the existing literature in two major ways. First, the integration of policy network and neo-institutionalism is theoretically significant in settlement of the debate about "behaviour—outcome" versus "structure—outcome." The study better coordinates structuralism and behaviourism in policy network analysis, as well as integrating the structure and behaviour analyses from the perspective of neo-institutionalism. Second, the logic of "policy network—institutional system—network performance" reconstructs the causal relationship between the network and its performance. It further interprets causal relationships among specific policy network structure,

network interaction, and network institutional system as a dynamic circular process. This approach can be applied to policy scenarios in other domains, and can also be used to analyze the implementation of other welfare service programs.

Moreover, the study demonstrates the advantages of employing a multi-logic perspective in reviewing the institutional system. Such an analysis better integrates the multi-logics approach and neo-institutionalism, and clarifies the mechanism from each actor's strategic action to the institutional system of the entire policy network. An analysis of the institutional system from a multi-logic perspective further benefits policy network analysis in three ways: first, it emphasizes multi-logic institutional interactions, so as to elaborate more deeply on diversification exchanges under network context; second, it specifies how these institutional logics are adopted in actors' corresponding actions, to elaborate the macro-level network structure impact on micro-level policy implementation; and third, it strengthens institutions and their developing routines resulting from the interactions of actors' diverse logics, in order to explore and highlight the changeable networking process.

While in practice, policy suggestions based on the analysis in this study fall in three levels. The first is for service provider to balance child service and caregiver service so as to raise the service effectiveness. Since key problems in foster care policy as foster parents' noncorporation with social workers have been existed for a long time, the importance of serving caregiver as foster

parents in foster care should be emphasized to the same level of service for the children. Foster parents' daily care and parenting are the most directly influence on children out of institution. Various resources from society as a network should also through foster parents to benefit foster children in their family. Once foster parents close the door to refuse any help, foster care policy will lost the significant of sending children out of institution to normalize their socialization as other children. The most effective service offering should not only focus on children's training, group theropy, special education, but also functional support, training, and guidance for foster parents. A systematic policy implementation should be organized from the very beginning of the implementaion, so as to take comprehensive care of children in or used to be in institution.

The second level is the clarification of roles and responsibilities in public-private relationship between government and NGOs. Taking network governance discussed in the study for instance, only when all actors involved have strong and correct part fixed position, the three conditions (interdependence, standardization, autonomy) can be fulfilled in the first stage. Referring to the experience of Guangzhou foster care reform, especially regarding government purchase service program, government should act as efficiency not omnipotence in the position of macroscopical control but not micromanagement. Government has no longer been the absolutely authority in network governance, instead, it guides NGOs and other organizations from society into the general orientation and principles. Simultaneously, government,

authority should be used to settle down or at least face squarely the conflicts that arise during the networking process. The maximum of public interest should always be the final target of any solutions.

NGOs should take the role of resource mobilization, service provision, society governance and policy advocacy. When exploring the new models of public-private relationship, NGOs could be even more positively to suggest government the most effective collaboration pattern, because they are beyond the politic system and free enough to organize asset of themselves together with resources from the society. Any sacrifice for bargaining power in the survival stage is worthy, because the power from the equal partner relationship is the only way for NGOs obtain their position in a longitudinal collaboration with the government. The third level of suggestion is to establish a systematic child protect mechanism in China. Even though the universal model of child welfare system has been proposed from national level, those matching execution rules should be considered simultaneously. Since separate, independent, autonomy policy implementation process is crucial to effect on policy outcome as the study explained, special child welfare department, funding, law, etc. are urgent to take into action. However, the diverse development of child welfare in different districts also require that the universal model should proceed in an orderly way and step by step. Children in special needs are still suggested as the focus on national level at this stage, while in some districts with child welfare well developing like Guangzhou city, policies benefit all children can make a trial.

8.3.3 Implications for other policy domains

The research carried out in this study also demonstrates the value of the integrative approach for applications in other policy domains operating broadly during the socialisation of social welfare reforms in China. The integration of policy network and neo-institutional analysis challenges the former method of emphasising one certain mechanism and pays more attention to the interaction effect in the dynamic networking process. It provides more detailed illustration of macro-level structural influences and micro-level action significance, so as to supply a stronger and more substantial foundation on the institution system construction. Only through this kind of deductive approach can those multi-actors involved in policies obtain a clear picture of how policy implementation reflects initial policy ideas and development in practice. Applying this integrative approach, research on multi-actors involved in other policy networks may gain an advantage in showing a dynamic process of networking and be able to demonstrate the emergence and transformation of an institutional system in public policy service provision.

It is noteworthy that while the actors' logics originally developed separately in each own domain, their relations may be loose or discontinuous in other contexts. In this research, the foster care policy network provides a special room for actors to influence and exchange with each other. In this room, their role, function, and other characters change and get influenced by the network

structure. Their relationship gets improved and they aim for a common interest demand through collective actions on the network level. Therefore, institutional system and network structure are the two foundations shaping network behaviours. This dual-embedded process can also impact multi-actors involved in other policy networks.

Moreover, application of policy network analysis can also provide a renewed picture of the state-society relationship in present China. On the one hand, multi-decision-making organs like those in western society do not exist in China. The problems of "fragmentariness" and "decentralisation", which are popular in western policy-making structure (Pantelidou, 2011), have not risen in China. To the contrary, government holding the central position in the policy-making structure is still prominent in China. In this context, policy network has been applied as a tool for expansion of the state's authority. By utilising this tool, government provides a coordinated mechanism encouraging the involvement of social groups and even individuals in the policy process, so as to enlarge government's social authority foundation.

On the other hand, as a type of *Guanxi* society, "personification mechanism" apparently accompanies the policy process (Hu, 1998). Policy network analysis thus can highlight this "personification mechanism," better explaining the complex *Guanxi* relationship in any policy domain than research conducted simply based on the dichotomous state-society model.

Appendix A: List of Interviews

No.	Position	Interview Questions	Data Analysis
	Administrators:		
Interview 1	GCWI Assistant Dean	Background; Collaboration procedure; Internal regulations; Difficulties encountered during the collaboration process; Future expectations.	Membership; Resource allocation; Multi-logical interactions; Interdependence; Standardisation.
Interview 2	GCWI Foster Care Office Director		
Interview 3	GCWI Foster Care Office Deputy Chief		
Interview 4	GDC Social Work Service Office Director		
Interview 5	GDC Social Work Service Office Deputy Chief		
Interview 6	HSF District Consultant		
	Staff members:		
Interview 7	GCWI Foster Care Office Supervisor	Details about the foster-care implementation process; How service is offered? What are the common problems in the collaboration process? How the problems are solved? Any discrepancy between the agency rules and the practice?	Degree of cohesion; Multi-logical interaction; Multi-logical institutional system; Interdependence; Standardisation
Interview 8	GCWI Foster Care Office Supervisor		
Interview 9	GCWI Foster Care Office Supervisor		
Interview 10	GCWI Foster Care Office Supervisor		
Interview 11	GDC social worker		
Interview 12	GDC social worker		
Interview 13	GDC social worker[1]		
Interview 14	HSF Family Consultant		

	Foster parents:		
Interview 15	Foster mother[2]	What is the motivation to join foster care? How to serve foster children? Who do you consult for help when encountering difficulties?	Membership; Degree of cohesion; Multi-logical interaction; Interdependence; Standardisation; Autonomy.
Interview 16	Foster father		
Interview 17	Foster mother		
Interview 18	Foster mother		
Interview 19	Foster mother		
	Government officer:		
Interview 20	Director of Department of Social Work Guangzhou Civil Affairs Bureau	History of foster care policy and government purchase of service in Guangzhou.	Membership; Autonomy;

Notes:

[1] A graduate trainee.

[2] The parent was reported to be model foster parents by the local newspaper.

Appendix B: List of Archive Documents

1. Promoting the Socialization of Social Welfare (State Council, No. 19 [2000])

2. Principle of Enhancing Protection for Orphans (State Council General Office, No.   54 [2010])

3. Outline Program for Development of Chinese Children (2011-2020) (State Council, No. 24 [2011])

4. Temporary Administration Methods on Social Welfare Institutions (Ministry of Civil Affairs, No. 19 [1999])

5. Interim Procedures of Foster Care Management (Ministry of Civil Affairs, No. 144 [2003])

6. Collection of Documents (Ministry of Civil Affairs Department of Social Welfare and Social Affairs, 2000)

7. The national 12th Five-Year Plan (Ministry of Civil Affaire, No. 209 [2011])

8. The Statistics Communiqué on the 2012 National Social Service (Ministry of Civil Affairs, 2012)

9. The 2010 Census of Population (National Statistical Bureau, 2011)

10. The Implementation Regulations of Foster Care in Guangzhou (27 October, 2003)

11. Foster-Care Manual (GCWI, 2005)

12. Family Village Project Manual (HSF, 2009)

13. Agreement on Family Village Project (Signed by GCWI and HSF, 2006)

14. Agreement on Purchasing Services of Foster Homes (Signed by GCWI and GDC, 2011)

15. Contracts of Foster Care Service (Signed by GCWI and foster parents, 2012)

16. Annual Evaluation Report 2011 (GDC to GCWI)

17. First Quarter Self-evaluation Report 2012 (HSF to GCWI)

18. Documents of foster homes in Yu Long Ju district (2010)

19. Weekly diaries of foster children (Foster parents to HSF every two weeks)

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