

ABSTRACT

This dissertation studies why and how in post-Mao China, local states' policy implementation and the ensuing policy outcomes differ from each other. The overarching analytic framework is the competition between two policy coalitions: the central state allied with state-owned enterprises (SOEs), and the local states allied with township and village enterprises (TVEs). The research design comprises two pairs of comparative case studies, with each pair examining two localities' policy implementation concerning either SOEs or TVEs. The research method rests on both intensive interviews in field trips and documentary survey.

This dissertation has four major findings. First, the most significant factor to explain the varying degrees of local states' departure from centrally framed policy rules in policy implementation is institutional capacity. The stronger a local state's institutional capacity, the more deviant its implementation. Second, the expected effect of local states' fiscal incentive is often outweighed by that of institutional capacity. Local states' greater share in rival coalition's internal resource supply or less share in its own coalition's is not found to encourage more local compliance. Third, when the structure of enterprises' property rights shapes a local state's incentive, local implementation becomes more defiant if the local state has a stronger claim over the property rights. This effect overrides institutional capacity in a handful of cases. When this factor affects a local state's ability, local implementation turns less defiant under the same antecedent condition. This effect is only ancillary to institutional capacity. Fourth, in regulatory more than in extractive and redistributive policies, the more resources a local state draws from abroad, the less contumacious its implementation is.

These findings address various inadequacies of relevant theories in political science in general. In China studies, they modify the traditional state-society

dichotomy, and support the view of socialist corporatism in contemporary China. They also supplement current explanations of reform policies' success or failure. Above all, they offer a more dynamic exposition of contemporary China's central-local relations. In conclusion, they point to the fundamental problem of policy implementation in China: the structural dilemma of *tiaotiao* versus *kuaikuai* inherent in the Chinese polity.



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