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Political and Ethnic Representation in Chinese Local Governance

Analysis of the Roles of the Deputies of Leishan County People's Congress,
Guizhou Province, China

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
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This thesis investigates the political and ethnic environment of local Chinese political actors and their representational dilemmas in the Miao-dominant area of Leishan County, Guizhou Province, China. The investigation is conducted via two research questions: how do the deputies of a Miao County People's Congress in China play their roles in representing the interests of the state towards the community, and how do they represent the interests of the community towards the state? The achievements of the deputies and the challenges they face in their dual representational roles are a focus of the analysis. The thesis provides insight into the governance and politics of a local government body dominated by an ethnic minority and the interplay of these dynamics with central government authorities presided over by Han Chinese.

The representative structure of the Leishan County People's Congress (LCPC) and its deputy membership is explored to understand how the deputies enact their roles in promoting, intervening in and restructuring development projects as both agents of and remonstrators to the central state. Case studies of village governance and cultural tourism are used to illustrate how the LCPC deputies are both coordinators and negotiators in a polycentric local governance structure.

The fieldwork was carried out in the ethnic area of Leishan County. Relevant data was collected through four interrelated research methods: focus groups, semi-structured individual interviews, purposive observation and document analysis. The quantification of pairwise ranking by the focus groups highlighted the achievements and challenges in the key functions required of the deputies. The data also led to two further areas for in-depth analysis: central-local relations, and the political and ethnic representation of the deputies.

The research found that when conflicts exist, political representation that favours the state prevails over community interests. At the same time, the deputies' representation of their ethnic communities is enhanced and augmented when they undertake to localise the national development policies and projects handed down by central authorities. Finally, the concept of polycentric governance enables a more precise understanding of the changing local governance systems in China among the diverse stakeholders present in the ethnic communities.

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Sincerely

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| | |
|---|-------------|
| Abstract..... | i |
| Acknowledgements | iii |
| Table of Contents | v |
| Annotated Glossary | xi |
| Acronyms..... | xiii |
| Tables | xv |
| Figures..... | xv |
| Photos..... | xvi |
| Maps..... | xvi |
| Formulae..... | xvi |
| Diagrams..... | xvii |
| Boxes..... | xvii |
| Charts..... | xvii |
| Chapter One: Introduction | 1 |
| 1.1 Overview..... | 1 |
| 1.2 An introduction to the Miao ethnic group and Miao people in Guizhou Province..... | 3 |
| 1.3 Research questions | 4 |
| 1.4 Purpose and contribution of this research..... | 6 |
| 1.5 Focus and Perspective | 7 |
| 1.6 Conceptual framework..... | 8 |
| 1.7 Outline of chapters | 11 |
| Chapter Two: Literature review: Governance and polycentric governance | 14 |
| 2.1 Introduction | 14 |
| 2.2 Governance | 15 |
| 2.2.1 Governance: Definitions | 16 |
| 2.2.2 Good governance | 19 |
| 2.3 Local governance | 21 |
| 2.4 Conceptual framework: Polycentric governance..... | 23 |
| 2.4.1 Theoretical background of polycentric governance | 23 |
| 2.4.2 The development of thinking about polycentric governance..... | 25 |
| 2.4.3 Polycentric governance as a theoretical tool of analysis..... | 28 |
| 2.4.4 The significance of local governance in a polycentric system | 33 |
| 2.5 Decentralisation and polycentric governance | 36 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| 2.5.1 Decentralisation: Definitions and concepts | 36 |
| 2.5.2 Decentralisation and central-local relations | 37 |
| 2.5.3 Decentralisation and polycentric governance | 38 |
| 2.6 Ethnicity, political and ethnic representation | 41 |
| 2.7 Research and debate on polycentric governance in China | 42 |
| 2.8 Summary of the literature review and its relevance to the research questions | 46 |
| Chapter Three: Governance in the ethnic areas in China | 48 |
| 3.1 Introduction | 48 |
| 3.2 Historical perspectives on the local governance system in China's ethnic areas..... | 49 |
| 3.2.1 Local governance system in the Imperial Period in China | 49 |
| 3.2.2 Local governance policies of Chinese Communist Party in the Republican Period | 51 |
| 3.3 Local governance system in ethnic areas in contemporary China..... | 52 |
| 3.3.1 Ethnic Regional Autonomy System | 52 |
| 3.3.2 County governmental authorities..... | 54 |
| 3.3.3 The Party and Party Committee of the County..... | 55 |
| 3.3.4 The County People's Government | 56 |
| 3.4. The People's Congresses..... | 58 |
| 3.4.1 Roles of the People's Congresses | 58 |
| 3.4.2 Roles of the deputies in the People's Congresses | 60 |
| 3.4.3 Representative structure and representation of the deputies in the People's Congresses..... | 61 |
| 3.5 Local governance and democratisation in China | 62 |
| 3.5.1 Central-local relations in China | 63 |
| 3.5.2 Local governance and democratic elections at grassroots level | 65 |
| 3.5.3 Local governance and elite capture | 67 |
| 3.6 Ethnicity, politics and cultural tourism in China | 68 |
| 3.7 Core concepts in Chinese local context: consensual democracy, interest groups and pluralism ... | 70 |
| 3.8 Development interventions and projects | 72 |
| 3.9 An introduction to Leishan County and its People's Congress..... | 74 |
| 3.9.1 Leishan County..... | 74 |
| 3.9.2 Leishan County People's Congress (LCPC) | 75 |
| 3.10 Chapter summary | 77 |
| Chapter Four: Methodology and research methods..... | 79 |
| 4.1 Introduction | 79 |
| 4.2 Methodological considerations..... | 80 |
| 4.2.1 Positionality and reflexivity..... | 81 |
| 4.2.2 Ethics approvals | 85 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| 4.2.3 Liaison officer as gatekeeper and intermediary | 86 |
| 4.3 A qualitative research supported by quantitative methods | 88 |
| 4.4 Concepts, expressions and translation issues | 89 |
| 4.5 Research methods | 90 |
| 4.6 Recruitment of the participants for focus groups and individual interviews..... | 90 |
| 4.7 Focus groups..... | 91 |
| 4.7.1 The procedure of arranging focus groups..... | 92 |
| 4.7.2 Practical operation of focus groups by pairwise ranking..... | 93 |
| 4.7.3 Synthesis of the four focus groups and explanation of the classification of each item into achievements and challenges | 97 |
| 4.8 Analysing data based on the normalisation and averaging of raw data..... | 102 |
| 4.8.1 Normalisation of the raw data “score” | 102 |
| 4.8.2 Averaging normalised score..... | 104 |
| 4.9 Semi-structured individual interviews..... | 106 |
| 4.9.1 Design of the supporting questions for the research questions..... | 108 |
| 4.9.2 Photos in the semi-structured individual interviews..... | 109 |
| 4.9.3 Quantifying the findings in semi-structured individual interviews..... | 110 |
| 4.10 Purposive observation..... | 114 |
| 4.11 Document analysis..... | 117 |
| 4.12 Conclusion..... | 118 |
| Chapter Five: Representative structure and representation | 120 |
| 5.1 Introduction | 120 |
| 5.2 Representative structure and representation of the LCPC deputies | 121 |
| 5.2.1 Age structure | 125 |
| 5.2.2 Gender structure..... | 127 |
| 5.2.3 Ethnicity | 131 |
| 5.2.4 Education | 132 |
| 5.2.5 Party status | 135 |
| 5.2.6 Social class | 137 |
| 5.2.7 Status of professionalisation..... | 138 |
| 5.2.8 Regional representation | 140 |
| 5.3 Representation of the LCPC deputies in their political activities | 140 |
| 5.4 Analysis of development projects in the submitted motions..... | 146 |
| 5.4.1 Motions submitted by numbers of deputies | 146 |
| 5.4.2 Explanation of development projects in the motions | 148 |
| 5.5 Conclusion..... | 152 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| Chapter six: Achievements and challenges in representing the interests of the state towards the community | 154 |
| 6.1 Introduction | 154 |
| 6.2 A general introduction of the four functions of the deputies in representing the interests of the state discovered in the focus groups..... | 155 |
| 6.3 Analysis of the achievements and challenges in representing the interests of the state | 156 |
| 6.3.1 Function 1: Promoting the strategy of the Party | 156 |
| 6.3.2 Function 2: Enforcing laws and policies of the state | 161 |
| 6.3.3 Function 3: Implementing livelihood projects | 164 |
| 6.3.4 Function 4: Developing political representation | 165 |
| 6.4 An analysis of the four functions from the individual interviews | 172 |
| 6.4.1 A general introduction to the four functions in individual interviews | 172 |
| 6.4.2 Analysis of the individual interviews | 173 |
| 6.4.3 The deputies' views of the Ethnic Regional Autonomous System (ERAS) in representing the interests of the state..... | 176 |
| 6.5 The roles that the deputies play in a structure of polycentric governance in cultural tourism in Xijiang village | 177 |
| 6.6 Conclusion..... | 183 |
| Chapter Seven: Achievements and challenges in representing the interests of the community towards the state | 185 |
| 7.1 Introduction | 185 |
| 7.2 The functions in representing the interests of the community as revealed in the focus groups .. | 186 |
| 7.3 The deputies who are from and seconded to the community..... | 187 |
| 7.4 Analysis of the achievements and challenges in representing the interests of the community in focus groups..... | 189 |
| 7.4.1 Function 1: Promoting the voice of community | 189 |
| 7.4.2 Function 2: Localising policies of the state | 196 |
| 7.4.3 Function 3: Implementing livelihood projects | 198 |
| 7.4.4 Function 4: Developing ethnic representation | 201 |
| 7.5 An analysis of the four functions from the individual interviews | 202 |
| 7.5.1 A general introduction of the functions based on the points..... | 203 |
| 7.5.2 Analysis of the achievements and challenges in representing the state in individual interviews..... | 203 |
| 7.5.3 The deputies' views about Ethnic Regional Autonomous System (ERAS) in representing the interests of the community in individual interviews | 207 |
| 7.6 The roles that the deputies play in a polycentric governance structure in the cultural tourism of Upper Lande village..... | 208 |
| 7.7 Conclusion..... | 212 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| Chapter Eight: Discussion and conclusions: The dilemmas of the political and ethnic representation of deputies in the local governance system | 215 |
| 8.1 Introduction | 215 |
| 8.2 Political representation: The role that the deputies play in representing the interests of the state towards community | 217 |
| 8.2.1 Political representation with the dominance of the Party through its cadre management and responsibility system | 218 |
| 8.2.2 Political representation in the triangular relations between the Party, the County People's Government, and the County People's Congress | 220 |
| 8.2.3 Political representation: Representing the interests of the state | 222 |
| 8.3 Ethnic representation: The roles that the deputies play in representing the interests of the community towards the state..... | 224 |
| 8.3.1 Ethnic representation: Representing the interests of the community..... | 225 |
| 8.3.2 Ethnic representation: Extension of recognition of politics | 228 |
| 8.3.3 Ethnic representation: Representative structure and universal representation..... | 230 |
| 8.4 Political and ethnic representation: A win-win situation? | 231 |
| 8.4.1 The role dilemmas of political and ethnic representation..... | 233 |
| 8.4.2 Interests of unanimity and conflicts | 237 |
| 8.5 Contribution: A better understanding of the evolution of local governance system through the structure of polycentric governance..... | 239 |
| 8.6 Contribution: Pairwise ranking in focus groups used in a real world research context | 242 |
| 8.7 Conclusion | 244 |
| Final words: Recommendations | 247 |
| Part I: Institutional and governance systems that can assist the deputies play their roles better | 247 |
| 1. The deputies can play their roles better in an institution based on cooperation | 247 |
| 2. The deputies can play their roles better in a model of good governance | 248 |
| 3. The deputies can play their roles better with the status of professionalisation | 248 |
| Part II: Institutional issues need to be considered in policy-making | 249 |
| 1. Central control | 249 |
| 2. Limited autonomy..... | 249 |
| 3. Elite capture | 250 |
| 4. Insufficient representation of women deputies | 250 |
| 5. Missing representation | 251 |
| Appendices..... | 252 |
| Appendix 1: Low Risk Notification (PN 331) of Massey Human Ethics Chairs Committee | 252 |
| Appendix 2: Letter of Certificate for Field Research by Institute of Development Studies of Massey University | 253 |

| | |
|---|------------|
| Appendix 3: Photo of Letter of Recommendation..... | 254 |
| Appendix 4: Data summary of Focus Group 1 | 255 |
| Appendix 5: Data summary of Focus Group 2 | 256 |
| Appendix 6: Data summary of Focus Group 3 | 257 |
| Appendix 7: Data summary of Focus Group 4 | 258 |
| Appendix 8: Demographic information of the deputies who participated in the interviews..... | 259 |
| References | 261 |

Biangan

Village development model worker.

Daitouren

Pacesetter in area of village development.

Ganbu

Cadre; public employees who work in governmental organs, the army or people's organisations and who play a leading role or conduct administrative work.

Haozhaoli

Charisma; the collective ability of a group such as deputies who possess the influential ability of a policy who/which can inspire and guide the people to follow.

Livelihood Projects

A series of projects implemented by the government such as poverty-relief, promotion of employment, education and aid, social security, economy housing, infrastructure, environmental improvement, medical care etc..

Minimum Subsistence Security System (MSS)

A national policy practiced over China to guarantee those aging, or disabled, or patients, or widows, or anyone who has no job, and who has no any source of income in both urban and rural areas, have the lowest income to live.

Oversight

The legal power executed by deputies in People's Congress for the supervision of the work of government, court and procuratorate; to have oversight over (something).

Paiban

Clap the board; have the final say.

Pufa

Activities taken by deputies to educate people in awareness about legal issues; popularising the laws.

Renovation of unsafe housing

A national project practiced over Chinese rural areas to grant financial support to those farmers who haven't the economic ability to improve their living houses which are in disrepair.

Sangnong issues

The issues related to agriculture, rural areas and farmers. In Chinese, the first character of each of the three words is the same as nong.

Spiritual work

Political consciousness raising; such work conducted by deputies to the villagers for specific political objectives.

The Party

Chinese Communist Party.

Xiadao

Second or to be seconded. It is used to describe those officials or future deputies who are transferred to work at a lower or grassroots level.

Yifuliangyuan

Government, court and procuratorate. The deputies of People's Congresses at different levels often use this term to describe their oversight over the government, the court and the procurtaorate.

Zhualuoshi

Carry through on a project.

Zuzhi

Organisation, such as governmental personnel department or unit within the Party; any Party or government institution.

Acronyms

| | |
|--------------|---|
| CGB | County Government Bureau |
| CGG | Commission of Global Governance |
| CCP | Chinese Communist Party |
| CPC | County People's Congress |
| CPG | County People's Government |
| CPPCC | County People's Political Consultative Conference |
| CPRs | Common-pool resources |
| ERAS | Ethnic Regional Autonomy System |
| FG | Focus groups |
| GRP | Government of the Republic Period |
| LCPC | Leishan County People's Congress |
| LPC | Local People's Congress, including People's Congress at provincial, prefectural, county and township levels |
| LPG | Local People's Governments, including People's Governments at provincial, prefectural, county and township levels |
| NPC | National People's Congress |
| NPM | New public management |
| NRCMC | New Rural Cooperative Medical Care |
| PC | People's Congresses at national and local levels |
| PCC | Party Committee of the County |
| PCLC | Party Committee of Leishan County |
| PG | Prefectural Government |
| PPC | Provincial People's Congress |
| PPF | Preferential policies for farmers |
| RCA | Representing the community: averaged value |

| | |
|-------------|--|
| RCTA | Representing the community: total averaged value |
| RSA | Representing the state: averaged value |
| RSTA | Representing the state: total averaged value |
| TPG | Township People's Government |
| TPC | Township People's Congress |
| VC | Villagers' Committee |
| VPB | Village Party Branch |

Tables

| | |
|---|-----|
| Table 1: Articles of polycentric governance in top ten disciplinary categories in China | 45 |
| Table 2: Frequencies of key words in articles which appear 20 or more times | 45 |
| Table 3: Representing the interests of the state: Achievements | 98 |
| Table 4: Representing the interests of the state: Challenges | 99 |
| Table 5: Representing the interests of the community: Achievements | 100 |
| Table 6: Representing the interests of the community: Challenges | 100 |
| Table 7: Average value of achievements in representing the interests of the state | 105 |
| Table 8: Averaged value of normalised data of achievements and challenges | 106 |
| Table 9: Items from one part of the interview of Deputy 18 | 114 |
| Table 10: Representative structure of the 153 deputies in the 16 th LCPC | 124 |
| Table 11: Representative structure by age from the 13 th to the 16 th LCPC | 126 |
| Table 12: Representative structure by gender from the 13 th to the 16 th LCPC | 127 |
| Table 13: Representative structure by ethnicity from the 13 th to the 16 th LCPC | 131 |
| Table 14: Representative structure of deputies by education from the 13 th to the 16 th LCPC | 133 |
| Table 15: Party status of deputies from the 13 th to the 16 th LCPC | 136 |
| Table 16: Representative structure of deputies by social class from the 13 th to the 16 th LCPC | 137 |
| Table 17: Representative structure by regional representation from the 13 th to the 16 th LCPC | 140 |
| Table 18: Motions submitted by the numbers of deputies from 2012 to 2014 | 147 |
| Table 19: Development projects in the motions by category submitted by the 16 th LCPC deputies | 149 |
| Table 20: Categories of motions submitted in 2013 and the government's responses | 150 |
| Table 21: Four functions in representing the state: Achievements and challenges | 155 |
| Table 22: Representing the interests of the state: Points of achievements and challenges | 173 |
| Table 23: Four functions in representing the community: Achievements and challenges | 186 |
| Table 24: The proportion of the LCPC deputies from and seconded to the community | 187 |
| Table 25: Representing the interests of the community: Points of achievements and challenges | 203 |

Figures

| | |
|--|-----|
| Figure 1: Organisational structure of Leishan County People's Congress (LCPC) | 76 |
| Figure 2: Activities of the LCPC deputies | 141 |
| Figure 3: Total and averaged values of each function for representing the state | 156 |
| Figure 4: Representing the interests of the state: Points of achievements | 174 |
| Figure 5: Representing the interests of the state: Points of challenges | 175 |
| Figure 6: The roles that the deputies play in the cultural tourism in Xijiang Village | 179 |
| Figure 7: Total and Averaged values of each function for representing the community | 189 |
| Figure 8: Representing the interests of the community: Points of achievements | 204 |
| Figure 9: Representing the interests of the community: Points of challenges | 206 |
| Figure 10: The roles that the LCPC deputies play in the cultural tourism in Langde Village | 211 |
| Figure 11: Triangular relations between the PCC, the CPC and the CPG | 221 |

Photos

| | |
|---|-----|
| Photo 1: The research assistant is preparing the writing cards for FG 4 (left) | 93 |
| Photo 2: The research assistant is delivering the writing cards and the participants are thinking (right) ... | 93 |
| Photo 3: The participants of FG 4 keep thinking (left)..... | 94 |
| Photo 4: The participants of FG 4 keep writing (right) | 94 |
| Photo 5: The achievements identified by the participants of FG 4 in representing the state (left) | 94 |
| Photo 6: The researcher facilitates the participants of FG 4 in categorising the achievements (right) | 94 |
| Photo 7: The participants of FG 4 watch the words put on the wall and smile (left)..... | 95 |
| Photo 8: The participants of FG 4 watch and read the words put on the wall (right) | 95 |
| Photo 9: The researcher writes down the items categorised by the participants in FG 4 (left)..... | 95 |
| Photo 10: The full categorised items with score and ranking in FG 4 (right)..... | 95 |
| Photo 11: Scores and ranked achievements and challenges in representing the state in FG 4 (left) | 97 |
| Photo 12: Scores and ranked achievements and challenges in representing the community in FG 4 (right) | 97 |
| Photo 13: The interview with the chairman of a TPC (left) | 110 |
| Photo 14: The interview with one Miao female deputy (right) | 110 |
| Photo 15: The 12 th meeting of the members of the LCPC 16th Permanent Committee (left) | 116 |
| Photo 16: The chairmen of township People's Congresses (right) | 116 |

Maps

| | |
|--|----|
| Map 1: Location of Guizhou in China | 74 |
| Map 2: Guizhou province and the location of Leishan County | 75 |

Formulae

| | |
|--|-----|
| Formula 1: Min-max normalisation | 103 |
| Formula 2: Average Value..... | 105 |

Examples

| | |
|---|-----|
| Example 1: Achievements and challenges in representing the interests of the state in FG 4..... | 103 |
| Example 2: Diagram 2: Representing the interests of the state: Challenges in FG 4 | 104 |
| Example 3: Enforcing laws and policies of the state in the achievements of representing the state | 105 |
| Example 4: References of “justice and fairness” in representing the community: Achievements (RCA)..... | 111 |
| Example 5: References of “national policies” in representing the community: Challenges (RCC) | 111 |
| Example 6: Multi-dimensional responses (Deputy 18)..... | 113 |

Diagrams

| | |
|--|----|
| Diagram 1: Representing the interests of the state: Achievements in FG 4..... | 96 |
| Diagram 2: Representing the interests of the state: Challenges in FG 4 | 96 |
| Diagram 3: Representing the interests of the community: Achievements in FG 4 | 96 |
| Diagram 4: Representing the interests of the community: Challenges in FG 4..... | 97 |

Boxes

| | |
|---|-----|
| Box 1: Development of cultural tourism in Xijiang village | 178 |
| Box 2: Development of village governance/cultural tourism in Langde village | 208 |

Charts

| | |
|---|-----|
| Chart 1: Deputies' visits to the constituency per month | 190 |
| Chart 2: Deputies' visits to the government per month | 190 |

1.1 Overview

This research examines the political and ethnic representation of the deputies of Leishan County People's Congress (LCPC) in Guizhou province in China. In this county, the Miao nationality (*miaozu*, 苗族)¹ is the dominant ethnic group. The thesis discusses the LCPC deputies' political and ethnic representation by exploring two research questions: how do the LCPC deputies play their roles in representing the interests of the state towards the community, and how do they represent the interests of the community towards the state? Their dual roles in representing the interests of the state and the people reveal tensions and challenges which this research explores. In addition, the thesis examines diverse development projects which were intervened in and restructured by the deputies. Through the exploration of these issues of representation and governance, this thesis contributes to a better understanding of development and local governance issues. It also contributes to a greater knowledge of the ways in which political and ethnic representation of the deputies is influenced by state policies, development projects, local politics and ethnic identity in the Miao ethnic area in China.

China is one of the biggest developing countries in the world and has suffered long-term poverty. The earliest movement for the restoration of China is the Tongzhi Restoration (1860-1874) (Barmé, 2009)² in the late Qing Dynasty (1636-1912). The first attempt of "Western-style modernity" in political institutional reforms (Barmé, 2009, p. 65) together with the "self-strengthening movement" (1861-1895), which focused on technological reforms, ended in frustration (M. M.-h. Yang, 1988, p. 420). This led to the dynastic collapse, civil war and warlordism of the Republic era (1912-1949) prior to the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. The commencement of reform and opening-up to the outside world in the late

¹The title of Miao people is a sensitive issue. Miao is officially recognised as a nationality in China. So it is better to call Miao people as Miao nationality (*miaozu*, 苗族), rather than Miao ethnic group (*zuqun*, 族群), or "Miao as a *zuqun*" or "this *zuqun* Miao". The researcher explains the title of Miao people when he discusses concepts, expressions and translation issues in Section 4.4 in Chapter Four.

² According to Barmé (2009), the period of Tongzhi Restoration saw "the creation of a ministry of foreign affairs, the beginnings of new transport and communications networks as well as a revived military, and marked China's first attempt to address the issues of Western-style modernity" (p. 65). These efforts at reform were ultimately frustrated.

1970s retriggered the restoration of China. While China is making remarkable economic achievements, there still remain a number of development issues: environmental pollution, uneven development, lack of infrastructure, and political disempowerment (especially in its ethnic areas).

Today, many ethnic areas in China are still poor and their economic indicators are lower than that of other areas. This is especially so regarding poverty and the lower economic indicators in the Miao areas in Guizhou Province. The central governmental authorities of China have made a series of development policies and have implemented a range of development projects which focus on economic development in the Miao ethnic areas. Under these policies, the Miao nationality is carrying out projects such as tea planting and cultural tourism to increase their income and to improve their living standards. Despite this, Miao people remain economically and politically vulnerable and the development issues they face remain diverse and complex. As an ethnic group, the Miao has a long way to go to eliminate poverty.

Are the development issues of the Miao people due to their political disempowerment and weakened ethnic identity? In order to investigate these issues, this research explored the political and ethnic representation of Miao people behind the economic-oriented development projects in the county of Leishan. The researcher is of a mixed Han and Dong ethnicities who lives in Guizhou province and he is concerned about the development issues of the ethnic areas in this province, especially the political and ethnic representation of Miao ethnic group. The researcher is a civil servant at the provincial level. He has coordinated agricultural projects implemented by the World Bank, and has organised poverty-relief projects donated by Heart to Heart International in the province's Miao area in the early 2000s. His frequent visits to the Miao area and his concern over the slow poverty-relief pace increased his motivation for researching the development and governance issues from the views of political and ethnic representation of the LCPC deputies.

In order to have a better understanding of the local situation in this Miao area, it is necessary to know the origin and the current development situation of Miao people in China. The following section introduces the Miao ethnic group and Miao people in Guizhou province.

1.2 An introduction to the Miao ethnic group and Miao people in Guizhou Province

The Miao people are known as Hmong in the international context. In her book, *Hmong: History of a people*, Quincy (1995) traces the origin of Hmong/Miao people through her research in ethnology, archaeology, cultural studies and linguistics. She dates the history of Miao people to the Caucasian region 7,000 years ago and believes that Miao people have originated from the Caucasus area. In the articles of domestic scholars in China, Miao people are generally described as the group “*jiuli*” (九黎) who lost tribal wars in ancient North China in the Yellow River Valley 5,000 years ago and who had to migrate to the south and southwest of China where they were identified as “*sanmiao*” (三苗) (Weng, 2010). Miao and other ethnic minority groups in the southern China were generally called “south barbarians” (*nanman*, 南蛮) (Baidu Encyclopedia, 2015) by the ruling classes before Song Dynasty (960-1279), and since the Song Dynasty, Miao officially received its name as the Miao ethnic group.

Miao ranks as the second largest of the seven biggest minority groups in China by population, which, in sequence, are the Zhuang, Miao, Hui, Uygur, Yi, Tujia and Manchu (Hoddie, 1998). The majority of the Miao people living in China are located in Guizhou province. Guizhou is often referred to as the hinterland of the Miao ethnic group by the local people. The very close linguistic similarity between two Hmong dialects in Thailand demonstrates the longest migration route for Miao/Hmong people from Guizhou to Southeast Asian countries (Culas & Michaud, 2004). Miao are scattered across Southeast Asian countries bordering southwest China including Thailand, Vietnam, Laos and Burma. Hmong/Miao have become an international ethnic group with diaspora found in every continent (C. Shi, 1998). Guizhou's Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture is the major base of the Miao population in China. There are now over four million Miao people living in Guizhou.

Today, the Miao people in Guizhou are still poor and much less developed compared to people in other areas of China. Taking disposable income per capita in 2014 for rural residents of the Prefecture as an example, the figure is RMB6,139 (equal to US\$974³) (Statistics Bureau of QMDA Prefecture & National Statistics Bureau of China, 2015, March). For 2014, it was RMB24,961 (equal to US\$3,962) for the rural residents who live in the suburbs of Guizhou's Guiyang city, where the Han Chinese are the dominated group

³ The exchange rate between US dollar and RMB is calculated by 1:6.3 in 2015 in this thesis.

(Statistics Bureau of Guiyang & National Statistics Bureau of China, 2015, April). The figure in Guiyang is four times more than that in the Prefecture. Many Miao local elites note that the frequent inner social turbulence of the Miao over their history and their scattered distribution within China constrain the development of the Miao people (Xiaozhu Li, 2002).

The Miao ethnic communities in Guizhou have had traditional social and political organisations such as a social contracting organisation called “*yilang*” (议榔) and a mediating and coordinating organisation named as “*zhailao*” (chief of a village, 寨老) (L. Yang, 2010) since the Imperial Period. These indigenous institutions, together with the deputies in the Local People’s Congresses (LPCs), Villagers’ Committee (VC), the VC mediation committee, villager’s mutual help team, village tourism reception team, Village Party Branch (VPB), the governmental authorities at township and county levels form the structure of local governance, especially in terms of community governance and the management of common-pool resources (CPRs) related to development projects in their communities such as cultural tourism.

1.3 Research questions

This research offers an independent view on the local governance related to the power relations between the deputies and the state and between the deputies and their communities. Three aspects are explored by the researcher. Firstly, under the Ethnic Regional Autonomous System (ERAS), ethnic groups in China have enjoyed some rights and power, but how do those rights and power operate? What is the reality of the local governance in relation to its decentralisation? What expands or limits the effectiveness of decentralisation under the ERAS? Secondly, the important roles played by the County People’s Congresses (CPCs) and their deputies in supporting and encouraging ethnic groups to follow national policies and development projects are investigated. At the same time these deputies are expected to represent the interests of their constituents, they are also instruments of the state. Accordingly, the thesis will explore how the deputies fulfill this double responsibility in compatibility regarding both the interests of the state and the community. This is especially important as the two interests are believed to cause role conflicts (K. J. O'Brien, 1994a). Thirdly, the thesis notes that the deputies play diverse roles. Consequently, the thesis asks: how then can their participation, empowerment and choices be visible and meaningful in the development and

promotion of diverse development projects such as cultural tourism? And what are the implications of the roles they play for their representation, politically and ethnically?

With these diverse issues in mind, the researcher considered which research questions may best explain these issues and which can provide some unique views on addressing the issues related to local governance and political and ethnic representation of the deputies. The deputies hold two dual duties. One is representing the interests of the state towards the community; the other is representing the interests of the community towards the state. On the one hand, the deputies are expected to play their roles as agents of the state who represent the interests of government authorities, explain the state policies, take part in inspections, control meeting discussions, and transmit the central spirit (K. J. O'Brien, 1994a). On the other hand, the deputies are looked upon as an elite group by the local people. They are thus expected by the locals to set themselves as a good model for their constituents to follow and to transmit local opinions to the government because they represent the interests of the community.

In the process of thinking through these issues, the deputies' roles became clearer and clearer. The researcher thus concluded that the ways that the deputies fulfilled the two missions were indeed meaningful. Eventually the researcher formed two research questions which became the basis for the exploration of this research. These two questions are:

How do the deputies play their roles in representing the interests of the state towards the community? And how do they play their roles in representing the interests of the community towards the state?

The deputies canvassed in the fieldwork for this study were asked of the achievements they had made and the challenges they faced in representing the interests of the state towards the community and/or in representing the interests of the community towards the state in the focus groups. In semi-structured individual interviews, they were asked to answer the two research questions one after another. The researcher also gained valuable insights through purposive observation, and through consulting governmental archives as to how the deputies played the two roles.

1.4 Purpose and contribution of this research

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate how the deputies manage their dual representation roles with their involvement in local development issues in the Miao ethnic area in Leishan County. O'Brien (1994a) studied the roles of the Chinese People's Congressmen and he discovered two roles of the deputies of County People's Congresses: agents of and remonstrators to the state. The research findings in this thesis assist in understanding further details about this differentiation of the two roles of Chinese local deputies. A further purpose is to explore a local governance system which has to deal with the political and ethnic representation of the regional ethnic groups. This local governance system is in a process of evolution and it is accompanied by a traditional structure of polycentric governance at village level. The interaction between the Chinese local governance system and the traditional structures raises issues in the transformation of both requires a review of the theories of governance, local governance and polycentric governance. The choice to apply an innovative methodology such as pairwise ranking in focus groups helps in explaining the dual roles of local deputies.

The two purposes are achieved by explaining the way that the LCPC deputies fulfil their roles in representing the interests of the state towards the community, and the way they carry out their roles in representing the interests of the community towards the state. Field research carried out in the Miao dominated county was the source of the data and the information about the achievements the deputies had made. It also revealed the challenges they faced in promoting the Party's strategy and the state's policies, while also promoting the voice of the community, implementing development projects and representing different political and ethnic interests.

This research aims to make a contribution to a better understanding of how development issues are addressed in local governance processes in those regions in China dominated by peoples who are ethnic minorities in the overall population. The analysis concentrates on two areas. Firstly, the central-local relations are explored by discussing relations between the LCPC, the Party Committee of the County (PCC) and the County People's Government (CPG). In this part, the roles that the LCPC deputies play in promoting development policies and projects of the state are investigated through the perspective of centralised governance, and the ways in which they address the conflicting interests between the state and the community. Secondly, the effects of the political and ethnic representation of the deputies are

explored through their intervention in and restructuring of development projects while they play their roles in representing the interests of the state and/or the interests of the community.

In order to discuss the roles that the deputies play, the researcher also explored institutional issues related to People's Congresses (PCs) and their deputies. Since the early 1980s, many scholars have been conducting research on China's politics and local governance by investigating the roles of PCs and their deputies at different levels. Cho (2002) discusses how the Chinese National People's Congress (NPC) has evolved as supervisory powerhouses from 'rubber stamps' to 'iron stamps'. Cabestan (2006, p. 67) argues that by an examination of the direct elections of the deputies at both village and township levels the roles of Local People's Congresses (LPCs) have "unquestionably expanded, particularly in debating and participating in the decision-making process for government policies". Manion (2008) evaluates the changing role of LPCs and the relationship between LPCs and local Party Committees. She identifies that "congressional assertiveness has significant implications for the relationship between the congresses and Party committees" (Manion, 2008, p. 607).

This research demonstrates that the PCs at different levels become more active and that their power is expanding. It provides an institutional framework under the people's congress system for exploring the roles of LPC deputies. However, the exploration from the perspectives of the insiders to discover the roles of the LPC deputies is rare. Equally rare is an exploration of the roles of the LPC deputies in local governance and local development issues from a perspective of polycentric governance. Thus the researcher endeavoured to explore the roles that the deputies play in representing the interests of the state by examining the way they promote development policies and projects. As well, there is exploration of the roles that they play in representing the interests of community by examining the way they become involved in localising development projects. These explorations provide a fundamental basis for the discussion of the central topic of this thesis: the political and ethnic representation of the deputies.

1.5 Focus and Perspective

The focus of this research includes three aspects: roles of the deputies, local power relations, and representation of deputies. The first focus is the roles of deputies in representing different social classes. The deputies interviewed by the researcher included a range of different

profiles: professional deputies, Party secretaries, incumbent officials, directors and members of village committees, educators and farmers. How do they play their roles in influencing the allocation of resources in development projects, for example, by means of submitting motions? Power relations at local level are the second focus. This research investigates the power relations between the County People's Congress (CPC), the Party Committee of County (PCC) and the County People's Government (CPG). These three political bodies affect the roles the deputies play in representing the interests of the state and/or the community. The third focus is the dual representation of deputies and how it is influenced and restricted by a representative structure which emphasises representing all.

Under the local context in the Leishan County People's Congress (LCPC), the deputy candidates are either selected by the LCPC or seconded to the community by the Party's organisational department for the election. Therefore, in order to win the election, they need to establish extensive social networks and to consider the local political environment and its nuances. In addition, the representative structure of the deputies is considered by the LCPC in order to ensure that they can have a universal representation from various social circles. This means that the deputies compose a range of groups of people based on their age, gender, ethnicity, education, Party-status or social classes such as farmer, worker, intellectual, cadre (*ganbu*, 干部)⁴ technician, serviceman and entrepreneur. Under this local perspective, the deputies are expected to represent the interests of a specific group of people.

For exploring the dynamics underpinning the two roles of the deputies, their choices, their ideas and actions in their intervening and restructuring of development projects are given great importance in the analysis. To help this analysis, Section 1.6 introduces the conceptual framework of this thesis: polycentric governance.

1.6 Conceptual framework

China has had a culture of believing in central power and monocentric governance since the founding of Qin Dynasty (221-206 BC). This belief is very difficult to be eradicated as it has

⁴ The term "cadre" was translated and introduced as *ganbu* (干部) into China from the Soviet Union. In the 1950s, a cadre was "defined by simple bureaucratic distinctions according to their education and whether or not they were employed by the state" (Brødsgaard & Zheng, 2004, p. 59). The cadre enjoys a full wage from the government and has a detailed ranking system. This is not much different from the use of the term "cadre" today. Now, cadres refer to those who work for Chinese governments at different levels and their affiliated organisations and have leading positions. It differentiates them from farmers and workers.

lasted thousands of years. Besides managing the public affairs of their own locality, the local governmental authorities execute orders and policies from the central governmental authorities. This operational mechanism of political powers creates a local governance model with Chinese characteristics. Accordingly, as the ancient Chinese historian, Sima Qian in the Han dynasty (202 B.C.-220) says: “when the county is well governed, the world will be secure and peaceful” (*junxianzhi, tianxia'an*, 郡县治, 天下安). In contemporary China, county governance still has an important position in the governance of the whole country. The manner of how the deputies of County People’s Congresses (CPCs) play their roles directly influences the “effectiveness” of the Chinese political system, because the CPCs are the crucial link for the “input and integration” (*shuru yu zhenghe*, 输入与整合) of public opinions and they play an important role in linking the higher-level with the grassroots (B. Chen, 2015, p. 17).

Along with economic reform and administrative decentralisation, the demands and complaints of communities have been gradually diversifying in China in both urban and rural/ethnic areas. Local governments are facing complex social formations and challenges. They are criticised as having malfunctioned in some fields such as the provision of public goods and the management of public affairs in rural/ethnic areas. Therefore, as L. Sun and Sun (2007, p. 88) argue, the traditional “monocentric governance model”⁵ cannot provide the rural society with a “basis for the development of rural modernisation”. As a result of these issues, the strength of the third sector such as social and community based organisations has grown. The appearance of the third sector can effectively overcome the double “malfunctions caused by both government and market” (P. Wang, 2010, p. 127).

In Chinese ethnic areas, the situation related to governance is even more complex due to its local political environment and culture. This research, therefore, has given special attention to the roles that the deputies of a Miao ethnic County People’s Congress play in order to express their political and ethnic representation in the governance of the county. In relation to the dual representations of the deputies, two sets of terms “politics and ethnicity” and “local and central politics” are used throughout the whole thesis. In the first set, the term “politics” generally refers to the politics of central government and the term “ethnicity” generally refers

⁵G. Wu (2007, p. 4) points out that “the traditional rural governance in China is a ‘monocentric model’. Its principal feature is ‘single polarisation’ of the allocation of public power as resources and the ‘unitary directivity’ of the operation of public power. This means that the governments at grassroots level execute the command of higher government authorities. Therefore, their management tools are executive commands, rather than dialogue, deliberation and coordination”.

to local politics such as the political dynamics between Han and Miao and/or between Miao and other ethnic groups. In the second set, the terms “local and central politics” refer more generally the political dynamics between local government and central government. These interactive political dynamics may form an environment for a structure of polycentric governance at grassroots level which is discussed in this thesis. Of the theories of governance and local governance, the theory of polycentric governance has been most used to analyse many development issues at a local level in China. However, it is seldom found to be used in rural and ethnic areas, even though these areas typically have a structure of polycentric governance because of the co-existence of traditional ethnic social organisations, voluntary participation of constituents and local governmental authorities.

The theory of polycentric governance is selected as the main conceptual framework of this thesis, because it interrelates closely with the search for modernity, is an alternative for democratisation at the local level, and relates to the traditional forms of governance of the Miao areas in China. This theory is based on the empirical studies by Elinor Ostrom and Vincent Ostrom. They developed the theory of polycentric governance by studying “self-organisation” and “self-governance” of the commons in the United States in areas such as packaged “police services” (V. Ostrom, Tiebout, & Warren, 1961, p. 839) and “common-pool resources” (CPRs)⁶ (E. Ostrom, 1990, pp. 58-102). Polycentric governance seeks to determine what kind of institutional arrangement can promote the fair sharing of public resources and the sustainable development of the society. Therefore, it has a potential significance to the developing areas like the Miao ethnic minority-dominated area in China.

Furthermore, while monocentric governance emphasises that the government is the principal decision-making body who manages the public affairs by means of exclusiveness, polycentric governance signifies the engagement of plural stakeholders, not only from the government, but also from the communities, from NGOs, private sectors and individuals. The participation of all stakeholders integrates a cooperative and deliberative partnership. This is in favour of the formation of an interactive and bidirectional, or even multi-dimensional management process. These stakeholders execute their powers by different approaches under certain regulations. Therefore, polycentric governance demonstrates the connotation of democracy. Thus McGinnis & E. Ostrom (2012) agree with the view of V. Ostrom that “democratic

⁶ “The term ‘common-pool resources’ refers to a natural or man-made resource system that is sufficiently large as to make it costly (but not impossible) to exclude potential beneficiaries from obtaining benefits from its use” (E. Ostrom, 1990, p. 30).

administration and polycentric governance are the one and same thing” (p. 21), and that it “articulates a vision of democratic governance that embraces the complexity of real-world processes” (p. 23).

1.7 Outline of chapters

The next chapter, Chapter Two, is a literature review. It commences with the scholarly research on governance and local governance from a global perspective which highlights the broader significance of this thesis. The chapter then turns to the discussion on the theory of polycentric governance, selected as the main conceptual framework of this thesis. Following the theory of polycentric governance, this chapter introduces decentralisation, community participation, ethnicity, cultural tourism and political and ethnic representation at a global context. In the end, this chapter explains the relevance between the literature review and the two research questions.

Chapter Three details the research background. It starts with a review of the historical perspectives on Chinese local governance and the ethnic policies from Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368) to the Republican period (1912-1949). Key historical aspects and forms of local governance in China and Guizhou province such as the chieftain system are introduced. The key Chinese elements of local governance, the Ethnic Regional Autonomous System (ERAS), the Local Party Committees, the Local People’s Congresses (LPCs) and the Local People’s Governments (LPGs) are then introduced. This includes the election of the LPC deputies and their representation. This chapter also looks into core concepts such as consensual democracy, pluralism, interests groups and development intervention and projects in the Chinese local context. Finally, the chapter elaborates the relevance between the research background and the two research questions.

Chapter Four introduces the research methodology and research methods. First of all, two crucial aspects relating to methodology, positionality and reflexivity, are discussed. A discussion of the ethical issues in relation to the research then follows. Chinese-English translation issues are also addressed as there are many Chinese words which may result in misunderstanding due to the continuous appearance of new words and terms in Chinese that arise in the context of the socio-economic transformation of China. The key research methods are then introduced: focus groups, semi-structured individual interviews, purposive

observation, and document analysis. The innovative pairwise ranking in the focus groups related to the synthesis of the data by its normalisation and averaging is detailed. The way in which the data in the semi-structured individual interviews was handled is explained. In the end, the reliability of the data with the use of these multiple research methods is discussed.

Chapter Five provides the findings on the representative structure and representation of the LCPC deputies. It explains the representative structure of the deputies based on six categories: age, gender, Party status, ethnicity, education and social classes. The deputies who belong to the social classes as farmer, cadre and intellectual are especially introduced, because these groups of deputies are the majority of the deputies and 39 of them were accessed by the researcher in his field research. The explanation then focuses on the political and ethnic representation of the deputies by analysing their motions submitted from 2012 to 2014. The last section of this chapter draws a conclusion on the representative structure and representation and its relevance with regards to the research questions.

Chapter Six provides the results of the first research question: the roles that the LCPC deputies play in representing the interests of the state towards the community. The researcher identifies four functions from the findings in the focus groups and individual interviews: (i) promoting the strategy of the Party, (ii) enforcing laws and policies of the state, (iii) implementing livelihood projects, and (iv) developing political representation. The researcher explores in detail the achievements the deputies say they have made and the challenges they face in representing the interests of the state toward the community. In addition, a structure of polycentric governance in the management of cultural tourism in Xijiang village is introduced to demonstrate the roles of deputies as negotiators and coordinators in representing the interests of the state.

Chapter Seven presents the results of the second research question: the roles that the LCPC deputies play in representing the interests of the community towards the state. Similar to Chapter Six, the researcher identifies four functions from the findings in the focus groups and individual interviews: (i) promoting the voice of the community, (ii) localising policies of the state, (iii) implementing livelihood projects, and (iv) developing ethnic representation. The researcher also looks into details of the achievements that the deputies say they have made and the challenges they face in representing the interests of the community towards the state. In addition, a structure of polycentric governance in village governance and cultural tourism in Langde village is introduced to demonstrate the roles of deputies as negotiators and

coordinators in representing the interests of the community. The deputies accumulated more roles in representing the interests of the community.

Chapter Eight is a chapter of discussion and some conclusions which uses the results of analyses in the fifth, sixth and seventh chapters. It links these analyses back to the literature review in Chapter Two and the research background in Chapter Three to discussion of the central topic of this thesis: political and ethnic representation of the deputies. Central-local relations and the way of localising development projects are discussed respectively in the analysis of the deputies' political and ethnic representation. In addition, this chapter includes two contributions of this research: the innovative use of pairwise ranking in qualitative research and the structure of polycentric governance which provides a better understanding of local governance in the Chinese context.

2.1 Introduction

The last decade of the Twentieth Century witnessed the emergence of the concept of governance as a political catchword in the social sciences, as Pierre and Peters (2000, p. 1) put it “from virtual obscurity to take a central place” in the literature. Governance involves various processes and is subject to trends, such as decentralisation from central to the local, the promotion of local self-governance systems, and the establishment of inter-governmental cooperative mechanisms. Scholars have mapped these processes and studied these trends in the various contexts of governance in China (Q. Li & Zhang, 2014; Xue & Ma, 2008).

In China there has been a gradual and continuous shift from central government towards a focus on governance at the national level (R. A. W. Rhodes, 1996) and at the local level (Andrew & Goldsmith, 1998). There has been, according to some observers an era of “governance revolution” (Kong, 2007). By rethinking the structure of local government, a comprehensive understanding of the workings of governance in communities can be studied (Box, 1997). The development trend of governance reflects the division and diffusion of governance authorities between and among various sectors, including the market, government and the third sector which is represented by civil society, NGOs and community-based organisations (CBOs).

According to Box (1997), local governance is not limited to local boundaries, but involves multiple structures at the global, national and local levels and this includes the devolution of the central to the local. Local power and self-governing abilities produced by this devolution process can include extensive cooperative partnerships between governments at different levels, local government and the private sector, and governmental organisations and civil society (Box, 1997, pp. 66-87). Thus, the traditional concept of local government has to be expanded and has been described by Leach & Percy-Smith (2001, p. 458) as “from the local government to the local governance”.

The theory of polycentric governance (E. Ostrom, 1990; E. Ostrom, Schroeder, & Wynne, 1993) is one result of the evolution of thinking from local government to local governance. Polycentric governance aims for societal governance beyond the “rational bureaucratic

institution” (Kong, 2007, p. 36). Polycentric governance is used in this thesis as a guiding main conceptual framework, because there is a structure of polycentric governance in the Miao ethnic area where the field research was conducted. In order for a better understanding of the development of the theory of polycentric governance, it is necessary to begin with a discussion of definitions of governance, followed by the explanation of local governance and then the conceptual framework of polycentric governance.

In this chapter, Section 2.2 gives some definitions of governance, while Section 2.3 discusses the concept of local governance. Section 2.4 covers the theory of polycentric governance and in Section 2.5 the theory is discussed in relation to decentralisation. Section 2.6 discusses ethnicity and cultural tourism. Section 2.7 discusses the theory of polycentric governance in relation to the Chinese context. Section 2.8 concludes this chapter and summarises how the literature relates to the research questions of this study.

2.2 Governance

Governance remains a contested term since its emergence in ancient Greece. It appears in multiple forms and expressions in the academic literature. The concept of governance varies depending on the context of its use. It has been employed in work on public management (Hood, 1991; Löffler & Bovaird, 2003) and new public management (NPM) (Christensen & Lægreid, 2002; Hood, 1995; Osborne, 1993) which focuses on economy and efficiency. Advocates of NPM believe that the capacity of the political control by the centre can be undermined by an increase in the devolution of power (Christensen & Lægreid, 2002, p. 304). Tourism governance, as an example emphasises the sustainability of tourism and involves “various mechanisms for governing, steering, regulating and mobilising action” (Bramwell & Lane, 2011, p. 412). Whereas, good governance (Desai & Potter, 2008; Doornbos, 2001; R. A. W. Rhodes, 1996; Weiss, 2000) emphasises the sound management of national resources for development.

Other forms of governance in the literature include decentralised governance which is believed to promote economic development and political stability by the careful coordination of transfers of resources and responsibilities and a clear definition of intergovernmental relationships (Aziz & Arnold, 1996; Dillinger & Fay, 1999; Wibbels, 2005). Societal governance regards governance as societal with the participation of “public and private

governors” (Kooiman, 2003, p. 229). Citizen governance (Box, 1997) is seen as more representative than other political participation because it includes “a wider representation of groups in society who draw from service users and seek to recruit hard-to reach groups” (John, 2009, p. 494). Local governance involves local stakeholders interacting with each other to influence public policies (Bovaird & Loeffler, 2007; Stoker, 1999). Local democratic governance emphasises citizen’s participation in local elections and the performance of local government, and includes a series of variables such as characteristics of local governments and local political culture which includes citizen’s participation in local politics, and citizen and representative’s political culture (Soós, 2001).

Lastly, community governance is a specific type of political governance (Somerville, 2005) which explains the decision-making process that takes place in an identifiable community and which empowers the public as community with the highest degree of democratisation (Clarke & Stewart, 1992, 1998). These examples show that governance is full of contested expressions. There is a need to further define governance from its various conceptions.

2.2.1 Governance: Definitions

The term *governance* originated from Latin and ancient Greek. Its traditional use and dictionary entry show that it is a “synonym of government” (Stoker, 1998, p. 17). In British and American political theory, the term “government” refers to a series of official institutions of the state and their monocentric and coercive power. “Governance” refers to the “steering” and “coordination” of government and other stakeholders (Pierre & Peters, 2000, pp. 14-27). So in this regard, governance is not a synonym of government. The growing research on the theories of governance demonstrates the shifting of governance styles at both global and local levels.

The World Bank (1989, p. 60) has argued that a “crisis of governance” existed in the “litany of Africa’s development problems”. This new focus on the crisis of governance demonstrates the World Bank’s “more explicitly political concerns with legitimacy, participation, pluralism, free press and human rights” (Williams & Young, 1994, p. 86) in African development. Since the 1990s, the word *governance* has been extensively used in many of the social science disciplines such as political study, sociology, public administration as well as development studies. Despite its imprecision, the ideas of governance expanded to North America (the US and Canada) and Australasia (Australia and New Zealand) in the 1990s. Governance became

the focus of the political and administrative reforms of the time. The emergence of the debate about governance symbolises the “appearance of a new approach of governmental administration” (Xue & Ma, 2008, p. 48).

Weiss (2000) discusses the concepts of governance and analyses the challenges that governance faces. He introduces diverse definitions of governance, among which the most typical is given by the Commission of Global Governance (CGG). The CGG defines governance as “the sum of the many ways, individuals and institutions, public and private, manage their common affairs” (Weiss, 2000, p. 797). This definition shows that governance is an on-going process by which contradictory or multiple interests may be included and coordination from different aspects may be taken. Stoker (1998, p. 19) defines governance as “a complex set of institutions and actors that are drawn from but also beyond government”. This change of the style of government is in part institutional, and it is the emerging consciousness that government can comprise of multiple agencies. Thus, governance involves “coordinating the activities of a wide range of agencies distributed both horizontally and vertically across society” (Moran, 2011, p. 444). Therefore, governance is best looked at as the way “society as a whole manages the full array of its political, economic, and social affairs” (Michael Dean McGinnis, 1999b, p. 1). This process of political management includes “the normative basis” (*guifan jichu*, 规范基础) of political authorities, the methods of dealing with political affairs and the management of public resources” (K. Yu, 2000, p. 5).

Governance emphasises the management of the common affairs of individuals and institutions, and public and private sectors, and the satisfaction of the interest demands of different groups. Therefore, decentralisation becomes necessary in the process of governance to enable better representation of the multiple interested groups. The devolution of power, shifting from the central to the local along with a multi-level governance model should be promoted by stakeholders. Hooghe & Marks (2003) differentiate two different forms of multi-level governance. The first form assumes the scattering of authority to jurisdictions based on the principles of general-purpose, non-intersection and durability. The second form assumes the jurisdictions based on task-specification, intersection, and flexibility. The two types of governance share one vital feature, that is “sharp departures from the model of the all-powerful central state” (Hooghe & Marks, 2003, p. 241). “There is no one best governance mechanism”, because “the rationality of governance is dialogic rather than monologic, pluralistic rather than monolithic, heterarchic rather than either hierarchic or anarchic” (Jessop, 2000, p. 16).

Jessop's idea creates a wide space for research in both the theory and practice of governance. The "reflexive rationality" (Jessop, 2000, p. 16) of governance is complex. It involves different modes of coordination such as the networks between people, the negotiation between organisations as well as the steering between institutions. In the Miao ethnic area in Guizhou, extensive networks exist between the people through different organisations, public or private. The implementation of development policies and projects rely on the negotiation and coordination between these organisations such as Villager's Committees (VC), Miao social organisations and governmental authorities. In the development of governance, the relations between organisations are no longer hierarchical, instead they are subject to coordination between the participating stakeholders. Along with the interdependence between power and resources, the rules of the game are not completely dominated by the government. Relevant actors in this governance mechanism need to "reach agreement over spatial and temporal horizons of action vis-à-vis their environment" (Jessop, 2000, p. 17).

For example in the Miao area in Guizhou, in order to develop the economy and to increase their incomes the villagers of Langde village use a traditional workpoint system (*gongfenzhi*, 工分制) to organise their cultural performances for tourists rather than performing at regular times promoted by the governmental authorities. This is because they are the owners of the resources in their village, including the material heritage such as the unique architecture, roads, relics, forests and waterways, and less tangible heritage such as embroidery and silver ornamentation crafts and skills, festivals, and other customs and traditions. The villagers' control over these resources gives them the power to negotiate equally with the local governmental authorities. They are able to employ their own approach to developing their livelihood projects, rather than those suggested or even forced upon them by the local governmental authorities.

The debate in the literature shows that governance involves a process of the management of political, economic and social affairs in which different stakeholders may have equal power. Governance is a process for these stakeholders to address contradictory or multiple interests through coordination and negotiation. In this research, when the deputies, as one particular stakeholder played their roles in representing the interests of the state and/or the community, they were directly involved in the process of governance and as such, could act as coordinators and negotiators for others.

2.2.2 Good governance

If governance is a process of managing various affairs with different stakeholders, good governance emphasises the concept of sound management. Desai & Potter (2008, p. 499) define good governance as a “sound management of a country’s economic and social resources for development”. They believe that there are different paths for development in different countries which are “compatible with alternatives to liberal democracy” (Desai & Potter, 2008, p. 499) while following good governance. Grindle (2004) thinks that good governance is essential to promote development and to reduce poverty, and that it involves improvements in all aspects of the public sector: economic and political institutions, administrative organisations and human resources. So the obtaining of good governance requires “changes in political organisation, the representation of interests, and the processes for public debate and policy decision-making” (Grindle, 2004, p. 525).

Doornbos (2001, p. 98) believes that good governance is “broad enough to comprise public management as well as political dimensions, while at the same time vague enough to allow a fair measure of discretion and flexibility in interpretation as to what good governance would or would not condone”. In contrast to Grindle and Doornbos, Batterbury and Fernando (2006, p. 1855) conclude that “much of the credit for the current popularity and institutionalisation of good governance is attributed to the activities of civil society or third sector organisations, which have been persistent in their attacks on deficient state policy, and diligent in creating parallel channels to achieve development outcomes”. Therefore, the concept of good governance can provide societies and national governments “a clearly framed set of normative ideals” (Batterbury & Fernando, 2006, p. 1860).

Following on from this concept, Andic (August 20, 2007) emphasises that good governance is a concept of multi-dimensions that extends far beyond government itself and embodies the full relationship between government and its citizens. Therefore, good governance has four dimensions: accountability, transparency, predictability, and participation. Similar to good governance is quality governance. McLennan and Ngoma (2004) think that quality governance for sustainable development needs the government to support institutions and build institutional capacity, and thus good governance needs to be tailored to the local context and to be inclusive.

B. He (2003) believes that good governance needs to empower local governments with authority and resources and build their capability to act as participatory, responsive and

accountable institutions which can address the concerns and needs of all citizens. Simultaneously, he suggests that good governance is concerned with “the strengthening of grassroots democracy and the empowerment of citizens, communities and organisations such as community-based organisations (CBOs) and NGOs, to participate as equal partners in local governance and local development processes” (B. He, 2003, p. 293). Whereas, Bovaird and Löffler (2003, p. 316) think that good governance means:

the negotiation by all the stakeholders in an issue (or area) of improved public policy outcomes and agreed governance principles, which are both implemented and regularly evaluated by all stakeholders.

In all, both governance and good governance are a continual process which mediates mutually conflicting or different interests and takes the necessary action. They include not only coercive formal institutions and regulations, but also various informal institutional arrangements that people agree to or think that they conform to their interests. In the Chinese context, both offer a broader framework for the reform of Chinese governance in public administration and the possibility of political democratisation at the national level. In exploring the governance related to the reforms on “central devolution” (*zhongyang fangquan*, 中央放权) and “local decentralisation” (*difang fenquan*, 地方分权) (J. Cao, 2008, p. 65) at a local level in China, the terms and theories of local governance can be introduced. Local governance is more practical and concrete than just governance to discuss socioeconomic development issues in a poverty-stricken locality, as Joshi & Schultze-Kraft (2014, p. 1) argue:

The local has moved centre stage in efforts to promote socioeconomic development, reduce poverty, establish more accountable and legitimate political institutions and orders, and prevent or end violent conflict.

The area where the field research was conducted is one of the most poverty-stricken ethnic areas in China. The researcher noted diverse development issues and “a complex set of political relationships” (Joshi & Schultze-Kraft, 2014, p. 5) between many different stakeholders at the local level. Models of local governance can “break through the boundary between federalism and a unitary system”, because local governance focuses on the inter-governmental relations and the relations between governmental authorities and communities (Xue & Ma, 2008, p. 47). The inter-governmental relations and the relations between governmental authorities and communities form the central part of discussion in this thesis

for exploring the roles of the deputies in representing the interests of the state and/or the community and their political and ethnic representation. With regard to their important role in exploring diverse development issues in a specific locality, the theories of local governance are introduced next.

2.3 Local governance

The contemporary thinking and practice of local governance originated from Great Britain in the early 1980s (T. Chen & Xiao, 2010). Britain had a crisis of governance for a range of political and economic reasons. This led to a series of local government reforms. The reforms advocated for the shrinking of the state, the promotion of marketisation and privatisation, and the marketisation of public affairs (Q. Li & Zhang, 2014). This reform showcases the features of “anti-statism” (*fan guojiazhu*, 反国家主义), and the result in the UK was the retreat of state power and the death of traditional bureaucratic administrative systems to more open and market-led formats (Q. Li & Zhang, 2014, p. 48).

Stoker (1999) points out that local governance is the authorisation, organisation and control of local services which include health, education, public security, construction of infrastructure and economic development. Bovaird and Löffler (2007) analyses the governance experience of OECD countries and they defined local governance as local stakeholders interacting with each other so that they can influence public policies. However, local governance is not limited to the geographic boundary of a locality. It emphasises not only local power and self-governing ability by decentralisation, but also advocates extensive collaboration and partnerships between governments at different levels, local government and private sectors, and governmental organisations and civil society (Box, 1997, pp. 66-87; B. Sun, 2003, p. 48).

These scholars’ ideas demonstrate that local governance is a set of formal and informal regulations, structure and processes. It can determine the approach by which an individual and/or an organisation can execute power within in or over a locality. This approach influences the welfare of individuals and organisations at the local level. Bovaird and Löffler (2009) summarise four connotations of local governance: (i) multiple governance; formal and informal rules, (ii) attention to the fixed authority of government, (iii) network relations of coordination and cooperation, and (iv) governance being not controlled by an elite class. This

definition of local governance redefines the relations between local government and society. That is to say, local government is not the only stakeholder in local affairs and instead, multiple stakeholders compose the framework of the management of local affairs (Lou & Zhang, 2007).

The debates among these scholars on governance demonstrate that local governance is a process, rather than a set of rules or activities. The foundation of its process is not dominance, but coordination between stakeholders. Local governance is not only comprised of formal institutions, but is also a fluid and continuous interaction between public and private sectors. In all, local governance is a process of readjustment and rebuilding of power between the state, market and civil society as well as a process of the re-configuration of intergovernmental power and organisational structure (Xue & Ma, 2008).

With the influence of globalisation and its fast social transformation and economic development, both public and private affairs have become very complex in China. Polycentric governance emerges as a model of local governance which demonstrates a flexible and strong form of governance. Polycentric governance has appeared in some developed urban areas in China such as the Wenzhou Municipality of Zhejiang Province (Qinghua Wu, 2008) (See Section 2.7 in this chapter). However, the polycentric governance that is occurring in Chinese rural and ethnic areas such as in the Miao area of Guizhou province has not been recognised by scholars to date.

With regards to non-Western contexts, E. Ostrom et al. (1993) argue that there exists polycentricity in developing countries because there are indigenous social and economic organisations, including family and ethnic groups. While analysing polycentric institutional arrangements, they believe that:

Indigenous institutions are frequently small in size and are therefore able to provide services for members on either a voluntary or involuntary basis, using social and moral pressure to enforce rules that limit free riding (E. Ostrom, et al., 1993, p. 185).

This idea by E. Ostrom et al. provides a starting point for exploring the political and ethnic representation of the deputies of the Leishan County People's Congress (LCPC) through the lens of polycentric governance, because there are indigenous institutions in the Miao communities in Guizhou. These local social organisations form a network of polycentric governance together with the deputies in the LCPC, the Cadres Settled in Villages (CSV)

(*zhucun ganbu*, 驻村干部)⁷, the Villagers' Committee (VC), the VC Mediation Committee, the Villagers' Mutual Help Team, the Village Tourism Reception Team, the Village Party Branch (VPB), and the governmental authorities at township and county levels.

2.4 Conceptual framework: Polycentric governance

In this thesis, the researcher has linked the Western theories of local governance with Chinese local governance practice. Western theories of polycentric governance can be used to interpret traditional practices in the Miao ethnic areas in Guizhou Province because there is a lack of indigenous theory of local governance in China. Hence, it's necessary to review the literature and map these Western theories, and see how they apply to Chinese practice.

Polycentric governance emerged as a conceptual device in the field of economics. This concept of polycentric governance then expanded to political, social and cultural studies. One feature of polycentric governance in public administration is the decentralisation of power and it is a “fundamental prerequisite of self-governance” (Michael Dean McGinnis, 1999a, p. 3). This decentralisation of power is evident in public fields such as the polycentricity of market mechanisms, judicial decision-making processes and the delivery of local public services such as health care, Minimum Subsistence Security System (MSS) and agricultural facilities in the Miao areas. In public administration, polycentric governance refers to the polycentricity of production and governance systems.

2.4.1 Theoretical background of polycentric governance

Governance based on the two types of economy, either market or planned, established a foundation for the development of polycentric governance. It is generally understood that the governance of public affairs can be achieved by market mechanisms (e.g. Adam Smith's invisible Hand) which can realise economic growth by optimising the distribution of

⁷ CSV is a work system practiced in Guizhou province since 2013 by the Party and the government in order to realise synchronous wellbeing for society in all villages. Many young and mid-aged cadres are sent to the villages to help overall development of a village. Five work tasks are included: (i) promoting the Party's principles and policies of the state; (ii) conducting targeted poverty-relief and promoting development; (iii) helping solve difficulties and improving villagers' living conditions; (iv) helping maintain social harmony and stability; (v) helping strengthen the construction of the Party branch at the grassroots level. Normally, each village has five CSV cadres who work and live there for a year. They have to work hard and struggle for resources in order to complete their tasks.

resources. However, the market is not almighty in the provision of public goods. The market can suffer many unpredictable events and issues which can cause it to malfunction in various ways. The malfunction of government occurs when its policies and collective operations do not improve economic efficiency or realise morally acceptable income distribution (Samuelson & Nordhaus, 1992).

Market malfunction relevant to this research includes the Tragedy of the Commons (Hardin, 1968)⁸, the Prisoner Dilemma (PD)⁹ and the Collective Action (Olson, 1965), all of which refer to the distribution and wise use of public goods for a society. The occurrence of the Tragedy of the Commons reveals that the action of a rational individual who pursues the maximum of self-interests in the process of using public resources in the short-term can lead to the overuse or degradation of public resources, or the long-term loss of collective interests (Tang & Wang, 2010). Social dilemmas in various situations can generate collective-action problems when individuals choose actions in different environments, as E. Ostrom (2010, p. 155) describes:

Traffic jams, residential flights, runs on scarce goods, extending and keeping trust in long-term relations, and the organizing of labor unions, work-teams, demonstrations, or any group seeking common interests—all can and have been modeled as social dilemma generating collective-action problems”.

The collective-action problems differentiated by Olson (1965)¹⁰ demonstrate that there exists a “free-rider” phenomenon in collective action, because self-interested and rational individuals of one group won’t take collective action voluntarily to achieve the common interests of the group, unless there are independent and selective incentives. The market malfunctions appeared once again in the process of managing the commons in public affairs.

⁸ Hardin (1968, p. 1244) describes the phenomenon that “each herdsman seeks to maximise his gain. Explicitly or implicitly, more or less consciously” in “a pasture open to all”. The increase of the cattle numbers improves individual herder’s profits, so the herder would add more and more animals. However, the result of the destruction of the cattle towards the grassland or the costs from overgrazing will be borne by all villagers.

⁹ Hardin’s model has often been looked upon as a form of the Prisoner’s Dilemma (Dawes, 1973, 1975; E. Ostrom, 1990). In the environment of Prisoner’s Dilemma, each prisoner makes a rational choice which is thought to be an advantageous strategy. However, this “non-cooperative game” (E. Ostrom, 1990, p. 4) is proven to be worse to the individual, and to be worst to the collective, or the group involved in the long term. This result is contradictory to the paradox that the pursuit of each rational individual for the maximum of self-interests will bring the maximum interests for the collective under the assumption of rational economic individual.

¹⁰ Since ancient Greece, political scientists such as Aristotle, De Tocqueville and Hobbes have assumed that social members could join up and realise self-governance. Olson (1965) criticised such ideas and emphasised that the two features of public goods, non-exclusivity and publicity (non-competitiveness) will lead to the “free-rider” phenomenon of self-interested and rational consumers or producers. Therefore, the effective supply of public goods cannot be realised by market behaviours.

This market malfunction causes scholars to focus on the government. Government is expected to be effective in the provision of public goods and to avoid the market's imperfections. This assumes government works well and in the interests of the public good. Unfortunately, in the case of China, the malfunction of government itself is demonstrated in the following fields: failure of public policy-making or inefficient execution, high cost and low efficiency in the provision of public goods, especially in its rural and ethnic areas, and the blind expansion of government, and rent-seeking (P. Li, 2014).¹¹ Rent-seeking creates governance issues in the public sector by making the productivity of any particular investment “secondary to the private gains of the rent seeker” (E. Ostrom, et al., 1993, p. 97). This situation of the dysfunction of both the market and government has driven scholars to think of ways to address the issues in the distribution and control of resources. Here the theory of polycentric governance comes in use after long-term empirical studies by E. Ostrom and V. Ostrom.

2.4.2 The development of thinking about polycentric governance

The research and discussions on governance demonstrate the diverse and complicated theoretical themes of governance, good governance and local governance. These themes, which emphasise either local governance, decentralised governance, the remaking of effective government, or new public management have been argued to form a governance revolution (Cheffins, 2001; Kong, 2007; Sabel, 2001). Kong (2007) has described this governance revolution as the most influential and profound social transformation since the contemporary democratic revolution. He thinks that the mission of the governance revolution in China was to build a governance model and operational framework, and to rebuild democratic political life. The “hidden nature” (*yinbi de benzhi*, 隐蔽的本质) of this governance revolution is actually a polycentric arrangement of a national governance structure. Therefore, polycentric governance has become the “meta-narration” (*yuanxushi*, 元叙事) (Kong, 2007, p. 31) of the governance revolution.

¹¹ Rent-seeking was discovered by the crackdown of several governmental officials in the Miao ethnic area in Guizhou. This included Yubiao Wu, the previous Party secretary of Leishan County, who has been investigated due to his violation of the Party's discipline and his economic issues in 2014. Although the final result is not yet published, his working experience and his economic issues disclosed the possibility of rent-seeking when he had undertaken his position as the leader of the industrial zone for culture and tourism in Leishan County, where a lot of construction and projects were implemented.

Understanding polycentricity is the foundation for understanding polycentric governance theory. The first appearance of the term “polycentricity” is in Polanyi’s book (1951), *The Logic of Liberty*. In this book, polycentricity is defined as a social system which is composed of many decision centres having “limited and autonomous prerogatives and operating under an overarching set of rules” (Aligica & Tarko, 2012, p. 237). Polanyi employed polycentricity to prove the rationality of social order and to illustrate the possible limitations of social management. Polycentricity means that there are multi-power centres and organisations which govern the commons and provide public services, but there is no subordinate relationship between different power centres and organisations. Polanyi distinguished two different social orders to explain his polycentricity: “deliberate or directed order” and “spontaneous or polycentric order” (V. Ostrom, 1999, pp. 57-60; Polanyi, 1951).

The deliberate (directed) order, by virtue of final authority, maintains self-coordination and operation, and realises self-differentiation and integration by the commanding of the senior and the obedience of the subordinate. Polanyi calls this a unitary monocentric order. A polycentric order on the other hand must “allow public officials or agencies to make alternative arrangements for the provision of a public good for members of the collective consumption unit” (Michael Dean McGinnis, 1999a, p. 5). In such a polycentric order, many units are mutually independent and go after their own interests freely, but they adjust to the actions of each other and are restricted by certain regulations. They discover their own positioning in general regular institutions and realise the integration of mutual relations.

Polanyi (1951) thought that deliberate order is an order which implies profound crisis and huge theoretical defects. Deliberate order creates a hierarchic and pyramidal bureaucratic institution, in which the communication between the people and the government is difficult. A deliberate order can become an order without a feedback mechanism and the preferences of people cannot be effectively expressed in the government process. So due to its complexity, polycentricity is regarded as a “cumbersome” word (Michael Dean McGinnis, 1999a, p. 5). It can be seen in many public fields, such as the polycentricity of market mechanism, judicial decision-making and public services. Polycentricity is defined as an organisational model by McGinnis (1999a), in which many independent elements can adjust and adapt mutually. V. Ostrom, Tiebout, and Warren (1961, p. 831) used the term “polycentric political system” to describe “the traditional pattern of government in a metropolitan area with its multiplicity of political jurisdictions”. They elaborated the connotation of this term as follows:

Polycentric connotes many centers of decision-making which are formally independent of each other ... To the extent that they take each other into account in competitive relationships, enter into various contractual and cooperative undertakings or have recourse to central mechanisms to resolve conflicts, the various political jurisdictions in a metropolitan area may function in a coherent manner with consistent and predictable patterns of interacting behavior (V. Ostrom, et al., 1961, p. 831).

Therefore, the existence of polycentricity suggests “that the governance of metropolitan areas can occur in a polycentric political system so long as no single set of decision makers is able to gain dominance over all decision-making structures” (V. Ostrom, 1999, p. 73). However, this political polycentricity has “broader ramifications than the governance of metropolitan areas” (V. Ostrom, 1999, p. 54), as explained by V. Ostrom et al. (1961, p. 831),

Polycentric political systems are not limited to the field of metropolitan government. The concept is equally applicable to regional administration of water resources, regional administration of international affairs, and to a variety of other situations.

The book “*Governing the commons: the evolution of institutions for collective action*” (E. Ostrom, 1990), marks the official formation of the theory of polycentric governance. Since then, this theory has become a theoretical framework in the social sciences. E. Ostrom’s term “polycentric” (1990, p. 133) emphasises interactive processes and “active participation” (1990, p. 136) of participants such as government enterprises, private companies and voluntary associations and their initiative in governance regulations and models. The system formed by the “polycentric set” of these participants is “neither centrally owned nor centrally regulated” (p. 136). E. Ostrom discovered a third order and mechanism in the management of commons called “polycentric” together with V. Ostrom, who co-founded the theory of polycentric governance. The central idea of polycentric theory is that between the state and market orders, and power and price mechanisms, there exists many other possible governance methods which can operate effectively (F. Liu & Kong, 2010).

In her conclusion on the governance experience for common-pool resources (CPRs), E. Ostrom (1990) thinks that governance, whether self-governed or not, cannot be consistently successful, if it is maintained on one horizontal level. Their empirical research proves that compared to the coercive regulations by government and pure marketisation, local

communities can manage their CPRs such as forests, lakes and fishing areas, alone and better. In the management of CPRs, a group of interdependent individuals can organise themselves and conduct self-governance. Therefore, they can achieve continuous common benefits even under the possibility that each of the individuals has opportunities to free-ride and to avoid responsibilities.

E. Ostrom (2001) studied further the vulnerability of different governing systems. She believed that it is highly possible that “governance systems composed of multiple units at multiple scales of organisations are less vulnerable to many types of external shocks than centralized systems” (E. Ostrom, 2001, p. 3). So in her view the world needs robust systems to address governance issues. Under mature federal systems, the provision of social services is gradually decentralised to local government and even local NGOs. In this process, local community and local government play increasingly more important roles in managing practical local affairs (V. Ostrom, 1994). The polycentric governing structure that E. Ostrom discovers offers citizens the opportunities to “organize not one but many governing authorities” (E. Ostrom, et al., 1993, p. 178).

The Ostroms argue that the governance of public affairs needs to leave the monocentric governance model due to the malfunction of either the government or market or both. Therefore, a polycentric governance system needs to be established under a three dimensional framework of the government, market and society. They believe without any doubt that there are other methods beyond privatisation and nationalisation to address governance issues. They regard governance by the society, NGOs and CBOs as the governance without government. This style of governance goes beyond not only the state and government, but also the market. This brings into perspective that “another invisible hand...debunks the established idea that common goods can only be managed effectively either under a central authority or after their being completely privatised” (Tang & Wang, 2010, p. 140).

2.4.3 Polycentric governance as a theoretical tool of analysis

Polycentric governance theory proposes new possibilities in the management of public affairs beyond government and market—“the importation of society as the third centre” (S. Yu, 2005, p. 106). Stoker (2007) summarises three key ideas of local governance: the management of networks, the mechanism of appropriate delegation and the communication by social interpretation theory. This perspective suggests that local governance needs to

transcend multiple governmental institutions and include private sectors, voluntary organisations and communities. The theory of polycentric governance interprets Stoker's ideas on local governance by the creation of an institutional analytic framework for the achievement of a democratic locality, based on its extensive positivist research. In contrast to monocentric governance, polycentric governance represents a new and valuable idea and institutional arrangement. Hence, the local government in an environment of polycentric governance is not a single source of power any more, instead, it is one of many stakeholders. The style of the government's management transforms from previous direct management to indirect management. The government plays its role more like a mediator, draws up the macro framework of polycentric governance and the participants' behaviour rules.

At the local governance level, Olson (1965) argues that local units, as a smaller group, have stronger cohesion and more efficiency than larger groups. His hypothesis generates the idea that the smaller group is more homogeneous, and a larger group more heterogeneous. Small groups can remove unstable features of big groups at national level and organise local affairs. So it's less likely for a larger group to achieve collective action. However, subsequent work generally suggests "that group size is less problematic for collective action than Olson thought" (Poteete & Ostrom, 2004, p. 439). Rather it is the demand for resources which stimulate the desirability of collective action, not the group size.

The predicted correspondence of small group size with homogeneity of interests provides another reason to expect size to influence prospects for collective action. Unfortunately, the desirability of collective action does not decrease with group size; rather, the importance of collective action grows with demand for common-pool resources (Poteete & Ostrom, 2004, p. 443).

The idea that "collective action grows with demand for CPRs" links closely with the findings in the field research of this study. The deputies formed different political alliances (*zhengzhi lianhe*, 政治联合) by submitting different motions which focussed on different development projects (See Chapter Five). It is these development projects (CPRs) which they pursue in order to play their role in representing the interests of the community that determine whether they take collective action (jointly submitting motions) or not, rather than their group size. The motions related to different development projects are submitted by one or more deputies, even more than ten deputies. The diversity of the development projects means that one deputy can appear many times in different joint-submitted motions.

Olson's collective-action theory recognises the "complex linkages among variables at multiple levels that together affect an individual's reputation, trust, and reciprocity as these, in turn affect levels of cooperation and joint benefits" (E. Ostrom, 2010, p. 164). In addition, this theory considers all of the latent structural variables at multiple levels such as "linkage structure", "number of participants" and "face-to-face communication" which affect "core relationships" between individuals including "levels of cooperation" (E. Ostrom, 2010, p. 163). However, Agrawal (2002) suggests that collective action needs to focus on the chain of relationships which are well defined such as the self-governance of individuals who have common interests. This idea shares the same view with that of E. Ostrom (1990) that a group of individuals can self-govern their resources, alone and better.

The diversification of local governing stakeholders means that public affairs are not only the responsibilities of local governments, but also other bodies such as NGOs and those in the private sector. These bodies undertake the duties of managing public affairs and form a pattern of polycentric governance. This governance structure demonstrates three levels of participation: state, market and society (social organisations and citizens). The theory of polycentric governance emphasises that the stakeholders of governance is plural, rather than unitary. In discussing its adaptability, P. Li (2014) argues that polycentric governance unleashes the enthusiasm of government, market and society, because compared to the conventional governance model, it advocates the decentralisation of power and emphasises the self-organising role of society. In polycentric governance, each stakeholder is relatively independent, but mutually interactive. These stakeholders jointly undertake the governance of public affairs. Therefore, the nature of polycentric governance is the establishment of the "plural co-governance" (*duoyuan gongzhi*, 多元共治) (M. Wang, Cai, & Wang, 2014) model, which advocates the common participation of government, market and society. Polycentric governance is an "equal democratic and deliberative governance" (P. Li, 2014, p. 52) which considers the interests of different actors. Neef (2009, pp. 57-58) summarises that polycentric governance transforms:

The responsibilities and capabilities of state and non-state actors, and shifts power and resources among these actors in various ways; yet, to deepen the deliberative spaces available for a broader range of actors and to enhance access for the most marginalised groups of society (pp. 57-58).

This summary by Neef reveals that polycentric governance has the characteristics of "deliberative democracy" (Elster, 1998; Valadez, 2001). One most important achievement of

polycentric governance is that it discovers another “invisible hand” (Michael Dean McGinnis, 1999a, p. 405) beyond market and government. Historically, before polycentric governance theory, there existed two social order theories: market theory by Smith (1937) and sovereignty theory by Hobbes (2013).¹² Market theory emphasises the role of the market as “virtuous institutions of social efficiency” and the self-regulating market organises “the economy efficiently and yet also transforming private self-interest into public virtue” (Peet & Hartwick, 2009, p. 33). The sovereignty theory sets up a standard view that political power and authority have exclusive responsibility for determining public policy (Michael Dean McGinnis, 1999b).

Ostrom’s polycentric governance examines the weakness in these two theories and she discloses the inherent social order of the development of public affairs beyond market and government based on deliberative democracy. Deliberative democracy provides a basic space for rational discussion in political life by a democratic government (Cooke, 2000). As a form of governance, deliberative democracy proposes that consensus is realised and responsibility is clarified by dialogue with diverse actors and thus commonly agreed decisions are made (Valadez, 2001).

Polycentric governance discloses the importance of civil society in the third-way theory (Blair, 1998; Finlayson, 1999; Giddens, 2013). The third-way theory emphasises the reinvigoration of civil society, partnership government and international cooperation (Blair, 1998) and it advocates the view that the reform of government is “less administration, more governance” (T. Chen & Xiao, 2010). So the connotation of the third-way theory is to decentralise the power of state and establish a nation-state of cosmopolitanism (Giddens, 2013). Supporters of this theory think that civil society is a basic environment for the realisation of local governance. Without it, local governance is baseless (Yu, 2006). The emphasis on civil society can be found in communitarianism, because communitarianism emphasises the participation of citizens in state affairs and views that the realisation of local governance is a sign of the maturity of a civil society.

In this process, social capital, which refers to “the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of membership in social networks or other social structures” (Portes, 1998, p. 6), plays a key role in guaranteeing the communitarian participation of citizens. Social capital implies the characteristics of social organisations, such as trust, standards and networks and improves the

¹² In Hobbes’ theory, sovereignty is supreme. Sovereignty is indivisible and non-transferable and the power of sovereignty cannot be constrained by any individual or group.

efficiency of institutional operations by promoting mutual cooperation and action between actors (Boix & Posner, 1998). In developing countries, indigenous organisations are an “important source of social capital for forming effective noncentral (or polycentric), public-private institutional arrangements” (E. Ostrom, et al., 1993, p. 209), such as the social contracting system called “*yilang*” (议榔) and the mediating and coordinating system named the “*zhailao*” (chief of a village, 寨老) in the Miao communities in Guizhou province. The theory of polycentric governance integrates the role of civil society articulated in the theories of the third way, communitarianism and social capital. It thus forms a comprehensive theoretical and analytical framework.

Public affairs are complex and diversified. It’s difficult for a unitary governance system to obtain precise information and make decisions. To fill in the gap in monocentricity, polycentric governance brings into alignment the centralisation of governmental monopoly distribution, the efficiency of corporate marketisation and the flexibility of societal self-governing organisations. In his analysis of the governance failure in resource management, Pahl-Wost (2009, p. 363) argues that polycentric governance has a “higher adaptive capacity” and is “less vulnerable to disturbance”. Furthermore, he believes that “more polycentric structures and balance between bottom-up and top-down approaches lead to higher adaptive capacity and thus also sustainability of a resource governance regime” (Pahl-Wostl, 2009, p. 363). The polycentric structure can be found among the deputies of Leishan County People’s Congress (LCPC), the Village Committee and the traditional social organisations in the Miao communities in the process that the deputies play their roles in representing the interests of the state and/or the community.

Local governments begin to play more important roles in local governance in a polycentric era. The basic requirement of this era is to ensure the decentralisation of the power of government and politics. Rosenbaum (2004) suggests that a strong and independent local government should be emphasised, because only it can guarantee the decentralisation that is crucial to the establishment of democratic governance. Even more importantly, in the polycentric era, citizens’ roles must also be emphasised. B. Sun (2004) argues that citizens play four roles in participating in local governance: (i) they vote in local elections; (ii) they enjoy or consume public services; (iii) they are community citizens who express certain interests and inclinations and they influence public policies; (iv) they are partners who help governments to produce public services and participate in the provision of these services in the community. The participation of citizens based on polycentric governance can improve

the representation and responsive ability of a political system and increase the mutual understanding and trust between government and citizens (Carroll & Carroll, 1999).

The inclusiveness of polycentric governance suggests that it can be practiced in many circumstances. While scholars admit the adaptability of polycentric governance as it includes the ideas of many popular theories such as collective action, communitarianism, the third way and social capital, they also point out its limitations. There is a risk of the dysfunction of polycentric governance, i.e. it may be entrapped into the situation of non-centricity (Xinglun Wang, 2005). There should be a core power when this dilemma happens. In the governance of public affairs, there exist multi-power centres and multi-organisational systems. To ensure the effectiveness of this governance model, E. Ostrom (1990) proposes a solution for three issues arising in polycentric governance, which are institutional supply, trust and commitment, and mutual supervision in public affairs and public goods. Only when these three issues are conducted can the citizens of communities solve the provision of public goods by self-funding and self-contracting.

2.4.4 The significance of local governance in a polycentric system

Miller, Dickson and Stoker (2000) argue that local governance is the delegation, organisation and control of local services. Those services include health, education, public security, construction of infrastructure and economic development. So the realisation of local governance needs “the formulation and execution of collective action at the local level” (Qiao & Shah, 2006, p. 1). In contrast to Miller, Dickon and Stoker’s theory of the “control of local services”, B. Sun (2004) argues that local governance is a process of reform and development to address local public issues, commonly completing and realising public services and social affairs. Therefore, an ideal governance model includes the following five points: (i) flexible local systems and organisational structural arrangements, (ii) action processes of local government reform and a sustainable development path, (iii) operation based on public policies and a net for citizen participation formed at a locality, (iv) concern for environmental transformation and challenge, and (v) a concessive approach to local strategic development (B. Sun, 2004).

The various theories of local governance explore governance issues at the local level. Stoker (2007) categorises the system of local governance from a global perspective. He analyses the essential functions, the economic environment, main interests of stakeholders, capacity of

civil organisations, and the challenges of all systems. He classifies the local governance systems into four genres: economic, welfare, life-style and basic, with a summary of three key theories to local governance. Firstly, he suggests the network management theory, as Rhodes (1997) points out, that governance is the management of networks. Therefore, “governance is the operation of networks which are composed of stakeholders and organisations” (Stoker, 2007, p. 8). Secondly, delegation theory advocates that the key for efficient governance is “the creation of appropriate incentive regimes” (Stoker, 2007, pp. 5-6)”. The third is social interpretative theory. Supporters of this theory such as Bevir (2003) see more complexity in the responses of individuals and groups to their challenges and predicaments, as the design of governance is not an easy task (Stoker, 2007). According to these social interpreters, it is of significance to regard governance as a set of networks of “political communication” (Bang, 2003, p. 9) featured by openness, development and rethinking. So in this network,

Institutions and individuals are interlocked in multiple, reciprocal relations of autonomy and dependence. Governance here manifests the ability of institutions and individuals within any given political field, terrain or group to communicate about their environment and to use the perception and understanding of their differences from the environment in their internal communication (Bang, 2003, p. 9).

Therefore, as Yang (2005) points out, there are common tendencies in local governance globally which include the promotion of local autonomy systems, the expansion of local decentralisation, the establishment of inter-governmental cooperative mechanisms and the development of the system of polycentric governance. The theory of polycentric governance establishes a micro-analytic framework. It brings forth the micro-analytic method for the macroscopic issues of the governance of public affairs. It is a useful framework to analyse the situation of “decentralised and centralised” (*fen yu tong*, 分与统) power (Tang & Wang, 2010, p. 149) that exists in China. In addition, this theory helps establish a mapping of the structure of polycentric governance formed by the spontaneous ordering of social organisations. Therefore, new multi-level governments based on polycentricity and diversified institutional and public policy arrangements can help constrain opportunism in the collective action and realise the sustainable development of public interests.

The theory of polycentric governance explores the overall crisis of government in the fields of finance, public management, and trust and development, and rethinks the relationship

between government, the private sector and society. It transcends the boundary of nationalisation and privatisation and argues that this dichotomy of government and market is not an effective solution to address issues in the management of public affairs. Rather, a solution can be found beyond government and market. The rise of local governance puts forward new challenges to the structure and function of local government. In this regard, local governance should include the encouragement of decentralisation, the reorganisation of local government and the building of participatory networks. However, in this process, local government remains the prime stakeholder of local governance. This provides a workable solution to the problem of non-centricity which may arise in polycentric governance.

Polycentric governance signifies the deployment of the politics of recognition (Kong, 2007). Kong argues that the governance structure of a core-periphery, nation-state has realised political integration and independence. This obfuscates the boundary of democratic governance. The structure of core-periphery changes people's sovereignty into the absolute sovereignty of a nation-state. Therefore, the power of governance based on absolute sovereignty is used to punish and discipline the periphery of a polity. The result is that the expectation of equal deliberation in politics cannot be met and the recognition of citizens to their own sovereignty and power of governance is undermined. This misrecognition "shows not just a lack of due respect. It can inflict a grievous wound, saddling its victims with a crippling self-hatred" (C. Taylor, 1997, pp. 98-99).

China is intent on promoting the establishment of a harmonious society. The historical existence of hierarchy in its social structures and social production constrains the realisation of this target. Polycentric governance provides a way for people from different ethnic groups and different social classes within an ethnic group to understand a form of due respect, rather than irrationally worship the commanding power in a monocentric system. In the Miao areas in Guizhou where a structure of polycentric governance exists, due respect can be observed between deputies and their constituents. The structure of polycentric governance that exists is a product of decentralisation in the Ethnic Regional Autonomous System (ERAS). This being the case, it is important to discuss decentralisation and its link with polycentric governance, which is carried out in the following section.

2.5 Decentralisation and polycentric governance

Decentralisation has become a general tendency in public administration for central governments in many countries. This is due as Bardhan (2002) argues, to many failures of the central government, resulting in a loss of legitimacy and thus, decentralisation has become a trend in local governance. Decentralisation forms multiple centres of policy-making. It is practiced in many developing countries and transformative economies and brings a lot of benefits. For example, decentralisation helps the central government to realise political stability in the periphery and promote economic development, as Dillinger and Fay (1999, p. 19) point out:

Decentralisation can foster political stability and economic development—if transfers of resources and responsibilities are carefully coordinated and intergovernmental relationships are clearly defined.

Decentralisation itself cannot lead to “an increase in societal participation” and it is “only productive if the centre remains responsible for the supervision and coordination of activities in the local units” (Ackerman, 2004, p. 459).

2.5.1 Decentralisation: Definitions and concepts

Rondinelli (1980) examines the concept of decentralisation and he concludes that decentralisation means the transfer of political authority from the central government or its agencies to the local governments, semi-autonomous public corporations or NGOs. Therefore, the degree of decentralisation depends on how much power the central government gives up. Decentralisation includes two aspects as Devas and Delay (2006) distinguish: devolution and deconcentration. They argue that “devolution is political decentralisation to a locally elected body with some degree of autonomy and some local own revenue sources”, and “deconcentration is administrative decentralisation to local agents of the central state” (Devas & Delay, 2006, p. 677). This distinction may not be clear-cut, because there are different levels of local decision-making and central control, different degrees of accountability and various ranges of functions and resource transfers in the two aspects. In addition, there are parallel systems of, and tensions between, devolution and deconcentration in many countries.

Decentralisation neutralises some problems of centralised structures and it provides opportunities to change both policies and projects. The efforts of decentralisation include local planning and regional development projects and some “genuine devolution of responsibilities to local governments” (Wunsch, 1999, p. 245). Decentralisation reduces the role of the state with the fragmentation of central authority and it is regarded as an approach to create a more responsive and efficient government, because all governments have both centralised and decentralised functions (Rondinelli, 2008). However, Ackerman (2011) argues decentralisation is not a panacea for developing countries in addressing their local governance issues, because it doesn’t automatically mean an improvement in government accountability and a blind decentralisation process tends to reinforce inequalities. Moreover, “decentralised governmental institutions are doing more of the work of government than ever before” (Schneider, 2003, p. 32). Therefore, as Bardhan (2002) argues, decentralisation is not just about weakening central authority, nor about preferring local elites to the central authority, it is essentially about making governance at the local level more responsive to the demands of the people in the local areas.

Unlike Ackerman and Bardhan’s balanced ideas on decentralisation, Rosenbaum (2001) emphasises prominently the advantages of decentralisation by seven points: (i) decentralisation of power execution by government, (ii) the creation of more citizen space, (iii) the provision of numerous practical opportunities for democratic governance, (iv) development and technological improvement, (v) more selective scope of citizens while seeking active reflection from government, (vi) the provision of multiple services for mass demands, and (vii) citizens’ feelings about the efficiency of policies and the opportunities provided for economic development. There is one potential risk as (Rosenbaum, 2001) points out, in that the departments of local government may be manipulated by a small circle of highly organised local elites in the process of local governance.

2.5.2 Decentralisation and central-local relations

Shah and Chaudhry (2004, p. 19) examine the process of decentralisation regarding central-local relations such as “big bang vs. gradualism, bottom up vs. top down and uniform vs. asymmetric decentralisation” and they argue that decentralisation activities may produce disfunctionalities. Decentralisation may reverse comprehensive decentralisation reforms, because in systems with strong centralisation, the essential challenge is to guarantee that local

governments gain enough political autonomy so as to allow them to govern their localities responsibly (E. Willis, da CB Garman, & Haggard, 1999). The relations between the central and the local governments are at the centre in the discussion of decentralisation as “an obvious tension between local autonomy and central control” (Devas & Delay, 2006, p. 688) is seen.

Chung (1995) discusses three broad views in his research of central-local relations: cultural, structural and procedural. The cultural view emphasises “the significance of historical continuity such as centrifugal tendencies, and the influence of collective beliefs such as provincialism over national integration and state building”. The structural view discovers “the origins of central-local conflicts in particular distributions or arrangements of power between central and local governments” and finally, the procedural view “takes central-local conflicts to originate from the lack of appropriate channels of communication and focuses on the ways central-local conflicts are resolved through sanctions, bargaining and negotiation” (Chung, 1995, p. 489). Rosenbaum (2005) likens central-local relations as a “zero-sum game” (p. 90): the strengthening of government’s ability on one side weakens the ability on the other side. He believes that the manner of the central government determines the degree of independence of local government. Therefore, the collaboration and partnership between the central government, the local government officials and civil society result in achieving local governance. In addition, as Crook (2003, p. 85) suggests, decentralisation is most likely to lead to achieving governmental objectives “where it has been designed by a central government intent on challenging conservative local elites”.

2.5.3 Decentralisation and polycentric governance

Local governance relates to a process of decentralisation and democratisation. Those who advocate democratic construction argue for the establishment of a decentralised powerful and reliable local government and they regard this initiative as a significant instrument to guarantee the dispersion of political power and governmental authorities from the central to the local (Rosenbaum, 2005). Furthermore, Political power can be transferred from local government to local community where governance is based on a structure of polycentric governance. Polycentric governance advocates the decentralisation of the power in governance and it stresses the role of self-governance of society, establishing a network based

on equality, democracy and deliberation between government, market and society (P. Li, 2014).

Decentralised governance breaks up the dominance of political powers (Rosenbaum, 2001). Therefore, it can create more spaces for citizens and promote democracy by creating multi-power centres. It leads to a governance system based on multiple centres. Therefore, this structure of polycentricity can be used as a tool to analyse issues of rural governance such as the roles that the deputies of Leishan County People's Congress (LCPC) in China play in representing the interests of the state and/or the community.

Community plays an important role in addressing issues related to polycentric governance. Burns et al. (1994, p. 225) recognise five different meanings of the concept of community as "heritage", "social relationship", "the basis of collective consumption", "the basis for the most effective production" and "provision of local public goods or the source of influence and power". McEwan (2003) discusses the political transformations in South Africa in debating good governance and participatory democracy. She focuses on relationships between gender equality and citizenship on the one hand, and local government policy, legislation, and community participation on the other hand. She believes that

The close interaction with communities presents opportunities for local government to promote gender equity that other spheres of government do not have. However, understanding which groups benefit most from a particular strategy and which are consulted and excluded from local decision-making processes is of importance (McEwan, 2003, p. 480).

With regard to this research, the concept of community as heritage and the source of influence and power will be further discussed in this thesis. Burns et al. (1994) believe that if the local government wishes to develop a leading role in its community area, a multi-dimensional strategy needs to be developed to respond to various communities and to correct the imbalances in power and position among communities. This leads to the development of Community-based organisations (CBOs) for the promotion of community participation and empowerment. As the basis for collective empowerment, CBOs may lead to social movement and political change. So community participation based on CBOs becomes a way to establish an efficient local governance system (Rosenbaum, 2005). However, the uses and abuses of participation results in depoliticising development. So White (1996) suggests three steps to deal with the non-politics of participation in community: the recognition of participation as a

political issue, the interests in participation and the recognition of participation and non-participation.

Gaventa & Valderrama (1999) argue that linking citizen and community participation to the state at the local level raises fundamental and normative questions about the nature of democracy and about the skills and strategies for achieving it. They believe that the dearth of a strong and determined central government in providing and enforcing opportunities for participation at the local level and the absence of political will by local officials in enforcing the legislation are the barriers to citizen and community participation. In the analysis of governance theory, power is not regarded as social control but as social production (M. Taylor, 2007).

Governance theory “moves away from fixed ideas about power as a commodity rooted in particular institutions to more fluid ideas of power developed and negotiated between partners” (M. Taylor, 2007, p. 299). This generates the possibility for a community to achieve polycentric governance with multi-stakeholders. Local government may play a leading role in such a polycentric arena. The community may face a range of challenges of governing beyond the state. Morison (2000) explores some of the wider issues about the changing role of government and its developing relationships within communities by discussing the Government-Voluntary Sector Compacts in UK. He believes that “the process started by the development of the compacts can be best understood as an instance of de-governmentalisation, through which new technologies and political rationalities of power are being developed without constraining the freedom of choice of the agent” (Morison, 2000, p. 119).

Shah and Chaudhry (2004) discuss the sustainability of decentralisation. They believe that “decentralisation initiatives are likely to be sustained if they were implemented after reaching a broad societal consensus. Sustainability potential is much higher for reforms stemming from grassroots support” (Shah & Thompson, 2004, p. 22). This idea suggests that polycentric governance of community based on decentralisation can bring political representation for communities and their representatives, and in ethnic areas, ethnic identity can be strengthened like the Miao in Guizhou.

Local people and/or local elites (such as Miao deputies in the LCPC) enjoy “voice” and “exit” (Hirschman, 1970) options in their participation in local governance through the decentralisation of power. Both solutions, exit “based on marketisation” and voice “grounded

in co-production, social protest or consultation” (Ackerman, 2004, p. 447) are insufficient to solve the issues of government accountability. Therefore, Ackerman suggested co-governance as a best way to have social actors participating in the core governmental activities such as infrastructure provision and poverty reduction. This decentralised co-governance is a demonstration of a structure of polycentric governance.

2.6 Ethnicity, political and ethnic representation

Ethnicity is rooted in the culture of an ethnic group and can be influenced by the development of cultural tourism. It is relevant for this study that issues concerning ethnicity and governance are discussed because this governance of cultural tourism relates to a structure of polycentric governance existing in the ethnic areas.

There are two dominant and competing views with which ethnicity or ethnic identity is malleable: primordialism and instrumentalism (Hoddie, 1998; Pieterse, 1996). Advocates of primordialism think that ethnicity and cohesion is based on the language, blood ties and complexion of an ethnic group. So ethnicity remains “fixed and unchanging” (Hoddie, 1998, p. 121) in the primordialist perspective and this view is often used to explain the conflicts among ethnic groups (Geertz, 1963). In contrast, proponents of instrumentalism view ethnicity “essentially as a weapon in the pursuit of collective advantage” and the instrumentalists emphasise “the situational and circumstantial nature of ethnic solidarity, and focus upon competition and interaction” (Young, 1983, p. 660).

Pieterse (1996, p. 2) argues that the formation of ethnic identity must be related to “existing cultural hierarchies, the state and modernisation”. In his view, ethnic politics are highly contextual and local because they are influenced by many variables such as political and socio-economic transformation, the change of central-local relations as well as historical mortgages. Smith (1996) points out the relationship between culture and politics, between pre-modern ethnic ties and modern countries by examining three major trends: (i) purifying culture through authentication which can lead to cultural and social exclusion, (ii) universalising ethnic options through nationalist ideology to generate national solidarity and self-assertion, and (iii) territorialising shared memory to inspire historical claims to historic homelands and sacred sites. These trends can be found throughout history, but they are

particularly well known and spread in these times and underlie many current political conflicts.

Tourism and politics is relevant for ethnicity and ethnic representation discussed in this study. Hall (1994) concludes that there are different factors which influence tourism policy and the decision making process. For example, the government, either elected or non-elected, acts as a decision maker and sets out the roles of national tourism organisations and provides assistance for the tourism industry. Under this policy framework, many governments use ethnic cultural tourism as an attraction for economic and cultural development (Henderson, 2003). Therefore, cultural tourism related to ethnic groups is generally regarded as a way to promote economic and cultural development and to improve the income of indigenous people such as the cultural tourism in the Miao villages in Guizhou.

Ethnic cultural tourism helps ethnic minority groups with both showing their cultures and resurrecting their traditions (Santos & Yan, 2008). While ethnic tourism brings economic and social benefits, it also brings negative impacts on both the culture and the sense of identity of ethnic groups (Oakes, 1997). For example, ethnic language is identified from a primordial perspective as one of the key factors of ethnicity. In the Miao villages in Guizhou where the ethnic cultural tourism has developed, fewer and fewer Miao people can and would like to speak their Miao language. Therefore, the ethnicity as a weapon in the pursuit of collective advantage for the ethnic people is decreasing according to instrumentalists.

2.7 Research and debate on polycentric governance in China

The theory of polycentric governance has been used to discuss and analyse various governance issues by domestic scholars in China, such as the provision of public goods and services in rural areas (L. Sun & Sun, 2007; P. Wang, 2010; Y. Yang, 2014), social conflicts in rural areas (Y. Cao, 2011), community governance in both urban and rural areas (T. Li, 2014; R. Wu, 2010; W. Zeng, Lian, & Wang, 2010; Hongwu Zhang, 2007), ecological and environment (D. Yan & Wang, 2010), governance for new socialist rural areas (G. Wu, 2007), local government (Xuemei Wang, 2011) and NGO governance (Junxing Chen, 2011). Most of these researchers introduce the theoretical framework and main contents of polycentric governance and they present it as an ideal outlook to change the traditional monocentric governance model.

Qinghua Wu (2008, p. 158) analysed the model of polycentric governance in Wenzhou municipality in Zhejiang province and she found an existing social governance model based on the “pluralism of stakeholders” (*zhuti duoyuanhua*, 主体多元化) in this city. In her Wenzhou model, the government plays a role as service provider (*fuwuzhe*, 服务者), coordinator and intervenor. Industrial associations and chambers of commerce maintain their independence in organising form, personnel arrangement and decision-making. They participate in the political process of the government in the provision of public goods, so new relations with the government based on the principle of authorisation and cooperation, supervision and equality are established.

In this Wenzhou model, the democratic governance of grassroots-level is a significant foundation for polycentric governance. The farmers actively participate in public management through a self-governed Villagers’ Committee (VC) making the VC an important organisation, able to influence government policies to the rural areas. Citizens participate in social governance by using internet resources, press and media, government hot lines and complaint offices and the mail-box of the mayor, as well as transmitting their voices through deputies of the Local People’s Congresses (LPCs) and members of Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). She regarded this model of social governance based on the pluralism of stakeholders as an operational mechanism of “collaborationism” (*hezuo zhuyi*, 合作主义) (Qinghua Wu, 2008, p. 158) with Chinese socialist characteristics.

Some Chinese scholars are dedicated to a localised theory of governance such as social co-governance (M. Wang, et al., 2014). This social co-governance emphasises the roles of social organisations in the local governance. In his 2014 report of government work, Keqing Li, the Chinese Prime Minister, talked about the innovation of social governance. He said the government will “implement co-governance of plural stakeholders by focusing on the rule of law” (*zhuzhong yunyong fazhi fangshi, shixian duoyuan zhuti gongtongzhili*, 注重运用法治方式, 实行多元主体共同治理). He expected that social organisations can play a better role in public services and social governance in order to achieve co-governance with plural stakeholders. The appearance of plural governance in PM Li’s report encouraged domestic scholars to explore governance in practice and for institutional innovation.

Xu, Qin and Liu (2010) argue that the development of rural destination tourism has become a positive economic policy option in Chinese rural areas. They found that there are several resources and environmental constraints in the development of rural destination tourism. In order to realise sustainable development and to “achieve interests balance and value

maximisation”, there is a need to build a stable polycentric governance structure which follows three different types: public type, mixed type and private type (F. Xu, et al., 2010, p. 18). To achieve this, different models are applied through role division and diverse collaboration of stakeholders including government, private sector, community, academic world and media. They emphasise that the people residing in the community are the main stakeholder and are the ones who must be empowered. The residents’ invisible power based on the resources can be transformed into political power when they participate in decision-making at the policy level. In addition this can translate into real economic power when they coordinate their interest for profitable gain (F. Xu, et al., 2010).

M. Wang et al. (2014) discuss the necessity of plural co-governance (*duoyuan gongtongzhili*, 多元共同治理) in China and considers four characteristics of this plural co-governance: (i) plural stakeholders (multi-subjects), (ii) an open and complex system of co-governance, (iii) co-governance mechanism based on dialogue, competition, reconciliation, collaboration and collective action, and (iv) common interests as the final output (p. 16). J. Yu and Zhang (2013, p. 100) argue for the establishment and integration of the mechanisms of coordinative governance because they think that the maximal value of this action rests with “promoting the cooperation of stakeholders of governance and realising good governance”. This contemporary research of local governance in China demonstrates a link in governance issues between China and the Western world since the beginning of its economic reform in 1978.

This link can be found from Liao’s (2014) review of academic articles from 2003 to May 4th, 2014, in China’s National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI).¹³ Liao finds that the term “polycentric governance” is used in the titles of 851 articles¹⁴. Table 1 shows the top ten disciplines in which articles having polycentric governance are most discussed according to Liao. Table 2 shows the frequencies of the term “polycentric governance” being used as the key word in articles according to Liao.

The frequency of the term ‘Polycentric governance’, at 329 is much higher than the term “governance”, “public services”, “local government”, “government”, “community

¹³ CNKI is a key project of national informatisation construction. It is dedicated to the mass digitalisation of China’s knowledge resources, as well as creating the platform for global dissemination and value-added services. It is first launched in June 1999 by Tsinghua University and Tsinghua Tongfang Holding Group, with the promotion of World Bank. CNKI is also explained as China National Knowledge Internet. Sources: <http://www.cnki.net/> & <http://baike.baidu.com>.

¹⁴ There were actually 921 articles found by Liao (2014). He eliminated those which were duplicated.

governance”, “rural governance”, “rural public goods” or “public policies”. Its frequencies would be even higher, if the frequencies for the terms “polycentricity” and “theory of polycentric governance”, each having 56 and 22 times, are included according to Liao.

| Table 1: Articles of polycentric governance in top ten disciplinary categories in China from 2003 to May 4 th , 2014 | | | |
|---|-----------------|---|-----------------|
| Disciplinary category | Articles | Disciplinary category | Articles |
| Administrative Sciences & National Administration | 192 | Sociology & Statistics | 56 |
| Politics of China & International Politics | 114 | Environmental Sciences & Resource Utilization | 50 |
| Macro-economic Development & Sustainable Development | 99 | Parties and Mass Organisation | 49 |
| Agricultural Economy | 90 | Tertiary Education | 32 |
| Politics | 67 | Public Security | 27 |

| Table 2: Frequencies of key words in articles which appear 20 or more times from 2003 to May 4th, 2014 | | | |
|--|--------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| Key word | Frequencies | Key word | Frequencies |
| Polycentric governance | 329 | Community governance | 24 |
| Governance | 84 | Theory of polycentric governance | 22 |
| Polycentricity | 56 | Rural governance | 21 |
| Public services | 28 | Rural public goods | 20 |
| Local government | 26 | Public policies | 20 |
| Government | 26 | | |

| |
|---|
| Source for Table 1 & 2: Data collected in CNKI articles from the year 2003 to 4 May 2014 by (Liao, 2014) |
|---|

Although “polycentric governance” is widely used to discuss local governance issues in China as we can see in Table 1 and Table 2, the dearth of its use in discussion of local governance in the ethnic areas of China can be seen and few researchers have shown a polycentric analysis in the Miao ethnic area in Guizhou. So this research can fill a gap and provides a unique and independent analysis of local governance issues in Chinese ethnic and rural areas by using the theory of polycentric governance as an analytic framework. In the structure of polycentric governance, the deputies, as one of the local political actors “should act to support the capacity of self-governance for groups and communities at all levels of aggregation” (Michael Dean McGinnis, 1999b, p. 16). This research, focussing on the deputies’ position is highly relevant to the current context in China.

2.8 Summary of the literature review and its relevance to the research questions

The literature reviewed in this chapter shows diverse theories and practices of governance and local governance in the development discourse at a global level. The discussion also covered the theory of polycentric governance which the researcher has selected as the conceptual framework for this study. In addition, the relations of polycentric governance with local governance and decentralisation were discussed. Three main conclusions can be drawn from this literature review.

Firstly, by tracing the definitions of governance and the theories of local governance, this chapter has shown that local governance is a process in which multiple stakeholders play their roles in policy-making. The global requirement for local governance demonstrates the trend for the diversification of stakeholders in governance. Public affairs such as the provision of public goods and development policy-making are not only the matter of local governments, but also for the private sector and social organisations. Therefore, decentralised governance can be formed in which there are polycentric centres.

Secondly, the literature review demonstrates that the theory of polycentric governance is inclusive and adaptive, because it advocates a model of governance based on decentralisation and new power centres beyond the government. In addition, diverse debates and the growing interests in the Western theories of local governance and polycentric governance by Chinese scholars demonstrate that there is a lack of indigenous theories of local governance which can be used to discuss diverse local development issues in the Chinese context. So, by tracing the origin and development of the theory of polycentric governance, and showing its relevance to the Chinese context, the researcher has justified his use of polycentric governance as the conceptual framework for this study.

Thirdly, this literature review demonstrates the evolution of local governance systems. This evolution has influenced the local political environment and the institutional framework in which the deputies in the counties play their roles. Therefore, the two research questions, the way in which the deputies play their roles in representing the interests of the state and/or the interests of the community are discussed under the umbrella of governance and local governance. There are multiple actors in local governance in China. The deputies represent different interests groups who can be the state, or their constituents. The theory of polycentric governance was selected as the conceptual framework to explore issues related to local

governance in the Miao area where there are multiple stakeholders and where there exists a structure of polycentric governance.

Ethnic groups such as Miao are often conceived of being gradually assimilated into the dominant Han nationality in China. However, the traditional Miao system of social organisations in Guizhou still operates and plays an important role in mediating conflicts and coordinating village and community development. A reputable “old Miao chief in a village” (*zhailao*, 寨老) can be elected as a deputy of County People’s Congress (CPC) and/or the director of Villagers’ Committee (VC). This mixture of systems demonstrates that there is a structure of polycentric governance in the Miao villages and their communities.

This study focuses on a county dominated by Miao ethnic group in Guizhou province as a case study. With the differentiation of local governance and decentralisation at a global level, the literature review in this chapter provides a theoretical backdrop for this study to the convergence, complexity and heterogeneity of governance issues and processes in different areas in China. In order to discuss the politics and practices of current local governance in the counties of China, there is a need to understand the historical local governance policies and systems which were promoted and implemented in the ethnic areas. Chapter three focuses on these historical perspectives.

3.1 Introduction

Since its decentralisation reforms in 1978, local governments in China have carried out “major functional responsibilities from economic development to social welfare provision” (Caulfield, 2006, p. 253). However, when local governments are the primary driver of economic reforms at local level (Caulfield, 2006), many issues related to the roles of local government such as imbalances of socio-economic development, unequal income distribution, environmental pollution and inefficient provision of public goods have appeared under the “model of monocentric social management of local governments” (Xuemei Wang, 2011, p. 54). Therefore, as Xuemei Wang (2011, p. 55) points out, some local governments are envisaging a “crisis of trust” due to their “malfunction” in the process of governance and they are gradually losing their “confidence of public” (*gonggongxing*, 公共性) in public administration.

The malfunction of local governments under monocentric governance suggests the exploration and demand of a new governance model in China (L. Sun & Sun, 2007; S. Yu, 2005). Polycentric governance changes the actors of local governance from unitary to polycentric, and shifts the focus from centralisation to a decentralisation of power (Liao, 2014). It breaks apart the monopoly power of local governments in public management and calls attention to the participation of government, market and society (P. Li, 2014). The deputies of the Local People’s Congresses (LPCs) communicate with local government, market and society through their deputy status. In practice this means they visit the local governments to ask for development projects for their constituents and in turn, visit their constituents to promote the state policies and solicit public opinions from them. They play their roles in representing the interests of the state and/or the community by communicating with different stakeholders in the process of local governance.

In the previous chapter, the theories of governance and local governance in Western countries were discussed and the theory of polycentric governance was introduced as the main conceptual framework. These theories demonstrate a high degree of homogeneity in terms of local governance in Western countries (T. Chen & Xiao, 2010). In contrast, local governance

in China is characterised as complex and heterogeneous because “differentiation between regions and localities is actively encouraged” (Caulfield, 2006, p. 253). In order to discuss the issues of local governance in China, there is a need to understand Chinese local governance systems from ancient to contemporary periods, especially those practiced in the ethnic areas. From this, insights from analysing the effects of the transformation in systems of governance over time can be gained (Herbst, 2014). In addition, it’s also important to know how ethnicity, local politics and some aspects of cultural tourism can impact on governance. All these elements, together with the local governance systems, are used as a contextual background in this study to explore the roles that the deputies play.

In this chapter, historical local governance systems such as the chieftain system are discussed in Section 3.2, followed by an explanation of the Ethnic Regional Autonomous System (ERAS) and county governmental authorities in Section 3.3. Then, a particular explanation is given for the Local People’s Congresses (LPCs) and their deputies in Section 3.4 as the roles that the deputies play are the central analysis of this thesis. Section 3.5 provides a brief introduction on local governance and democratisation in China. Section 3.6 gives a brief introduction on ethnicity, politics and cultural tourism in the Chinese context. Some core concepts in Chinese context are introduced in order to have a better understanding of the Chinese political tradition such as consensual democracy and development interventions in Section 3.7 and 3.8. Section 3.9 provides a brief introduction to the field research in order to have a better understanding of the local institutional framework. At the end, Section 3.10 provides four main conclusions linking the research background with the two research questions.

3.2 Historical perspectives on the local governance system in China’s ethnic areas

3.2.1 Local governance system in the Imperial Period in China

The Imperial Period in China refers to the period from the establishment of Qin Dynasty (B.C. 221-B.C. 207) to the end of Qing Dynasty (1636-1912). Since the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368) when China was reigned by the Mongolian, in order to consolidate and strengthen its dominance over the ethnic areas and to popularise its central administrative orders, the central government implemented a chieftain (*tusi*, 土司) system in its ethnic dominated areas (Z.

Chen, 1989). This system allowed the chiefs of different ethnic groups to govern their own lands. The chieftain system maintained the Miao ethnic group as a political power in Guizhou in southwest China. Miao chieftains governed their own areas officially and legally with the establishment of relevant administrative institutions by permission of the central governments. The political connections between the Miao people and the central regime of China were strengthened with the introduction of this chieftain system. Many Han people immigrated into Guizhou from central China with the policy *junwei tuntian* (军卫屯田). This policy involved garrison troops being sent to Guizhou on a large scale to open up wasteland and plant food grain by the first emperor (Yuanzhang Zhu, reigned in 1368-1398) of Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). These immigrants were called “guest residents” (*kemin*, 客民) by local Miao people (M. Huang, 1980). They brought advanced technologies of production and promoted the socio-economic development of Guizhou. The quasi-political autonomy based on chieftain system means that the Miao people developed a distinctive and coherent political and ethnic identity. They enjoyed some degree of political representation and ethnic identity by this chieftain system.

Since the late Ming Dynasty, the chieftain system has gradually demonstrated its disadvantages. Chen (1989, p. 96) describes those defects: (i) the chiefs used their own privileges to enslave and exploit the local ethnic people; (ii) the chiefs and the central government didn't trust each other; (iii) quarrels and military actions often happened between and among local chiefs for population and lands. The chieftain system had become a barrier against the development and consolidation of a multi-ethnic country (Z. Wang, 1994). With this regard, the policy of the removal of the chieftain system and appointing officials from the central government (*gaituguiliu*, 改土归流) (IOSC, 2010)¹⁵ to govern the local area appeared in the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911).

Qin (2005, p. 67) evaluates this political reform in Southwestern China as “a long-term political reform” in Chinese history. However, Luo (1987) points out that the long-term military action of the Qing ruling group towards the Miao area in Guizhou province in the name of the *gaituguiliu* policy deepened the oppression towards Miao people, though the progressive intent of the new policy cannot be denied. Herman (1997, p. 48) discussed the chieftain system reform in Qing Dynasty and he argued that the removal of this system led to

¹⁵ The report, *China's Ethnic Policy and Common Prosperity and Development of All Ethnic Groups*, IOSC (2010, p. 225) (Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China) explains the policy of *gaituguiliu* as “appropriating the governing power of local hereditary aboriginal chieftains and setting up the system of appointment of local administrators by the central government in the minority areas”.

the “increased state control over the native chieftain selection process and, as the Qing central government expected, heightened its own political legitimacy and cultural prestige among the indigenous frontier elite”. Therefore, the removal of chieftain system undermined the Miao people’s political and ethnic representation.

3.2.2 Local governance policies of Chinese Communist Party in the Republican Period

Ethnic policies relating to local governance in the Government of the Republican Period (GRP, 1912-1949) are divided into two stages, Beiyang (North Ocean) Warlord Government (BWG) (1912-1927) and Nanjing Nationalist Government (NNG) (1927-1949). Yan, Li and Wu (2012) describe BWG’s ethnic policies as follows: (i) stressing Mongolian and Tibetan affairs by establishing special institutions, (ii) reinforcing the dominance over ethnic minority areas, (iii) continuing the *jimi* (restrain and conciliate, 羈縻) policies taken by the Qing government. These policies included ethnic minorities into national administrative organs and developed the well-being of ethnic minorities, but with simultaneous ethnic assimilation. Yan et al. (2012) also introduce the ethnic policies of the NNG: (i) setting up the Mongolian-Tibetan Committee to administrate ethnic affairs, (ii) defining the legal evidence on ethnic equality, ethnic autonomy and political participation of ethnic minorities, (iii) conducting local constructions in ethnic areas, (iv) mixing ethnic policies with boundary policies, (v) invigorating ethnic assimilation. During this period, it is clear that the local people’s political and ethnic representation was steadily eroded. They now had less control over their internal affairs. The power had been moved from the ethnic regions to the central government.

The GRP’s priority on ethnic groups was in the Mongolian and Tibetan areas. In this period, great change has taken place in the ethnic concept, from Han chauvinism to Sun Yat-sen’s official recognition of five ethnic groups of Han, Man, Mongolian, Hui and Tibetan, and then to grand Chinese nations, and to the concept of a Chinese nation with all the different ethnic groups. These thoughts and ideas made a great impact on the GRP’s ethnic policies at the boundary areas of China. They reflect the conceptual evolution from a small ethnic group to Chinese nations and to a Grand nation, from ethnic discrimination to ethnic equality (C. Peng, 2012; C. Yan, et al., 2012).

In the Republican Period, as one of the civil political powers, the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) ideas and thoughts on dealing with ethnic relations and developing ethnic policies cannot be ignored. In the resolution and declaration of its second national conference in 1922,

the CCP proposed “building democratic autonomous *bang* (commonwealth, 邦), and building federate nations in ethnic minority areas respectively” (C. Zeng, 2007). The third CCP national conference in 1923 proposed “a preliminary regime system of local ethnic self-determination”. However, in the CCP’s Sixth National Conference of the six plenary session in 1938, Mao proposed a “theory on implementation of ethnic regional autonomy of ethnic minority groups, ethnic minorities managing their own affairs and establishing a united country with Han people” (Hu, 2008). Y. Zhang (2010) thinks that the CCP’s early proposal on autonomous *bang*, federate nations and ethnic self-determinations are a copy of the Soviet Union model. And according to Y. Zhang, the proposal of ethnic regional autonomy is an exemplar to study and utilise Marx-Leninism and an indication that the CCP began to conduct domestic affairs independently. One symbol of successful independent transaction of the CCP in domestic affairs is the establishment of Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region in 1947, before the founding of the People’s Republic in 1949.

3.3 Local governance system in ethnic areas in contemporary China

3.3.1 Ethnic Regional Autonomy System

China introduced the Ethnic Regional Autonomous System (ERAS) in 1949 in its ethnic minority dominated areas. This system includes three levels: ethnic autonomous region (provincial-level), ethnic autonomous prefecture and ethnic autonomous county. There are five ethnic autonomous regions, 30 ethnic autonomous prefectures and 120 ethnic autonomous counties in China. There are autonomous units under the jurisdiction of large non-autonomous areas. For example, Guizhou is not an autonomous province, but there are three ethnic autonomous prefectures under its jurisdiction. Leishan is one of the 16 counties under the jurisdiction of Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture (the Prefecture). Therefore, Leishan is not autonomous county, but the Prefecture is an autonomous prefecture. The resources from the central and provincial governments are transferred to the Prefecture. Then they are transferred by the Prefecture to its 16 counties, including Leishan. Therefore, the local people in Leishan may feel that they have less autonomy and fewer resources are delivered to their county.

The ERAS is easily misunderstood as either ethnic autonomy or regional autonomy without discussion on its institutional design and legislative techniques. Yong Zhou (2009) argues that there exist tensions between ethnic autonomy and regional autonomy, and between and among ethnic groups in the ERAS. To solve these tensions, he suggests two alternatives: redefining “the territory of the autonomous areas” and “strengthening the functions of ethnic autonomy, and for achieving these purposes, there is a need for the establishment of a “rights protection mechanism”, and a “functional and cultural autonomy” (Y. Zhou, p. 348).

Heberer (2000) believes that all multi-ethnic nations including China suffer increasing ethnic conflicts, which form a main factor in domestic political instability. Therefore, more effective local governance approaches related to ethnic autonomy need to be discussed to address those issues. Shih (2004) analyses the meaning of Chinese multi-ethnic autonomy at county level and he argues that the purpose of Chinese ethnic policy is for national unity. However, multiple ethnicity may conflict with the aim of ethnic autonomy, because it “strips ethnicity of its ability to mobilise people into action” and “multi-ethnicity cannot effectively represent any specific ethnicity, nor does it serve as an incentive for cadres to develop agencies for social change” (Shih, 2004, p. 1).

Yuqin Zhou (2009) argues that the improvement of the ERAS is one of the ways to promote the political development of ethnic groups in China. She concludes that the value objectives of this political development are in six areas: (i) adhering to and safeguarding the unification of the nation and all ethnic groups, (ii) perfecting the subnational political system based on ERAS in the framework of current political institution, (iii) realising the joint control and administration of the state power of all ethnic groups, (iv) administering domestic affairs by ethnic groups themselves, (v) ensuring all ethnic minorities equally living together with Han Chinese who have comparatively developed economy and cultures, and (vi) achieving common prosperity and development of all ethnic groups in China.

Ren and Sheng (2010) have done a comparative study on the regional autonomy power in China and local self-governance power in the international community. They think that the two powers are different because the local self-governance system in the international community is based on local decentralisation, which, however, is not a necessity under the ERAS in China. They believe that in the power relations between the central and the autonomous regions, the central holds a decisive and predominant position. However, in a locality where the ethnic minority is the major group (such as in Leishan county where 82.4%

of its population is Miao¹⁶), it is arguable whether formal autonomy is necessary, as Stoker (2011, p. 25) illustrates:

Identity politics requires only weak formal autonomy to work, since it is in local government's relationship with citizens about closeness to the locality rather than a capacity to make a difference... In a less competitive environment or more controlled environment, such as in China, maybe that formal autonomy may not be necessary.

In addition, the consideration for political stability constrains the expansion of minority autonomy as Sautman (1999, p. 300) points out:

The other principal obstacle to expanded minority autonomy and other rights is the lack of confidence in the political stability of minority areas that results from the threat of ethnic separatism, support for which varies significantly from region to region. Assimilationism and the uncertainty of national leaders about the loyalties of minorities (including minority elites) are thoroughly imbricated and mutually reinforcing.

As a form of local governance, the ERAS grant some political power to the local people in order to maintain political stability in ethnic areas. However, it also restricts the autonomy of the autonomous areas as the central has the decisive and dominant position. Therefore, there is a large space to improve the standard of the ERAS in order to promote the political development of the ethnic groups who are under the jurisdiction of the ERAS.

3.3.2 County governmental authorities

County governmental authorities in China are generally composed of four leading bodies (*sidabanzi*, 四大班子). They are: Party Committee of the County (PCC), County People's Congress (CPC), County People's Government (CPG) and County People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). Of all of them, the PCC is the most crucial power centre and it plays the most significant role in policy and decision-making. Constitutionally, the CPC is the organ of state power, and the CPG, the executive body. In this research, the relations of the three are discussed.

¹⁶ The population of Leishan County is 165, 640 and Miao people account for 82.4%, according to the Family Planning Bureau of Leishan (2014). See Table 13 in Chapter Five.

Traditionally, the three governmental authorities maintain independent from each other in their respective work. However, many case studies show that the new Party-executive-legislative relations are cooperative and symbiotic (Y. N. Cho, 2009), such as the making of a development strategy in a locality. Compared with the PCC and the CPG, the CPC is less powerful. In order to conquer the difficulties caused by such a weak political position and to achieve its organisational development and power expansion, the CPC has adopted two strategies: “gaining the Party support and cooperating with governments” (Y. N. Cho, 2009, pp. 44-45).

3.3.3 The Party and Party Committee of the County

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP or the Party) has consistently been the largest ruling party since the founding of the People’s Republic of China in 1949. Brødsgaard & Zheng (2004) discuss the roles of the Party in the governance of China. They describe the Party’s status quo as the following:

Despite radical changes to other communist parties in other parts of the world, the CCP continues to dominate both China’s domestic development and external affairs. The latest version of the Party Constitution states that the CCP is the vanguard of not only the working class, but also the Chinese people and the Chinese nation. For better or worse, the impact of any major changes over the CCP will go beyond China’s national boundaries (Brødsgaard & Zheng, 2004, p. 1).

One of the main approaches for the Party to maintain its legitimacy lies in its “mass line”, which emphasises “consultation with the masses by the cadres, while reserving decisions to the cadres” (Eldersveld & Shen, 2001, p. 93). However, without democracy, “rationalization and bureaucratisation has often isolated the Party from the masses” (Brødsgaard & Zheng, 2004). In the research of local governance in China, it is impossible not to discuss the role of the Party Committee of County (PCC) and its secretaries, especially in the ethnic minority dominated areas, because major economic and social decisions such as industrial, agricultural and ethnic cultural development strategies in a county are actually decided by the PCC and its (vice) secretaries (Zhong, 2003). The emphasis of the power of the Party’s leadership at various governmental levels gives its secretaries great power which may be abused by the local Party chiefs, who can effectively build “independent kingdoms that give them the

latitude to disobey higher administrative authorities or to drag their feet in carrying out the centre's policies, particularly in the absence of an effective monitoring system" (Zhong, 2003, pp. 61-62).

Many Chinese people believe that absolute power leads to absolute corruption. This idea originates from Acton (1948, p. 364): "all power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely". In the continuous anti-corruption activity since President Xi's official reign in 2013, many of the corruption cases are related to Party secretaries. One case in 2014 in China reveals the severe corruptive activities of Zhenjian Liu, the previous Party secretary of Juye County in Shandong province. Of the 18 Party secretaries of its 18 townships, 17 township Party secretaries were found to have bribed Liu in order to be upgraded or moved to a more important position, only one maintaining his innocence. Many local cadres believe that this case of "collective corruption" (Gong, 2002) is a "catastrophe to the political environment" of Juye County. The Party's authority and public trust are challenged by series of corruptions like the Juye case.

3.3.4 The County People's Government

Local governance is demonstrated as governing a locality by government from the historical Chinese perspectives. The most fundamental administrative unit in China is the county (*xian*, 县). The county was founded in the Western Zhou period (1112-771 B.C.) and institutionalised as a standardised local government unit nationwide in the Qin Dynasty (221-206 B.C.). The county has been playing an essential role in Chinese local governance since its founding. With the changes of dynasties, the county survived without being interrupted as a governmental organ and unit at the grassroots level. It keeps its "endurance and continuity in both structure and function" (Zhong, 2003, p. 45). Some historical central governments in China such as the Qing government in the late Qing dynasty (1636-1912) and the Guomindang government (1925-1948) in the Republican period attempted to apply "an alternative democratic way of governance at local levels" (Zhong, 2003, p. 46).

None of these democratic reforms was successful due to "the reluctance of the central government to adopt a genuine and completely democratic system for fear of losing control over local governments (Zhong, 2003, p. 46). The efforts of local governance relating to the reforms of local government in China have experienced three stages of reforms, with varied focuses in each: marketisation (1979-92), fiscal reform (1993-98), and management and

administrative reform (1998-present) (Caulfield, 2006). Local government which is nationally organised by the state may not have broad representativeness for local interest groups as what an elected local government has, as Andrew and Goldsmith (1998, p. 112) argue:

In terms of representativeness, elected local government helps to ensure that all strands of opinion are represented in government at some level, as well as widening the opportunities for political participation; elected local government is likely to include more women, members of ethnic minorities, and part-time or unskilled workers elected to public office than is the case with national governments.

Chinese local governments are organised by the Party rather than elected by the constituents. The heads of local governments and their bureaux are appointed procedurally by the People's Congresses in accordance with the Party's arrangement. There are diverse authorities in the local governance system at county level. County government and its policies are seldom studied as "independent subject" (Zhong, 2003, p. 5) in the research of Chinese local governance. One model for studying Chinese local government is the "totalitarian model", which became popular in the Cold War period due to the work of Friedrich and Brzezinski (1965). In the reform period, this model of totalitarianism has been proven to be out of date to explain central-local relations and to address issues related to local governance.

Researchers use some other terminologies such as "fragmented authoritarianism" (Lieberthal & Lampton, 1992, pp. 1-12) and "sporadic authoritarianism" (Lieberthal & Oksenberg, 1988, pp. 131-168) to describe the governance system in China. These various forms of authoritarianism cannot explain why the central planning is weakened and its capability of mobilisation is decreased at the local level. In addition, they also fail to depict that "the areas in which the central government is ineffective and areas in which the central government remains effective in controlling local governments and mobilising them for policy support and policy implementation" (Zhong, 2003, p. 6).

This thesis focuses on the research of People's Congresses (PCs) and their deputies. Therefore, there is a need to give more detailed explanation to County People's Congresses (CPCs) and the roles of their deputies in Section 3.4.

3.4. The People's Congresses

The People's Congress System in China includes five levels: the National People's Congress (NPC), the provincial (regional) People's Congress, the prefectural People's Congress, the county and township People's Congresses. The latter four levels are generally called the Local People's Congresses (LPCs). People's Congresses (PC) fulfil four functions: legislation, supervision, representation, and regime maintenance" (Y. N. Cho, 2009, p. 42).

J. He (2011) analyses the theoretical evolution in the research on the institution of Chinese People's Congresses and he summarises that this process has experienced three stages: The Soviet model (1949-1979), the model of democratisation (1979-1990) and the model of governance (1990-present). O'Brien (1989, p. 792) argues that even in some bold power execution, NPC supports moderate reform, rather than an irrational reform and its role is carved out as "a rationaliser and legaliser of policy" which balances "a political system whose motive forces have long been imbalance and disequilibrium". This demonstrates that as a new actor, PCs at all levels appear not as a "challenger", but as a "collaborator" in the Chinese political arena (J. He, 2011, p. 190). Therefore, in a governance model, LPCs are looked upon as one of the plural "partners in governance providing a venue for interested parties to work out disagreements" (K. J. O'Brien, 2009, p. 131). So the functions of LPCs are regarded as maintaining and supporting, rather than challenging the government.

3.4.1 Roles of the People's Congresses

The roles of Chinese People's Congresses are well-known as rubber-stamp institutions¹⁷ due to its "limitations and superficial power" (Zhong, 2003, p. 157), even if these roles are unique and demand various activities. The role of Chinese People's Congresses as legislative institutions was rediscovered (K. J. O'Brien, 1994b) in the 1980s and the People's Congresses have been performing some "concrete functions" (Chao, 2004, p. 116) since then. As one of the players in the local governance system, these concrete functions of LPCs may be categorised as four roles in terms of "identity expression, economic development, social welfare and community governance" (Stoker, 2011, p. 23). This identity expression has

¹⁷ Bond and Lou (2009, p. 72) explain the traditional understanding of rubber-stamps which mean that the People's Congresses "do not allow substantial political debates, they do not provide a meaningful connection between the citizens and the state, and they do not exercise an independent role in overseeing the activities of the executive and judicial institutions in China".

extensive connotations which suggest political and ethnic representation of ethnic groups in China's ethnic areas, because it emphasises not only the autonomy of the People's Congresses, but also the autonomy of the ethnic regions.

To better understand Chinese LPCs, there is a need to know some ideas in the research on NPC. O'Brien (1989) argues that NPC has played the active role in legislation, supervision, representation and regime support since its institutional reform. Xia (1998) shares the similar viewpoint to say that NPC has expanded its functions and power in the two decades from 1978-1998 with the change of the Chinese political environment. He argues that NPC adopts the strategy *mohe* (cooperation through friction, 磨合) to reinforce its position and power. This mixture of harmony and friction was a peculiar strategy to connect NPC with other power players to facilitate NPC's institutionalisation through the key roles of its committees. So the organisational reforms in NPC were expanded with a rational division of labour (K.J. O'Brien, 1988).

Some scholars who discuss the roles of LPCs at different levels in China have noted some patterns. MacFarquhar (1998) investigated the Provincial People's Congress (PPC) and he acknowledged that the major function of the PPC is overseeing their provincial government. Therefore, without significant mechanical or systemic change, PPCs seem unlikely to build up a legislative role which is present in the NPC. The roles of LPCs have, however, changed from that of "rubber stamps" to "iron stamps" in China through congress reforms (Young Nam Cho, 2002). As a result, the LPCs, along with the Party and the local governments have become significant political actors in local politics, even though LPCs may not be as influential as the other two governmental bodies (Young Nam Cho, 2002).

Constitutionally, the County People's Congress is designed to play more of an oversight role regarding the CPGs. In reality, as Zhong (2003, p. 153) states, the LPCs at county and township levels are still "treated as facades and rubber-stamping bodies that do not have much supervisory power over county and township governments due to their lack of real power, authority, autonomy and independence". Therefore, it is unrealistic for LPCs to "pursue only autonomy" by confronting the Party and the government, because LPCs are "vulnerable to the encroachment" of the established powers (Young Nam Cho, 2002, p. 739) due to their lower political status.

3.4.2 Roles of the deputies in the People's Congresses

The deputies of County People's Congresses (CPCs) are directly elected by constituents in accordance with the Law of Election. These elections are "semi-competitive", because the constituents are allowed to vote for "alternative candidates" (T. Shi, 2000, p. 20) pre-selected by the Party and the People's Congresses. In most cases, there are more candidates than the seats. In his research on rural China, O'Brien (1994a) studied the roles of the Chinese People's Congress deputies at national and local levels. He discovered two roles of the LPCs' deputies: agents of and remonstrators to the state. There are conflicts between the two roles due to the conflicting demands and structural features. Sometimes, the deputies' roles don't reconcile with each other and they need to develop strategies to cooperate with government and their constituents.

In his research, O'Brien (1996, p. 35) derived the concept "rightful resistance". It means that discontented villagers "increasingly cite laws, regulations, and other authoritative communications when challenging all sorts of cadre malfeasance, particularly misconduct related to economic appropriation and autocratic work style" (K. J. O'Brien, 1996, p. 36). The rightful resisters "cite People's Congresses as a model for turning villagers' representative assemblies into policy-making bodies" at the grassroots level in China (K. J. O'Brien, 1996, p. 54). This approach, based on the concept of rightful resistance "emphasises economic and political reform as having facilitated the ability of villagers to use official policies and values to confront leaders when grievances develop, while acknowledging that popular participation still occurs largely as a response to policies from above" (Jennings, 1997, p. 370) .

Conventionally, the Party, the People's Congress and the government are primary stakeholders of the governance in China. The Party Central Committee (2013) has pointed out that the general target of completely deepening reforms in China is improving and developing a socialist system with Chinese characteristics, and promoting the modernisation of the governance system and governance ability of the state. This emphasises that the government, enterprises, social organisations and citizens are multi-stakeholders of governance. This model of governance with multi-stakeholders implies that the deputies of People's Congresses can play more roles as they are expected to represent the interests of their constituents, some of whom may be rightful resisters. The deputies are important participants in the management of public affairs of the state and the roles they play in this

process cannot be replaced (Jianguo Chen, 2014), because the coordination of all the stakeholders is significant to realise such governance.

3.4.3 Representative structure and representation of the deputies in the People's Congresses

Deputies in the Chinese People's Congresses are selected to satisfy three standards: "breadth" (*guangfanxing*, 广泛性), "progressiveness" (*xianjingxing*, 先进性) and "representativeness" (*daibiaoxing*, 代表性) (K. J. O'Brien, 1994a, p. 364; K. J. O'Brien & Li, 1993, p. 21). The term "representative structure" is a commonly-used notion in the Chinese People's Congresses at different levels, and yet it is a concept difficult to define precisely. One definition of representative structure is that it means the classes¹⁸ that the deputies represent and the proportion of such classes in a People's Congress.

Therefore, the representative structure of the deputies was designed to possess three features: "universality" (*pubianxing*, 普遍性) or breadth (*guangfanxing*, 广泛性), "national polity" (*guotixing*, 国体性) at local level and "reasonableness" (*helixing*, 合理性) (Huimin Zhang, 2006, pp. 61-63). Representative structure is one significant part of the representation of the deputies in the Chinese People's Congresses and it reflects the degree of socio-economic development, the division of social classes and the requirement of the "harmonious development" (*hexie fazhan*, 和谐发展) of society (Ni, 2014, p. 15). The representation of deputies is generally believed to include two factors: the "all sidedness"¹⁹ (*quanmian chengdu*, 全面程度) of the people that deputies represent and the "efficiency" when deputies play their roles (X. Huang & Zhu, 2006, p. 34).

In practice, the representative structure produces quality issues of the deputies and it directly results in the lack of appropriate representation (X. Liu, 2011). These quality issues may influence the political and ethnic representation of the deputies. The broad use of this term reflects the importance of the structural issue of the congressional deputies in China, though the traditional division of representative structure doesn't match the change in demographic

¹⁸ The classes in a traditional context in China cover workers, farmers, intellectual, cadres, PLA serviceman, democratic parties and non-party members.

¹⁹ X. Huang and Zhu (2006) argues that 'all sidedness' requires deputies being elected from the people, and the people can autonomously select their own deputies who can play their role in the People's Congresses. All sidedness, as one aspect of improving the deputies' representation (the other aspect is the effectiveness of deputies in playing their roles) can guarantee that the people from all different social classes have their own deputies. Therefore, various social interests and complaints can be reflected through the intervention (*jieru*, 介入) of their deputies in the process of policy-making.

and social structures—the appearance of new classes²⁰. Ni (2014, p. 15) thinks that representative structure “is a significant content of the representation of the deputies in the People’s Congresses; and it reveals the degree of socio-economic development, the division of social classes and the desire for a harmonious social development”. Therefore, according to Jieni Guo (2010) and Ni (2014), the representative structure of the deputies needs to adopt to the changes in the structure of society.

3.5 Local governance and democratisation in China

Along with the development of the practice of local governance in China, many scholars focus their research on issues related to local governance such as the reforms of local government, democratic political development at grassroots level and civic and social organisations. B. Sun (2004) emphasises the basic theory of local governance and introduces the overall theoretical foundation, background and dynamics, targets, achievements and operations of local governance in China. With a deeper research, (K. Yu, 2000) focuses on multi-level structures of governance (*duoceng zhili jigou*, 多层治理结构) and the transformation of governance since China’s reform and opening-up in the late 1970s. Xie (1998), and (X. Yang & Lai, 2009) analyse the transformation of local governance through an institutional lens. These scholars share the view that the reform of the Chinese local government system turns local governance in the direction of democratisation and rationalisation. Therefore, such “major political reforms at local level” (Eldersveld & Shen, 2001, p. 1) empower local farmers and villagers to play more roles in the governance and development of their areas.

(B. He, 2003) argues that the complex Chinese practice of governance is a mixed regime in which totalitarian, authoritarian and democratic elements coexist and have their adherents in the institutions at both national and local levels. Therefore, in this mixed governance regime, “totalitarian elements are likely to decrease, authoritarian elements will continue to dominate,

²⁰ The change of the social structure since the opening-up and reform in 1978 in China is also a process of division between the state and the society. Before 1978, the state controlled and monopolised almost all important resources. In that period, there wasn’t a relatively independent society in China. However, along with the reform of economic system, “free flowing resources” and “free spaces for activities” (*ziyou huodong kongjian*, 自由活动空间) have been appearing; the market and society began to become relatively independent sources which provide resources and opportunities. Under such circumstances, a relatively independent society began to grow, which is featured by the shaping-up of independent social power and the growth of non-government organisations (NGOs) (X. Huang & Zhu, 2006, p. 34).

and democratic elements are likely to increase” (B. He, 2003, p. 314). The reason why B. He believes that the democratic elements have increased in China lies in his belief that Chinese local governance is a well-established social administrative system which involves a partnership among local governments, market economy and social organisations. In this system, self-governance, elections and democratic participation in both urban and rural areas are involved.

In contrast, (X. Yang, 2008) argues that China hasn't yet formed a stable governance structure by the triangle of state, market and civil society at the local level from the angle of systematic structure. The reform of local governance depends to a large degree on the reform of local government. According to (Yin, 2011), the Chinese government holds great advantages which limit the development of market and civil society as well as the execution of their roles. Therefore, Chinese local governments may have a weak idea about community participation in local governance and may have no idea of decentralisation. The results are that self-governance organisations at the grassroots level in China may become “institutionalised”, which produces “function-cross and confusion” (Yin, 2011, p. 80).

So there is a need for the local government to understand what good governance is. On one hand, good governance is concerned with building the capability of local governments to act as participatory, responsive and accountable institutions which can address the concerns and needs of all citizens (B. He, 2003). On the other hand, good governance is concerned with “the strengthening of grassroots democracy and the empowerment of citizens, communities and organisations such as community-based organisations (CBOs) and NGOs, to participate as equal partners in local governance and local development processes” (B. He, 2003, p. 293). In order to achieve such good governance, K. Yu (2002) gives a set of assessment criteria to measure it: legitimacy, transparency, accountability, the rule of law, responsiveness, effectiveness, order and stability. This is because good governance “ensures that people have sufficient power and rights to participate in elections, decision-making and the supervision of a government” (K. Yu, 2002, p. 196).

3.5.1 Central-local relations in China

China is a highly-centralised country with powerful central government authorities. Since the China Communist Party (the Party) established its regime in 1949, a highly centralised state administrative system has formed in China, generally referred to as a party-state system.

According J. Yan, this central planning system caused not only the waste of resources and low efficiency, but also limited greatly the enthusiasm and autonomy of society at the local level (J. Yan, 2015). The top-down control system created a governance model that incentivises lower-level governments and local officials to be responsible and responsive to the higher hierarchy, but not to the lower levels of the hierarchy and local communities (M. Lin, 2011). Policies of centralised governance have continued to affect local governance practices even after economic and fiscal decentralisation reforms initiated in 1978. Top-down policies have created tendencies in the local governments of waiting for, depending on, and soliciting development projects from the central government. This has led the central government over the last 15 years to consider it necessary to move towards further decentralisation.

However, the recent decentralisation policies have also led to a certain fragmentation of local governments and local governments can now sometimes be criticised for going after self-interests and refusing the acceptance of policies by central government (X. Xu, 2016). Therefore, C. Xu and H. Wang (2013) suggest a development model based on a mixed system of centralisation and decentralisation while recognising there are conflicting dynamics between the central and the local governments in China. Central-local relations are essential for large countries and for developmentalists, because they are related to policy-making at the central level and implementation at the local level, as (L. C. Li, 2010, p. 177) points out:

Central–local relations are a matter of great importance to developmentalists because they highlight an intriguing puzzle in public administration especially in large states: How policies decided at higher echelons of the formal system can possibly be implemented by the multitude of intermediary and local actors across the system.

Central-local relations are problematic in China for both economic and political reasons (Y. Huang, 1996) and so “conflicts between national and local interests, and between central and local officials have entered the official and public discourse in China since the 1950s to a larger extent than conflicts between the Party and various parts of society” (L. C. Li, 2010, p. 187). The conflicts between the centralised and the local decentralised powers have weakened local ability of self-governance and local creativity (Yongjun Wang, 2014)²¹. As a

²¹ Yongjun Wang (2014) recognises three challenges in county-level governance: transformation of role, effective decentralisation and integration of (county-level) bureaus. He thinks that the government needs to transform from a development-oriented to a service-oriented government. In the long-term, the government

result, “tensions remain strife and policy implementation failures abundant” (L. C. Li, 2010, p. 187). Therefore, the essential challenge is how to guarantee that local governments can “gain policy autonomy that allows them to govern responsibly” in systems with strong centralised parties (E. Willis, et al., 1999, p. 48).

Local governance is looked upon by Yin (2011) as an intrinsic demand of a locality which can enlarge citizen political participation and promote democracy at the grassroots level. He argues that the solution to local governance lies in longitudinal decentralisation, multi-central governance structure, citizen participation and the seeking of cooperation between government and society. Self-governance requires the government to decentralise its power, reshape and reconstruct its relationships with society. To achieve such a purpose, the state and the local communities should intertwine with each other through an embedded autonomy (Y. He, 2009). This allows local governance to remain embedded in its national environment. However, as Y. He (2009) points out the key is how to choose proper approaches of national embeddedness and local anti-embeddedness for the goal of good governance, because embedded autonomy shifts central-local relations from bureaucratic hierarchy to communication and cooperation and thus achieves a positive-sum game.

3.5.2 Local governance and democratic elections at grassroots level

China’s decentralisation is demonstrated in the reform of its People’s Congresses (K.J. O’Brien, 1988). Although in general, the institutional environment in China is not conducive to democracy, direct election at grassroots level began in China in the mid-1980s. This provided communities and villagers with more opportunities to participate in local governance. Direct election at grassroots level has reshaped the local political and economic landscape (X. Zhang, Fan, Zhang, & Huang, 2004). It has enhanced local governments’ accountability and thus plays a positive role in promoting grassroots democracy (S. Wang & Yao, 2007). However, good governance needs not only “periodic competitive elections but

at the county level provides 70% of public services for 70% of Chinese people. He believes that private (civil) sectors in many jurisdictions under county governments have been greatly developed. Their abilities of correction and capital investment have been greatly improved. So the role that the grassroots-level governments play to lead development becomes out dated. Secondly, he thinks that the power should be decentralised to the county from Ministries (in the central government) and departments (in province). Thirdly, he suggests a rational distribution of governmental functions among bureaus and the effectiveness of county-level governance is highly dependent on the integration of bureaus.

also supporting institutions that provide oversight and a check on the public-office holders” (Su & Yang, 2007, p. 275).

Manion (2000) studied the direct elections in China and discovered that the electoral mechanisms are designed to align voter preferences with those of the Party Committees. Ordinary voters and the deputies of LPCs can choose candidates in elections at the township level, but these choices are normally constrained by the Party’s pre-selection of candidates designated for positions of leadership. Therefore, direct election at grassroots level in rural China is a competition without parties (Landry, Davis, & Wang, 2010). However, the “villagers’ responses to the incentives of greater competition make incumbents frequently lose elections and that being allowed to choose between multiple candidates drives the perception of electoral fairness” (Landry, et al., 2010, p. 781).

Guo (2001) explores the institutional approach (*zhidu tujing*, 制度途径) to address the change of relations between the LPC deputies and their constituents. He argues that with the acceleration of social transformation in China, the electorate has increased political consciousness, the electorate’s interests have divided and the electorate structure has become complex. Those changes bring new challenges to the relations between the LPC deputies and their constituents. Therefore, Guo suggests expanding direct elections from the county level to the prefectural level. Guo’s research raises another issue — inner-party democracy. (Fewsmith, 2010) introduces two types of electoral democracy as inner-party democracy: “public recommendation, public election” (*gongtui gongxuan*, 公推公选) and “public recommendation, direct election” (*gongtui zhixuan*, 公推直选)²² (p. 4). He thinks that these inner-Party elections can be competitive. Therefore, it is

not an unreasonable way for an authoritarian party, concerned with corruption, social tension, and other such issues, to try to develop better mechanisms for monitoring its local agents, expanding the pool of potential officials, and giving

²² According to Fewsmith (2010), in the model of “public recommendation, direct election”, “the ‘electoral group’ (*xuanjurentuan*, 选举人团)—those eligible to vote in the election of cadres—is expanded from just the Party secretary’s conference (or Party committee for the record) to include five to ten county Party and government cadres, all representatives to the township People’s Congress, all members of the township Party and government, the primary village cadres (the Party secretary, the village head, and the village accountant), and some representatives of the villagers. Altogether this electoral group usually numbers 200–300, though sometimes it reaches as many as 3,000 people, and although this model expands the scope of those participating in the election, it is not a popular election; only those in the Party and government departments, or those very close to them, can become members of the electoral group” (p. 4). The model of “public recommendation, direct election” “is considerably more democratic in that all Party members of a given locale vote in an assembly. Though it has been touted recently, it is more controversial and has been criticised for violating the principle of the “party controlling the cadres” (p. 5).

Party members a greater stake in the management of the Party (Fewsmith, 2010, p. 9).

3.5.3 Local governance and elite capture

To achieve good governance at the local level in China, “the challenge is not only democratic participation but also power sharing between the appointed Party secretary and the elected executive officials” (X. Zhang, et al., 2004, p. 2869). The decentralisation reform in China grants more power of non-public functions to local government authorities such as investment approval and entry of non-state firm (J. Y. Lin, Tao, & Liu, 2006). The local Party leader and the head of local government have more powers to make the strategies of their local development. In addition, fiscal decentralisation to Chinese local government authorities provides “local incentives to promote economic development” (Tao & Liu, 2007, p. 29). This process of decentralisation may result in elite capture if the political participation and empowerment of local people is low as Shah and Chaudhry (2004, p. 23) point out:

When civic participation in local government is low, there is a greater risk that interest groups and local elites may capture local governments and direct resources towards their own priorities rather than towards improving the provision of local public goods and poverty alleviation.

To avoid elite capture, there is a need to create a proper institutional framework for the implementation of poverty relief policy and projects. Poverty is determined by means of income and multi-dimensionality (Howard, 2008). These diverse dimensions include development projects targeted at poverty relief which are “vulnerable to elite capture at local level” (Platteau, 2004, p. 223). Elite capture links with the roles of the deputies in the County People’s Congresses because one function of the deputies is to oversee the work of government and officials. Their oversight over the officials may constrain elite capture at the grassroots level where numerous development projects are implemented.

3.6 Ethnicity, politics and cultural tourism in China

While achievements have been made in the research of local governance in China, issues still exist. For example, the expression of local governance appears frequently, but there is confusion between local governance, the governance of local government and local autonomy. Moreover, the research in recent years just focuses on Chinese subnational regions and cities where market economy and civil society are more developed. The research of local governance in ethnic and rural communities has just started in the inland, ethnic and poor areas such as in Guizhou province. The deputies play one of their dual roles which is representing the interests of communities. In order to understand the roles that the deputies play in their communities, there is a need to differentiate the types of communities

Liu (1996, pp. 193-194) identifies two types of ethnic communities: nationalistic and primordial. The collective ethnic communities in both types have a strong sense of distinctiveness. The nationalistic type of community enjoys a degree of self-governance before coming under the rule of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) such as the Tibetan community. The Miao community belongs to the primordial type according to Liu. The imperial governments before the Qing Dynasty practiced “a policy of indirect rule” (Oakes, 1997, p. 36) called the chieftain system (Section 3.2 in this chapter), rather than the Miao’s self-governance.

Ma (2009) discusses government policies in guiding ethnic identity in China and recognises two contrasting policies that govern ethnic relations in viewing ethnic groups as political entities or cultural groups. The policy based on political entities stresses “integrity, political power and territorial conservation of ethnic groups” and the policy based on cultural groups emphasises the “cultural characteristics of ethnic groups” and as a result, their political interests are attenuated (Ma, 2009, p. 202). The research of Hoddie (1998) on ethnicity favours the instrumentalist perspective, and he argues that the ethnic identity in China is not fixed and the ethnic identity shifts because:

A number of minority citizens seem to be weighing the potential costs and benefits of minority status based on current government policy. It is only during periods when government policy favours ethnic minorities that there is a substantial shift away from identity with the dominant group (Hoddie, 1998, p. 121).

Cultural tourism in the ethnic and rural areas may play such a role to increase the ethnic identity because it is promoted as a strategy to invigorate the economy in the ethnic areas by Chinese central government authorities. Following this strategy means that the ethnic areas can obtain resources and funding from central government. “Tourism makes a valuable but often under-rated contribution to freedoms in China as the Government progressively relaxed its restrictions on travel for both international visitors and domestic tourists, an opening that has been not just physical but psychological and philosophical” (Sofield & Li, 2011, p. 28). According to (H. Q. Zhang, Chong, & Ap, 1999), the roles that the Chinese government has played in tourism development can be examined as operator, regulator, investment stimulator, promoter, coordinator and educator. For example, in the county where the field research was done, the development of cultural tourism is one of the two strategies made by the Party Committee of the County (PCC) and the County People’s Government (CPG), and the other is the development of the tea industry.

In her research on the Miao ethnic tourism in Guizhou, (X. Wu, 2000) points out that cultural tourism “bridges two societies that have a significant cultural, technological, and income gap” (p. 29). In spite of this promise, the lack of a proper strategy for managing the ethnic cultural tourism makes the “disadvantaged society become a victim” (X. Wu, 2000, p. 29). Ethnic communities and their heritages are recognised by both residents and visitors as an attraction for outsiders in China. However, ethnic groups must “have an awareness and understanding of both the positive and negative impacts of tourism” (X. Wu, 2000, p. 1) in order to sustain their culture and society.

(Henderson, Teck, Ng, & Si-Rong, 2009) argue that ethnicity and its diversified cultural presentations are the major tourism assets. Cultural tourism can be a double-edged sword as it may be used by regimes for social and political control and but may also lead to over-commercialisation and the replacement of authenticity by contrived and artificial cultures. Therefore, (Henderson, et al., 2009, p. 537) call for greater empowerment for China’s ethnic groups in tourism which assumes “wider political, economic and socio-cultural changes”. Questions of how the ethnic cultural capital (Bourdieu, 2008) influences ethnic political representation and how such cultural capital can be converted into political capital still remain.

The deputies in the field research area have strong links with their traditional cultural heritages and those Miao people who are proficient in certain aspects of Miao culture have more opportunities to be elected as a deputy. Some Miao deputies are elected because they

are good practitioners of their Miao cultures such as embroidery, hosting Miao rituals, or they can speak Miao dialects very well so that they can assist in establishing good communications between different Miao branches. The deputies have the privilege to arrange and carry out certain development projects. Such political participation influences the local political environment and development intervention and projects of the central authorities. In order to discuss the political and ethnic representation of the deputies, it's necessary to explain the meaning of several core concepts in Chinese context such as consensual democracy (Section 3.7), development intervention and projects (Section 3.8) in China.

3.7 Core concepts in Chinese local context: consensual democracy, interest groups and pluralism

The two research questions for this study: the way that the deputies play their roles in representing the interests of the state towards the community and the way that the deputies play their roles in representing the interests of the community towards the state need further explanation with regard to the deputies' roles. (K. J. O'Brien, 1994a, p. 377) discusses the conflicts of the deputies' roles as agent and remonstrators and argues that:

Despite conflict, most deputies who add the remonstrator sub-role to the agent sub-role do not appear to feel excessive stress or the impossibility of fulfilling both roles, but rather perceive their special dual obligation to be a challenge that only a capable and subtle individual can meet.

Since the reign of the Party over China in 1949, the concept “consensual democracy”²³ under the Chinese political system has included electoral democracy and deliberative democracy (*xieshang minzhu*, 协商民主) (Zhou, 2007). The proper site for the former is the Chinese People's Congress and for the latter the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). The concept of consensus is “unanimity of pluralism” (*duoyuan yiti*, 多元一体) and

²³ The institutional design for the political bodies of power in China was completed at the beginning of the founding of the People's Republic of China. This design was based on the premise that China is a socialist and centralised country. In other words, the citizens in a socialist country can abandon their individual or partial interests and pick up the entire interests of all as the guidance of action. Under such framework, four political bodies have formed in China: the Party Committees, the People's Congresses, the governments and the people's political consultative conferences from the central to the local, five levels in all (central, provincial, prefectural, county and township). All political bodies participate in the management of the state affairs by consensus (democracy) under the leadership of the Party committee (centralisation). This system of democracy and centralisation characterises the nature of Chinese socialism in the political field.

“the single thought which is the prerequisite of the single view to the world” is not included in a unanimity of pluralism (C. Yu & Sun, 2011, p. 54). The features of consensual democracy include inclusiveness, pluralism (diversity), reciprocity and coexistence. So according to these features, the interests of the state and community (constituency) are believed to be supplementary to and match each other.

People who become deputies grow up and are educated in such a consensual system. Therefore, most of them may not believe that there are conflicts inherent in their dual roles or, as O'Brien (1994a) argues, that they adjust their roles to eliminate role strain. Rapid socio-economic development in China has brought about changes nationwide and although the consensual democracy may still match the changing social reality, increasingly, there are divisions between interest groups. These divisions have not yet broken through the status quo of the political system which was built under the ideal consensus democracy, but their progressive roles cannot be neglected. This means that the Local People's Congresses (LPCs) may not fully follow the intentions of their designers, because the interest groups they represent may be different from those of the Party and the government.

Different interest groups are emerging in the changing social reality in China, even without political outlets for competition. In the election of the LCPC deputies, candidates are selected by the LCPC to ensure a diversified representation of deputies. The term *representative structure* explains such diversification of representation. The officially recognised representative structure in the LCPC includes six categories: age, gender, ethnicity, Party status, education and social class. Due to this structural scheme, the representation of the LCPC deputies can be broad and they are bound to represent different interest groups once they are seconded to (*xiadao*, 下到) the constituency and/or elected.

Pluralism refers to a political philosophy. It is the “recognition and affirmation of diversity within a political body and which permits the peaceful coexistence of different interests” or it is defined as “a belief in, or commitment to, diversity or multiplicity—the existence of many things”, but it is employed more narrowly as a “theory of the distribution of political power” (Heywood, 2000, pp. 175-176). Here the “political body” can refer to the LCPC. The pluralism of the LCPC signifies three aspects, the potential “tentative institutional pluralism” (Saich, 2011, p. 29), the pluralism of representation of its deputies and that of the power relations between the LCPC, the Party Committee of the County (PCC) and the County People's Government (CPG). Institutional pluralism refers to the establishment of a developed or mature system in the LCPC which has some key factors such as the number and

quality of its deputies, the working experience and composition of its chairmen, the building of its special inner committees and the improvement of its inner regulations and procedures.

3.8 Development interventions and projects

The deputies' intervention in and restructuring of development projects as part of their roles in representing the interests of the state and/or the community is at the heart of this research. Therefore, to understand the background of these development interventions and projects, it is helpful to introduce the concept of development in the Chinese context. The development policies and projects in Chinese localities demonstrate "the development movements (reforms) of the state"²⁴ such as People's Commune Movement in the late 1950s and the "development intervention" (Zhu & Tan, 2010, p. 2). The former refers to a series of social and economic development activities, strategies and policies. The latter refers to a series of intervention activities aiming at addressing issues of some specific groups such as poor people, ethnic minority groups and women according to Zhu and Tan (2010).

The realisation of development cannot be separated from development interventions. The concept of Chinese development intervention can be explained as contrived efforts for changing the status quo of a locality in order to achieve specific development targets. According to Fu and Zuo (2009), development interventions in China include structural adjustment, development policies and projects. The principal ideas of development interventions have been adopted in China. These ideas, such as participation, empowerment, community-based development, community-driven development and rights-based development have been practiced in both the international community and China (Fu & Zuo, 2009). This provides a broader space for the realisation of a fair, just and free development process.

Development intervention is a non-linear process in the making, implementing, supervising and evaluating of development strategies, policies and project plans (Yihuan Wang & Ye, 2005). Development projects are the principal form of development interventions (Ye & Na,

²⁴ Before the policy of China's opening-up and reform in 1979, the development strategy of the state was often named as a movement, such as "the Movement of Great Leap Forward (*dayujin yudong*, 大跃进运动)" and "the People's Commune Movement" (*renmin gongshe yundong*, 人民公社运动) in the late 1950s. However, since 1979, the word "movement" is replaced by "reform", such as industrialisation reform in 1980s, marketisation reform in 1990s and the reform of state-owned enterprises and the reform of forestry rights in 2000s.

2008). According to J. Yang, Jin and Wang (2008), China have implemented a series of international and domestic development projects in order to realise the fast development of rural communities, but many of these development interventions are found to have large disparity between the planning and the real results. This non-linear process demonstrates that development interventions have extensive heterogeneity and vary in their processes and in their effect of implementation due to contextual differences in China.

Development projects are the presentation of national policies of China at the local level. They are the most common and straightforward form of development intervention. For example, preferential policies for farmers (PPFs)²⁵ are a form of development intervention in ethnic and rural areas of China. When the deputies enforce policies of the state and implement livelihood projects, they are promoting development policies and conducting development projects. The state policies such as education and industrial development are connected with their local development. The deputies argue for the recognition of livelihood projects at the grassroots level such as Minimum Subsistence Security System (MSS), These projects are looked upon as “a clear step in the direction of a modern welfare state and a shift away from a traditional approach of alms and charity for specially identified groups” (Saich, 2011, p. 23).

There are other policies and projects, such as the old age pension and New Rural Cooperative Medical Care System (NRCMCS) which play a similar role. However both these development policies and projects have a high level of complexity. The policies such as MSS may produce unfairness because the evaluation methods of who should enjoy the MSS are not transparent. These development-oriented policies and projects have created both “winners and losers” (Baogang He & Thøgersen, 2010, p. 282) in much of China.

Distinctive Miao values such as their worship of nature influence Miao people’s engagement in the local governance process. Miao people worship ecological and meteorological phenomena, ranging from plants to events such as wind and rain. These environment-based ethics of Miao people in Qiandongnan Prefecture (Long, 2013) can lead them to support economic development projects based on an harmonious development between human beings and the environment, rather than projects based on heavy industries which cause environment pollution. These cultural values inherited from ancient times affect how many Miao respond

²⁵ PPFs refer to a series of policies made by the central government of China to support the development of agriculture, improve the income and level of living of farmers and promote the sustainable development of rural areas. The PPFs are implemented in order to solve the issues relating to sannong issues (三农问题: agriculture, rural areas and farmers).

to policy choices and political participation. Leishan County's long-term development strategies for cultural tourism and tea industry – which bring no environment pollution as explained in Chapter 5, 6 and 7 – are influenced by such unique values.

3.9 An introduction to Leishan County and its People's Congress

3.9.1 Leishan County

Leishan County (See Map 1 and Map 2) lies in the Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture of Guizhou province. It has a population of 165,640 according to statistics from the non-published documents of the County's Family Planning Bureau in September 2014 and the Miao people account for 82.4% of the total population. Leishan is known as the hinterland of Miao people and the centre of Miao culture in China according to some Miao deputies. To the Leishan government, the most important work is to protect its Miao culture and architecture by means of “rescue and protection, rational utilisation and heritage and development”²⁶.

Map 1: Location of Guizhou in China



Source: http://www.chinabravo.com/chinaGuide/CityGuide_detail_1295.html (2014)

²⁶ This is from the unpublished government report on Leishan's economic and development situation in 2012 provided by the LCPC.

Some Miao villages such as Xijiang and Langde have been developed as successful Miao cultural tour destinations. Despite this, the conflicting aims of protection and development have formed conflicts in Leishan. The problems include a lack of laws on cultural protection, a shortage of general planning and authorised management institutions, and interests driven by different groups.

Map 2: Guizhou province and the location of Leishan County



Source (left): <http://www.chinatourblog.com/China-maps/China-Province-Maps/10-32.html>

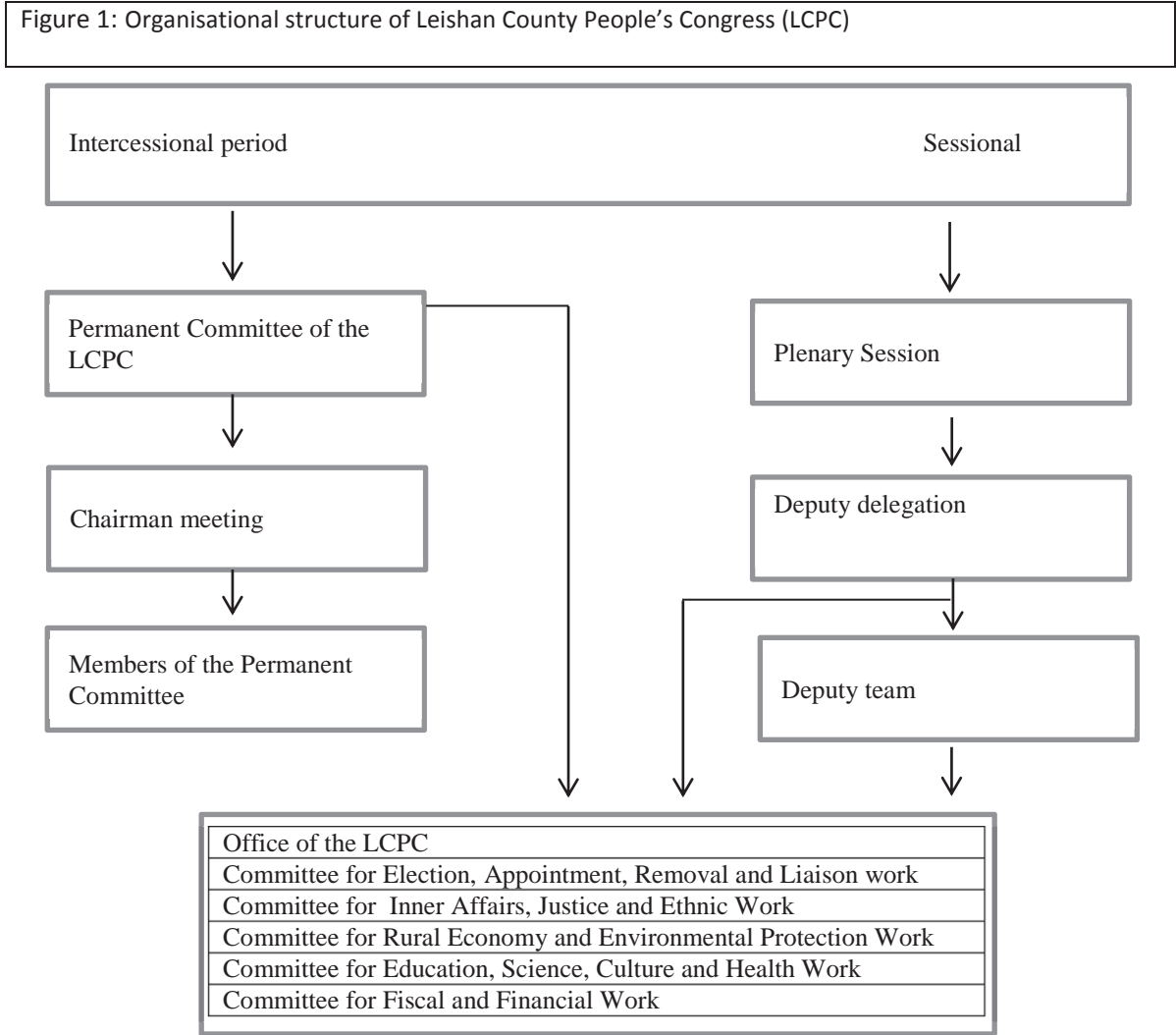
Source (right): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Qiandongnan_Miao_and_Dong_Autonomous_Prefecture

3.9.2 Leishan County People's Congress (LCPC)

Since the 1980s, the functions of the People's Congresses (PCs) have been reinforced, even though under the current unitary Party political system, it's difficult for the PCs to have autonomy like that of what Western parliaments have. In Leishan County, the LCPC plays its traditional function as a representative institution (*daibiao jigou*, 代表机构) of the People's Democratic Dictatorship²⁷ and it practices the oversight of personnel appointment and removal of roles in accordance with its constitutional duties. In practice, the LCPC is a third

²⁷ The expression "People's Democratic Dictatorship" (PDD) was proposed by Mao Zedong and it is used in the Constitution of the People's Republic of China (PRC). The nature of PDD is that the people are the host of the state and it is the political polity of PRC.

power centre besides the Party Committee of the County (PCC) and the County People’s Government (CPG). Figure 1 explains the organisational structure of the LCPC.



The Chairman of the Permanent Committee of the LCPC (Figure 1) has a powerful position in this institution. He hosts Chairman Meetings which include the chairman and another four vice chairmen, plays a centralised role in the management of its inner affairs and coordinates the relations with other political powers such as the PCC and CPG. Based on deliberation, the magistrate of the CPG is required to present a report of government work in sessions of the County People’s Congress , rather than his delegate, to avoid superficiality according to Chao (2004).

In the process of executing its functions, the special committees of the LCPC play an important role. The LCPC has one office and five special committees (Figure 1) which are responsible for their duties in accordance with the content of work required. The office is in charge of the activities of the chairman and coordinates the activities of the vice chairmen.

The Committee for Election, Appointment, Removal and Liaison work “closely controls nominations” and the organisation department of the County Party Committee “conducts political examinations” of candidates (K. J. O'Brien, 1994a, p. 363). There are another four special committees: Committee for Inner Affairs, Justice and Ethnic Work, Committee for Rural Economy and Environmental Protection Work, Committee for Education, Science, Culture and Health Work and Committee for Fiscal and Financial work. The four Committees organise deputies to solicit public opinions and to carry out investigations and research in related fields. Each committee holds a session every quarter to arrange work and to discuss development issues found in the deputies' grassroots-level investigations.

Compared with the Party Committee of the County (PCC) and the County People's Government (CPG), the LCPC has fewer staff and is a smaller organisation. The institutionalisation of the LCPC relies on the increase of more permanent staff in its special committees. Like other PCs in China, along with the process of institutionalisation, the LCPC has been in the process of professionalization by increasing its full-time staff and deputies, even though many deputies are still non-professionals (See Chapter Five). The professionalisation of PC deputies is regarded as a “conspicuous component of legislative development” (Chao, 2004, p. 120).

The Plenary Session of the LCPC is held once a year, normally before the Spring Festival of China. Deputy delegations are organised based on their constituencies. In most cases, each township has one deputy delegation. Deputies can be reorganised as deputy teams to discuss the issues in which the team members are all interested. Those issues are categorised and the deputies visit communities to do investigation and/or research. The deputies write their findings in the communities into motions and submit them to the office of the LCPC; then the LCPC send these motions to the County People's Government (CPG) for its transaction and response.

3.10 Chapter summary

This chapter has mapped the historical and contemporary local governance systems in China, in particular in its ethnic areas, from the ancient chieftain system to the current system such as Ethnic Regional Autonomous System (ERAS). It has provided a broad picture for understanding central-local relations, complex local political environments and the evolution

of Chinese local governance systems in China, where there are different stakeholders who interact with each other. Four main conclusions from this mapping are given here.

Firstly, the discussion of the local governance system with the three main local governmental authorities, the Party Committee of the County (PCC), the County People's Government (CPG) and the County People's Congress (CPC) shows that the Party dominates the local. This implies the possibility that the deputies may consider the interests of the state first and foremost when there are conflicts between the interests of the state and the community.

Secondly, the chapter provides a political and institutional framework by explaining the evolution of the roles of People's Congresses from rubber stamps to iron stamps. The direct election at grassroots level influences the roles that the deputies play in representing the interests of the state and/or the community. Their representation is also influenced by their representative structure in terms of breadth, progressiveness and representativeness.

Thirdly, this chapter has outlined issues related to some of the salient themes addressed in this thesis such as ethnicity and politics. The differentiation of ethnic groups as political entities and cultural groups demonstrates the evolution of ethnicity of ethnic groups in China's transformative society. This research focuses on the political and ethnic representation of the deputies in a Miao county in China. The discussion of ethnicity linking local governance issues with decentralisation in administrative and political fields assists in understanding the ethnic representation by the deputies. It has discussed concepts such as consensual democracy, development interventions and projects in the Chinese context.

Fourthly, this chapter provides information as to the development issues of the field research area and the organisational structure of the LCPC. This implies that the research may apply an insider's view to exploring the roles that the LCPC deputies play through examining the work of the LCPC from within. Therefore, this study can provide a unique view on how the deputies identify their political representation through their representation of the interests of the state towards the community and their ethnic representation through representing the interests of the community towards the state.

4.1 Introduction

All research requires specific methodology and appropriate methods that can answer the research questions. This chapter outlines those chosen for this study. This forms the priority of the methodological consideration in this research. The researcher discusses the methodological challenges along with an explanation on how he dealt with them. Two aspects, positionality and reflexivity are included in this discussion (Section 4.2). This discussion demonstrates that there is a separation between the researcher and participants, but there is also collaboration between them.

This is primarily a qualitative study supported by some quantitative methods, such as analysis of pairwise ranking in focus groups (Section 4.3). In explaining the methods used, this chapter also explains concepts, expressions and translation issues that arose with the fieldwork being conducted in the Chinese context (Section 4.4). Some debates on research methods are also presented (Section 4.5) and the methods of recruitment of participants are also introduced (Section 4.6). The chapter outlines and gives some personal reflections on the four chosen research methods: focus groups (Section 4.7, 4.8), semi-structured individual interviews (Section 4.9), purposive observation (Section 4.10), and document analysis (mostly sourced from government archives, Section 4.11).

The triangulation of these methods, especially between the focus groups and semi-structured individual interviews helps to mitigate potential bias in the research. In the end, the researcher draws a conclusion on the methodological considerations and research methods with an explanation of their importance and relevance for this research (Section 4.12). The triangulation of these research methods not only makes the collected data robust and reliable and but also reduces bias which may come from one single research method.

4.2 Methodological considerations

In the process of designing the two research questions and considering what research methods should be used, the researcher was confronted with methodological challenges. The research questions concern the diverse roles which the deputies of Leishan County People's Congress (LCPC) play in representing the state and/or the community. These two questions required the researcher to interview the LCPC deputies who are regarded as local elites and observe meetings and activities attended by these elites. However, the positioning of this research determines that the focus cannot be only on the LCPC and its deputies, but also on other local governmental authorities such as the Party Committee of County (PCC) and the County People's Government (CPG).

Based on the two research questions, the researcher endeavoured to seek a comprehensive understanding of the relationship or power sharing between different stakeholders through focus groups, semi-structured individual interviews, purposive observation and document analysis. The power relations among government authorities are explored through both "vertical" (*tiaotiao*, 条条) and "horizontal" (*kuaikuai*, 块块) systems (Wedeman, 2001, p. 80)²⁸. This exploration suggests a way of understanding the political and ethnic representation of the deputies in both depth and breadth under the current representative structure of these deputies. The researcher focussed on two types of deputies, ones who hold "real power" (*shiquan*, 实权)²⁹ such as incumbent officials who have resources and funding, and those who have no real power such as deputies who are farmers. Interviews with the deputies who were able to talk about diverse development issues from their point of view were worthwhile. The 39 deputies that the researcher interviewed were officials, educators and farmers. Before the interviews, the researcher solicited their collaboration with an explanation of the significance of this research in the exploration of development and local governance issues in the Miao area.

²⁸ Wedeman (2001, p. 80) explains that in order to deal with governance issues of China, the central leadership has constructed "parallel systems and is using them to monitor each other", which consist of both "horizontal and vertical systems", with the former referring to territorially based units such as the province, the county, and the latter referring to the hierarchy of local bureaux of central ministries and centrally based functional systems. The horizontal units themselves consist of parallel Party and state hierarchies that frequently share dual responsibility for administration and oversight.

²⁹ According to the interviews with the deputies in the field research, the deputies who are from bureaux with real power, such as poverty-relief bureau and finance bureau, possess more resources and they can make promises on the spot to implement some projects (Deputy 30).

The researcher also explored how development policies and projects of the state influence the political and ethnic representation of the deputies. Through the exploration of the roles of the LCPC deputies in these policies and projects, power relations between different stakeholders are evaluated and discussed in this thesis. This articulation brings forward a debate of central-local relations, ways to implement projects, and political and ethnic representation of the LCPC deputies, as the LCPC and other governmental authorities and communities quite possibly have different perspectives towards development. Some answers to the two research questions were also found by studying and analysing archives in the Local People's Congresses (LPCs) and other governmental authorities. There are challenges with regards to maintaining impartiality and objectivity while studying and interpreting those government archives such as the motions submitted by the LCPC deputies in 2013 (Table 20 in Chapter Five) and the responsive report of the government to these motions (Section 4.10 in this chapter).

From the very beginning, the researcher began to consider the challenges that he had to face methodologically. Being a mix of Han and Dong nationalities, he was aware that he may also have bias against the Miao people in the research design and analysis of his findings. Under the Chinese local context, another challenge also lies in how the researcher interprets the words and expressions that some local elites use as ambiguities may exist. Therefore, taking into account the contextualisation of the speaker in any interview can go some way towards reducing any misinterpretation of meaning that may cause bias on behalf of the researcher.

4.2.1 Positionality and reflexivity

Following on from this awareness, this section discusses the significance of being aware of researcher positionality. As this research is conducted in the unique circumstances of the Chinese ethnic and rural areas, the methodology must consider positionality and reflexivity. The consideration of positionality and reflexivity concerns the underlying ethical considerations, and the role that a liaison officer plays in facilitating the research and his/her impact on the quality of the research process.

The challenge for the researcher as both an overseas Chinese student in a Western university and a civil servant in a Chinese provincial authority must be acknowledged at the outset in order to avoid either just “the other” or just “the insider” as positions taken. Two Chinese proverbs illustrate this situation that a researcher may encounter in the field. “The other” is

interpreted as “letting things drift if they do not affect one personally” (*shibuguanji, gaogaoguaqi*; 事不关己, 高高挂起); and “the insider” is explained as “one who is in the game is blind, while a bystander sees through everything” (*pangguanzheqi, dangjuzhemi*; 旁观者清, 当局者迷) .

In addition, the researcher is aware that the views and information that the deputies presented in the interviews may not be necessarily truthful facts. It is a widely-held opinion of the public in China when a researcher interviews officials and/or deputies, their views may primarily reflect what they believe to be the institutional interests of the organisation they represent. So in this research, the responses from the interviewees might be influenced by the positionality of the deputies themselves such as their status of incumbent officials, their Party status, or whether they are seconded or elected. The researcher is aware that there are issues of positionality related to the interviewees, but trying to ascertain the truthfulness of interviewees’ comments was not possible with the chosen research method and the available time. Instead, the research focused on the examination of the process on how the deputies put up their motions.

In research, it is very crucial to consider various contexts. The researcher needs to understand that the participants are the researched, and that a researcher must have a position and his individuality influences the research process in some way (Murray & Overton, 2003). Stewart-Withers, Banks, McGregor and Meo-Sewabu (2014, p. 62) list both demographic concepts such as “gender and ethnicity” and other attributes such as “age and life history” which can influence the positionality of the researcher. Taking these aspects into account, the researcher carefully considered his positionality, to know who he is and how the local people might perceive him. In this regard, the related local officials or deputies needed to be informed of the status of the researcher. This positionality may cause bias and reflexivity is crucial to notify potential bias and “potentially facilitating understanding of both the phenomenon under study and the research process itself” (Watt, 2010, p. 17). Sultana (2007) has discussed the importance of positionality and reflexivity in international research. She thinks that

Recognising and working with multiple positionalities of researchers and research participants that are constantly negotiated is needed in creating ethical relations, which should be encouraged and embraced in undertaking challenging but rewarding field research. Attempts to institutionalise ethical frameworks are

not sufficient to address or ensure good practice in the field (Sultana, 2007, p. 383).

The deputies in this study were local elites such as Party secretaries, professional deputies, incumbent officials, educators, directors of village committees and farmers. There exists a huge gap in the literature which investigates the elite and powerful people in developing countries (R. Scheyvens, Scheyvens, & Murray, 2003). Scheyvens et al. (2003) consider that the absence of research of the elite in development studies forms a crucial challenge for this subject. They summarise some practical issues in elite research as the follows: (i) gaining access to the elite, (ii) lack of seriousness in interviews, and (iii) the participants' requirements for a copy of the final work. Those issues were foreseen before the researcher conducted his field research. Thus, knowing that he was interviewing elites in a development context provided extra challenges for the researcher.

Firstly, for gaining access to the elite, the researcher contacted the elite directly, while maintaining communication with the liaison officer to follow up the reason why a particular person was not accessible; Secondly, the researcher used the strategy of multiple communications with sincerity. For example, the researcher called one deputy for an interview. He said he was busy and could not come to the township. The researcher told the deputy that he could drive to the village where the deputy stayed, even if it took more time than expected to meet the deputy. While talking with the deputies through the phone and on the spot in the interviews, the researcher emphasised the importance of this research for making clear the role of the deputies in representing the interests of the state and/or the community, so their cooperation and care is very important.

The manners of the deputies in focus groups and semi-structured individual interviews proved that this is a workable way to solve the issue of not taking the interview seriously. The researcher didn't encounter the issue of a requirement for the copy of the final work. Some LCPC deputies who work in development organisations such as agriculture or poverty-relief bureau were interviewed. Various empirical studies show that these elites can "be frustratingly guarded and reticent about the interview process" and they need to be encouraged to "open up" (Regina Scheyvens, Scheyvens, & Murry, 2014, p. 204).

The researcher had anticipated a high degree of prepared responses by experienced interviewees who are very experienced in answering questions by reciting texts instead of giving their honest and frank opinions. He found that he did not need to worry as the

interviewees were open and candid. The style of semi-structured interview made preparation of answers difficult. The attitudes of the interviewees were cooperative, expressive and productive. The flexibility and diversity of their answers made it clear that they were not giving prepared answers.

The researcher's positionality relates inevitably to the issues of insider-outsider. As an insider, his research may be trusted and the research is easily facilitated. In particular, the researcher himself is a civil servant and who works for the Foreign Affairs Office of Guizhou province. The researcher is familiar with the Miao area because he has been involved in some international development projects as coordinator and interpreter from the Provincial Foreign Affairs Office. This includes an aid project of medical equipment and medicines by the America-based NGO "Heart to Heart International" in 1999 and 2000, and agricultural development projects sponsored by World Bank in 2000 and 2006 in Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture. When he contacted the Prefectural Government to explain his field research, even if this is his personal interest, the PG preferred to consider it as a social investigation and/or research conducted by an official from the higher governmental organisation. So in this way, the Prefectural Government suggested the LCPC facilitate this research and the researcher was introduced to the county government authorities as an official from the Prefectural Government.

In addition, the researcher is studying as PhD student in a Western university and felt that he may be considered as an outsider by the participants. The researcher experienced this hybridity when he was introduced as both an official from the PG and a PhD student from a university in New Zealand in all the focus groups and in some semi-structured individual interviews. This meant that some could see him as having some ulterior intention and block access to resources such as government archives and to local elites. In addition, the researcher has a mixed nationality as Han (his mother is a Han) and Dong (his father is a Dong). He is not a Miao. He speaks Mandarin and the Guiyang dialect, and he doesn't speak Miao or Dong. He lives in Guiyang, the capital city of Guizhou Province, rather than living in the Miao area. All these elements potentially make him liable to be treated as an outsider, rather than an insider.

This binary of being insider or outsider are more adequately seen as appearing on a "sliding scale", rather than as "binary opposites" (R. Scheyvens, et al., 2003, p. 185). So a useful approach is to make one an insider for the research purposes, while being remaining able to step outside of its boundaries. Scheyvens, Nowak and Scheyvens (2003, p. 186) discuss

positionality in elite research and they suggest one strategy: to present yourself as a “temporary insider”. Some dominant research approaches suggest that “an outside researcher can observe without being part of the research” (L. T. Smith, 1999, p. 137). However, the reflexivity implies that “the researcher understands that he is part of the social world(s) that he investigates” (Berg & Lune, 2012, p. 205). So the most important aspect is how to present the researcher himself to obtain access and information. Adjusting and maintaining a balance between being an insider and an outsider is necessary in accordance with the situation. In all cases the researcher needs to “remain flexible and learn to improvise where necessary” (Regina Scheyvens, et al., 2014, p. 207). He should not underestimate his ability in negotiating with the local elites whom he is planning to interview.

4.2.2 Ethics approvals

This research is related to personal interactions and exchanges with officials in governmental organisations and the LCPC deputies. The researcher had to consider potential ethical issues which may emerge. Ethical approval for carrying out this research in China was sought and granted from Massey University under the framework of its Code of Ethical Conduct. Despite adherence to the usual ethical principles, unpredictable ethical issues could have occurred in the process of the research. Therefore, two categories of ethical issues were considered in depth and addressed before and in the process of field research.

Firstly, the researcher sought to obtain an official approval for the field research from Leishan County People’s Congress (LCPC) and the Prefectural Government (PG). A request for approval for the research and interviews was initially sent to the Prefectural PG and it responded positively to agree to the research in Leishan County. This research focuses on the LCPC and its deputies. These deputies are the incumbent officials who work in the Party Committee of the County (PCC), the County People’s Government (CPG) and the LCPC, or who are educators and farmers who perform these duties. So an approval from a higher-ranking administration was required for both ethics approval and coordination of the field work interviews. This arrangement gave the researcher the rights to directly contact the local deputies. With the PG’s agreement, two liaison officers were designated by the LCPC to assist the researcher. The researcher advised them of the interview questions beforehand and notified them that the content of the interviews may be published. They passed this information on to the deputies who were the participants of focus groups and interviews. The

deputies consented to the use of the materials and pictures of their interviews for the researcher's PhD thesis and potential publication. Prior to the interviews, the researcher again solicited the permission of the interviewees to use the interviews for the purpose of publication.

Secondly, the researcher sought agreement and commitment for focus groups and semi-structured interviews directly from the LCPC deputies. The interviewees confirmed their agreement orally. Banks and Scheyvens (2014, p. 161) suggest that "ethics from the bottom up" have equal importance with that of the official procedures. Field research in developing countries conforms with the idea that the research process "must ensure the participants' dignity, privacy and safety, and must give back to them in some ways" (Banks & Scheyvens, 2014, p. 161). In this research, the participants received interview requests by phone from the researcher and they granted the permission for interviews. This research concerns the roles that the LCPC deputies play in promoting, intervening in and restructuring of development projects. Therefore, the deputies who are incumbent officials in the underlying government organisations such as the agricultural bureau and poverty-relief office and who are heads of township governments were informed in advance before the interviews. The issues of local development are comprehensive and this research needed to include different players. Some refused to give an interview by giving reasons, while others accepted by suggesting a meeting time and actively asking for topics so they could prepare. The participants appreciated their rights in terms of confidentiality, anonymity, informed consent and well-being.

4.2.3 Liaison officer as gatekeeper and intermediary

The role of a liaison officer is often regarded as no more than a receptionist by outsiders in the Chinese local context according to the experience of the researcher. In many circumstances, the liaison officer's role is only regarded as arranging itineraries and coordinating office affairs such as printing and copying. The liaison officer is the first person a researcher will communicate with and meet in the field. The liaison officer was arranged by the LCPC as this research was approved by the Prefectural Government (PG). He was seen as someone who can help facilitate the field research. He can also be regarded as a "third party" (R Scheyvens, et al., 2003, p. 145) who is trusted by the local authorities and officials. Brydon (2006, p. 28) considers that translators, gatekeepers and interpreters are "local

intermediaries”. In this research, the liaison officer was the local intermediary who had his own status and position, besides his role as gatekeeper.

A liaison officer is often seen by researchers as the primary gatekeeper, who plays a role in controlling “conflict with the needs and rights of the researcher and/or the researched” (R Scheyvens, et al., 2003, p. 153). In this field research, the researcher noticed that a more influential gatekeeper is often the person to whom the liaison officer reports in a specific government organisation. The requirements of this gatekeeper, along with those formal ones of governments, need to be foreseen and planned in advance by the researcher (Leslie & Storey, 2003). On doing research in China, Eklund (2011) discusses the strategies on how to manage risk by countering gatekeepers’ efforts. She believes that gatekeepers can be either fieldwork facilitators or distorters. So the researcher needs to prepare to counter a gatekeeper if s/he wants to block access to resources.

According to the researcher’s previous experience, a gatekeeper is the person whose position the researcher has to consider, which in this case, was the two liaison officers whom the researcher encountered in the field. So the researcher understood that he could not pose any requirement which went beyond the authorities of the two liaison officers, or which made them feel difficult. If that happened they would become a gatekeeper rather than a facilitator. In addition, in response to the requirements of the researcher, the liaison officer contacted different organisations, where there were various gatekeepers. It is the gatekeepers in these organisations who decide whom you can meet or not. Then, they give feedback to the liaison officer and it is often the liaison officer who tries to help to go beyond the gatekeeper and meet the requirements of the researcher.

The liaison officers were the main contact person and were sometimes the companion of the researcher during this field research. Quite often, a liaison officer is misperceived as a monitor by researchers. This mistrust may cause distrust. In this research, the liaison officers were designated by the LCPC. The role that the liaison officers played was to arrange the interviews with LCPC deputies and the researcher’s visit to local communities, to coordinate access to governmental archival investigations and sometimes, to mobilise his personal resources to offer facilitation. Most of the time, the liaison officer acted as a facilitator and helped the researcher to access different resources.

The liaison officer may have filtered the requirements that the researcher submitted, though this is not part of his responsibility. The reason that the liaison officer may have done so is

that he was worried about the refusal from influential gatekeepers. In addition, he may have distorted some requirement due to his gender, education and identity. While making full use of the convenience of the research resources from the liaison officer, his intervention may have impacted on this research. Confusing the role of the liaison officer with gatekeeper would negatively impact the research by undermining the willingness of a liaison officer to facilitate the research, rather than obstruct it. That is, they become the gatekeepers that they are perceived to be. Instead, differentiating the real role of a liaison officer created a secure environment for research.

4.3 A qualitative research supported by quantitative methods

This research used quantitative methods to support qualitative research such as pairwise ranking in focus groups and the items of each achievement and challenge quantified by points in Nvivo. The quantitative methods are “objectivist” and focus on “facts”, whereas, the qualitative methods are “constructivist” and concern “meanings” (Gray, 2004, p. 191). To become a qualitative researcher, there is a need to establish links between the literature on methodology, decisions taken during the research as well as the process of reflexivity and the evolving understanding of the complexities of qualitative research (Watt, 2010). In the qualitative aspect of this research, data management, observations and interviews were included as part of the data collection. Data management requires the addition, removal and rearrangement of documents including field notes and so on, when necessary. In addition, semi-structured interviews are conducted with the premise that interviews are not neutral tools of data gathering, but they are active interactions between the participants which lead to a negotiated, contextually based result (Fontana & Frey, 2000).

While the qualitative methods make a “close/insider” relationship between the researcher and the participants, the quantitative methods keep the relationship between the two as “distant/outsider” (Gray, 2004, p. 191). So the adaptability of quantitative methods relies on “the nature of the research questions and the information we want to answer these questions” (Overton & Diermen, 2014, p. 56). In quantitative research, the number-based data from the quantitative methods transmit the information that the reality is independent from the researcher, while the text-based data from the qualitative methods make up the truth and meaning through individual’s interactions in the real world. This research uses quantitative methods to quantify the qualitative data in focus groups (Section 4.7 in this chapter) and

semi-structured individual interviews (Section 4.9 in this chapter). Both methods supplement each other and their contrast is not clear cut sometimes (Bryman, 1999). For example, in Chapters Six and Seven, the researcher uses the qualitative data which have been quantified to explain qualitative issues which are the achievements that the deputies have made and the challenges they face in representing the interests of the state and/or the community.

4.4 Concepts, expressions and translation issues

As the field research was carried out in the hinterland of the Miao people, which lies in an inland and remote part of China's Guizhou province, a few concepts and expressions are considered too Chinese or do not translate well into English. Their confusion may lead to a misunderstanding or misinterpretation. The first one is the title for calling Miao people as a Miao nationality (*miaozu*, 苗族) or ethnic group (*zuqun*, 族群). It is very sensitive because Miao is an officially recognised nationality in China, so it is better to call them *miaozu*, rather than "Miao as a *zuqun*" or "this *zuqun* Miao". The clarification of these concepts and expressions will help integrate this ethnic development into a global context, because the fast transformation of China has produced new terminology or given the old terminology new meaning. For example, a common translation of the word "charisma" (*haozhaoli*, 号召力) means individual charm or attraction that impresses other people. In the Chinese context, this word means the power of an organisation or group of people (such as deputies) which can cause other people to follow them. And "spiritual work" (*sixiang gongzuo*, 思想工作) is a word from Marxism, meaning political consciousness raising, often for specific political objectives. Therefore, it is necessary to include an annotated glossary to explain the words as used in the Chinese local context (See Annotated Glossary in p. xi).

In addition, due to the increasing global concern of Chinese politics and the formulation and implementation of development policies and projects in China, many titles of governmental institutions and development projects are discussed such as Local People's Congresses (LPC) and Preferential Policies for Farmers (PPFs). Thus, it is also necessary for the reader to refer to the list of acronyms (See Acronyms in p. xiii) so that these abbreviated terminologies can be better understood. Finally, throughout this thesis, the researcher follows the standard procedure for the insertion of the English translations of Chinese terminology: English translation followed by pinyin Romanisation and Chinese characters in parentheses, for

instance, “decentralisation and interest-concession” (*fangquan rangi*, 放权让利) in Section 5.1 in Chapter Five. This is to assist those who are interested in Chinese politics, development and language.

4.5 Research methods

Qualitative research requires the establishment of broader links which directed the following methods being undertaken in this research: semi-structured interviews, purposive observation and document analysis. Each of these methods “reveals slightly different facets of the same symbolic reality” and the use of these methods form multiple lines of sight called “triangulation” (Berg & Lune, 2012, p. 6). This research is based on the opinions that the deputies shared in their semi-structured interviews. In this research, semi-structured interviews included focus groups and individual interviews. On one hand, the focus groups emphasised the ideas of the deputies as their own. On the other hand, individual interviews conducted in two-way dialogues and brought about opportunities for improvisational correction of misunderstanding. Therefore, the researcher needs to consider the degree of courtesy that a semi-structured interview can offer, positively and stimulatingly (K. Willis, 2006). This may reduce the disadvantages of the semi-structured interviews as limiting in revealing wider contexts, underlying factors and sensitive issues.

4.6 Recruitment of the participants for focus groups and individual interviews

After contacting and visiting the liaison officers of the LCPC in their offices with an introduction letter from his organisation, the researcher kept in touch with them. Of the two liaison officers, one was responsible for liaising with common deputies for the researcher and the other liaised with the deputies who were leaders at the county level. The researcher got the list of all deputies from the first liaison officer. Deputies’ personal details such as gender, age, ethnicity, education, category of representation, mobile numbers, are included in this list. The researcher had access to six townships from the nine in the county following the discussion with the LCPC. For each of the six townships, the researcher planned to interview six to eight deputies. They were recruited by phone from the list provided.

In the county, there is one chairman at each Township People's Congress (TPC). As a courtesy and in respect, the researcher called him and informed that he had recruited deputies from his township for both focus group and individual interview and the researcher needed his support. Among the six chairmen of TPC, five of them are the LCPC deputies and one is not. These five chairmen are also the interviewees and none of them refused to accept the researcher's invitation for individual interviews. Three of them also arranged meeting rooms for focus groups and attended them as well.

4.7 Focus groups

The focus group is widely used in qualitative research with the recognition of its advantages as being highly flexible, useful in gathering large amount of information, good for the generation of significant insights and providing a fair-minded footing between the group and the researcher. Focus group interviews in this research started with an opening question to seize the attendees' interests. The procedures included a "trained and practiced facilitator who asked a small group of individuals a series of open-ended questions" (Berg & Lune, 2012, p. 179). A focus group is "a highly efficient technique for qualitative data collection" and "natural quality controls (for example, to avoid extreme views) on data collection", and it is regarded as one of the most suitable methods for investigating motivations, decisions and priorities (Robson, 2002b, p. 284).

In this research, four focus groups were organised. Each of them was planned to have five to eight participants. The researcher believes that the LCPC deputies are open-minded and they can be interviewed in a semi-structured way. They have the capability to speak their opinions and discuss achievements and challenges in representing the interests of the state and/or the community. In this regard, the focus group method is favourable because the researcher can discover the views of the participants in ways which "are different from individual interviews by using discussion and arguments" (Bryman, 2008, p. 488).

4.7.1 The procedure of arranging focus groups

There are four focus groups arranged from four townships³⁰ agreed by the LCPC in the field research. Three focus groups were arranged in the meeting rooms of the respective Township People's Government (TPG). The fourth focus group was arranged in the meeting room of the LCPC, and it was a mixed team with three deputies from the township and three professional deputies who work in the LCPC. Each focus group had a host who presided over the focus group interview. In the townships, the host of focus group was chairman of the Township People's Congress (TPC). In the LCPC, the host was the second liaison officer for this research, who was in charge of office affairs. After a brief introduction, the researcher gave an explanation on the purpose and ethical issues of his research and the interview process. He solicited agreement for the collective interviews and the participants agreed orally. In the focus groups, the researcher adopted one participatory research method: pairwise ranking (The operation of pairwise ranking is discussed in Section 4.7.2). Each group interview lasted about two hours with tea and water served during the process, no special break being arranged. The groups were presented two research questions, each of which has two separate parts: achievements and challenges. In one focus group, each question was pairwise-ranked twice with achievements and challenges. The participants wrote their answers on the cards carefully and seriously and some of them smoked while thinking.

For answering the achievements or challenges questions, the participants were given two cards to write one answer on each. At the beginning of their writing, some deputies felt a little bit confused by the research question. For example, to the question regarding how a deputy represents interests of the state towards the community, they required the researcher to explain in detail. However, from the second research question, the participants understood clearly and less time was spent on writing. In the beginning, the researcher's assistant helped to put the cards on the wall and as the process continued, the deputies themselves put the cards on the wall and they categorised the answers by short discussions and arguments. The host kept neutral and spoke when others were showing their opinions. This experience ensured that each participant had the right to speak without interference from the host,

³⁰ In the field research, the LCPC has agreed six townships for both focus groups and individual interviews. However, only four focus groups were organised, rather than six, because the deputies in the other three townships were quite busy in the agricultural harvest season. They had different spare times but they would accept individual interviews.

avoiding influencing the independence of the answers. For example, the researcher asked one TPC chairman (Focus group 3) in the following dialogue.

The researcher: Why are you always the last one to give your suggestions and show your ideas?

The chairman: If I respond first, the opinions of other deputies would be influenced by me and this may not show the objectiveness of our opinions on your research questions.

4.7.2 Practical operation of focus groups by pairwise ranking

The researcher takes Focus Group 4 (FG4) as an example by a random selection to explain how the pairwise ranking operated in the field research. The effects are the same if the other focus groups are selected because each focus group was practiced well in the field with active participation of the deputies.

Four kinds of cards with different colours, pens and viscose glue and empty graphs were prepared in advance (Photo 1). Then the research assistant delivered the cards to all participants in FG4 one after another (Photo 2).



Photo 1: The research assistant is preparing the writing cards for FG 4 (left)

Photo 2: The research assistant is delivering the writing cards and the participants are thinking (right)

The first delivered were the yellow cards. Each participant had two yellow cards. They would write their answers to the achievements on how to represent the interests of the state, each card with one achievement. After the researcher explained the research questions, the participants began to write down (Photo 4) their answers after thinking for a while (Photos 3).



Photo 3: The participants of FG 4 keep thinking (left)
Photo 4: The participants of FG 4 keep writing (right)

After completing writing, the cards were put on the wall either by the participants themselves or by the researcher or the research assistant. There were six participants in FG4, so 12 yellow cards were pasted on the wall. Then the researcher, now serving as a facilitator, told the participants that the achievements in representing the interests of state which they have written on the yellow cards needed to be categorised into, at the most, six categories, or fewer (Photos 5 and 6). The participants had a lively discussion and reached consensus on the categorisation and rankings (Photos 7 and 8).

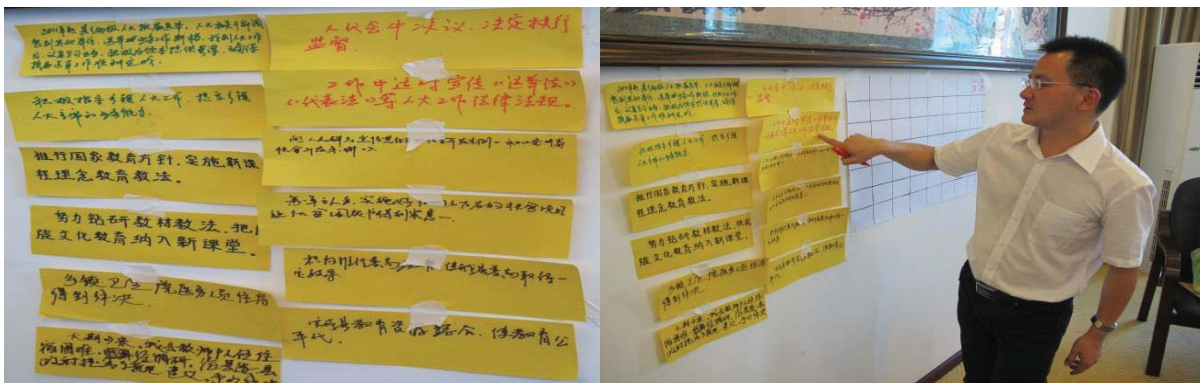


Photo 5: The achievements identified by the participants of FG 4 in representing the state (left)
Photo 6: The researcher facilitates the participants of FG 4 in categorising the achievements (right)

The researcher again, as facilitator, wrote the categorised achievements into a prepared empty graph on the wall (Photo 9). The original written achievements were summarised into higher order themes.



Photo 7: The participants of FG 4 watch the words put on the wall and smile (left)

Photo 8: The participants of FG 4 watch and read the words put on the wall (right)

For example, the achievement “improvement of education standard” is extracted and upgraded after the discussion and comments by the participants from the original four items (Photo 5 and 6): (i) “promoting the education policy of the state and implementing new teaching methods”, (ii) “actively promoting senior high school education in this county and making it reach a good result”, (iii) “teacher’s housing difficulties”, and (iv) “integrating the education resources in this county and promoting a fair education”. So are the other achievements.

Then, the participants were asked to choose one achievement from the other by pairwise ranking. For example, comparing “oversight role” to “implementation of livelihood policies”, the participants chose “oversight role” with mutual discussion and sometimes they debated in order to reach an agreement. When the pairwise ranking was completed, the diagrams for the achievements of FG4 in representing the state were formed (Photo 10).



Photo 9: The researcher writes down the items categorised by the participants in FG 4 (left)

Photo 10: The full categorised items with score and ranking in FG 4 (right)

The participants did the exercise four times: (i) achievements in representing the state, (ii) challenges in representing the state, (iii) achievements in representing the community, and (iv) challenges in representing the community. Four diagrams for FG4 were formed by this way (Diagrams 1, 2, 3 & 4).

| Diagram 1: Representing the interests of the state: Achievements in FG 4 | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------|---------|
| Achievements | Number of Achievements | | | | | | Score | Ranking |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | | |
| Oversight role ³¹ | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 1 |
| Popularising the laws ³² | | | 3 | 2 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 4 |
| Implementation of livelihood policies | | | | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 2 |
| Improvement of education standard | | | | | 5 | 4 | 1 | 4 |
| Enhancing political power at grassroots level | | | | | | 6 | 2 | 3 |
| Assured voting rights | | | | | | | 2 | 3 |

| Diagram 2: Representing the interests of the state: Challenges in FG 4 | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------|---------|
| Challenges | Number of Challenges | | | | | | Score | Ranking |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | | |
| Improvement of quality and ability of deputies | | 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 |
| Oversight role | | | 3 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 2 |
| Soliciting public opinions | | | | 4 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 2 |
| Lack of expertise and funding | | | | | 4 | 6 | 4 | 1 |
| Low political awareness of the local people | | | | | | 6 | 1 | 2 |
| Insufficient understanding of representation | | | | | | | 4 | 1 |

| Diagram 3: Representing the interests of the community: Achievements in FG 4 | | | | | | | |
|--|------------------------|---|---|---|---|-------|---------|
| Achievements | Number of Achievements | | | | | Score | Ranking |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | |
| Submitting motions, suggestions and criticisms | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 |
| Doing actual things for people | | | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| Transmitting the voice of the people | | | | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| Guiding economic development | | | | | 4 | 1 | 4 |
| Promotion of democratic politics | | | | | | 0 | × |

³¹ Oversight role means to oversee the work of yifuliangyuan (the Government, the Court and the Procuratorate, 一府两院). Oversight role is regarded as the principal role of deputies in Chinese People's Congresses at different levels according to the law. About the Procuratorate, see Section 4.10: Purposive observation in this Chapter.

³² Popularising the laws (pufa, 普法) is a commonly used term by the deputies which means activities taken by them to educate the local people awareness about legal issues.

Diagram 4: Representing the interests of the community: Challenges in FG 4

| Challenges | Number of Challenges | | | | | | Score | Ranking |
|---|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------|---------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | | |
| Lack of expertise and funding | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 1 |
| Difficulty in the implementation of motions | | | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 2 |
| Weak infrastructure in rural areas | | | | 3 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 4 |
| Low standard of farmers' know-how | | | | | 5 | 6 | 0 | × |
| Personal interests above all else | | | | | | 6 | 1 | 5 |
| Insufficient supporting policies | | | | | | | 3 | 3 |

In these diagrams and figures in this chapter and the following chapters, **Score** refers to the relative value in terms of importance assigned to items by the deputies, 5 being the highest and 1 being the lowest; **Ranking** refers to the ranking of items through the scores of pairwise ranking, 1 being the highest and 5 being the lowest.

Each focus group therefore has four diagrams (Photo 11 and 12). These diagrams by pairwise ranking in the field research were translated into English, as the following four diagrams of FG4 show.

Photo 11: Scores and ranked achievements and challenges in representing the state in FG 4 (left)

Photo 12: Scores and ranked achievements and challenges in representing the community in FG 4 (right)

4.7.3 Synthesis of the four focus groups and explanation of the classification of each item into achievements and challenges

The researcher synthesised the four focus groups into the following four tables: Tables 3 and 4³³, and Tables 5 and 6³⁴. Based on the categorisation given by the participants in the field research, the researcher put the functions practiced by the participants into four different

³³ Tables 3 and 4 appear also in Chapter Six for analysing the four functions of the deputies in representing the interests of the state towards the community.

³⁴ Tables 5 and 6 appear also in Chapter Seven for analysing the four functions of the deputies in representing the interests of the community towards the state.

groups: (i) promoting the strategy of the Party/promoting the voice of the community, (ii) enforcing laws and policies of the state/localising the policies of the state, (iii) implementing livelihood projects, and (iv) developing political/ethnic representation. This synthesis facilitates the analysis in Chapter Six and Seven.

The researcher classified each research question into both achievements and challenges. This classification is a demonstration of the deputies' opinions while they were discussing the ways to represent the interests of the state and/or the interests of the community. The achievements and challenges in Tables 3 and 4, and Tables 5 and 6 are regarded as two sides of a coin by the participants in representing the interests of the state and/or the community.

In Tables 3 and 4, the researcher classified the items for both achievements and challenges into four functions which the deputies play in representing the interests of the state towards the community: (i) promoting the strategy of the Party, (ii) enforcing laws and policies of the state, (iii) implementing livelihood projects, and (iv) developing political representation. In the above Diagrams 1-4, the researcher lists the ranking that each item has in the focus groups from one to five. Those items which have zero score in the interview are ranked with a mark ×.

| Table 3: Representing the interests of the state: Achievements | |
|---|--|
| Representing the state: Achievements (RSAn=21) | Functions |
| 1. Implementation of the Party's line, principles and policies 2. Promoting the development of China's western regions 3. National unity | Function 1: Promoting the strategy of the Party |
| 4. Family planning policy * 5. Family planning policy 6. Implementation of national policies 7. Maintaining and supporting the state education policy 8. Promotion of the industrial development nationwide | Function 2: Enforcing laws and policies of the state |
| 9. Implementation of livelihood policies 10. Minimum subsistence security system 11. Old age pension * 12. New rural cooperative medical care system * 13. Renovation of unsafe housing 14. Preferential policies for farmers * 15. Construction of infrastructure * 16. Improvement of education standard | Function 3: Implementing livelihood projects |
| 17. Assured voting rights 18. Enhancing political power at grassroots level 19. Development of human rights 20. Oversight role * 21. Popularising the laws | Function 4: Developing political representation |

The asterix * refers to those items which appear two or more times in either the achievements or the challenges, in Tables 3, 4, 5 and 6. For example, the item "family planning policy" appears twice, so the asterix* is marked after the first appearance of this item.

In Tables 5 and 6, the similar classification is done with the four functions which the deputies play in representing the interests of the community towards the state: (i) promoting the voice of the community, (ii) localising policies of the state, (iii) implementing livelihood projects, and (iv) developing ethnic representation. The four tables possess similar classification of the deputies' roles. The difference between them is that Tables 3 and 4 indicate the four functions of the deputies' in representing the interests of state and Tables 5 and 6 indicate the four functions of the deputies' in representing the interests of community.

| Table 4: Representing the interests of the state: Challenges | |
|--|--|
| Representing the state: Challenges (RSC n=22) | Functions |
| 1. Spiritual work 2. Charisma 3. Corruption 4. Social stability | Function 1: Promoting the strategy of the Party |
| 5. Family planning policy 6. Education 7. Rural-urban income inequality | Function 2: Enforcing laws and policies of the state |
| 8. Livelihood projects ³⁵ 9. Funding 10. Lack of expertise and funding * 11. Technical resources 12. Project profitability 13. Natural resources | Function 3: Implementing livelihood projects |
| 14. Backward ideas ³⁶ 15. Improvement of quality and ability of deputies 16. Oversight role 17. Low political awareness of the local people 18. Insufficient understanding of representation 19. Lack of understanding of policies by the villagers 20. Conflicts and disputes 21. Conflicts of interest 22. Soliciting public opinions | Function 4: Developing political representation |

So with regard to the idea about the Party-state, the researcher divided promoting the Party's strategy and enforcing laws and policies of the state into two different functions in Tables 3, 4, 5 and 6. The basis for this classification relies on the general understanding of the relations

³⁵ Livelihood projects refer to a series of policies and projects taken by the Chinese governments at different levels in order to fully guarantee the basic rights of the people and to improve the people's standard of living by the principle of "human first" and the implementation of "the concept of scientific development". Livelihood projects focus on vulnerable groups and include policies and projects such as minimum subsistence security, economic housing, employment and social security system, etc. Different provinces in China have different priorities in terms of livelihood projects.

³⁶ According to the experience of the researcher, the English word *backward* is widely used in China to express any ideas, opinions or infrastructure such as transportation, or development process which are lagging behind in both urban and rural areas. Therefore, in this thesis, the word *backward* is used without any bias and/or discrimination, and it just describes the fact of "backwardness" in the development process in China.

between/among the Party, the state and the community and that China is under the domination of one party, the China Communist Party (CCP or the Party). The Party is the core of power. The Party and the state are regarded usually as the same. In this research, the researcher separates the state (government) from the Party while discussing the roles of deputies. The Party's Central Committee makes important strategies such as, regulating its principals and lines, and the strategies on developing the Western regions and promoting national unity.

| Table 5: Representing the interests of the community: Achievements | |
|--|--|
| Representing the community: Achievements (RCAn=19) | Functions |
| 1. Listening to the voice of the local people * 2. Listening to the voice of the local people 3. Transmitting the voice of the people 4. Justice and fairness 5. Introducing advanced ideas and technology 6. Unity and cooperation | Function 1: Promoting the voice of the community |
| 7. Promotion of national policies 8. Guiding economic development | Function 2: Localising policies of the state |
| 9. Construction of infrastructure 10. Construction of infrastructure 11. New rural cooperative medical care system 12. Old age pension 13. Preferential policies for farmers 14. Setting up and developing the local economy | Function 3: Implementing livelihood projects |
| 15. Setting a good example 16. Submitting motions, suggestions and criticisms 17. Fulfilling responsibilities and carrying out oversight role 18. Promoting democratic politics 19. Doing actual things for people | Function 4: Developing ethnic representation |

| Table 6: Representing the interests of the community: Challenges | |
|--|--|
| Representing the community: Challenges (RCCn=19) | Functions |
| 1. Level of satisfaction 2. Difficulty in the implementation of motions 3. Insufficient prioritizing by leadership | Function 1: Promoting the voice of the community |
| 4. National policies 5. Insufficient supporting policies | Function 2: Localising policies of the state |
| 6. Difficult implementation 7. Funding 8. Construction of infrastructure 9. Livelihood 10. Project fund 11. Inadequate technology 12. Project selection 13. Lack of expertise and funding 14. Low standard of farmer's know-how 15. Weak infrastructure in rural areas 16. Integration of resources 17. Unrealistic demands by people | Function 3: Implementing livelihood projects |
| 18. Transformation of idea 19. Personal interests above all else | Function 4: Developing ethnic representation |

With their extensive control over political powers, the Party Committees at different levels have the authority to select, appoint and remove officials whenever necessary, even if these officials are of moderate importance. Moreover, many officials in the governments and People's Congresses at different levels are Party members. In this view, the Party is the state. Since the 1980s "China has made significant progress in the separation of the Party and the state" (K. Yu, 2002, p. 186) This twinning revealed itself in one focus group, when the researcher asked one deputy: "What do you mean by the state?" The deputy answered: "I mean that the state is the government".

The Party has led the people to build the state organs of China, but it doesn't mean that its identity is administration and execution. The Party plays an essential role in political leadership such as the leadership of the political principles, important decision-making and recommendation of cadres to the state organs. The government (the state) is one of the power organs. It makes policies and administrative regulations under the leadership and guidance of the Party such as those related to family planning, national education and industry development policies in Tables 3 and 4.

The "fixed terms"³⁷ of the Chinese governments make them "invulnerable" (Manion, 2008, p. 610) from the legislative action of the People's Congresses. As a new actor in Chinese local political arena, the Local People's Congresses (LPCs) are less powerful politically than the local Party Committee and local governments, though their roles have "unquestionably expanded" (Cabestan, 2006, p. 67) since 1978, the year marking China's reform and opening-up to the outside world. So the LPCs have to make a long-lasting relationship with both the Party and the government by their strategy of embeddedness (J. He, 2004; K. J. O'Brien, 1994b) and it is both "a process and a strategy" (K. J. O'Brien, 1994b, p. 99). The requirement of embeddedness proves that the People's Congresses are not separate from the Party and the government and that they are not competitors at this stage.

Instead, the LPCs utilise such a strategy of embeddedness to continue expanding their power. Therefore, promoting the strategies of the Party and the policies of the state forms an essential political task for the deputies of the People's Congresses at different levels. Since the reform of Chinese People Congresses in the 1980s, many deputies' consciousness of their

³⁷ The concept "fixed terms" means that the office tenure for the governments and their corresponding leaders is fixed according to the laws. For example, one term of the county people's government is five years. So the power of the county people's congress to impeach leaders at the same level is highly constrained and very limited.

role, that they represent the interests of the community, has increased. For example, in the individual interviews, many LCPC deputies explained and described how they represent the interests of their constituents. So the third classification of deputies' roles is "implementing livelihood projects". The implementation of livelihood projects is a most direct way to "do actual things for people" (Diagram 2 of FG 4), and at a macro-level, to represent the interests of the constituents. The fourth group of functions of deputies is "developing political/ethnic representation", which includes two facets for deputies in the LCPC: political representation and ethnic representation. The former is a nationwide issue; the latter is specific in the area where Miao ethnic minority accounts for the majority of its population.

4.8 Analysing data based on the normalisation and averaging of raw data

4.8.1 Normalisation of the raw data "score"

The normalisation of the raw data "score"³⁸ of pairwise ranking in the focus groups is introduced in this analysis. With the idea that a good normalisation scheme of the matching data must be "robust and efficient" (Jain, Nandakumar, & Ross, 2005, p. 2276) and a robust statistical procedure should have the "desirable features" of "efficiency, stability and breakdown"³⁹ (Huber & Ronchetti, 2009, p. 5) in mind, the researcher applied the technique of normalisation in pairwise ranking and used the "min-max normalisation method" (Giovannini et al., 2005, pp. 28, 30) recommended by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to construct composite indicators. The min-max normalisation method transforms the raw data "score" into the range between 0 and 1, because this method is "best suited for the case where the bounds (maximum and minimum values) are known (Jain, et al., 2005, p. 2276) and it "has the advantage of preserving exactly all relationships in the data" (Jayalakshmi & Santhakumaran, 2011, p. 91). In the focus groups, the scores show that the maximum and minimum are 5 and 0 respectively. In the Formula 1, S_{\min} and S_{\max} are set as the minimum and maximum of "Score" respectively. S' is the normalised score, a new data between 0 to 1 range.

³⁸ The data of rankings is not dealt with because they were ranked from the scores. The scores are the real raw variables. The rankings reflect the prioritising by the participants in each focus group. Normalising scores rather than rankings makes the data after the normalisation become more reliable and less biased. Both normalised score and ranking are used in the analysis.

³⁹ Breakdown means that "somewhat larger deviations from the model should not cause a catastrophe" (Huber & Ronchetti, 2009, p. 5).

Formula 1: Min-max normalisation

$$S' = \frac{S - S_{\min}}{S_{\max} - S_{\min}}$$

| | | |
|---|-------|-----------------------|
| Example 1: Achievements and challenges in representing the interests of the state in FG 4 | | |
| Diagram 1: Representing the interests of the state: Achievements in FG 4 | | |
| Achievements | Score | Normalised score (S') |
| Oversight role | 5 | 1 |
| Popularising the laws | 1 | 0 |
| Implementation of livelihood policies | 4 | 0.75 |
| Improvement of education standard | 1 | 0 |
| Enhancing political power at grassroots level | 2 | 0.25 |
| Assured voting rights | 2 | 0.25 |
| Diagram 2: Representing the interests of the state: Challenges in FG 4 | | |
| Challenges | Score | Normalised score (S') |
| Improvement of quality and ability of deputies | 4 | 1 |
| Oversight role | 1 | 0 |
| Soliciting public opinions | 1 | 0 |
| Lack of expertise and funding | 4 | 1 |
| Low political awareness of the local people | 1 | 0 |
| Insufficient understanding of representation | 4 | 1 |
| Diagram 3: Representing the interests of the community: Achievements in FG 4 | | |
| Achievements | Score | Normalised score (S') |
| Submitting motions, suggestions and criticisms | 4 | 1 |
| Doing actual things for people | 3 | 0.75 |
| Transmitting the voice of the people | 2 | 0.5 |
| Guiding economic development | 1 | 0.25 |
| Promotion of democratic politics | 0 | 0 |
| Diagram 4: Representing the interests of the community: Challenges in FG 4 | | |
| Challenges | Score | Normalised score (S') |
| Lack of expertise and funding | 5 | 1 |
| Difficulty in the implementation of motions | 4 | 0.8 |
| Weak infrastructure in rural areas | 2 | 0.4 |
| Low standard of farmers' know-how | 0 | 0 |
| Personal interests above all else | 1 | 0.2 |
| Insufficient supporting policies | 3 | 0.6 |

Take Diagram 1/FG 4: Representing the state: achievements as an example (Example 1), the S_{\max} is 5 and the S_{\min} is 1, so for the “Oversight role”, $S' = \frac{5-1}{5-1} = 1$; for both items, the “popularising the laws” and the “improvement of education standard” $S' = \frac{1-1}{5-1} = 0$; for the

“Implementation of livelihood policies”, $S' = \frac{4-1}{5-1} = 0.75$; for both items, the “Enhancing political power at grassroots level” and the “Assured voting rights”, $S' = \frac{2-1}{5-1} = 0.25$. All the other item scores follow the same way of normalisation (See Example 1). Both the S_{\max} and the S_{\min} are random variables which change differently in different diagrams.

4.8.2 Averaging normalised score

Averaging is used to deal with the normalised scores in the pairwise ranking. The items of both achievements and challenges are ranked from 1 to 6 according to their corresponding scores. Items which have a zero score are ranked as \times in the pairwise ranking. The items which have the same scores and are accounted for the same rankings in one focus group have the same importance. For example, while doing pairwise ranking on the challenges of representing the state in Group 4, the total number of items (challenges) is six. Three items rank the first and the other three rank the second (Example 2). The researcher clarified with the participants that the rankings were reliable.

The researcher: Now, we see there are three items ranking the first and the other three ranking the second. So do you think that those which have the same score and which are in the same ranking share the same importance?

| Example 2: Diagram 2: Representing the interests of the state: Challenges in FG 4 | | | | | | | | |
|---|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------|---------|
| Challenges | Number of Challenges | | | | | | Score | Ranking |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | | |
| Improvement of quality and ability of deputies | | 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 |
| Oversight role | | | 3 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 2 |
| Soliciting public opinions | | | | 4 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 2 |
| Lack of expertise and funding | | | | | 4 | 6 | 4 | 1 |
| Low political awareness of the local people | | | | | | 6 | 1 | 2 |
| Insufficient understanding of representation | | | | | | | 4 | 1 |

Some participants responded that the items which have the same score in the first ranking have the same importance. So do those in the second. They also thought that such scores and rankings gave them a clear idea on the issues they face. To follow the analysis, Formula 2 is created to get the average value. $\overline{S'}$ means average value. f represents the frequency of S' . The average value $\overline{S'}$ is the result that the sum of all normalised scores (S') multiplying their corresponding frequencies, and then divided by the sum of all frequencies.

Formula 2: Average Value

$$\bar{S'} = \frac{s'_1 f_1 + s'_2 f_2 + \dots + s'_n f_n}{f_1 + f_2 + \dots + f_n} = \frac{\sum s' f}{\sum f}$$

| Example 3: Enforcing laws and policies of the state in the achievements of representing the state | | | | |
|---|--|------|-----------|-----|
| Functions | Achievements | S' | f | |
| Enforcing laws and policies of the state | -Family planning policy * | 0.75 | $f_1 = 1$ | 0.6 |
| | -Family planning policy | 0.25 | | |
| | -Implementation of national policies | 1 | $f_2 = 1$ | |
| | -Maintaining and supporting the state education policy | 0.5 | $f_3 = 1$ | |
| | -Promotion of the industrial development nationwide | 0.5 | $f_4 = 2$ | |
| The asterisk * here refers to those items which appear two or more times in either the achievements or the challenges. See similar in Tables 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8. | | | | |

To take “Enforcing laws and policies of the state in the achievements of representing the interests of the state” as an example (Example 3 and Table 7), the S' 0.75, S' 0.25 and S' 1 appear once, so their frequency is 1 respectively; the S' 0.5 appears twice, so its frequency is 2. Importing all the variables into the formula as the following and calculating that the average value is 0.6.

In Table 7, the researcher implements the same averaging method to the S'—the normalised score to get an averaged value for each function by the same synthesis process. The total averaged value in the last row is the result of the 21 items.

| Table 7: Average value of achievements in representing the interests of the state | | | |
|---|---|---------------------------------|----------------|
| Functions | Achievements (An=21) | S' | Averaged value |
| Promoting the strategy of the Party | 1. Implementation of the Party's line, principles and policies 2. Promoting the development of China's western regions 3. National unity | 1 0 0.5 | 0.5 |
| Enforcing laws and policies of the state | 4. Family planning policy * 5. Family planning policy 6. Implementation of national policies 7. Maintaining and supporting the state education policy 8. Promotion of the industrial development nationwide | 0.75 0.25 1 0.5 0.5 | 0.6 |

| (Continued with Table 7) | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|------|
| Implementing livelihood projects | 9. Implementation of livelihood policies 10. Minimum subsistence security system 11. Old age pension * 12. New rural cooperative medical care system * 13. Renovation of unsafe housing 14. Preferential policies for farmers * 15. Construction of infrastructure * 16. Improvement of education standard | 0.75 0.25 0.5 1 0 0.5 0 0 | 0.38 |
| Developing political representation | 17. Assured voting rights 18. Enhancing political power at grassroots level 19. Development of human rights 20. Oversight role * 21. Popularising the laws | 0.25 0.25 0.75 1 0 | 0.45 |
| Total | | 0.46 | |

The averaged values in Table 8 are the results of this arithmetical formula. In Chapter Six and Seven, the researcher develops his discussions on the research questions based on the figures from Table 8.

| Table 8: Averaged value of normalised data of achievements and challenges | | | | |
|---|--|------------|--|-------------|
| Functions | Representing the state Averaged value (RSA) | | Representing the community Averaged value (RCA) | |
| | Achievements | Challenges | Achievements | Challenges |
| Function1: Promoting the strategy of the Party; | 0.5 | 0.75 | / | / |
| Promoting the voice of the community | / | / | 0.47 | 0.6 |
| Function 2: Enforcing laws and policies of the state; | 0.6 | 0.58 | / | / |
| Localising the policies of the state | / | / | 0.5 | 0.8 |
| Function 3: Implementing livelihood projects | 0.38 | 0.5 | 0.35 | 0.48 |
| Function 4: Developing political representation | 0.45 | 0.36 | / | / |
| Developing ethnical representation | / | / | 0.55 | 0.6 |
| Total averaged value | 0.46 | 0.5 | 0.46 | 0.54 |

4.9 Semi-structured individual interviews

In this research, semi-structured individual interviews with 39 deputies were used to collect in-depth ideas, intentions and knowledge of participants regarding the research questions, as

individuals prefer the most convenient methods and some of them may offer unexpected contributions to some phenomena. In this research, the individual interviews were with the deputies who are Party-secretaries, professional deputies, incumbent officials, educators, directors and members of village committees and farmers. Each participant was asked a number of relevant questions which were related to the research questions from a broader view.

This research maintains an aspect for inquiry into gender-related development in discovering the roles of Miao male and female deputies. In this regard, it was crucial to use an approach of the narration of oral history because it is important with the diverse backgrounds and social textures and it provides “an increased understanding and lifeline between the present and the past” (Berg & Lune, 2012, p. 319). In the Chinese context, social transformation with the modernisation of public media and services in Miao communities has made a difference with regard to Miao males and females’ positions and roles in the society. One Miao deputy specifically mentioned this societal change during an informal lunch time discussion. Thus, their oral histories reflect this social transformation.

According to the plan of the researcher, the approach to obtaining the oral histories of Miao deputies was to use an open interview. It was hoped that this would provide the researcher a unique opportunity to hear the real life experience and memories of people, and which would allow the researcher to avoid the deficiencies in official documentary records (Samuel, 1976). Particularly, what motivates a Miao woman to become a female LCPC deputy? And how does she play her roles in the LCPC on behalf of both Miao people and women? By just listening to the oral history of women, we may lose the comprehensive understanding of overall context, so an oral history of male deputies was necessary as well.

The researcher found that the data from the narration of life histories of the deputies was the same with that from the semi-structured individual interviews. The reason is that the deputies know each other and a life-history narrator has had the opportunity to know the research questions from other deputies before the researcher met them. In addition, the two woman deputies whom the researcher planned to meet for their life history narration were not accessible. One had migrated and the other was difficult to contact. She said she was quite busy and was doing a long business trip and she didn’t know when she would be back. Eventually the researcher met her one day during a meal arranged by the LCPC (She was not the guest of the meal, but she just passed by the restaurant and the host introduced her to the

researcher) and the situation was a bit embarrassing. The researcher decided at last “not to interview her” and give her “an elegant escape”.

In addition, the researcher found that most of the participants in the semi-structured individual interviews were very talkative. Besides focusing on the research questions, the participants talked a lot about their lives, which were linked with their growth as a deputy. This meant that the researcher was able to put the interviews of the deputies who were designed for narration of their life histories into semi-structured individual interviews. As a result, there is no research method as “narration of life history of the deputies” in this research.

4.9.1 Design of the supporting questions for the research questions

In the individual interviews, the research questions are “can you tell me how you play your role in representing the state towards the community? And how do you play your role in representing the community towards the state?” As this research is predominantly qualitative research, in order to obtain comprehensive responses from the deputies, the researcher developed four supporting questions which related to the research questions (See individual interviews of deputies) and the topic of this thesis, which is the political and ethnic representation of the deputies in County People’s Congresses. “Do you feel you are local elite?” was usually set as the first supporting question in the individual interview, by which, the researcher examines the attitude and criteria that an interviewee has towards his / her deputy status.

The second supporting question is “in what way do you think differently before and after becoming a deputy?” The researcher discloses the changes that a deputy had before and after becoming a deputy. The third is “what do you think about the Regional Autonomous System for Ethnic Groups”. The research was done in the Miao area where Ethnic Regional Autonomous System (ERAS) at prefectural level is practiced. Therefore, it was necessary to understand how the ERAS system influences the representation and identity of deputies. The fourth supporting question asked by the researcher was “what symbols or logos do you have that distinguish the Miao from other ethnic groups”, because the researcher considered this a good way to test the identity of the deputies through asking them their identity to a symbol or logo which they think is important to represent the Miao people.

For example, when asking “Do you feel you are local elite?”, the participants responded with a list of items that a deputy should match as an elite such as deep trust of people, being responsive and active, being a good model, being a pacesetter (*daitouren*, 带头人), good mass foundation (*qunzhong jichu*, connection with community, 群众基础), coordination and management abilities. Those items are composed of criteria of being a deputy or being local elite under the Chinese context. Furthermore, taking “good mass foundation” in the criteria as an example, the deputies who are “seconded to” and “from local constituency” have a different mass foundation. Deputies who are from the local constituency have better mass foundation. Deputies who are “seconded to” have a better understanding of policies. So while looking for patterns in the answer to the way in which the deputies play their roles, the consideration of such attribute values to deputies becomes meaningful.

The research questions relate to the roles that the LCPC deputies play. After examining the focus groups and the transcriptions of individual interviews, the researcher consecutively used the classification of the focus groups to classify the responses of the deputies of the two research questions into both achievements and challenges. The only difference is that the researcher merged the same items which appeared two or more times in focus groups into one, such as the item “listening to the voice of the local people” in the achievements of representing the constituency.

Considering the limitations in time and access to resource persons, the research design and fieldwork has been focused completely on researching the local elites. Therefore, when the deputies talked about their achievements and challenges in performing their duties, it was not investigated whether their constituents held comparable views on achievements and challenges, as interviewing constituents was not part of the research. However, the researcher would like to reiterate that the focus of this research is on how the system of local governance works and how local governance evolves along with central control and a structure of polycentric governance unfolds at the grassroots level. The focus of the research was not to investigate the outcomes or effectiveness of the process of local governance.

4.9.2 Photos in the semi-structured individual interviews

Many photos were taken in the individual interviews and the researcher found that the participants were happy with their photos being taken. Some photos (Photo 13 and 14) demonstrate the patterns of analysis to the two research questions such as central-local

relations. The semi-structured individual interviews were taken in either the deputies' homes, or their offices, or the reception room and meeting rooms of the corresponding governments.



Photo 13: The interview with the chairman of a TPC (left)
 Photo 14: The interview with one Miao female deputy (right)

Photo 13 shows an interview with the chairman of a Township People's Congress (TPC). The interview was conducted in his office. The big Chinese characters on the red card of his desk mean the pioneer position of the Party member. The small ones show that his position is vice Party secretary and Disciplinary Inspection Committee of the Party Committee of the Township. However, his position as TPC chairman isn't on show. He explained that he was a newly appointed TPC chair, so the name card hasn't yet been updated. This may demonstrate that the TPC has less important political position than the Party.

Photo 14 shows the interview with one Miao female deputy in the meeting room of a Township People's Government (TPC). She has been a teacher, and is now a midwife. She is a deputy representing the farmers. The slogans on the wall of this meeting room show the Party's decisive position in the central-local relations and in the local development. The slogans are read as this: "Manage the construction of the Party well by focusing on economic development; promote the economic development by managing the construction of the Party well".

4.9.3 Quantifying the findings in semi-structured individual interviews

The researcher uses the same classification of achievements and challenges in the focus groups to quantify the data in the individual interviews by importing references of each participant into Nvivo, because the use of Nvivo provided the researcher with reference

points whose frequencies determine the deputies' priority concerns in development issues (See Section 6.3 in Chapter Six and Section 7.4 in Chapter Seven). The items of achievements and challenges from the focus groups are sought in the texts of individual interviews. Example 4 demonstrates the item of achievement in representing the constituency "justice and fairness" appears six times in the individual interviews by six deputies. Each of the six deputies has one reference to this achievement. So this achievement "justice and fairness" has six points.

| Example 4: References of "justice and fairness" in representing the community: Achievements (RCA) |
|---|
| <p>Deputy06 If you deal with the forest disputes between villagers, you must be fair and uphold justice.</p> <p>Deputy10 Promote fairness and justice in the implementation of government policies.</p> <p>Deputy16 They have developed an attitude of waiting, depending on the government and submitting requests. Others who make a living by their hard work think that it is unfair.</p> <p>Deputy17 We should treat all ethnic groups equally to ensure justice and fairness. This township has many ethnic groups and they co-exist happily together.</p> <p>Deputy21 I arrange each and every project fairly and with a sense of justice.</p> <p>Deputy26 The villagers believe that I am upright and I spare no efforts for their welfare. I solve issues based on fairness.</p> |

One participant may have more than one reference to the same item of achievements or challenges. For example, there are 12 points for the challenge "national policies" in representing the community (Example 5). Five deputies made contribution to the points, both Deputy 18 and Deputy 22 contribute 3 points; both Deputy 21 and Deputy 37 contribute 1 point respectively and Deputy 32 contributes 4 points. The researcher followed the rule that each reference is unique and it is not duplicated in a specific item while calculating how many references of one item of achievements or challenges of each deputy there are.

| Example 5: References of "national policies" in representing the community: Challenges (RCC) |
|--|
| <p>Deputy18 Reference 1: When we formulate policies, we also need to consider the local culture and customs. The poverty-relief fund policy is really good, but our local situation needs to be considered when it is carried out, otherwise it is a waste of resources.</p> <p>Reference 2: I would like to talk more about the raising of black-wool pigs. Here, we eat pork from outside the county. It doesn't cost much. Our local variety is raised by green fodder and needs more time before it can be sold, so the cost is higher. The county policy promotes pig-raising on a large scale without giving due consideration to whether the variety is good or not.</p> <p>Reference 3: It is the same for our culture, such as the drum-tower dance. Our culture is fast disappearing. When there are visitors here, the villagers perform the dance, but they receive no funds for their daily life. So the good dancers leave and the team disperses. If you want them to regroup them, it is difficult.</p> <p>Deputy21 I feel that the government should be more responsible and not let the Miao language be forgotten. The government should promote the speaking of the Miao language.</p> |

(Continued with Example 5)

Deputy22

Reference 1: Generally speaking, the state policies are multi-dimensional and good. However, some policies are partial.

Reference 2: For example, the county strategy aims to create Leishan as a big tourist area and a tea county. So the projects are transmitted in the form of political tasks. Then, the township is required to plant a certain number of *mu* (One hectare is equal to 15 *mu*) of tea. However, in our township we don't have so much land for planting tea only, even when we include the barren hillsides and slopes. So if the government classifies tea planting as a political task, it's really hard to implement in my township.

Reference 3: The local situation should be considered when formulating policy, otherwise the project becomes difficult.

Deputy32

Reference 1: There is a disparity at different levels between the good policies and the local and individual demands of the people.

Reference 2: This includes areas such as the new rural cooperative medical care system.

Reference 3: The dispersal of the poverty-relief funds.

Reference 4: The provincial strategy for developing animal husbandry.

Deputy37

I think the title "National Forest Park of Leigong Mountain" constrains and limits our development.

Some items such as the challenge "conflicts and disputes" may not appear in the text of an individual interview, but by analysing the words of deputies, the researcher found that the ideas from these words belong to "conflicts and disputes". For example, one constituent (See Section 4.10 in this chapter: Purposive observation) came to report the issues related to Minimum Subsistence Security System (MSS) and renovation of unsafe housing to a deputy (Deputy 16). The constituent says: "The state policies are good. There are various preferential policies for farmers. However, only a few farmers can benefit from the policies. Most of them cannot do so. Only a small number of people enjoy both the MSS and the renovation of unsafe housing policies.

There are other examples similar to this one. The constituent came to the deputy to report that the policies had generated conflicts and dispute such as who should benefit from the policies and who should not. However, in representing the interests of the state, the deputy disagreed with the constituent because the MSS was categorised by the deputies in focus groups as an achievement in representing the interests of the state. The deputy told the constituent that all the procedures are open and transparent. If a villager wants to receive MSS, the villagers themselves, the Villagers' Committee (VC) and the government bureau will evaluate and decide who should receive it. Those who are awarded the MSS will then be publicly notified. From their dialogue, the researcher summarised that there are conflicts and disputes between the local people due to the MSS policy, despite the deputies' view of it as an achievement in representing the interests of the state in focus groups.

Example 6: Multi-dimensional responses (Deputy 18)

The researcher: In general, what kind of difficulties do you face as a LCPC deputy? What factors constrain your role?

The Deputy: What I feel the saddest about is that the majority of the Miao people in their forties in this area are still illiterate, so we face difficulties in promoting (State) policies and providing leadership for the masses in areas of development (RSC: Education. RCC: Lack of expertise and funding; Low standard of farmer's know-how.) At present the main income for the villagers derives from the export of their labour. We have done well in this aspect. I gather information about employment opportunities from the workers who come back to spend the Spring Festival and I then make the overall arrangements. As a result, the people are satisfied with me (RCA: Doing actual things for people).

I often undertake fact-finding missions on projects in other counties. For instance, fifty villagers went to learn how to plant green leafy vegetables. On their return, they showed that they have good ideas about planting (RCA: Doing actual things for people; Guiding economic development; Setting up and developing the local economy; Introducing advanced ideas and technology).

However, the project has not yet been developed due to the backward transportation and the issue of finding buyers (RCC: Construction of infrastructure; Weak infrastructure in rural areas). So the villagers feel unhappy about this (RCC: Level of satisfaction).

This is an area that goes beyond my capability and I can only try my best. I also arranged to conduct research on how to plant medicinal herbs and am contacted many of my doctor friends (RCA: Introducing advanced ideas and technology). However, this idea is difficult to act on because the people living in the village are mostly the elderly, disabled and those who are ill and children. The young adults go and work in the urban areas (RCC: Difficult implementation).

As the individual interviews are semi-structured, the deputies may answer in a random sequence or s/he may talk about different aspects. If the researcher asked his/ her challenges, s/he may answer either the challenges, or the achievements or a mixture of both. For example, doing an analysis of the words of Deputy 18, the researcher finds that both the issues related to achievements and challenges are multi-dimensional (See Example 6 in the previous page).

The use of individual interviews combined with focus groups is for enhancing data richness (Lambert & Loiselle, 2008) and makes the data more accountable. The items of the achievements and challenges identified in the focus groups are talked about in the semi-structured interviews. For example, the items “assured voting rights”, “conflicts of interests”, “Doing actual things for people” “Listening to the voice of the local people” are talked of 25, 19, 53 and 28 times respectively by different deputies in the interviews.

Items in Table 9 reflect the multi-dimensional ideas of Deputy 18 in responding the difficulties and constrains when he played his role as a LCPC deputy. There are 13 items from the example part of Deputy 18, which are included into RSC, RCA and RCC. The two research methods, focus groups and individual interviews interact with each other.

| Table 9: Items from one part of the interview of Deputy 18 | | | | | |
|--|---|----------|-----|-----|-----|
| No. | Items | RSA | RSC | RCA | RCC |
| 1 | Education | / | 1 | / | / |
| 2 | Lack of expertise and funding | / | / | / | 1 |
| 3 | Low standard of farmer’s know-how | / | / | / | 1 |
| 4 | Guiding economic development | / | / | 1 | / |
| 5 | Setting up and developing the local economy | / | / | 1 | / |
| 6 | Doing actual things for people | / | / | 2 | / |
| 7 | Introducing advanced ideas and technology | / | / | 2 | / |
| 8 | Construction of infrastructure | / | / | / | 1 |
| 9 | Weak infrastructure in rural areas | / | / | / | 1 |
| 10 | Level of satisfaction | / | / | / | 1 |
| 11 | Difficult implementation | / | / | / | 1 |
| Total | | 1+6+6=13 | | | |
| RSA: Representing the state: Achievements; RSC: Representing the state: Challenges RCA: Representing the community: Achievements; RCC: Representing the community: Challenges | | | | | |

In the following chapters, the researcher uses the word “point” to describe the times (in Nvivo, it is “reference”) that each item of achievements and challenges has been mentioned, in order to further explore the three patterns of analysis identified from the focus groups.

4.10 Purposive observation

Observation is a significant tool to redress preconceived views of researchers and it avoids a possible framing of a research situation in advance (Desai & Potter, 2006). Observation has different forms, but all include basic elements such as non-verbal, spatial, extra-linguistic and linguistic behaviors (Robson, 2002a). In order to minimise observer effects which may impact the objectivity of the observation, Robson (2002a) suggests two main strategies in the observation: minimal interaction with the observed and habituation of the observed. The avoidance of eye contact and indifferences in behavioral reaction can minimise the interaction. Repeated attendance to a certain spatial area can habituate the researcher's presence as it may change what the researcher is planning to observe.

In this research, observation is used as a “supplementary method” (Robson, 2002a, p. 312) to collect data which complement the data from focus groups and semi-structured individual interviews. The observation method that the researcher conducted in this research is purposive observation. When the researcher interviewed some deputies, he observed that some constituents come to visit their deputies. These impromptu visitors often come to complain about some policies and the practical difficulties in their lives. This gave the

researcher the opportunity to observe the interactions between the constituents and their deputies.

The researcher stayed for fifteen working days in the LCPC. So the impact of his presence in a meeting over the actions and behaviours of the observed gradually diminished. The researcher observed a meeting for the members of the 16th LCPC Permanent Committee. The purpose of this observation for the researcher is to understand how the LCPC motions are responded to by the government and how the LCPC deputies give feedback to the government's response and how the appointment and removal of cadres is conducted under the dominance of the Party. In addition, the researcher took this opportunity to access and copy documents from the government archives related to these motions, including an elaborate document on specific development projects such as developing a tea industry.

A LCPC meeting is formal (Photo 15 and 16). It is held in a rectangular meeting room. The names of the attendees who sit around the meeting table and in the second row are shown on a name board. One photographer and one video-maker from the local television station were invited to record and broadcast the meeting. Ten topics are discussed one after another and the meeting ended in 4 hours and 30 minutes. The first eight agenda items involved listening to and examining the work reports of the three authorities: the Government, the Court and the Procuratorate⁴⁰ (the GCP), and several bureaux of the county government. The ninth is on examining the work report of the three authorities for testing the degree of satisfaction. The tenth concerns personnel arrangements—the appointment of two officials. After listening to the work reports, chairmen and members of the CPC permanent committee gave comments and suggestions on the works of the GCP.

⁴⁰ Institutionally, China's judicial system includes three parts: the People's Court, the People's Procuratorate and the Public Security. According to the Organic Law of China, the People's Procuratorate is one state organ of legal supervision. The People's Procuratorate has four levels: national (supreme), provincial, prefectural and county levels. It has seven functions: (i) to exercise procuratorial authority over cases of treason, (ii) to conduct investigation of criminal cases, (iii) to review cases investigated by public security organs, (iv) to exercise supervision over the investigative activities of public security, (v) to initiate public prosecutions of criminal cases and support such prosecutions, (vi) to exercise supervision over the judicial activities of people's courts and (vii) to exercise supervision over the execution of judgments and orders in criminal cases.



Photo 15: The 12th meeting of the members of the LCPC 16th Permanent Committee (left)
In the first row around the meeting table are members of the LCPC 16th Permanent Committee. These members have voting rights;

Photo 16: The chairmen of township People's Congresses (right)
They sit in second row and in the third row sit the staff members LCPC and those who are specially invited.

The members listened to the government's transaction of suggestions and motions submitted by the LCPC deputies. The official from the County People's Government (CPG) announced the 121 motions submitted. In his report, he read aloud and explained that according to the classification of the County government office, these motions include 30 motions that concerned transportation, 13 concerned education, 8 concerned finance, 7 concerned the tea industry and 63 concerned other issues. All the motions and suggestions are divided into 4 categories: A, transacted (36); B, underway (65); C, accepted but unresourced (16); D, noted but not actioned ⁴¹ (4). His announcement made it clear that the CPG had considered all the motions at the face value.

In the observation, the researcher noticed that what the CPG was concerned with was whether or not that the motions themselves on the paper have already been dealt with. This was because when some deputies asked the official whether the motions were transacted or not, he said that he had forwarded them to relevant government bureaux but did not know the results. So the issues included in the motions may not be tackled in reality. This inaction was observed and revealed by the speech given by the deputies after the official from the CPG finished his reading. The deputies in their speech listed several issues which were not actually

⁴¹ It means that the issue in the motions cannot be solved by the county-level government. However, the county government knows this and the upper-government will solve it. For example, relating to the motion in 2013 "Motion on recruiting the university graduates majoring in tourism, hotel management and tea industry as civil servants", the county government hasn't the power to make a decision. The higher-level governments, prefectural and provincial, can decide this recruitment.

solved, such as the management of tea industry. The motions related to development projects together with the previous years are discussed in Chapters Five, Six and Seven in this thesis.

4.11 Document analysis

Archives become relatively stable sources of data for repeated analysis from different angles and purposes while the interview is often a disposable practice and fluctuates with the participant's status. The well-managed and organised formations of archival sources present a clear and multi-layered way of analysis for the researcher. Therefore, archival sources form a significant method in this research, as they are very relevant to the functions and operational mechanism of the LPCs. In this research, different governmental archives are explored, such as meeting notes, documents about the representative structure of the deputies, motions related to development projects, and government responses to those motions as well as the report of government work. These governmental documents are read and reread by the researcher in order to have a comprehensive understanding of them and support the findings in focus groups and semi-structured individual interviews.

These non-published governmental archives were accessed with the approval of the LCPC. The focus groups and semi-structured individual interviews facilitated the researcher's request for these primary archives. The reason is that some deputies whom the researcher had interviewed reported to the liaison officer that the researcher's work style was "careful and serious". When the researcher requested the relevant governmental archives, the liaison officer told the researcher that he knew the comments about the researcher from the deputies. Therefore, he would like to help the researcher gain access to these unpublished governmental documents. The researcher holds the view that "documents are not neutral, transparent reflections of organisational or occupational life" (Atkinson & Coffey, 2011). In archival research, one focus is on how the archives are generated by textual conventions. Prior (2011) points out that document content is crucial and worth of systematic analysis, but its assembling, utilisation and function need to be considered by the researcher while using it.

Challenges in archival research are also discussed by S. McLennan and Prinsen (2014). Their study shows that archives may be shifted to different locations, or be misplaced in their making process. So it is necessary to avoid "seriously under-resourced" archives and the researcher needs to express his questions "broadly enough to capture the material", but "not

too broadly to be rejected as unworkable while submitting a request for access to the archives” (S. McLennan & Prinsen, 2014, pp. 87-88). This idea proved to be particularly useful in the researcher’s requirement for the documents with categories of the deputies’ representative structure. At the beginning, the liaison officer thought the requests were too broad and were asking for too much information which they thought could not be provided and publicised. To allay their concerns, the researcher made a table, listing the information that he needed. This was much more workable and documents were soon forthcoming.

In addition, some publications of Chinese scholars and published leader speeches and documents from People’s Congresses are also used as secondary archives in this research. Those publications are found in the provincial and university libraries, newspapers and on websites.

4.12 Conclusion

Field research in development studies is typically heterogeneous. The consideration of the two aspects of positionality and reflexivity in methodology makes the findings more objective and thus lessens any bias. In addition, the researcher takes into account those ethical issues which may possibly influence the objectiveness of the research and ethically harm the participants’ interests. The use of the four research methods in this research, focus groups, semi-structured individual interviews, purposive observation and document analysis, establishes a triangulation which makes the findings more robust and reliable. In particular, while identifying that a single use of each method may cause bias the researcher made an interactive use of the two main research methods, focus groups and semi-structured individual interviews.

The research on the ways in which the deputies play their roles in representing the interests of the state and/or the community contains a large amount of information in the area where there are diverse development issues and where the local political environment is complex. The use of focus groups by pairwise ranking makes it possible to obtain significant information from the deputies who are from different social classes. The deputies discussed their dual roles in the focus groups and formed a consensus in each part of one of the two research questions concerning their achievements and challenges. The categorisation of the achievements and

challenges with pairwise ranking makes clear the priorities of the deputies in their roles in representing the interests of the state and/or the community.

Furthermore, the normalisation and averaging of the raw data of the focus groups quantifies the diverse achievements and challenges which provides a quantitative comparison between and among the four functions extracted from these achievements and challenges. The nuance of the averaged values of the four functions helps explain the diversity of development projects and the complexity of the local political arena. As a result, these functions led to an in-depth analysis of central-local relations, and political and ethnic representation of the deputies. Developing the political and ethnic representation is the fourth function identified in the focus groups and forms the main theme of discussion in the Chapter Eight.

The semi-structured individual interviews provide personalised explanations for the findings in the focus groups. Many achievements and challenges identified by the deputies in the individual interviews were found to have the same priorities with those in the focus groups. Some development issues and development projects which were not identified in the focus groups were talked about by the deputies in individual interviews. This provides supplementary data for the researcher to explain and analyse how the deputies play their roles in representing the interests of the state and/or the community. Therefore, the development issues can be interrogated and the two roles that the deputies play be discussed under a broader context and debate in the individual interviews.

The document analysis which is based mainly on unpublished government archives supplements the data that may not exist in the focus groups and semi-structured individual interviews. In particular, the data about the representative structure of the deputies helps demonstrate institutional issues which may restrict the political and ethnic representation of the deputies. The motions submitted by the deputies from government archives supplemented the data about the issues in development projects in focus groups and in individual interviews. This triangulation not only makes the collected data robust and reliable and but also reduces bias which may arise from one single source of data.

5.1 Introduction

In recent years, the “new normal” (*xinchangtai*, 新常态) in Chinese political life demonstrates that the roles of deputies have been transformed and the People’s Congresses’ (PCs) position as an organ of the state power has been assured (Y. Liu, 2010). Local People’s Congresses (LPCs) are not simply regarded as a “rubber-stamp”, but rather, have been transformed into an “iron-stamp” (Young Nam Cho, 2002; K. Yu, 2005). This means that the LPCs have become “important political actors in local politics”, though they are still not as influential as the local Party Committees and Local People’s Governments (LPGs) (Young Nam Cho, 2002, p. 725). Under the reform model of “decentralisation and interest-concession” (*fangquan rangi*, 放权让利) (J. He, 2011, p. 190), many local governments obtain more power from the centre. In this process, the centre identifies the need to strengthen the functions of LPCs to constrain the power of LPGs for the purposes of governance, but not for democracy (J. He, 2011).

LPCs have the incentive to enhance their representation: representing the interests of their community. However, they face the “absence of institutional guarantees of representation” (K. J. O’Brien, 1990, p. 376) and they have exerted only “limited influence in the representation role” (Y. N. Cho, 2009, p. 163) of their deputies. “Deficiencies and defects” (X. Liu, 2011, p. 15) exist in the operation of LPCs, especially of County People’s Congresses (CPCs), which are the result of “top-down design” according to J. He (2004, p. 22). The leaders of the CCP Central Committee who designed CPCs don’t participate in their practical operation. The separation between the designers and the operators produces deficiencies and defects such as the “imbalance” (*shitiao*, 失调) (P. Li & Zhao, 2011, p. 15) and “backwardness” (*zhihouxing*, 滞后性) (Jieni Guo, 2010, p. 150) of the representative structure of the deputies.

Based on the government archives of Leishan County People’s Congress (LCPC) and the County People’s Government (CPG), the representative structure of the deputies is discussed in Section 5.2 which includes six categories: age, gender, Party status, ethnicity, education and social classes and two more categories as professionalisation and regional representation identified and extracted by the researcher. That is discussed in the same section is the social

classes including farmer, cadre intellectual, technician, worker, serviceman and businessman for a better understanding of the influence of representative structure over the representation roles of the deputies.

In order to demonstrate the dual representation of the deputies, their political activities during intercessional and sessional periods are explained in Section 5.3. This is followed by an exploration of the evolution of the political and ethnic representation of the deputies by their motions related to diverse local development issues in Section 5.4. The analysis of these motions is conducive to help in understanding the official participation of the deputies in local politics. All these discussions are summarised in Section 5.5 which concludes that the participation of localising development projects restructure the political and ethnic representation of the deputies.

5.2 Representative structure and representation of the LCPC deputies

In order to understand how the LCPC deputies play their roles, it's necessary to discuss their representative structure and representation. In the Chinese context, representative structure means the social classes that the deputies in a People's Congress represent and their proportion in the population. The establishment of the People's Congress system is based on an idealised socialist regime where consensual democracy has been realised and this democracy is for the interests of the majority of people (Section 3.7.2 in Chapter Three). Under such a system, the representative structure should embody universality. This means that the candidates selected to stand for the roles of the LCPC deputies must include the representatives of all social circles (*jiebie*, 界别), classes, ethnicities and regions. The universal and regional representation is enhanced by quota, as Deputy 30 says,

The representative structure must be considered, such as the political parties, gender and the farmers' proportional representation. The ethnic groups with a smaller population are also taken into account by the rules governing the structure. It is not realistic to have no proportional restriction. In some constituencies, the deputy quota is allocated to each township in line with the requirement for ethnic groups, gender, cadres, independent, or both female and ethnic groups. The quota enhances the deputies' universal representation and regional representation.

In addition, the “diversity” and “equal representation” of deputies are also considered to demonstrate consensual democracy in the LCPC:

The election of the deputies entails issues of diversity, such as age, gender, ethnicity and others. There are many restrictions in place. For example, I am a deputy of the agriculture sector⁴². However, my qualifications must include being a leading official at the level of section chief (*zhengkeji*, 正科级), Party member, and deputy of the previous term. Of all the public employees in our agriculture sector, only two possessed the requisite qualifications, and I was the one who was elected. But there are many who are better suited than I. I was chosen merely because my qualifications fit the criteria. A similar issue exists in the rural communities. For example, the previous deputies elected by the villagers were all male or all Party members. As a result, there are no deputies representing women or non-Party members. To ensure equal representation, the criteria for the current election are set as female, non-Party member and ethnic minority. Only if a candidate matches all three criteria can she participate as a candidate and have the right to be elected. When it comes to elections, the LCPC must ensure a reasonable structure that is diverse (Deputy 6).

The deputies know that their representation is specific and limited, and they believe that deputies must represent an interest group.

The deputies have some specific areas of representation, but the people they represent are limited. We cannot elect all the elite as deputies. We need to consider the structure [of representation] that has been set up for the deputies. No matter whether they are elite or not, they need to represent an interest group (Deputy 31).

The meaning of representation is still controversial: who represents and whom do they represent? (*shuidaibiao yu daibiaoshui*, 谁代表与代表谁) (L. Liu & He, 2013; L. Peng, 2015). Qiu (2010) argues that deputies in Chinese People’s Congresses actually undertake the “delegation” (*weitu*, 委托) of “multi-political entities” (*duochong zhengzhishiti*, 多重政治实体) (pp. 312-313) such as political parties, self-governance organisations and citizen groups. This multiplicity suggests a mechanism of “quota” (*ming’e fenpei*, 名额分配) (L. Peng, 2015, p.

⁴² The agriculture sector refers to several bureaux related to agriculture, water facilities, agricultural machinery, forestry and weather in Leishan County.

85)⁴³. While scholars such as L. Peng (2015) argue that the quota system affects the quality of deputies, and means that many deputies elected cannot effectively fulfil their responsibilities, the LCPC deputies interviewed for this study considered the role of quota as important to enhance universality and regionality:

In some constituencies, the deputy quota is allocated to each township in line with the requirement for ethnic groups, gender, cadres, independent, or both female and ethnic groups. The quota enhances the deputies' universal and regional representation (Deputy 30).

In the 16th LCPC, the representative structure of its 153 deputies covers six categories according to the current official scheme of classification: age, gender, education, Party status, ethnicity and social class (Table 10). The social class of the deputies reflects that they are from different social circles in terms of farmer, worker, intellectual, cadre, technician, serviceman and entrepreneur in the private sector. This representative structure shows the traditional representation of the LCPC deputies. The major groups distinguished from the six social classes in Leishan cover “all major social classes” (Y. N. Cho, 2009, p. 101) and these groups have their representatives. Those people who are new classes such as managers and consultants working in private enterprises and family businesses, and those who are freelance professionals are not represented in the structure of social classes.

For example, the category “farmer” only demonstrates a person’s status that s/he lives in rural area and holds a household registration book ⁴⁴that identifies him/her as farmer. Some deputies who are categorised as “farmers” (Table 10) are actually conducting other professions other than taking on agricultural production. For example, an interviewee who lives in a remote village is a Miao medicine practitioner. He makes a living by treating and curing patients. He has gained a reputation by this profession and has been elected the LCPC deputy for four terms. Another Miao deputy who lives in a village in a remote township is a successful businessman who runs a processing company. However, both of them are simply

⁴³L. Peng (2015) explains that the current quota of deputies is arranged according to a dual standard as *shenfen* (identity, 身份) and *hangye* (sector or industry, 行业). This arrangement results in a structure of comprehensive representation. As deputies represent many interests, their representation of identity can be vague.

⁴⁴ Before 1958, there was no strict system of household management and people could migrate freely in China. After the discussion in January 1958, the Permanent Committee of the National People’s Congress passed and implemented the Regulation on Household Registration in the People’s Republic of China. This rule strictly restricts the free migration of farmers from rural to urban areas and it builds a wall between the rural and the urban areas. A model of dichotomic economy is thus formed in China. This dichotomy results in seriously imbalanced development between the rural and urban areas.

listed in the category “farmer” in the name list for deputies. The groups of people such as doctors and medium-sized businessmen are not recognised in the representative structure. Therefore, these deputies officially represent farmers and so all others won’t be represented due to the current classification of representative structure and the concealment of the two deputies’ real representation.

Table 10: Representative structure of the 153 deputies in the 16th LCPC

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------|------------|-----------------------------|
| Age | 18-22 | 23-34 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55-59 | 60 or more | |
| | 0 | 35 | 69 | 37 | 7 | 5 | |
| | 0 | 22.9% | 45% | 24.2% | 4.6% | 3.3% | |
| Gender | Male | Female | | | | | |
| | 118 | 35 | | | | | |
| | 77% | 23% | | | | | |
| Ethnicity | Miao | Dong | Han | Shui | others | | |
| | 120 | 12 | 10 | 9 | 2 | | |
| | 78.4% | 7.8% | 6.5% | 5.9% | 1.4% | | |
| Education | Bachelor or higher | Diploma | Senior high school | Junior high school | Primary school | | |
| | 53 | 25 | 25 | 48 | 2 | | |
| | 34.6% | 16.3% | 16.3% | 31.4% | 1.4% | | |
| Party status | Party member | Non-Party member | | | | | |
| | 97 | 56 | | | | | |
| | 63.4% | 36.6% | | | | | |
| Social class | Farmer | Cadre | Intellectual | Technician | Worker | Serviceman | Entrepreneur private sector |
| | 74 | 41 | 17 | 14 | 4 | 2 | 1 |
| | 48.3% | 26.8% | 11.1% | 9.2% | 2.6% | 1.3% | 0.7% |

Source of data: The data in the tables (Tables 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17) in Section 5.2 of this chapter is from the unpublished governmental archives of the LCPC, except the data of total population of Leishan County in the last line in the above tables which are from the Family Planning Bureau of this county in 2014.

The deputies who are categorised into farmers conduct different professions such as doctor or businessman and they explained their profession in detail. They gained their reputation among the local people by the professions they are conducting, rather than as a farmer.

I have been elected to four terms since 1998. I am a doctor of Miao traditional medicine and enjoyed a good reputation among the villagers ... The villagers trust me very much which is why they elected me ... As deputy, I submitted two motions for the renovation of a primary school and the repair of a reservoir. Both

were adopted and implemented. But the state still needs to strengthen its establishment of public utilities (Deputy 14).

I am a businessman and I care only about whether what I am doing is beneficial or not..... I am a down-to-earth person. I don't have a high level of theoretical understanding. However, I love to guide the villagers to achieve wealth. I noticed that my village possesses the right conditions to plant *tianma*⁴⁵ due to our soil quality and climate ... I run a trading company, so that Tianma is sold to different places in China. The operation model is based on “company + base + cooperative agency” (Deputy 36).

The two Miao farmer deputies identify themselves as either doctor or businessman respectively, but they don't represent either the group of doctors or that of businessmen, instead, they represent farmers. These examples show that the current representative structure of the LCPC deputies needs to be more inclusive so that it can really reflect the interests and complaints of different social classes. This issue exists in other County People's Congresses (CPCs) in China. The Election Committee of CPCs is the legal institution which arranges the quota of deputies based on three principles for the equality of everyone, regional equality and ethnic equality⁴⁶ (Teng, 2011) according to the Law of Election. The arrangement of the quota by the Election Committee reflects its assurance of deputies' “identity” (*shenfen*, 身份), rather than their professions.

5.2.1 Age structure

The age structure of the deputies from the 13th to the 16th LCPC who represent different age groups from 18 to 60 years or more is shown in Table 11. There are no deputies younger than 18 years old, because a deputy must be 18 to be elected. The age group of 18-22 is poorly represented in the 13th and the 14th LCPC, with less than 1%; and has no seats in the 15th and the 16th, though its proportion in the total population is 6.0%. The seats of the age group of 23-34 in the LCPC match more or less its proportion in the total population. The three age

⁴⁵ The noun “*tianma*” (*gastrodia elata*, 天麻) means a kind of herb for processing traditional Chinese medicine.

⁴⁶ Teng (2011) states that besides the three principles, the Law of Election also regulates that all parties must have proper numbers in the Peoples' Congresses. For example, the sixth item of the Law says that there must be proper numbers of grassroots level deputies as worker, farmer and intellectual, as well as a proper number of women deputies and the proportion of women deputies should be gradually improved. The Law just regulates a proper number for each social class or each identity, but a specific number is not given. So in practice, the LPCs have autonomy to arrange a suitable quota for the deputies of each social class or identity.

groups, 35-44, 45-54, 54-59 have more seats than their proportion in the total population respectively; in particular, the seats of the two age groups, 35-44 and 45-54 are even double or triple their proportion in the total population. The people aged 60 or more have much less representation in the LCPC. They occupy less than 5% of the seats from the 13th to the 16th LCPC, but they make up 16.4% of the total population (Table 11).

Looking at the 16th LCPC in particular, the age groups of 35-44 and 23-34 account for 45% and 22.9% of the total 153 deputies respectively; and the age group of 45-54 accounts for 24.2%. By adding up all deputies between the age of 23 and 54, it is found that these deputies account for 92.1% of the total deputies. The general population between the age of 18 and 54 accounts for 80.8% of the total population. These figures demonstrate that the age structure of

Table 11: Representative structure by age from the 13th to the 16th LCPC

| Term | Total | 18 less | 18-22 | 23-34 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55-59 | 60 or more |
|---------------------------------|---------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|------------|
| The 13th (1998-2002) | 154 | 0 | 1 | 42 | 45 | 50 | 10 | 6 |
| | 100% | 0 | 0.6% | 27.3% | 29.2% | 32.5% | 6.5% | 3.9% |
| The 14th (2002-2006) | 145 | 0 | 1 | 25 | 68 | 43 | 5 | 3 |
| | 100% | 0 | 0.7% | 17.3% | 46.9% | 29.6% | 3.4% | 2.1% |
| The 15th (2006-2011) | 152 | 0 | 0 | 25 | 81 | 29 | 14 | 3 |
| | 100% | 0 | 0 | 16.4% | 53.3% | 19.1% | 9.2% | 2.0% |
| The 16th (2012-2016) | 153 | 0 | 0 | 35 | 69 | 37 | 7 | 5 |
| | 100% | 0 | 0 | 22.9% | 45% | 24.2% | 4.6% | 3.3% |
| Population | 165,640 | 44,066 | 10,109 | 33,719 | 26,090 | 19,840 | 4,592 | 27,224 |
| | 100% | 26.6% | 6.0% | 20.4% | 15.8% | 12.0% | 2.8% | 16.4% |

The population figures in this table and in the below tables are from the Family Planning Bureau of Leishan County (2014)

Note: When the researcher required the statistics for general population in the field, he was told that there was no such data. When he finished his fieldwork and returned to his thesis writing at Massey, he felt that he still needed the data to explain the deputies' structure of representation. So he contacted Leishan government authorities several times and was offered only the statistics of general population in 2014 from the Family Planning Bureau of Leishan County. He was also told that the figure of the general population in Leishan maintained more or less stable. So due to limited sources of this statistics and the said relatively stable figure of general population, the researcher has to use this figure of population in 2014 to explain, not precisely, but generally the representational structures of the deputies from Table 11 to Table 17.

the LCPC deputies is younger than the age structure of the population. Most of the deputies are in the prime of their lives. Compared to their higher occupation in the LCPC seats, the

same three age groups have a lower proportion in the total population, 20.4%, 15.8% and 12% respectively, 48.2% in all. This comparison demonstrates that the young adults in the county are more likely to participate in the local politics than the elderly. While adults in their prime occupy the majority of the seats in the LCPC, the seats occupied by the group aged 60 or more is only 3.3%, much less than its proportion of 16.4% in the total population. So the interests of elder people are less represented and their voices may not be heard due to their low occupation of seats in the 16th LCPC. This age structure can ensure the basic ability of deputies to play their roles and it is also in favour of the continuity and stability of the work of People's Congresses (L. Liu & He, 2013, p. 119).

5.2.2 Gender structure

The gender representation from the 13th to the 16th LCPC is uneven (Table 12). Male deputies are the majority of the LCPC. The women deputies' proportion in the LCPC is very low compared to that in the total population. There is no major increase in the proportion of women in the LCPC from the 13th to the current 16th terms. Women's lowest proportion is in the 13th LCPC, accounting for 18.2%; the highest is in the 14th LCPC, being 26.9%. In the 16th LCPC, the proportion of male deputies is 77% and that of female is only 23%. The female's low representation occurs despite special measures to ensure women are more included in the LCPC based on "quota" for enhancing "the deputies' universal and regional representation" (Deputy 30), and for an "equal representation" in gender, as Deputy 6 says:

Table 12: Representative structure by gender from the 13th to the 16th LCPC

| Term | Deputies | Male | Female |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| The 13th (1998-2002) | 154 100% | 126 81.8% | 28 18.2% |
| The 14th (2002-2006) | 145 100% | 106 73.1% | 39 26.9% |
| The 15th (2006-2011) | 152 100% | 121 79.6% | 31 20.4% |
| The 16th (2011-2016) | 153 100% | 118 77% | 35 23% |
| Total Population | 165,640 100% | 91,553 55% | 74,087 45% |

For example, the previous deputies elected by the villagers were all male or all Party members. As a result, there are no deputies representing women or non-Party members. To ensure equal representation, the criteria for the current election are set as female, non-Party member and ethnic minority. Only if a candidate matches all three criteria, can she participate (in the election) as a candidate and have the right to be elected (Deputy 6).

Even though there would be fewer women deputies in the LCPC without a quota, the quota⁴⁷ for women is still limited.

There is only one quota (for women) in this constituency. Of the three candidates, one lives too far away. Another has a lower education level than I. The villagers know me well, so they nominated and then elected me (Deputy 19).

In summary, the male-female proportion of the LCPC deputies doesn't match their respective proportion in the population of Leishan County. The total population of Leishan is 165,640 (Table 12), of which, 91,553 (55%) are male and 74,087 (45%)⁴⁸ are female. So the women are not well represented in the LCPC. Such underrepresentation suggests that women's voices are less likely to be heard and women's issues are less likely to be discussed. Therefore, their "participation in political affairs is very limited" and "more influence and action from women's organisations" is required (L. Chen, 2009, p. 112).

Female deputies identified a need for better representation in the LCPC in order to fully represent the rights of women and to address women-related development issues. The researcher has interviewed seven female deputies in the field, accounting for 18% of the 39 interviewees. Their various voices on gender-related development issues included maternity care, reproductive health of women, microloans and cultural tourism.

As a woman, I wish to manage all things like a mother. I care for both big and small things and I take better care. I view all things from a long perspective and

⁴⁷ With regard to their level of education and the numbers of female cadres in the government, the deputies in Leishan suggest that the "reasonable quota" of female deputies in the LCPC was around 25%, even though the female proportion accounts for 45% of its total population.

⁴⁸ Two reasons may explain women's uneven proportion in the total population of Leishan: (i) the change of statistic criteria. Previously, the population of a locality was counted by the certificate of household (CH). For example, if a woman's CH was in Leishan, even if she worked in some other area, she would be counted as a resident in Leishan. However, under present statistic system, if she works in other area rather than Leishan, even if her CH shows that she is a resident of Leishan, she won't be counted in the population of Leishan. Many Leishan women work in other areas such as coastal cities because there are more job opportunities. (ii) the tradition that "boys value more than girls". Although, this tradition has changed gradually, there are still many parents in rural areas who prefer boys to girls.

sometimes feel tired. Besides planning for overall development, I also need to complete some practical matters. I take care of more projects related to women such as maternity care. I serve as a means to enhance women's independence. I help them to get microloans and design their own industries. In addition, I help them to develop a harmonious family life. I help both the women and the men in families to jointly develop industry (Deputy 9).

As a female deputy, I pay more attention to the interests of women. I offer guidance to the women in my village about raising pigs ... My priorities are motions on maternity care and the reproductive health of women ... I organised some activities on Women's Day and I explain issues related to women to the villagers (Deputy 19).

As a female deputy, I pay special attention to the people's livelihood policies in areas of education and health. I tend to focus on women's projects and have formulated some activities to promote women's development ... Every year, I join the other deputies to submit one suggestion and sometimes one motion. I believe that I receive equal treatment to the male deputies. If there are good projects for women's development, I visit the female villagers to guide them in areas such as microloans and chicken-raising in the forest areas. I invite technicians and experts to run workshops for them (Deputy 29).

Before becoming a deputy, I only considered myself a female teacher and it was enough just to take care of my teaching ... As a Miao (female) deputy, I am aware that we need to develop the Miao culture with some distinctive features and to promote Miao culture-related tourism, so that our Miao culture can be recognised worldwide (Deputy 5).

I am a female deputy and deputy-head of the Township People's Government (TPG). While performing my duties I don't feel there are any differences compared to male deputies. The way I perform my duties depends on the local situation and what kind of projects the village needs. The projects I concern myself with are the construction of roads or maternity care. It depends on what the village needs (Deputy 17).

In the past, I have been a farmer, a teacher at a primary school and also a midwife ... I also gained the trust of the local people, who hold me in high regard.

As a result, they elected me. Now, as a deputy, I must provide a good model for them and follow the national policies (Deputy 12).

I am a teacher and am very active. If the people experience any difficulty, they will come to see me. I can say that I represent all the teachers in the community. I don't worry that I won't be elected. I took part in a competitive election, one in two. I was anxious about how I could represent more people. But after becoming a deputy, I understood that I should visit and communicate with people more often and in greater depth. Every time when there is a meeting in the LCPC, I understand that I should attend it with the voice of the people, not with that of myself (Deputy 24).

Besides considering the overall development of their localities, the women deputies promote women-related development projects such as maternity care (Deputy 9, 17) and microloans (Deputy 19), and the development projects that their community need (Deputy 17). Their voices demonstrate that they have various responsibilities and are involved in a wide range of tasks in terms of the domestic, productive and community development. Some women deputies plan to "set up a cooperative agency to unify all sellers in the village "to market their products together" (Deputy 19) which can expand the women's participation in local development, as L. Wang and Jiang (2007) argue that women have less communication and fewer social activities in rural cooperative agencies in China than men.

Although women deputies play an important role in local development, if there is no quota policy, the seats of women deputies are likely to be even fewer in the LCPC. None of the four terms of the LCPC shows that women deputies had reached the "33 percent quota" which Rai (2008, p. 376) argues is a bottom line "in order for women to be more than "tokens' in political institutions" and "a level of presence that cannot be overlooked by political parties".

In the traditional Miao society, women are respected very much and they have a higher status in their families.

Miao is still a matriarchal society. We respect woman very much in our society and women enjoy a higher status in our families (Deputy 1).

Women deputies played their roles in local development and they didn't feel any differences compared to male deputies (Deputy 17). Women have fewer representatives than men in the LCPC and this may demonstrate that they have less consciousness of political participation and the traditional sexism may also restrict their participation as that a woman's status is in

her family. In addition, the interviews with women deputies show that women may contribute more than men to become a deputy as they “wish to manage all things like a mother” (Deputy 9).

5.2.3 Ethnicity

Although Miao is the major ethnic group in Leishan, there are other ethnic groups (*shaoshu minzu*, 少数民族) in this county such as Dong, Han and Shui. J. Li (2011) argues that the governance of a multi-ethnic county relies on the common participation and deliberation of different ethnic groups, because their diverse cultures and interests determine that they may have different ways to pursue complaints or their interests. In the LCPC, each ethnic group has its own seats which generally fit to their proportion in the total population of the County. Ethnic representation of ethnic groups varies from the 13th to the 16th LCPC (Table 13). As the major ethnic group in Leishan, Miao occupy most of the LCPC seats.

Table 13: Representative structure by ethnicity from the 13th to the 16th LCPC

| Term | Total | Miao | Dong | Han | Shui | Others |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|
| The 13th (1998-2002) | 154 100% | 125 81.2% | 5 3.2% | 17 11.1% | 5 3.2% | 2 1.3% |
| The 14th (2002-2006) | 145 100% | 111 76.6% | 9 6.2% | 17 11.7% | 5 3.4% | 3 2.1% |
| The 15th (2006-2011) | 152 100% | 116 76.3% | 13 8.6% | 15 9.9% | 7 4.6% | 1 0.6% |
| The 16th (2011-2016) | 153 100% | 120 78.4% | 12 7.8% | 10 6.5% | 9 5.9% | 2 1.4% |
| Total population | 165,640 100% | 136,466 82.4% | 4,239 2.6% | 15,885 9.6% | 6488 3.9% | 2562 1.5% |

Miao deputies have the highest proportion at 81.2% in the 13th LCPC. The proportion of the seats which Miao holds in the 16th LCPC is a bit less than that of the total population, and accounts for 78.4% of the 153 deputies (120), with a proportion of 82.4% in the total population. But it occupies a major representation in the LCPC. Although Dong (the second biggest ethnic minority group in Leishan) has a lesser population, it always has more seats in the LCPC. In the 16th LCPC, Dong deputies have 12 seats, accounting for 7.8%, with its proportion of 2.6% in Leishan’s total population. The proportion of Han deputies is

fluctuating. Han accounts for 6.5% of the 16th LCPC deputies, but with a higher proportion in the total population. As Leishan is a Miao county, the other ethnicities become minority groups, rather than Miao. Of the total population of Leishan County, 82.4% is Miao people (Table 13).

The percentage 78.4 of Miao deputies as representatives is lower than the 82.4% proportion of Miao people in the population. Therefore, some deputies thought that the Miao people's representation in the LCPC is less in line with their proportion in the total population. One Miao deputy who worked as a professional deputy in the LCPC explained to the researcher during a dinner in the field research: "there are less Miao deputies compared to the proportion of Miao people in the total population, because there are fewer suitable Miao people who match the criteria of being a deputy".

The ethnic representation varies due to the limited quota, education and the proportion of one ethnic group in the total population. In Leishan County, Miao (82.4%) and other ethnic minority groups (8%: Dong 2.6%, Shui 3.9% and other 1.5%) account for 90.4% of its total population and Han accounts for 9.6%. Compared to its 6.5% proportion in the LCPC, the Han's representation is lower than its proportion in the total population. The population of Shui accounts for 3.9% in the total. However, it takes 9 seats in the 16th LCPC, accounting for 5.9% of the 153 deputies.

5.2.4 Education

From Table 14, we can see that the level of education of deputies has improved from the 13th to the 16th, with the increase of deputies who have a Bachelor or higher degree and the decrease of deputies who have the education of senior high and primary school. The proportion of deputies who have bachelor or higher education maintains continuously increasing, from 4.5% in the 13th LCPC to the 34.6% in the 16th LCPC. On the contrary, the deputies who have an education of senior high and primary school keeps decreasing from 31.2%, 33.1% and 13.6% in the 13th term to 16.3%, 31.4% and 1.4% in the 16th term respectively. The proportion of deputies who have a diploma is fluctuating from the 13th to the 16th term, with the highest proportion of 21.4% in the 14th and that of the 16th ranks only the third in the four terms. The deputies who have an education of junior high school increase to 37.9% in the 14th LCPC from that of 33.1% in the 13th LCPC, and keeps decreasing to 31.4% in the 16th LCPC.

Looking at the structure of education of deputies in the 16th LCPC, the deputies who have a Bachelor degree or higher and who have a diploma account for 34.6% and 16.3% respectively, their sum being just over 50% and reaching 50.9% (Table 14). The deputies who have a senior high school, junior high school and primary school education account for 16.3%, 31.4% and 1.4% respectively, which in sum is 49.1%. So nearly half of the 16th LCPC deputies do not have a university education. In some constituencies, a senior high school education is the highest.

For example, in the interview with Deputy 19, when the researcher asked her why she was the only person to be nominated, she answered:

I am well known in my village because I am the only woman in our age group who has a senior high school education.

Her level of education plays an important role in her nomination as the deputy candidate in her constituency. For these deputies who have a lower level of education, their representation and ability may be limited by their education in representing the people of their communities and in the management of state affairs.

Table 14: Representative structure of deputies by education from the 13th to the 16th LCPC

| Term | Deputies | Bachelor or higher | Diploma | Senior high school | Junior high school | Primary school |
|--|-------------|--------------------|-------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| The 13th (1998-2002) | 154 100% | 7 4.5% | 27 17.6% | 48 31.2% | 51 33.1% | 21 13.6% |
| The 14th (2002-2006) | 145 100% | 6 4.1% | 31 21.4% | 42 29.0% | 55 37.9% | 11 7.6% |
| The 15th (2006-2011) | 152 100% | 47 30.9% | 21 13.8% | 28 18.4% | 53 34.9% | 3 2.0% |
| The 16th (2012-2016) | 153 100% | 53 34.6% | 25 16.3% | 25 16.3% | 48 31.4% | 2 1.4% |

Note: In Table 14 (Education) and in the following Table 15 (Party status) and 16 (Social class), there is no statistics for total population. The Family Planning Bureau of Leishan County (FPBLC) explains that there is no such demographic statistics in the bureau, because FPBLC only conducts the basic statistics of population such as age (Table 11), gender (Table 12) and ethnicity (Table 13), and that based on townships (regional representation, Table 17).

The low level of education of some deputies has some drawbacks. Those deputies with limited education do not have the experience or skills to contribute widely to discussions concerning projects,

Many deputies don't have sufficient breadth and depth when they consider things. They have insufficient understanding of objective factors of matters and can't propose issues more comprehensively. They only propose concrete projects such as the construction of roads and housing. The deputies' educational level plays a major role in the execution of their responsibilities. It is unrealistic to expect a deputy to fully carry out his/her duties if s/he has a low education level (Deputy 30).

When the deputies play their roles in representing the local people, they face difficulty because of their quality (Deputy 6). The quality of the deputies includes two aspects: level of education and culture.

A deputy is a person who, in his representation of all people from one locality, will involve others in the management of state affairs. So the quality of the deputy is crucial and includes his/her culture and level of education (Deputy 6).

The culture of a deputy is important because it demonstrates the ability of a deputy to organise and coordinate, and his communication and management skills.

The ability to organise and coordinate, oral and written communication skills and management skills, all those align with cultural achievements of a deputy (Deputy 6)

They enjoy speaking freely when they represent the people. But the deputies need to strengthen their abilities in order to reflect the people's voice better. They especially need to strengthen their speaking ability (in a meeting or some specific occasion) on behalf of the people (Deputy 30).

If a deputy has a lack of education and culture, his representation may be compromised.

Every time when I listen to speeches given by deputies in the LCPC annual meetings, I feel they have many limitations. One may feel that they have broached issues well, but they do not go beyond that. For example, if a deputy finds that a road has been built badly, he or she may not establish a connection with the agriculture issues and water facilities. They just discuss the road issue

alone. This shows that their ability to participate in state affairs is compromised (Deputy 6).

From the deputies' interviews, it is found that the relatively low level of education is a barrier to successfully implement local governance. Although the responses of the deputies demonstrate the overwhelmingly negative influence of the low level of education, we can see there was a significant change in the proportion of the deputies who had a bachelor's degree or higher. This would surely suggest that the capacity of the deputies has increased substantially in the last ten years. This could also lead to a more effective performance of the roles of the deputies if we agree that higher level of education can help the deputies play their roles more effectively. However it was not possible to ascertain this more fully within the limits of time and research methods available.

The above quotes show that level of education and culture is a significant issue for the representation of the deputies. The data for the structure of education of the general population is not collected because the Family Planning Bureau of Leishan County didn't provide such data by its current statistical approach. Therefore, there is no comparison of diverse levels of education between the deputies and the general population.

5.2.5 Party status

There are only two divisions in terms of the structure of the Party status in the LCPC: Party members and non-Party members (Table 15). In the previous chapters, the researcher related that Leishan is an inland, remote and less developed county in Guizhou Province. This developmental backwardness means that there is a shortage of tertiary educated candidates for the LCPC. Nationally, besides the CCP, there are another eight parties traditionally called "Eight Patriotic and Democratic Parties"⁴⁹ in China.

In Leishan County, there are no members of any of these parties, because it is said that these parties require at least a degree of tertiary education for their membership. This high

⁴⁹ The eight patriotic and democratic parties in China include Revolutionary Committee of the Kuomintang, China Democratic League, China Democratic National Construction Association, China Association for Promoting Democracy, Chinese Peasants' and Workers' Democratic Party, Zhigongdang of China, Jiusan Society and Taiwan Democratic Self-Government League. Some members of these parties and some elites who have no party affiliation have been playing an active role in the Chinese central and local governments. Saich (2011, p. 214) introduces that "there were said to be 31,000 non-CCP members in government posts" at and above the county level with 177,000 representatives of the people's congresses at various levels being non-CCP members (SCMP, 16 November 2007).

threshold prevents people, especially the ethnic minorities in the rural areas who have lower education from becoming these parties' members.

Table 15: Party status of deputies from the 13th to the 16th LCPC

| Term | Deputies | Party member | Non-party member |
|-----------------------------|-------------|--------------|------------------|
| The 13th (1998-2002) | 154 100% | 97 63% | 57 37% |
| The 14th (2002-2006) | 145 100% | 86 59.3% | 59 40.7% |
| The 15th (2006-2011) | 152 100% | 99 65% | 53 35% |
| The 16th (2012-2016) | 153 100% | 97 63.4% | 56 36.6% |

From the 13th to the 16th LCPC (Table 15), we can see that the Party members occupy the majority of the seats. The proportion of the Party members in the LCPC matches the level that the Party members of the People's Congresses at different levels and should be: more than 50% and no more than 65% according to the law.

The Party members' proportion of the total population was 6% in 2012.⁵⁰ The dominant proportion of the Party members remains unchanged (Table 15) from the 13th to the 16th LCPCs, with the highest proportion 65% in the 15th LCPC and the lowest 59.3% in the 14th LCPC. Of all the deputies in the 16th LCPC, 63.4 % are the Party members and 36.6 % are non-Party members. Party members are the majority in the LCPC and the Party controls the People's Congress. In addition, according to the collected data in the field research, those who work in the 16th LCPC as professional deputies are all Party members. Therefore, by controlling majorities in the County People Congresses, the Party can "make sure that its principles and line are implemented" and "its policies are transformed into the people's will" (Jieni Guo, 2010, p. 149).

The high proportion of the Party members gives the Party a strong political influence in the LCPC. Furthermore, the Party has its branches at the village level, which are regarded as the villages' "leadership core" (T. Shi, 2000, p. 5). In each administrative village, there is one Village Party Branch (VPB). Some secretaries of the VPB are deputies of the LCPC. Of all

⁵⁰ There are no statistics of Party members in the total population in Leishan County. However, the national average data shows that the proportion of Party members in the total national population is 6% (2012). In 2012, the Party members are 8.3 million and the total population is 1.39 billion according to the statistics in the web link: <http://news.sina.com.cn/c/sd/2013-05-18/200827161689.shtml>

the 153 deputies in the 16th LCPC, 12 of them are secretaries of Party Village Branch, accounting for 7.8% of the total. By its domination in the People's Congress and its command over villages, the Party ensures that its principles, line and policies can be fully transmitted to the deputies.

5.2.6 Social class

While understanding that along with its economic development and social transformation, “the division and flowing of social classes in China are accelerating and the characteristics of worker, farmer, cadre and intellectual has become vague” (L. Liu & He, 2013, p. 131), the researcher still uses the current structures in this chapter and in the later chapters to explain the representative structure. The intellectual refers to school educators. By studying the structure of the deputies' social classes (Table 16) from the 13th to the 16th LCPC, the classes include farmer, cadre, intellectual, technician and worker. Farmers, cadres and intellectuals occupy the top three of the deputies in the four LCPC terms.

Table 16: Representative structure of deputies by social class from the 13th to the 16th LCPC

| Term | Deputies | Farmer | Cadre | Intellectual | Technician | Worker | Serviceman | Entrepreneur |
|----------------------|----------|--------|-------|--------------|------------|--------|------------|--------------|
| The 13 th | 154 | 76 | 52 | 16 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| | | 49.4% | 33.8% | 10.4% | 3.2% | 3.2% | / | / |
| The 14 th | 145 | 79 | 49 | 8 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| | | 54.5% | 33.8% | 5.5% | 4.8% | 1.4% | / | / |
| The 15 th | 152 | 75 | 52 | 19 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| | | 49.3% | 34.2% | 12.5% | 1.3% | 2.7% | / | / |
| The 16 th | 153 | 74 | 41 | 17 | 14 | 4 | 2 | 1 |
| | | 48.3% | 26.8% | 11.1% | 9.2% | 2.6% | 1.3% | 0.7% |

From the 16th LCPC, the high proportion of 48.3% farmers within its deputies reflects that Leishan is a developing and agricultural county. Its industry is much less developed with the proportion of workers (in state-owned sector) and entrepreneurs (in private sector) accounting for 2.6% and 0.7% respectively, only 3.3% in sum. Farmers account for 70% of Leishan's population, but the farmer has less representation in the LCPC. The second rank is cadre which occupies 26.8% of the total deputies. The proportion of cadre deputies in the 16th LCPC is less compared with the higher average proportion of the officials (cadres) which Jieni Guo (2010, p. 150) puts at between 40-50%”, in the People's Congresses in China, and

some “even high to 60%” The professional deputies in the LCPC, Party secretaries at township and county levels, government officials at county and township levels are cadres. Here cadres refer to officials or civil servants.

Cadres are the group of deputies who hold real power because of their government employment and can shift the allocation of resources. Compared to the lower proportion of cadres of national average in the total population, the occupation of 26.8% in the deputies is much higher. The similar situation exists in other CPCs, so the deputies of these CPCs are called “representatives of officials” (Feng, 2006, p. 30), rather than representatives of their communities. The researcher didn’t find statistics of cadres (civil servants) in the total population in Leishan County. The number of cadres nationwide cannot be found as well. However, the estimated number of cadres nationwide (2014) according to the estimation of Chinese netizens is about 40 million, so that the proportion of cadres in the total population of 1.39 billion is about 2.9%.

5.2.7 Status of professionalisation

“Specialisation” (professionalisation) signifies that the “only profession of deputies must be representing the interests and will of people” (Lu, 2007, p. 60). Therefore, except People’s Congresses, deputies cannot work in other governmental organs. Any concurrent work (*jianzhi*, part time, 兼职) undertaken by deputies causes many malpractices such as the “lack of professional quality” and “role conflicts” (Xi wang, 2008, p. 29), and “low awareness of duties of representation” (Lu, 2007, p. 58). This is because non-professional deputies have less time and they cannot make themselves concentrate on listening to and representing the interests of the communities. This results in a scarcity of “authentic and reliable information” (X. Xie, 2006, p. 5) which can help achieve a more inclusive political governance with different interests.

There is no category for professional and non-professional deputies in the current representative structure. Only the deputies who work in the People’s Congress system are looked upon as professional deputies. In the 16th LCPC and its township branches, there are a total of 16 professional deputies and 137 are non-professional deputies who don’t work in the LCPC system. The professionals account for 10.5% of the total. Those non-professional deputies account for 89.5%. The professionals and non-professionals have their own merits and faults, as Deputy 39 described in the interview:

Professional deputies have a higher level of working standards and possess a better large-scale sense than the non-professional deputies. The deputies who work in the People's Congress are actually professional deputies. However, they have a weaker mass (local people) foundation than the non-professionals. The non-professionals are from the masses. They work and live with the masses, so they have a stronger representation than the professionals and they understand better the demands of the masses. But in terms of their command (*zhangkong*, 掌控) of the situation at the macro level, the non-professionals have a weaker sensibility. Therefore, each time there is an election in the constituency, you can see both phenomena. On one hand, you can see the local people elect their own deputies from their locality; on the other hand, there are the cadres / officials / employees from the government (Party or People's Congress) organ who are seconded (*xiadao*, 下到) to the constituency. As a result, there are both professional and non-professional deputies in one constituency. The merits and faults complement each other (Deputy 39).

Professionalisation of the deputies is a reform direction for the People's Congresses in China and it can "guarantee the authenticity and universality of democracy" (Qingru Wu, 2014, p. 146). In recent years, the favour of the professionalisation of deputies has been heard among scholars, the staff members and researchers in the People's Congresses and the common people. They call for a transformation of deputies from a "symbolic position" (*xuzhi*, 虚职) to a "real position" (*shizhi*, 实职). In addition, they suggest that the work status of deputies should be changed from part time (*jianzhi*, concurrent, 兼职) to full time (*zhuanzhi*, professional 专职), because the part time status produces a conflict of roles as (Yong Wang, 2004) argues:

Part time (non-professional status) system of the deputies produces frequent conflicts of roles which the deputies play. As a result, a stable and long-term role expectation for the deputies cannot be formed. The part time system usually correlates with regional representation. Therefore, the deputies often face the demands for regional multi-interests. What follows next is that they are trapped in the difficulty that they have few ways to express the interests of their constituents (p. 63).

There are millions of deputies at different levels of People's Congresses and the majority of them are non-professionals. Therefore, the professionalisation of deputies seems to be unfeasible for the less developed areas of China like Leishan due to fiscal restriction (Zou, 2008).

5.2.8 Regional representation

Like the categorisation of professional or non-professionals, the structure of regional representation of deputies is also neglected in the statistics of deputies. In order to conduct an overall analysis of the representative structure, there needs to be consideration of regional representation of the deputies. There are nine townships in Leishan County. Each of its townships has its own constituencies and deputies. The principle of “regional fairness and equality” is practiced in the arrangement of quota. The representative structure by regional representation (Table 17) is in general, fair. The proportion of deputies in each township mostly matches its proportion in the total population. In Town 5 (Table 17), the proportion of 9.8% of its deputies is much lower than its 15.2% proportion in total population, 5.4% lower.

Table 17: Representative structure by regional representation from the 13th to the 16th LCPC

| Term | Total | Town1 | Town2 | Town3 | Town4 | Town5 | Town6 | Town7 | Town8 | Town9 |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| The 13th (1998-2002) | 154 100% | 45 29.2% | 23 15.0% | 23 15.0% | 11 7.1% | 13 8.4% | 14 9.1% | 10 6.5% | 9 5.8% | 6 3.9% |
| The 14th (2002-2006) | 145 100% | 27 18.6% | 24 16.6% | 24 16.6% | 11 7.6% | 15 10.3% | 15 10.3% | 11 7.6% | 11 7.6% | 7 4.8% |
| The 15th (2006-2011) | 152 100% | 31 20.3% | 26 17.1% | 26 17.1% | 10 6.6% | 15 9.9% | 15 9.9% | 10 6.6% | 11 7.2% | 8 5.3% |
| The 16th (2011-2016) | 153 100% | 31 20.1% | 26 17.0% | 26 17.0% | 12 7.8% | 15 9.8% | 15 9.8% | 10 6.6% | 11 7.3% | 7 4.6% |
| Total Population | 165,640 100% | 33,208 20.0% | 28,475 17.2% | 26,800 16.2% | 10,632 6.4% | 25,156 15.2% | 14,801 8.9% | 9,395 5.7% | 11,187 6.8% | 5,986 3.6% |

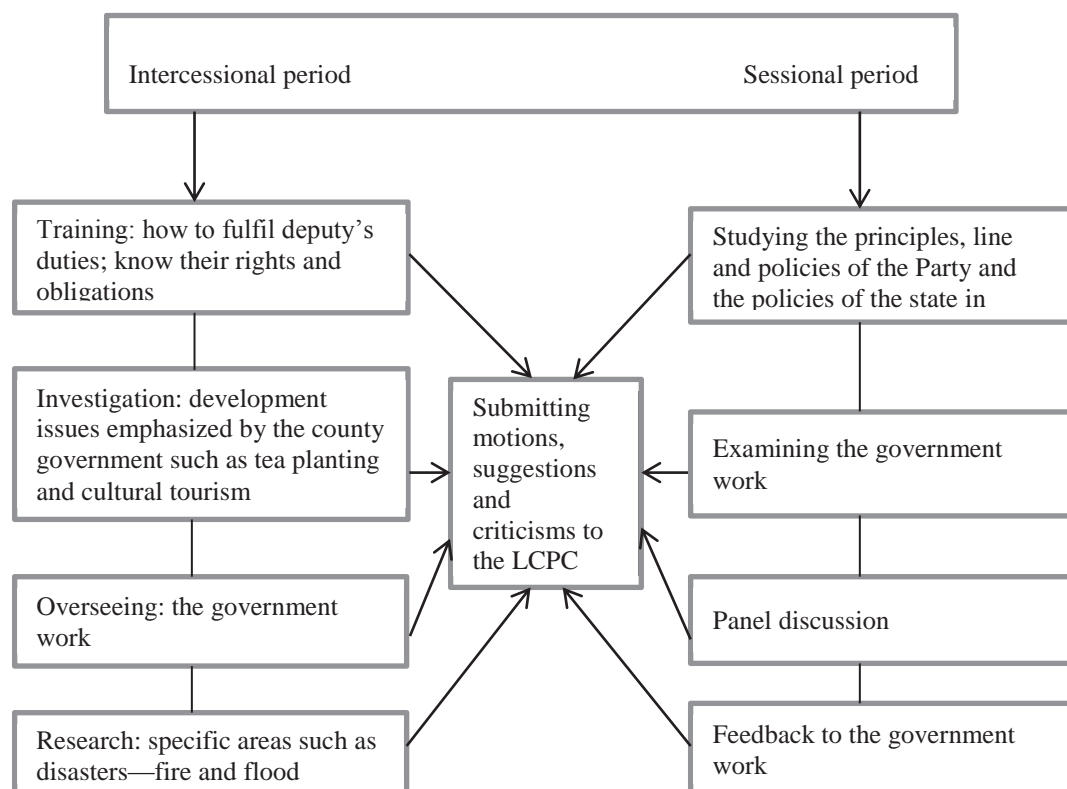
5.3 Representation of the LCPC deputies in their political activities

Constitutionally, the County People's Congress is the highest decision-making (legislative) body in the counties of China. It has 15 functions including “administratively supervising the county government, discussing and deciding county government policies concerning local

political, economic, educational, and cultural developments” (Zhong, 2003, p. 62). Therefore, the LCPC deputies are allowed legally to be involved in development policies and projects. The deputies play their roles in representing the interests of the state and the community through the submission of motions and suggestions to the LCPC. Then they wait for the responses from the government. In order to know why and how the deputies submit motions and suggestions to achieve their political and ethnic representation, it is important to know their activities in both the intercessional and sessional periods (Figure 2).

In the intercessional period (Figure 2), the deputies accept training organised by the LCPC so that their ability to play their roles can be improved as soon as possible (Zou, 2008) as many of them have no experience in acting as a deputy. They accept training so that they know “how to communicate with the local people” (Deputy 8) and they know their rights and obligations better and learn how to represent the voice of people.

Figure 2: Activities of the LCPC deputies



Source of Figure 2: This is drawn by the researcher through the collected data in the field research in the interviews with the deputies on how they play their roles in representing the state and the community.

The LCPC often organises training for the deputies, in particular during the first year of their term in office. They are directed to see how the former deputies play their roles and how to visit the villagers and listen to them. The purpose of the training is to teach them how to play their roles and to know their rights and obligations. They will learn how to represent the voice of people and how to mobilize the people. They will also learn how to lead the people in handling development projects, for example, the wheres and hows of tea planting (Deputy 32). More importantly, in the intercessional period, the deputies are organised by the LCPC to do two types of investigation according to the unpublished report of the LCPC work (LCPC, 2013, July).

(i) The LCPC organises the deputies to investigate the implementation of laws to carry out their oversight role. These laws include Compulsory Education Law, Employment Promotion Law and Law of Urban and Rural Planning.

(ii) The LCPC organises the deputies to investigate the development of key industries including tea industry and tourism and solicits their opinions.

In this process, the deputies' understanding of government work is increasing and they are able to strengthen their understanding of their role in supervising the government. They regard the investigations as the demonstration of their representation: representing the interests of the local people.

I conduct investigations into public opinions in areas of benefits to the people and analyse and submit them to the government for implementation. I make full use of the annual meeting to propose suggestions, describe criticisms and report the truth which I uncover in the process of investigation. That is my understanding of representation and representing the interests of the people (Deputy 33).

I also organise specific investigations into issues emphasized by the county government. We visit the villagers to understand their views and to see whether the government does sufficient work when it comes to some typical issues. The duties of the deputies are difficult and varied (Deputy 8).

In most situations, it is a combination of investigation and research when the deputies visit their constituencies. An investigation normally means knowing whether issues exist in an area; as research normally signifies that there are issues in an area and research is needed on how to solve them. The combination of investigation with research helps the deputies understand the issues in both broader and more in-depth ways. So when the deputies submit

the motions and suggestions, they know what their objectives are. Therefore, most of their motions reflect the “real situation” and “real issues” (Deputies 1, 8, 16, 21) and demands of the local people.

Following their investigation and research, the deputies submit motions and suggestions relating to different development issues to the LCPC in both intercessional and sessional periods (Figure 2). Those motions relate to many development issues such as transportation, preferential policies, livelihood projects, obligatory education, unsupervised children and ageing people.

Prior to submitting motions, I visit the constituency to know the local needs. Then, we deputies at the county level in the township meet to select an issue in common to include in the motion ... Each year I submit two or three motions that represent local interests, such as the development of transportation. I go to the constituency to listen to the local people and summarize their suggestions in a report about the local situation. The report may concern the development of tourism. I then submit the report to the People’s Congress. Besides the local interests, there is also the issue of laws and regulations (Deputy 7).

I always consider how I can provide better service to the local people. I really hope that I can contribute to my hometown and submit motions on policies which will benefit our locality and our people. How can the local people have a better life? If different constituencies have the same issue, we can make a joint motion to ensure it will become a focal point of interest of the government (Deputy 35).

I submit motions relating to the people’s livelihood. Some motions have met with a response and have been implemented (Deputy 27).

The motions that I submit are related to senior high school education. I am planning to promote and submit a motion on popularising compulsory senior high school education to safeguard against students dropping out. Through this motion, we hope that we can gain an exemption for the tuition and textbook costs for those poor students in the senior high school. Finally, we hope that compulsory senior high school education can be practiced widely (Deputy 35).

I submit motions related to unsupervised children and the elderly and I hope that the government can find a solution for these issues as soon as possible. I visit the

poverty-stricken families and report their difficulties and seek a comprehensive solution. I often report issues that our villagers face to the LCPC (Deputy 38).

In the sessional period (Figure 2), the deputies who are permanent members of the Permanent Committee of the LCPC have a one-day meeting at least every quarter of a year to discuss important issues related to development, government work and the appointment or removal of officials. In these meetings in the sessional period, the deputies express criticisms over the government work. The complaints that the researcher observed were about the strategic development proposals made by the CPC and the CPG. For example, tea planting was seriously criticised because the deputies believed that as a pillar industry, the tea planting and processing haven't developed well due to "inappropriate management" and "rigidly uniform policy". They argued that the input of time, energy and funding from the government doesn't bring adequate benefits for the county and its people.

All the deputies attend the plenary session of the LCPC which is normally held in January or February before the Spring Festival. This is an arena where they meet each other and study the Party's central principles, line and policies. They are entrusted with "developing a hegemony of discussion and transmitting the central spirit" (K. J. O'Brien, 1994a, p. 359). Once the session ends, they visit their constituencies from time to time with the idea to transmit the principles of the Party and the policies of the state.

Every time when I attend a LCPC meeting, I study the Party principles and State policies. I promote the principles and policies. Generally speaking, the state policies are multi-dimensional and good. However, some policies are partial (Deputy 22).

I attend the LCPC meetings twice a year and play a role in examining the work of the government. I have a better understanding of the state policies and understand what I need to promote (Deputy 35).

The deputies examine the report of the government in the plenary session. They have panel discussions and give feedback on the government work. They investigate development issues emphasised by the county government such as ethnic culture tourism and tea planting and they submit various motions after their investigation in intercessional periods. These motions demonstrate how the deputies represent the interests of communities in all. Furthermore, they also demonstrate how the deputies represent the interests of the state, because the deputies say that the interests of the state and the communities match and supplement each other.

Both the state and the community interests are consistent with each other. They do not contradict each other. One can draw an analogy with the palm and the back of the hand: neither one nor the other is more important. On the contrary, both are equally important. The decisions of the Party and the government are in accordance with the interests of the people; they do not violate these interests (Deputy 1).

When I help the community, I am in fact helping to implement State policies. The interests of the state and the community match each other. This is due to the fact that the essence of State policies, such as the industrial development in the township, aims to make the local people become rich quickly (Deputy 9).

The interests of the state represent the interests of the majority of the people. The interests of the constituents are one and the same as the state interests. ... When individual interests are damaged, the state interests are also damaged. The same is true for the interests of the constituents. Their relationship is complementary, rather than conflictual (Deputy 23).

In the following section of this chapter, the researcher explains the motions submitted by the deputies from the year 2012 to 2014. The researcher has explained (Section 3.7.2 in Chapter Three) that the People's Congress system is set up under the ideal model "consensual democracy" in which both the interests of the state and the community supplement and match each other in an inclusive pluralism. So in the motions submitted by the deputies, they believe that the deputy is "a link" between the state and the people (Deputies 6, 8, 10). Therefore, in their motions, they are playing both roles as promoting the development projects under the development plan of the state and representing the community to draw the attention of the CPG to implement those development projects without delay. The interests of the state and the community are the one under their traditional idea of consensual democracy as Deputy 26 says:

One's personal quality is very important as a deputy. The people can not only elect a deputy, but also dismiss him. A deputy needs to execute the Party's principles and policies and uphold the people's benefits.

5.4 Analysis of development projects in the submitted motions

The deputies submit motions and suggestions⁵¹ to the LCPC twice a year. Submitting motions is one of the main duties that the deputies fulfil. The deputies intervene in and restructure development projects by submitting motions. They play their role as “policy providers” (Y. N. Cho, 2009, p. 98)⁵², rather than policy-makers in this way. In this research, the motions submitted by the 16th LCPC deputies from the year 2012 to 2014 are analysed.

5.4.1 Motions submitted by numbers of deputies

The motions are submitted by one deputy or a group of deputies. A government official attends the LCPC bi-monthly meeting to report the situation of motion transaction to the deputies who are the permanent members of the Standing Committee (See Section 4.10: purposive observation in Chapter Four). According to the regulation, ten or more deputies should jointly submit a motion (Table 18). In practice the operation is more flexible.

The LCPC accepts motions submitted by a single deputy because they can collect more views and opinions from the deputies and they can encourage the deputies as some of them may be “inactives” and “essentially have no role perception” (K. J. O'Brien, 1994a, p. 365) in playing their roles. The LCPC also accepts motions submitted by fewer than ten deputies and more than one deputy, because some towns (See 17) have fewer than ten deputies due to the proportion of their population. If the LCPC were to execute the regulation rigidly, there wouldn't be motions from those small towns⁵³. A joint motion with deputies in other towns requires much coordination, communication and discussion between deputies in different constituencies. In addition, there is no internet in the remote areas where some deputies live

⁵¹ One deputy explained the difference between a motion and a suggestion in the interview, “normally, I write down their complaints and submit them to the LCPC during the annual meeting. If it's not a serious issue, we submit a suggestion. If it's an important issue, we submit a motion. The government responds to every suggestion or motion we submit” (Deputy 20). For simplicity, motions and suggestions are briefly called “motions” in this chapter and in the following chapters.

⁵² Cho (2009, p. 98) argues that policy-providing means that the deputies “provide governments with policy proposals on important matters, and that they can sometimes make government implement their proposals by means of decisions and resolutions that have the same legal effect as local laws in a given region”. Here, the proposals refer to motions.

⁵³ In July 2015, the researcher has been told that the two smallest towns in population in Leishan County have been merged into a bigger one. The reason given is that the local authorities pay attention to the issues that resources need to be integrated for economic development. There are now 17 deputies in this new town, instead of the previous 10 and 7 deputies respectively (See Table 17). So the deputies can submit joint motions in accordance with the law.

and work. Deputy 22 stated: “in the rural areas, we have water, electricity and roads, but we don’t have Internet”. This situation makes it difficult to organise a group of 10 or more deputies to submit a motion.

In Table 18, we can see that the motions in 2012, 2013 and 2014 for the deputies in the 16th LCPC are 164, 121 and 101 respectively. The duration of one term for deputies is five years. 2012 is the first year of the term for the 16th LCPC deputies. There are more motions in 2012 compared to the other two years and the number of motions decreases from 2012 to 2014. In 2012 and 2013, there are more motions jointly submitted by two or more deputies which are 57.7% and 62% respectively. Under the local political culture, as the newly elected, the deputies may feel that they need to submit a joint motion for political communication and for friendship in the first two years. In 2014, there were more motions submitted by a single deputy because of their part-time status and the higher cost for a joint motion due to poor transportation and lack of access to internet in the locality.

Table 18: Motions submitted by the numbers of deputies from 2012 to 2014

| Year | Motions | One deputy | 2-5 deputies | 6-9 deputies | 10 or more deputies |
|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|
| 2012 | 164 100% | 70 42.3 % | / | 66 57.7% | |
| 2013 | 121 100% | 46 38% | 19 15.7% | 27 22.3% | 29 24% |
| 2014 | 101 100% | 72 71.3% | 16 15.8% | 3 3.0% | 10 9.9% |

Source of data: The data in the tables (Table 18, 19 & 20) in Section 5.4 in this chapter are arranged from the unpublished governmental archives of Leishan County People’s Government.

The deputies are included in the local bureaucratic system. Therefore, they can enjoy some privileges according to the opinions of a few local people from the conversation that the researcher had with them about the deputies. Even if a deputy is neither an incumbent official nor professional deputy, s/he can submit motions alone. Therefore, the interests of a small group that the deputy may represent can be represented in the motions.

5.4.2 Explanation of development projects in the motions

Deputies intervene in and restructure development projects by submitting motions. The development projects they are involved in include six categories (Table 19) from the year 2012 to 2014: construction of infrastructure, industrial development, the establishment of a well-off society, education, finance and capacity building. Of all the development projects in the six categories, construction of infrastructure ranks the first in any of the three years. Industrial development and establishment of a well-off society ranks the second and the third respectively in the year 2013 and 2014. The top three categories are considered by the deputies as “hardware” (*yingjian*, 硬件). They believe that the realisation of wealth relies on the improvement and perfection of the local hardware. The other two categories related to development projects are education and finance. The category which had the least motions in the three years was capacity building.

The deputies think that the backwardness of their locality is due to the dearth of infrastructure such as transportation, public facilities and agricultural and water facilities (Table 20). The construction of infrastructure still remains a hard task for the locality as it is generally believed to be the main reason which restrains the economic development of a locality by the deputies and the local people. The motions that the deputies submitted to the LCPC in 2013 are used for a detailed explanation of this preference. The motions submitted by the deputies are diverse. They are divided into 4 groups (Table 20) as A, B, C or D based on the outcome: A, transacted; B, underway; C, accepted but unresourced; D, noted but not actioned⁵⁴.

Of all 121 motions in 2013, we can see that 36 of them are listed in A, transacted; 65 of them are in B group, underway; 16 of them are in C group, can't be transacted due to the county's limited resources and they will be dealt with in the future. Four motions are noted by the government, which means the government knows there are such motions and they cannot or don't need to be actioned at county level. These motions were submitted in February 2013 and the government responded to them in September 2013, six months after the submission. There were 101 motions in Group A and B (Group A, 36; Group B, 65), accounting for the

⁵⁴ Group D was explained by the fourth meeting of the 15th LCPC (29 June 2010, the document can be offered upon request) as the follows: Although these motions concern people's livelihood, they don't conform to the current state policy; some of them need to be solved by villagers themselves; some of them don't match the county's reality; some of them haven't been investigated carefully and the issues addressed relating to repetitive construction. Therefore, these motions can only be regarded as a reference. About Group D, see also Section 4.10 in Chapter Four.

absolute majority of the motions. On face value, the government appears highly efficient, because it actioned 85% of the motions.

There are 62 motions on the construction of infrastructure (Table 20). This figure demonstrates that in a poor county like Leishan, the focus of the deputies is still on the modernisation of the county's hardware. The county put agricultural development and cultural tourism as its development strategies in the following years, thus, the construction of its infrastructure, in particular, the transportation network becomes extremely significant. As they say:

The villagers come to my office usually on rural market days. Most of the issues they report are about the construction of infrastructure such as roads, and agricultural and drinking water facilities (Deputy 33).

Table 19: Development projects in the motions by category submitted by the 16th LCPC deputies
(from 2012 to 2014)

| Year | Category | | | | | | |
|-------------|-------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-------------------|
| | Motions | Construction of infrastructure | Industrial development | Establishment of well-off society | Education | Finance | Capacity building |
| 2012 | 164 100% | 74 45.1% | 24 14.7% | 32 19.5% | 20 12.2% | 9 5.5% | 5 3.0% |
| 2013 | 121 100% | 62 51.2% | 19 15.7% | 15 12.4% | 13 10.8% | 8 6.6% | 4 3.3% |
| 2014 | 101 100% | 51 50.5% | 18 17.8% | 12 11.9% | 9 8.9% | 8 7.9% | 3 3.0% |

If industry is to develop, transportation must be developed first. We have a villager who plants plum trees. However, there is no road into the village. When the plums were carried out by hand, they rotted. So we need to develop transportation first (Deputy 7).

The task remains challenging for the county's deputies and its strategy-planners. The Party Committee of the County and the County People's Government. In Table 20, we can see that of the 30 motions relating to transportation, only two of them are in Group A, transacted; 21 are in Group B, underway. Three are in Group C and four are in Group D.

There are 19 motions related to industrial development. Tea industry and cultural tourism rank the first and the second in this category, each with seven and six motions respectively.

Leishan is an agricultural county and it lies in the upper reaches of the Yangtze River where any industry which may cause pollution is not allowed for the protection of its water source. Its economic development relies on agriculture and its ethnic cultural tourism. Any mining or other industries such as a paper mill may cause the destruction of the ecology and the degradation of its weak environment. So in industrial development, mining is not a development priority. The only motion relating to mining is listed in group C, accepted but unresourced.

Table 20: Categories of motions submitted in 2013 and the government's responses

| Category | Motions | A | B | C | D |
|--|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Construction of infrastructure | 62 | 10 | 39 | 9 | 4 |
| Transportation (roads) | 30 | 2 | 21 | 3 | 4 |
| Public facility | 12 | 4 | 6 | 2 | |
| Agricultural and water facility | 11 | 3 | 5 | 3 | |
| Drinking water facility | 4 | 1 | 3 | | |
| Fire control facility | 3 | | 2 | 1 | |
| Construction of office building | 2 | | 2 | | |
| Industrial development | 19 | 9 | 8 | 2 | |
| Tea industry | 7 | 7 | | | |
| Cultural Tourism | 6 | 1 | 4 | 1 | |
| Farming and animal husbandry | 5 | 1 | 4 | | |
| Mining | 1 | | | 1 | |
| Establishment of well-off society | 15 | 3 | 10 | 2 | |
| Migrants and displacement | 4 | 1 | 2 | 1 | |
| Rural-urban integration | 3 | | 2 | 1 | |
| Housing-related livelihood | 3 | 1 | 2 | | |
| Medical care | 2 | 1 | 1 | | |
| Establishing well-off townships | 1 | | 1 | | |
| Unsupervised children | 1 | | 1 | | |
| Forest rights | 1 | | 1 | | |
| Education | 13 | 6 | 7 | | |
| All motions submitted by Education Bureau of the County | 13 | 6 | 7 | | |
| Finance | 8 | 4 | 1 | 3 | |
| All motions submitted by Financial Bureau of the County | 8 | 4 | 1 | 3 | |
| Capacity building | 4 | 4 | | | |
| Personal arrangement | 2 | 2 | | | |
| Training for deputies | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Establishing new institution | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Total | 121 | 36 | 65 | 16 | 4 |

The deputies believe that cultural tourism is the way forward for the ethnicity of Miao people. There are no motions directly relating to ethnicity of Miao people. Only if it is involved in

economic development, does the issue of ethnic identity become crucial, as the Miao deputies say:

As a Miao deputy, I am aware that we need to develop the Miao culture with some distinctive features and to promote Miao culture-related tourism, so that our Miao culture can be recognised worldwide (Deputy 5).

I think that the development of cultural tourism is very important. The development of tourism will bring more benefits to the local people (Deputy 24).

The competition for economic development by tourism may fragment the whole Miao community, as each village in the community competes for attracting more tourists.

Our villages have some very good cultural attractions and we have a lot of tourists both domestically and from abroad. However, the tourism in our township has been weakened because of the development of tourism in Xijiang. We need to find a way to catch up with them. I actively communicate with my villagers on matters of the development of tourism and the construction of hotels and guest houses (Deputy 7).

The situation is not limited to this. In Miao townships, the local Miao people are divided due to their different requests for economic interests from the development of cultural tourism.

Due to the fast-paced development of cultural tourism in this township, the people are divided into different interest groups (Deputy 28).

The tourism industry in our county has made great strides. However, it cannot compare with other counties where tourism is more advanced. The development of tourism can't be separated out from the deputies' overall efforts (Deputy 30).

There are 15 motions in the category of establishment of well-off society, three being in group A, ten in B and two in C respectively. The establishment of well-off society remains a long-term task as the county is still one of the poorest counties in China. The county has to face issues in terms of migrants and displacement, rural-urban integration, housing-related livelihood, medical care, establishing well-off townships, unsupervised children and forest rights. There are 13 motions relating to education, seven have been implemented, listed in A and six are underway, listed in B. The fewest motions are "capacity building". This includes two motions for personal arrangement, one for the training of deputies and one for establishing new institutions.

In the category of capacity building, only one motion is related to the training of deputies. This discloses the issue that under the current system in which most of deputies are not professionals, the improvement of their abilities are still not at the top agenda of the deputies, even if the quality of deputies influences their ability to participate in state affairs as Deputy 6 said:

Every time when I listen to speeches given by deputies in the LCPC annual meetings, I feel they have many limitations. One may feel that they have broached issues well, but they do not go beyond that. For example, if a deputy finds that a road has been built badly, he or she may not establish a connection with the agriculture issues and water facilities. They just discuss the road issue alone. This shows that their ability to participate in state affairs is compromised. The capacity building of the deputies is a significant issue.

5.5 Conclusion

The representative structure of the deputies demonstrates an institutional framework under the local governance system in which the deputies play their roles in representing the interests of the state and/or the community. Under this institutional framework, the interests of the majority of the population are included. The deputies accept training and carry out investigation during the intercessional period in order to better understand and play their roles in representing the interests of the state and/or the community. They study the Party's line and principle in the sessional period in order to transmit the central intentions. They discuss development issues in the sessional period which links with the development of their community. The motions that they submit demonstrate that they play their roles in representing the interests of the community.

The six categories in the representative structure including age, gender, ethnicity, party status, education and social class demonstrate the traditional political idea of consensual democracy. The deputies' representation demonstrated in the representative structure is dual: political representation and ethnic representation. Due to major control of the Party over the congress, the political representation of the deputies dominates their ethnic representation. Their representation is constrained by the representative structure of education in two ways. On one hand, the congress expects that the deputies can be experts in the Party's principal and line

and laws so that they can better explain the state policies in representing the interests of the state; on the other hand, they are expected by the congress and the local people to better remonstrate in representing the interests of the community. However, the low level of education of many deputies constrains their roles of representation.

The category “social class” covers seven classes as farmers, cadres, intellectual, technician, worker, serviceman and entrepreneur. The interests of these classes can be represented by their deputies as they have their representatives in the congress and the deputies can undertake their roles as representatives of their social classes and their communities. This category does not display newly emerging groups such as lawyers, doctors and managers. The interests of these groups may be included in the social class existing in the category or their interests may not be represented because there are none of their representatives in the congress.

The deputies play their roles by submitting motions. This is an official demonstration of their participation in local politics. Their involvement of development projects in the motions demonstrates that they are seeking the interests of their communities in the process of promoting the state policies and development projects. The conflicts of the two interests between the state and the community exist. The development projects under the central development plan often step across the boundary of one constituency. Therefore, the motions that the deputies submit may extend across to other constituencies such as the motions related to the construction of roads. It involves many constituencies, so the deputies take collective action by a joint motion which demonstrates that they represent public interests, rather than constituent interests.

The deputies play their roles in implementing development policies and projects when they submit motions to address development issues. The deputies promote, intervene in and restructure these development projects. This is a process by which they begin to localise these development projects to satisfy the demand of their communities. Therefore, their role in representing the interests of the community is accumulating and increasing. However, many local development projects in a poor county dominated by an ethnic minority group like Leishan are from the central development plan. Therefore, when the deputies submit motions related to those projects, they are primarily promoting the interests of the state. They are seeking to represent the interests of the community in the process of their local development such as village governance and the development of cultural tourism under the structure of polycentric governance which is explained in the following Chapter Six and Chapter Seven.

6.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the ways in which the deputies of Leishan County People's Congress (LCPC) play their roles as agent of the state or "leadership proxies" to "transmit the spirit, regulations and decisions of higher levels" (K. J. O'Brien, 1994a, p. 366). Some LCPC deputies (Deputies 1, 2 and 17) deny that there are conflicts of interests between the state and the community. Some hold the view that if there are conflicts of interests between the two, they would consider the interests of the state first (Deputies 4, 7 and 23). The deputies play their roles in representing the interests of the state towards the community with a sense of pride.

Most of them use every possible way to transmit the central intentions and the state policies. They communicate with the local Miao people in Miao language to "make them understand the Party and the government", because "when the people don't understand the Party's policy, it is difficult to promote it" (Deputy 8). They believe that they have made achievements, while facing challenges in representing the interests of the state towards the community. These achievements and challenges reflect the diversity and complexity of the local political arena and local development issues.

Section 6.2 gives a brief explanation to the four functions played by the deputies in representing the interests of the state that were evident in the field research. Section 6.3 provides a more detailed analytical explanation on these four functions that the deputies play in representing the interests of state through the result of a pairwise ranking exercised in the focus groups. Section 6.4 is an analysis of the four functions based on the individual interviews outlining the achievements that the deputies have and the challenges they face. The items of achievements and challenges which were most frequently cited in each function are discussed. Section 6.5 explains the roles that the deputies play in in cultural tourism in a structure of polycentric governance. Section 6.6 concludes with the findings that the deputies play their roles as agents of the state under the monocentric political system and in an evolving local governance system.

6.2 A general introduction of the four functions of the deputies in representing the interests of the state discovered in the focus groups

The researcher identified four functions of the LCPC deputies that show how they make their mark in achieving their political and ethnical representation. Table 21 shows these four functions. In general, the participants reported that they faced greater challenges than achievements in representing the interests of the state. There was one more item recorded in the challenges than in the achievements.

In Function 1, the items for the achievements and challenges in “promoting the strategy of the Party” are three and four respectively. There was only one item difference from each other. In Function 2, the items for the achievements and challenges of “enforcing laws and policies of the state” are five and three respectively. In Function 3, the items of achievements and challenges of “implementing livelihood projects” are eight and six respectively. Looking at the items in Function 3, we can see that the deputies’ role in implementing livelihood projects accounts for a prominent position and it reflects many kinds of demands for livelihood projects by the local people.

Table 21: Four functions in representing the state: Achievements and challenges

| Function | Representing the state | |
|---|------------------------|------------|
| | Achievements | Challenges |
| Function 1: Promoting the strategy of the Party | 3 | 4 |
| Function 2: Enforcing laws and policies of the state | 5 | 3 |
| Function 3: Implementing livelihood projects | 8 | 6 |
| Function 4: Developing political representation | 5 | 9 |
| Total | 21 | 22 |

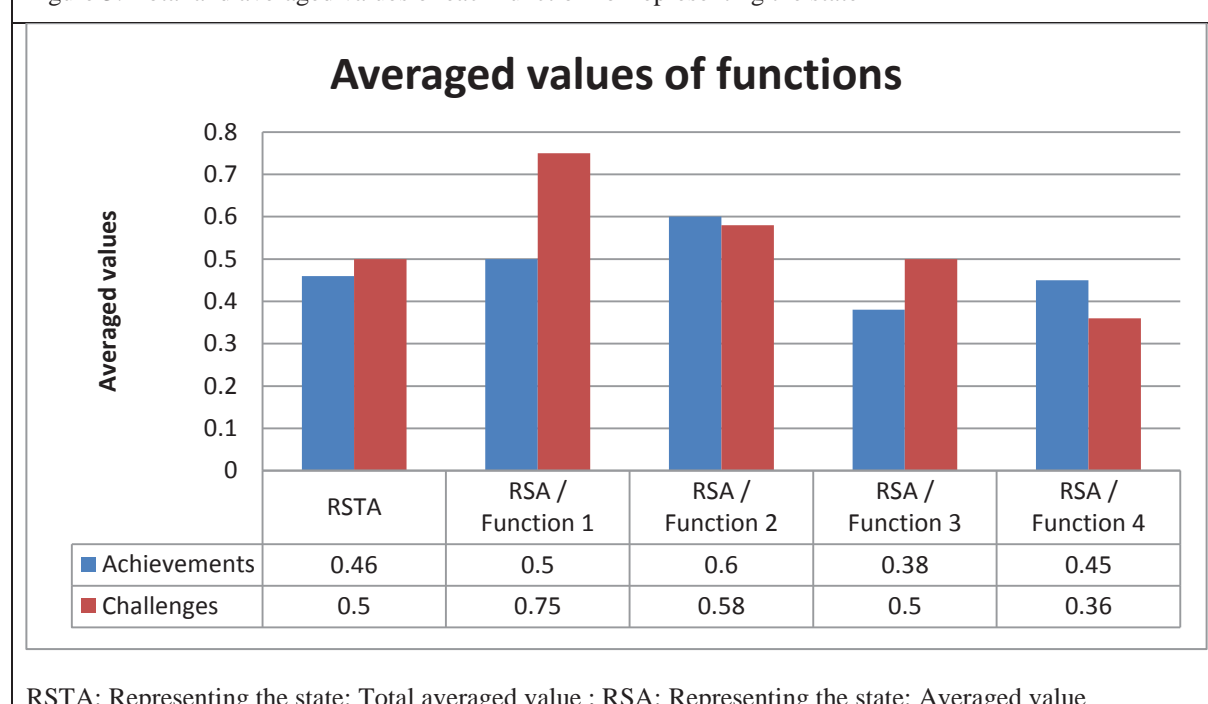
The deputies reported that they have made the most achievements in implementing livelihood projects compared to the achievements in the other functions. The livelihood of people is an essential issue in the rural areas of China, but also one in which there are many challenges. From the analysis of Function 4, it can be concluded that the challenges the deputies face are more diversified than their achievements in “developing their political and ethnic representation”.

6.3 Analysis of the achievements and challenges in representing the interests of the state

Looking at the total averaged values (RSTA) in representing the state (Figure 3), we can see that the challenges of the deputies in representing the interests of the state were slightly heavier than their achievements in general. Of all the four functions, Function 1 “promoting the strategy of the Party” and Function 3 “implementing livelihood projects” are the two in which the challenges are heavier than the achievements.

Function 1 has the largest disparity between the challenges and achievements compared to other functions in RSTA. Both Function 2 “enforcing laws and policies of the state” and Function 4 “developing political representation” have higher achievements than challenges. Function 2 has the least disparity between the challenges and the achievements compared to other functions in RSTA, so the achievements that the deputies get and challenges they face are more or less in a balanced situation for Function 2.

Figure 3: Total and averaged values of each function for representing the state



6.3.1 Function 1: Promoting the strategy of the Party

There are significant challenges that the deputies face in “promoting the strategy of the Party” and these can outweigh their achievements (Function 1 in Figure 3). The Party makes its line

and principles, and has important development strategies. As an agent of the state, one inevitable task of the LCPC deputies is in promoting the strategy of the Party. The participants reported that they had made three achievements (Table 3⁵⁵) in promoting the strategy of the Party: “implementation of the Party’s line, principles and policies”, “promoting the development of China’s western regions” and “national unity”⁵⁶.

| Table 3: Representing the interests of the state: Achievements | |
|---|--|
| Representing the state: Achievements (RSAn=21) | Functions |
| 1. Implementation of the Party’s line, principles and policies 2. Promoting the development of China’s Western regions 3. National unity | Function 1: Promoting the strategy of the Party |
| 4. Family planning policy* 5. Family planning policy 6. Implementation of national policies 7. Maintaining and supporting the state education policy 8. Promotion of the industrial development nationwide | Function 2: Enforcing laws and policies of the state |
| 9. Implementation of livelihood policies 10. Minimum subsistence security system 11. Old age pension 12. New rural cooperative medical care system 13. Renovation of unsafe housing 14. Preferential policies for farmers 15. Construction of infrastructure 16. Improvement of education standard | Function 3: Implementing livelihood projects |
| 17. Assured voting rights 18. Enhancing political power at grassroots level 19. Development of human rights 20. Oversight role* 21. Popularising the laws | Function 4: Developing political representation |
| The asterix* refers to those items which appear two or more times in the achievements and/or the challenges, in Tables 3 and 4. For example, the item “Family planning policy” appears twice, so the asterix* is marked after the first appearance of this item. | |

Their challenges in this field include (Table 4⁵⁷): “spiritual work”, “corruption”, “social stability” and “charisma”. The Party dominates the local governmental authorities by three mechanisms as Party discipline or principle, political ideology and central economic planning (Zhao, 1994). However, due to the reform of the past 40 years, the second has been significantly weakened and the influence of the third has been reduced, along with economic decentralisation in many localities. So the Party discipline is the only “viable control mechanism” (Zhong, 2003, p. 61).

⁵⁵ Table 3 appeared also in Chapter Four to explain how to synthesise the data in the four focus groups.

⁵⁶ The deputies recognise both “promoting the development of China’s Western regions” and “national unity” (Focus group 3) as achievements in promoting the Party’s strategy. However, none of the two items were extended and discussed in the individual interviews. So the two items here are understood as specific policies in “implementation of the Party’s line, principles and policies”.

⁵⁷ Table 4 appeared also in Chapter Four to explain how to synthesise the data in the four focus groups.

As a regular arrangement for fulfilling their duty, the deputies attend the LCPC meetings twice a year, where they “study and understand” the Party and the state policies and “collect relevant information in order to represent the state interests better” (Deputies 15, 19, 22 and 36). In the meetings, the overall intentions of the Party’s Central Committee are transmitted and the deputies are required to support and follow these intentions. According to several deputies, they have made contributions in the promotion of the Party line and principles.

| Table 4: Representing the interests of the state: Challenges | |
|--|--|
| Representing the state: Challenges (RSCn=22) | Functions |
| 1. Spiritual work 2. Charisma 3. Corruption 4. Social stability | Function 1: Promoting the strategy of the Party |
| 5. Family planning policy 6. Education 7. Rural-urban income inequality | Function 2: Enforcing laws and policies of the state |
| 8. Livelihood projects 9. Funding 10. Lack of expertise and funding 11. Technical resources 12. Project profitability 13. Natural resources | Function 3: Implementing livelihood projects |
| 14. Backward ideas 15. Improvement of quality and ability of deputies 16. Oversight role 17. Low political awareness of the local people 18. Insufficient understanding of representation 19. Lack of understanding of policies by the villagers 20. Conflicts and disputes 21. Conflicts of interest 22. Soliciting public opinions | Function 4: Developing political representation |

The LCPC directs us to study the Party’s documents that come from higher up (Deputy 29).

I have to deal with various types of work. I help to maintain social security and make contributions to promote the Party principles and State policies in this township. (Deputy 26)

As a deputy, I study the Party’s rules and policies and promote them among the people as a way to represent State interests. I promote them among the people to improve their political and spiritual consciousness (Deputy 33).

I shoulder the duty of a deputy when I promote the work of the Party. I play roles as both advocate (Party secretary) of the Party’s principles, strategies and policies, and the executor of all the arrangements of the state (Deputy 23).

While identifying their achievements, the deputies have noticed their challenges in promoting the Party's strategy. Both the "spiritual work" and "corruption" rank first in the challenges while promoting the strategy of the Party in Focus Group 1 and 2 (See Appendix 11 and 12). Corruption leads the local people not to trust the Party, because they understand that it's the Party who recommends and appoint cadres to the state organs, rather than those cadres being elected into the government. The non-confidence of the local people towards the Party due to corruption causes the deputies to feel that it's really hard to do "spiritual work" (*sixiang gongzuo*, 思想工作) of the local people—raising the local people's political consciousness for specific political objectives such as for social stability. With regard to the spiritual work of the local people, the deputies said:

We are now facing many difficulties while representing the interests of the state.

It's quite difficult to do the spiritual work of the people (Focus group 1).

When the people don't understand the Party's policy, it is difficult to promote it (Deputy 8).

Along with the difficulty in doing the local people's spiritual work is the issue of charisma.

Charisma (*haozhaoli*, 号召力)? The charisma has been weakened and our local people have different ideas and they don't listen to what we say (Focus group 1).

(Brødsgaard & Zheng, 2004, p. 6) argue that "the original charisma of the Party seems to have gone in the direction predicted by Max Weber" that "charisma cannot stand the test of everyday routines" and it will "eventually be rationalized and bureaucratized"⁵⁸. The deputies introduce a more general view that the decrease in the charisma of the Party is a legacy of reform and opening-up; that is, as (Saich, 2011, p. 32) argues, that the absolute majority of Chinese people "do not have to worry about" the Party, because the Party "does not interfere directly in their lives".

The challenges we face include our less than ideal group charisma and the inertia of the villagers ... The work at the grassroots level is complex, and our group charisma has been on the decline since reform and opening-up (Deputy 16).

With regard to the corruption, the deputies say:

⁵⁸ Brødsgaard and Zheng (2004, pp. 6-7) explain further that "rationalisation and bureaucratisation were often accompanied by democratisation. This is not the case in China. While democratisation did not take place, rationalisation and bureaucratisation often isolated the Party from the masses, and thus rendered the legitimacy of the Party problematic".

I think that the Party's principles and policies are in fact correct, for example, the policies for the solution of *sannong issues* (三农问题)⁵⁹. However, deviation from government principle is inevitable. The corruption by officials may well lead to the extinction of the regime (Deputy 6).

In particular, with respect to the current corruption issue if it isn't tackled well there will surely be great danger, such as the overthrow of our political regime. Therefore, at the present we spare no efforts to fight against corruption (Deputy 39).

Social stability as a challenge in representing the state was ranked the second by the deputies in Focus group 2. The Party and the central government understands that the development of people's livelihood is a guarantee of their reign and an important way to gain public support, so many livelihood projects are implemented to help maintaining stability (*weiwén*, 维稳) in the rural areas of China. Despite this, the LCPC deputies believe that corruption is the main factor which generates nationwide complaints and social instability.

Corruption is a big problem of our country. There are anti-corruption activities every year, but there is still corruption here and there. How can we maintain our social stability? (Focus group 2)

From the researcher's point of view, the decrease of the Party's charisma and social instability is because of the corruption in the implementation of some development projects such as construction of roads. Xuanta Song, the secretary of the Party Disciplinary Committee of Guizhou Province in an interview by Shen & Li (2015) has said that although the Party has made some achievements in the anti-corruption combat at the grassroots level in Guizhou, the province is still far from a clean land. This is due the cases related to the corruption at the county or lower-levels accounting for more than 93% of the total cases of corruption in Guizhou⁶⁰. In addition to the corruption issue, the LCPC deputies believe that

⁵⁹ *Sannong issues* (三农问题) refer to the issues related to the three aspects in terms of farmers, rural areas and agriculture. The issues of farmers include how to improve the quality of farmers and to increase their disposable income. The principal issue of rural areas is the household certificate reform. The binary system formed in the 1950s has separated the rural areas from the urban. It results in the large disparity in economic development and culture and education standard between the rural and the urban areas. The agricultural issue is mainly the industrialization of agriculture. The purchasing and marketing systems of agriculture are inadequate. And the agricultural economy should deploy the resources based on market regulations.

⁶⁰ According to Shen & Li (2015), there were 5,225 cases related to corruption in 2014 in Guizhou Province, which was an increase of 32.68% from 2013.

social instability is due to other reasons such as insufficient understanding of the policy of the local people and conflict as a fuse of social instability.

The state really cares about us, but sometimes, the local people don't understand that. I make great efforts to maintain social stability in this area (Deputy 12).

We maintain social stability in our township through a procedure referred to as the 'comprehensive security liaison person.' In some other areas, conflicts are due to the long-term lack of responsiveness of the cadres who work at the grassroots level. Therefore, as a deputy and cadre at the grassroots level, it is very important to be sensitive to the local situation (Deputy 2).

The challenges that the deputies face in the promotion of the strategy of the Party demonstrate the transformation of the social environment and the recent change in people's ideas in the rural and ethnic minority dominated areas like Leishan. The People's Congress system was created on past values and ideals and now faces a new and continuously changing environment with the promotion of the market economy in which a division of interests has emerged (J. He, 2004). The Party faces greater challenges in satisfying the interests of all people. Thus, from this research, it can be surmised that the deputies face greater challenges than achievements in promoting the strategy of the Party while being the Party representatives.

6.3.2 Function 2: Enforcing laws and policies of the state

In terms of the second function (Figure 3), we can see that the challenges that the deputies face was less than their achievements in "enforcing laws and policies of the state" in representing the state. The achievements of the deputies include "family planning policy", "implementation of national policies", "maintaining and supporting the state education policy" and "promotion of the industrial development nationwide" (Table 3). The challenges they face are less diverse than their achievements, and include three aspects (Table 4): "family planning policy", "education" and "rural-urban income equality". Family planning policy was seen as both an achievement and a challenge.

The deputies understand that they "should be a model and actively respond to state policies" (Deputy 10). They felt that they have generally made achievements in the "implementation of national policies" in representing the interests of the state. As there are a lot of state policies

which they have promoted, most of the deputies did not refer to a specific policy that they have made achievements in implementation when they were interviewed as they talked about their achievements in a more general way.

We have made achievements in promoting the state laws and policies, but there are still some local people who violate the laws. The principle 'People First' means nothing to those who disobey laws and regulations. So the state must crack down on them severely (Deputy 16).

Every time when I attend a LCPC meeting, I study the Party principles and State policies. I promote the principles and policies. Generally speaking, the state policies are multi-dimensional and good.... I often visit constituencies, solicit the villagers' opinions and help them to understand the state policies (Deputy 22).

Three specific examples of the implementation of national policies are the "family planning policy", "maintaining and supporting the state education policy" and "promotion of the industrial development nationwide". In Function 2 (Tables 3 and 4), the item "family planning policy" is recognised as both an achievement and a challenge. It appears three times, twice in the achievements and once in the challenges of representing the state. The deputies believe that they have made great achievements in the promotion of the family planning policy. When they promote this policy, they are also facing challenges because of the policy itself. Under the family planning policy, if both the wife and husband are farmers or of an ethnic minority, the couple can have a second child. The deputies think that when they promote this state policy, they have to consider other aspects. On the one hand, they think that they have successfully promoted this policy, because most of the local people obey the policy, and the policy "really benefits Miao people" (Deputy 4); on the other hand, the deputies have "challenges in the implementation of family planning policy" (Deputy 29) on behalf of the state, because they have to consider those who violate the rule. Some farming couples had more than two children. They "disobey the family planning policy" and they "will be fined ... as social compensation" (Deputy 7).

While promoting the family planning policy the deputies also play their roles in "maintaining and supporting the state education policy". They believe that a good education will help in promoting family planning policy.

I actively promote national policies such as family planning and the education policies. There has not been one single violation against family planning in our

community due to our qualified promotion. I myself never violate the policies. I also promote the state education policy. I treat students well in accordance with the regulation of the state Teacher's Law (Deputy 5).

The deputies recognise that education is a prominent challenge when they promote the national policies in enforcing the laws and policies of the state in representing the interests of the state. The deputies themselves have different levels of education. Some deputies have a low level of education of just primary school, junior or senior high schools while some have a diploma or bachelor degree (See Table 14 in Section 5.2.4 in Chapter five). According to several deputies, the low level of education becomes a disadvantage for the deputies in playing their roles, because it produces "many limitations" when the deputies play their role in the "execution of their responsibilities" (Deputy 6).

Many constituents have low level of education, so some deputies believe that they suffer difficulty in promoting and implementing national policies to the local people.

A difficulty I have in playing my role is that many villagers have a low level of education. Many are illiterate. It is difficult to mobilise them and they don't understand the state policies due to their low level of education (Deputy 12).

What I feel the saddest about is that the majority of the Miao people in their forties in this area are still illiterate, so we face difficulties in promoting (state) policies and providing leadership for the masses in areas of development (Deputy 18).

The technical ability of the people is quite weak. So we also need to organise training to increase their technical expertise. Sometimes, the local people do not understand even after completing the training due to their low education level. So we need even more supervision in such cases (Deputy 34).

"Promotion of the industrial development nationwide" is another achievement that the deputies recognize in representing the interests of the state. Promoting local development is under the general development plan of the state, so the deputies address their local development under the framework of the state development and they put industrial development in the category of representing the interests of the state, rather than representing the community.

I meet cadres and village representatives to discuss the construction of infrastructure, industrial development and the spiritual civilisation in their

villages. I link these issues with the overall development of the township. We try to solve issues at the village level. At our township level, we try to solve the issues related to development, such as industrial management, technical guidance and funds for bridge building and road works (Deputy 9).

6.3.3 Function 3: Implementing livelihood projects

In terms of the third function “implementing livelihood projects (Figure 3), the challenges in representing the state are numerically greater than the corresponding achievements. The deputies have more diversified achievements than their challenges in implementing livelihood projects. Their achievements include eight aspects (Table 3): “implementation of livelihood policies”, “minimum subsistence security system”, “old age pension”, “new rural cooperative medical care system”, “renovation of unsafe housing”, “preferential policies for farmers”, “construction of infrastructure” and “improvement of education standard”. Their challenges cover the five aspects: “livelihood projects”, “funding”, “lack of expertise and funding”, “technical resources”, “project profitability” and “natural resources”.

The “preferential policies for farmers” (PPFs) is a typical example of how a deputy represents the interests of the state. The central government made PPFs to support the development of farmers, rural areas and agriculture. When the deputies promote and implement PPFs, on the one hand, they are agent of the state; they serve as “proxies of the leadership” of higher levels and assistants of the government (K. J. O'Brien, 1994a, p. 366). They are active agents but on the other hand, they are representatives or advocates of their constituencies. The deputies believe that PPFs are “various” in design (Deputy 16) and “very good” (Deputy 21). PPFs can solve practical issues that the farmers are facing. They suggest more PPFs for those “landless farmers” (Deputy 2) such as “re-training for their transformation” (Deputy 6). While admitting the advantages of PPFs, the deputies also expressed their worries about PPFs. They thought that PPFs were “the cause of conflicts and social instability among the local people” (Deputies 16). There is no “follow-up” (*genzong*, 跟踪) (Deputy 18) of PPFs and some big companies come to “secure PPFs by trickery” (Deputy 18).

The “Old age pension” and “New Rural Cooperative Medical Care System (NRCMCS)” appear twice in the achievements for representing the interests of the state. The deputies “haven’t encountered any difficulties in promoting the policies, because all of them are focused on benefitting the local people” (Deputy 20). But they are critical, too. They feel the

“old age pension” policy is “good for single elderly people” (Deputy 16); but its coverage “is set by certain limits” (Deputy 16). They are suggestive as to improvements as well. Deputy 20 met with some difficulty to promote NRCMCS, because many local people didn’t accept such a policy at the beginning. So he holds the view that

Resistance would decrease a lot if the mode of thinking of the people can be transformed. When they realised that this policy is really good, they demanded that they be able to join the NRCMCS voluntarily (Deputy 20).

“Lack of expertise and funding” appears twice as challenges of representing the interests of the state and it ranks the first twice in pairwise ranking. Many deputies say they face a lot of challenges while playing their roles. They believe that the scope of their participation in the management of State affairs is broad and entails various aspects. But they “lack expertise in areas such as reform, planning, finance and statistics” (Deputy 31). Funding is always an issue, as one deputy says, “Compared to other counties, we get even less funding for poverty-relief” (Deputy 34).

6.3.4 Function 4: Developing political representation

In terms of the fourth function (Figure 3), we can see that in “developing political representation”, the deputies have bigger achievements than challenges in representing the interests of the state. There are five achievements (Table 9-1): assured voting rights, enhancing political power at grassroots level, development of human rights, oversight role and popularising the laws. Both oversight role (Focus group 4) and development of human rights (Focus group 2) are the two prominent achievements, ranking first in representing the state in the focus groups.

“Oversight role” has a more complex situation. It appears once in both the achievements and the challenges of representing the interests of the state. The deputies believe that they have made achievements in playing an oversight role, because they think that their oversight role “ultimately supports the work of the government” (Deputy 6) and that “they practice democracy and oversight and support relevant government institutions” (Deputy 23).

According to the deputies in Focus group 2, “development of human rights” means “to improve the income of the local people and the standard of economic development of a locality”. Their dimension on human rights is “no more than the survival and (economic)

development rights of the people” (Focus group 2). So in the interviews, the terminology “development of human rights” became a background and it is invisible because the deputies admit there are more achievements in the implementation of the livelihood projects. The deputies haven’t talked about it directly, but they talked a lot about how to increase the income of the local people and how to promote economic development.

The things I do for the local people are very practical. As I mentioned before, I advise the people to plant kiwi, peach and tea and help them to communicate with buyers. Their income increases every year by about 20,000 RMB (US\$3,175) (Deputy 13).

I understand that in order to increase the income from grain, Xijiang must build a standard agricultural water facility. The water facility should involve about 150 households. I have also suggested building roads to link the villages to increase the villagers’ income and to build more drinking water facilities to improve their living standard (Deputy 26).

An elite should support local economic development and provide convenience and assistance to resolve *sannong* issues (development issues related to rural areas, agriculture and farmers). The majority of the loans of our institution aim to resolve those particular issues. As a deputy from a financial agency, I must help and support vulnerable groups ... Besides the construction of road and water facilities I organise funds for other local economic development projects, such fruit tree planting and animal husbandry (Deputy 3).

In terms of “assured voting rights”, the deputies believe that both voting rights of the locals and their own are assured. However, it depends on whether the local people would like to participate in the election or not.

There are open channels for the local people to express their issues and complaints. For example, if a farmer wants to be elected as the director of the VC, he can do so if he is elected by the villagers. We have no limitations on common villagers being elected. If they have sufficient ability, they can participate in the election and be elected as deputy. (Deputy 10)

The election for deputies is not dramatic and competitive, but the deputies believe that it is still meaningful. The candidates include those both seconded to and from the local constituency. While admitting that the voting rights of the people are assured, the deputies

didn't shun the reality that the election is a mixture of the arrangement of the organisation and the participation of the local people.

My success in the election is the will of both the organisation and the local people” and “being elected, I experienced the entire process: I was considered by the organisation; documents were issued by my unit; I was seconded to the constituency; I was nominated by the constituents; I became a deputy candidate; and finally I was elected (Deputy 10).

The organisation dispatches me to the constituency because I am the head of Township People's Government (TPG) and it knows that I will do things to benefit the people (Deputy 1).

However, it is impossible to realise one's ideals without the trust of the organisation (*zuzhi*, 组织), even if one has great ability and there are certain things that are indispensable to being an elite: the trust of the organisation, the deep trust of people and self-confidence, being responsible and active, and engaging in coordinative service and management (Deputy 2).

To take me as an example, my nomination was at the discretion of the organisation. I was seconded by the organisation to the constituency. The people trust me and elected me deputy (Deputy 17).

I have been directed to be a deputy, more or less, by the organisation (Deputy 9).

The deputies identify “enhancing political power at the grassroots level” as an achievement in representing the interests of the state. They talk of the roles of Village Party branch (VPB) and Village Committee (VC). Both VPB and VC are political powers officially recognised by the Party committee and the local government at the grassroots level.

All VC members deal with trivial matters such as disputes between neighbours. However, for big issues such as the renovation of unsafe housing and Minimum Subsistence Security System (MSS) we convene meetings that include VC members, the VPB secretary and village representatives (Deputy 4).

I convene a meeting with the TPC deputies and members of the VPB and the VC. We discuss difficulties and issues as well as the next step in the economic development (Deputy 18).

My ultimate principle is to provide good service for the constituents. I keep better contact with the members of the VC by phone, because the members of the VC represent the will of all the constituents (Deputy 34).

I don't feel there are any conflicts between the state and the community. However, there are conflicts among the people. I often do a lot of coordination work to solve these issues with the help of the VC (Deputy 38).

“Popularising the laws” is another achievement recognised by the deputies in representing the interests of the state. From the following two paragraphs, we can see that raising legal awareness of the local people is a by-product of popularising the laws, because this achievement is listed by the deputies in representing the state, rather than in representing the community.

A deputy plays a dual function. On the one hand, s/he promotes the state laws, regulations and policies. S/he must raise the awareness of the people about legal issues and promote fairness and justice in the implementation of government policies (Deputy 10).

Each year, I invite the trained staff of the judicial bureau to visit the locality in order to promote laws, to train the local people and to give them support in legal issues. Doing so has helped the villagers to improve their knowledge about the law as well as their general cultural level (Deputy 7).

The deputies recognise nine challenges in “developing political representation” in representing the interests of the state (Table 4): “improvement of quality and ability of deputies”, “insufficient understanding of representation”, “backward ideas”, “oversight role”, “low political awareness of the local people”, “lack of understanding of policies by the villagers”, “conflicts and disputes”, “conflict of interests” and “soliciting public opinions”.

The most dominant two challenges are “improvement of quality and ability of deputies” and “insufficient understanding of representation” in developing political representation. Both share the first place in Focus group 4. Deputies’ quality and ability are regarded as the major reasons which limit the performance of the deputies and the LCPC. This challenge is mostly mentioned by professional deputies and those who are incumbent officials. The interviews from two incumbent officials may represent the opinions of these deputies on the issue of the deputies’ ability and quality in general.

The deputies have their specific functions and responsibilities. They enjoy speaking freely when they represent the people. But the deputies need to strengthen their abilities in order to reflect the people's voice better. They especially need to strengthen their speaking ability (in a meeting or some specific occasion) on behalf of the people (Deputy 30).

The third difficulty is the quality of the deputies themselves ... Every time when I listen to speeches given by deputies in the LCPC annual meetings, I feel they have many limitations. One may feel that they have broached issues well, but they do not go beyond that. For example, if a deputy finds that a road has been built badly, he or she may not establish a connection with the agriculture issues and water facilities. They just discuss the road issue alone. This shows that their ability to participate in State affairs is compromised. The capacity building of the deputies is a significant issue (Deputy 6).

Some deputies recognize that they themselves have ability issues and they think that they need to improve their own ability to better serve local people as a deputy, such as what one incumbent official who is a township Party secretary (Deputy 23) says:

In addition, I think that, besides the study of political theory as Party secretary, I need to learn from the grassroots level how to serve the local people better as a deputy. Only by continually studying, as a young official and deputy can I improve my ability for such purposes.

And one deputy who is a farmer and owns a small business in her village says:

I conceived the idea of leading the villagers to achieve wealth, although my ability is limited (Deputy 19).

Besides their insufficient understanding of representation based on the representative structure such as gender, ethnicity and social classes (See Chapter Five), the deputies' "insufficient understanding of representation" include another two aspects: insufficient understanding of representing the interests of the state and insufficient understanding of representing the interests of the constituency. The challenges that the deputies face are that some deputies don't understand the two aspects of representation. In the interviews, the deputies did however, present a clear idea on how to play their roles as to satisfy the demands of both the organisation (the state) and the local people.

There are certain things that are indispensable to being an elite (a deputy): the trust of the organisation, the deep trust of people and self-confidence, being responsible and active, and engaging in coordinative service and management. If I think that I cannot play these roles, I will resign. However, I am determined to win the trust of the organisation and let it know I can shoulder the responsibility (Deputy 2).

I have been a deputy for several terms. A deputy must be prominent in several ways. He must have a clear idea about the fact that he represents the state. As I have mentioned just now, a deputy must understand the overall situation. He should live up to the requirements of a deputy and have prestige in his community (Deputy 32).

“Backward idea” is identified as a challenge by the deputies to refer to those villagers who do not have “workable ideas” and “they need to change their ideas” (Deputy 14), and the deputies themselves who need to improve their ideas on development.

Deputies go on fact-finding missions elsewhere and then return to do promotion work among the masses. As I mentioned, I organise deputies in the township to do fact-finding in other areas. I encourage them to understand the ideas of development in other areas (Deputy 16).

“Oversight role” becomes a challenge because the deputies encounter institutional issues when they supervise the government work in accordance with the law. Some deputies say that the deputies as a whole have insufficient power and support for oversight, and inefficient enforcement of the laws. They don’t know how to give complete oversight and do not have a final say.

We have insufficient power of oversight and support for our oversight role ... This is not an issue for any particular individual, but of the whole system. As a result, oversight is difficult to set in place and has barely increased in force. It is really a difficult issue ... The deputies don’t necessarily know what an essential issue is in any oversight matter.... For example, it could be the people’s livelihood (Deputy 6).

We need to promote the efficient enforcement of the laws, but how? We deputies need to practice daily oversight over the work of *yifuliangyuan* (the Government,

the Court and the Procuratorate, 一府两院) and supervise it to act in accordance with the laws and strictly enforce the laws on the basis of justice (Deputy 32)

All in all, the role of the deputy has not yet changed. Deputies do not have a final say in matters (*paiban*, clap the board, 拍板). What they can do is to investigate and become familiar with the local situation and comprehensively report what they see and what they hear (Deputy 30).

“Low political awareness of the local people” becomes a challenge for the LCPC deputies in representing the interests of state towards the community. Due to their low political awareness, the local people “have few political demands” (Deputy 10). Therefore, the deputies promote State policies and laws to “improve the political and spiritual consciousness” (Deputy 33) of the local people.

“Conflicts and disputes” and “conflicts of interests” are two different challenges recognised by the deputies in representing the interests of the state towards the community. The former emphasises the disputes between the functions of local people. The deputies must deal with the disputes between the local people such as “forest disputes” (Deputy 6, 10, 27, 28 and 29), and “alcohol-related disputes” (Deputy 10). The latter focuses on the tension between the development plans of the state and the local people. Whenever there is a big project such as the establishment of an economic development zone or the national nature reserve, there is tension between the government and the local people. In such cases, the deputies need to do various coordination works to ease this tension before it develops into a conflict. They need to struggle more for the interests of the local people, without violating the basic principle of the government (Deputy 10, 25, 27, 28, 29 and 33).

The deputies categorise “soliciting public opinions” as a challenge in representing the interests of the state toward the community rather than an achievement in representing the interests of the community (See “promoting the voice of the community” in Section 7.3.1. Most of them are non-professional deputies, but they must spend much of their time soliciting the opinions of their constituents and “give feedback to the government” (Deputy 2). However, the local situation is complex (Deputy 18) and it “changes faster than you can keep up with” (Deputy 18). So the deputies have difficulty in soliciting and having the opinions of the constituents when they need to promote and explain the state policies to the constituents.

We face difficulties in promoting (state) policies and providing leadership for the masses in areas of development (Deputy 18).

When the people don't understand the Party's policy, it is difficult to promote it"
(Deputy 8)

The challenges and achievements that the LCPC deputies discussed in the focus groups are discussed again by the deputies in their interviews on how they play their roles in representing the interests of the state toward the community. As this research is a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, the findings in focus groups and the interviews support and supplement each other. Section 6.4 explains the findings in the interviews by quantifying how many points there are for each achievement and challenge in representing the interests of the state towards the community.

6.4 An analysis of the four functions from the individual interviews

The researcher interviewed 39 deputies who are incumbent officials, educators and farmers. These deputies provided a detailed explanation of how they play their roles in representing the interests of the state towards the community, and what difficulties and achievements they had in this role. As introduced in Section 4.9.3 in Chapter Four, the researcher used Nvivo to quantify the data in the individual interviews by the same classification of achievements and challenges in the focus groups. The references of each participant were imported into Nvivo. The frequencies of reference point determine the deputies' priority concerns in development issues

6.4.1 A general introduction to the four functions in individual interviews

In Table 22, there are 132 points of achievements that the deputies have in representing the interests of the state, 38 points more than the challenges they face, which are 94 points. The fourth function "developing political representation" was the most talked about in the interviews. In general, the achievements the deputies have are greater and more diverse than their challenges in representing the interests of the state. In the first three functions, which are "promoting the strategy of the Party", "enforcing laws and policies of the state" and "implementing livelihood projects, there are more points of achievements which are 19, 37 and 20, than the challenges which are 11, 11 and 8 respectively. However, only in the fourth

function as “developing political representation”, are there more points for the challenges they face than the achievements they have.

Table 22: Representing the interests of the state: Points of achievements and challenges

| Functions | Achievements (points) | Challenges (points) | A minus C (points) |
|---|--------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Function 1: Promoting the strategy of the Party | 19 | 11 | 8 |
| Function 2: Enforcing laws and policies of the state | 37 | 11 | 26 |
| Function 3: Implementing livelihood projects | 20 | 8 | 12 |
| Function 4: Developing political representation | 56 | 64 | -12 |
| Total | 132 | 94 | 38 |

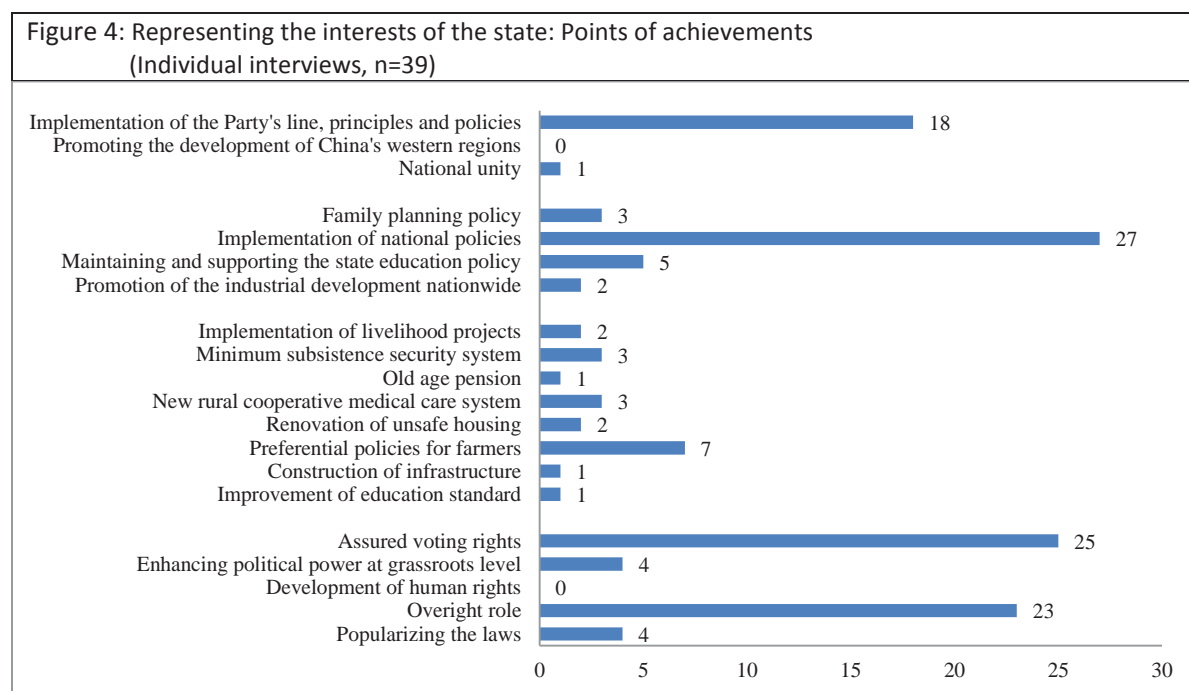
6.4.2 Analysis of the individual interviews

The achievements that the researcher discusses in Figure 4 include implementation of the Party’s principles and policies in the first function, implementation of national policies in the second function, preferential policies for farmers in the third function and two items, assured voting rights and oversight role, in the fourth function.

In Figure 4, for the achievements of representing the interests of the state towards the community, we can see there are 18 points for the achievement of “implementation of Party’s line, principles and policies” in the first function. This reflects that as one of the local governmental authorities in China, the LCPC has a core role as agent of the Party. It is a stipulated collective action for the deputies to be agents of the state. There are 27 points for the achievement of “implementation of the national policies” in the second function. Many national policies involve development projects in the rural areas. Therefore, when the deputies talk about this achievement, it has included those projects which are in the third function such as preferential policies for farmers, MSS and a new rural cooperative medical care system.

There are seven points for the achievement of preferential policies for farmers (PPFs). PPFs are most talked about because they concern the sustainable livelihood projects of the constituents such as the development of cultural tourism and the planting of orchards. There are 25 points for the achievements of “assured voting rights” and 23 points for “oversight role” ranking the first and the second most mentioned in the fourth function. Therefore, in

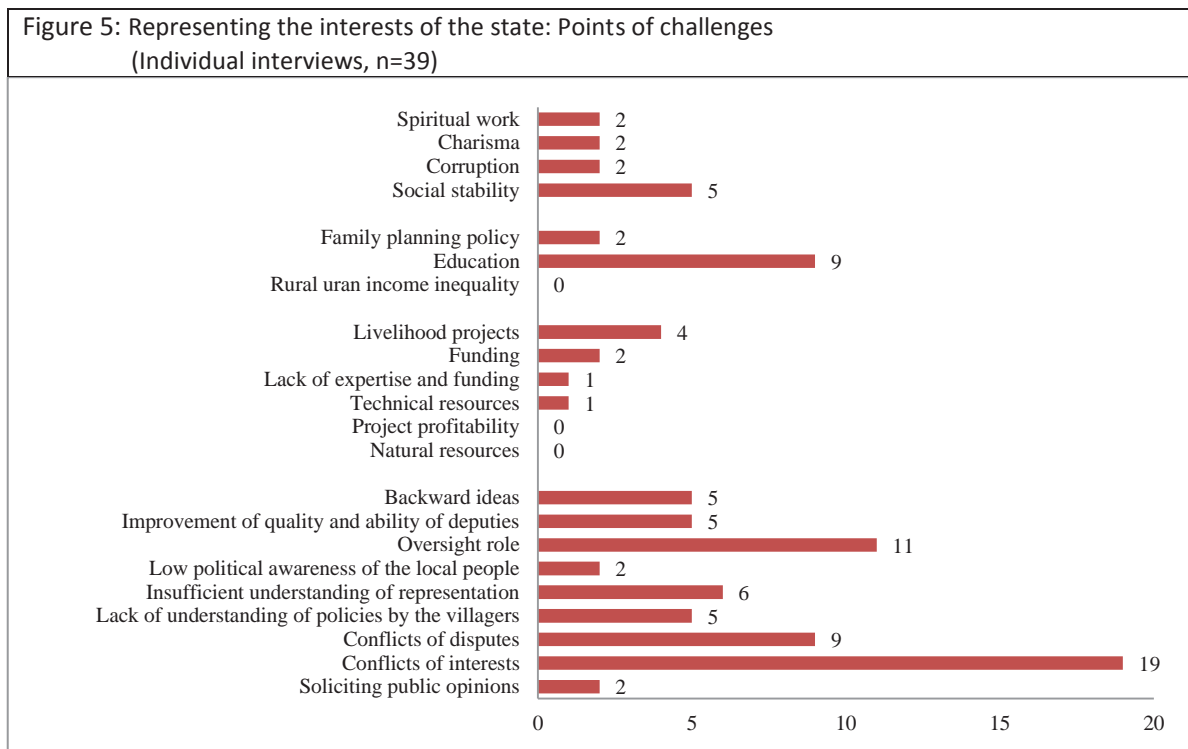
representing the interests of the state, there are four most prominent achievements: implementation of the Party's line, principle and policies, implementation of national policies, assured voting rights and oversight role.



In Figure 5, the challenges that the deputies face and discussed with the researcher are social stability in the challenges for the first function, education in the second function, livelihood projects in the third function, and oversight role and conflicts of interests in the fourth function. In Figure 5, for the challenges in representing the interests of the state towards the community, we can see “social stability” has five points and it is the item talked about most by the deputies in the challenges of the first function.

The deputies believe that social instability in the rural areas is the result of the corruption of officials and the conflicts of interests between the state and the community due to large-scale economic development projects. These projects result in many social issues such as unemployment and landless farmers. Education is the second biggest challenge, which was mentioned nine times in the second function. The challenge in education that the deputies face includes two parts: the first is the low level of education of the LCPC deputies which “make their ability to participate in state affairs being compromised” (Deputy 6) because education “plays a major role in the execution of their responsibilities” (Deputy 30). For the third function, livelihood projects are the greatest challenges because the supervision over

livelihood projects is difficult. Therefore, the LCPC and the deputies need to consider how to supervise the livelihood projects.



The leadership of the permanent committee of LCPC should consider what the essential areas for oversight are in any particular year. For example, it could be the people's livelihood (Deputy 6).

“Conflicts of interests” and “oversight role” have 19 and 11 points respectively in the challenges of the fourth function⁶¹. The deputies view conflict of interests as a potential threat against social stability in the rural areas.

During certain periods in the development of the state, the interests of the minority will invariably be violated. When that happens, conflicts come into being and will become more intense. All I can do is try to minimise the impact of the loss of voice of the minority as much as possible. At present what the state needs to consider the most is compensation for loss of land and employment (Deputy 6).

⁶¹ When the deputies talked about conflicts of interests, they generally deny their existence. However, the researcher finds that the conflicts of interests exist when the deputies talked about land appropriation and landless farmers due to the implementation of development projects. So the researcher considers that the conflicts of interests between the state and the community are potential ones in accordance with the talk of the interviewees. And thus this item is still categorised into the challenges.

Although the deputies believe that they have made achievements in their oversight role, they still view it as the biggest challenge when they oversee the government work, especially when it relates to people's livelihood projects.

All projects related to the people's livelihood must be given complete oversight, for instance, the period when a project begins and when it finishes. How are the funds used? The whole process should be fully supervised without leaving out anything. And the deputies themselves don't have sufficient strength to oversee livelihood projects. So the people are not satisfied with the government work in this area (Deputy 6).

6.4.3 The deputies' views of the Ethnic Regional Autonomous System (ERAS) in representing the interests of the state

In the individual interviews, many deputies talked about their views on the Ethnic Regional Autonomous system (ERAS). Their views reflect their role as agent of the state. They think that they are awarded many preferential policies to the local people in the ERAS.

Under the current ERAS, as I mentioned previously we are awarded many preferential policies, such as family planning and development projects. The county has a special poverty-relief bureau that has awarded many projects, such as fruit tree planting and micro-loans for small and micro enterprises. The preliminary financial support has helped the Miao people to prosper. We are currently applying for some other projects as well. The Party's ethnic policy is good. We have benefitted from many supporting policies (Deputy 4).

Under the ERAS, the county has got some preferential policies, such as being awarded marks for the college entrance examination. With the development of the local socio-economic situation, I believe that the Miao ethnic group I belong to will get even more benefits from the state policies (27).

I think there is something special about it. For example, we have preferential policies regarding things such as loans, bonus scores in entrance examinations for university and other various poverty-relief programmes (Deputy 20).

In addition, the ERAS promotes the political rights of the Miao people as well as the development of their culture and education.

This system promotes the political rights of the Miao people. The Miao people can live a better life by making full use of it. As TPC chairman, I need to promote the government work while playing my role as a deputy under the ERAS (Deputy 8).

We get better attention in the fields of culture and the development of education under the ERAS (Deputy 21).

The comments of the deputies about the ERAS demonstrate that the ERAS as a governance system is favourable to the interests of the local people because it bring about a lot of preferential policies. Therefore, the deputies promote it on behalf of the state.

6.5 The roles that the deputies play in a structure of polycentric governance in cultural tourism in Xijiang village

There are many development projects which are implemented in the County. This provides a way for the researcher to explore further the roles that the deputies play in representing the interests of the state, especially the evolution of their representation. Because in the implementation of the development projects, the complaints for more interests from the local people may increase and the deputies have to find a solution for the dilemma rising from their dual role play. The deputies consider that the cultural tourism in Xijiang village (Box 1) is a successful example because they believe that a win-win situation has been achieved in terms of the protection of cultural heritages and economic development.

The deputies consider that they represent the interests of the state through their initial training and in studying the Party's principle, line and the state policies in the plenary sessions. They transmit the policies and development strategy of the state. They talk with the constituents and promote the state policies and they know that "it's difficult to mobilise the constituents" (Deputy 12) if they don't understand the state policies. Through the development of cultural tourism in Xijiang, the local government has gained increased revenue and the local Miao people have increased their income, even though the proportion of revenue that the local people can share is small. These two targets are what the County People's Government (CPG) likes to see as a positive outcome. The deputies have done a lot of coordinating work between

the constituents, the Miao social organisations and the CPG in the management of cultural tourism of Xijiang village in representing the interests of the state towards the community.

Box 1: Development of cultural tourism in Xijiang village

Xijiang is a natural Miao village with 7000 people, the biggest Miao village in China. This village is the location of Xijiang Township People's Government (TPG). In order to develop the cultural tourism in Xijiang, the CPG invested large amount of funds to improve its physical infrastructure. The large benefits from its successful cultural tourism encourages the CPG to set up a tourism management committee and a state-owned corporate to officially manage the cultural tourism in this village and to control the distribution of the revenue. There are plural stakeholders in the management of cultural tourism in this village, the TPG, the Township People's Congress (TPC) and Miao traditional social organisations: *zhailao* organisation and *yilang* Organisation, and the villager's mutual help team.

With the fast commercialisation of the tourism and the increase of tourists, many businesses have developed. The local Miao people have an increasing income from their commercial activities such as the running of hotels, restaurants, handcraft shops and cultural performances. Simultaneously, Xijiang Miao museum and a Miao cultural centre have been established. Many Miao cultural activities such as Miao New Year Festival and Drum Festival, and regular Miao cultural performance have been recovered and developed. Cultural tourism has become the central industry of Xijiang village.

Figure 6 shows a polycentric structure in the management of cultural tourism in Xijiang village. The cultural tourism is promoted and implemented as a development project under the development plan of the state. This plan was delivered to the Party Committee of the County (PCC) and the CPG from the higher governmental authorities. There are multiple stakeholders in the management of cultural tourism in Xijiang. The PCC and CPG work together to make a strategy for this development project in order to gain the financial support from the higher-level government authorities. The LCPC and its deputies conduct research to find any issues in the implementation of this project. The grassroots organisation of the Party—Village Party Branch (VPB) promotes the Party line and reinforces the Party's influence and control over the grassroots.

The Villagers' Committee (VC) is in charge of the daily operation of the village affairs. The villager's mutual help team helps solve the difficulties that the villagers face such as making silver ornamentations and costumes for cultural tourism. The Tourism Development Company (TDC) set up by the CPG is in charge of marketing and selling entrance tickets.

The Miao political power—the *zhailao* organisation and *yilang* organisation are responsible for discussing governance and development issues in the village. The two Miao social organisations are also in charge of arranging welcome ceremonies for tourists, small-sized cultural performances and mediating disputes between/among villagers.

Figure 6: The roles that the deputies play in the cultural tourism in Xijiang Village
(in a structure of polycentric governance)



While admitting Xijiang is a “successful example of the maintenance and development of Miao culture” (Deputy 24) and a model worker (*biaogan*, 标杆) (Deputy 4) which must be followed by other Miao communities, disputes have developed between the villagers and

conflicts of interests between the state and the community have emerged. Some deputies in Xijiang have been helping the villagers to develop tourist-related industries.

These deputies reflects:

Xijiang in the Miao hinterland is not only a county township, but also belongs to the whole of China. Xijiang positively influences the development of the Miao culture. If the perch land of the Miao disappears, the Miao culture will disappear, too. In the process of the development of tourism, I guide the local people to develop tourist-related industries. Now about 80% of the villagers between 18-70 years old engage in tourist-related industries such as restaurant work, hotels, special local food processing and silver jewellery-making (Deputy 26).

I convene meetings of the deputies and the village representatives to discuss the general planning for the construction of Xijiang. As you know, this township is a big and famous tourist attraction for tourists from both home and abroad (Deputy 28).

In the structure of polycentric governance (Figure 6), the deputies play a central role of coordinating the disputes between villagers due to the construction of public utilities and the conflicts between the government and the villagers such as with the construction of roads and the expropriation of land.

We are undertaking a great deal of construction of public utilities in Xijiang, and I tackle the disputes of the villagers. Due to the fast-paced development of cultural tourism in this township, the people are divided into different interest groups. For example, some people who enjoy local prestige lead their small interest group in the village to obstruct the construction work of the public facilities. I visited them and explained that the construction is for the good of everyone. The group must not try to halt the process. Eventually, the groups reached an agreement. I also do a lot of coordination work between the villagers and the local government in terms of the construction of roads and the expropriation of land (Deputy 28).

More importantly, the deputies coordinate and solve the conflicts between the government and the community as a result of the increasing revenue from selling entrance tickets. However, Xijiang's success in cultural tourism doesn't mean that the deputies can maximize

the interests of the community even if they coordinate a lot with the CPG and its bureaux, as Deputy 25 says:

I visit the villagers and listen to their opinions twice a month. I work hard to help them get more benefits from the development of tourism in this township. The Miao culture will advance through tourism. When tourists are required to buy entrance tickets, I help the local Xijiang people to negotiate with the government to split the income from the entrance tickets 50-50 between the Xijiang Miao people and the government. However, in the end the government only gave us 18% of the net revenue. The government's explanation is that it expended a lot of money in the construction of tourist sites in Xijiang, so it needs to pay off the bank loan. The local people hope that the government will provide more benefits to them after it repays the debt.

The deputies consider the interests of state first if there are conflicts in the process of local development as Deputy 7 said:

We should abide by the principle of "state interests first" and deal in appropriate ways with the relationship between the state and the people. If there is a conflict, I think we need to consider the state interests first.

As the example of the ticket revenue shows, without the coordination and negotiation of the deputies, the locals may get even fewer benefits. Therefore, there can be a conflict of interests between the state and the community in term of the distribution of resources. The deputies haven't yet really participated in the process of policy-making such as the development strategy of the county. Even so, when they talk about the conflicts of interests between the state and the community, many said that they would consider the interests of the state first. Thus, as in this example of cultural tourism development in Xijiang, when the government would not like to give up more interests, the deputies consider the interests of the state first.

When the deputies are aware that there may be a potential conflict between the interests of the state and the community, they understand that they cannot do more for their communities. They compromise with the government and explain the reasons to their constituents. Therefore, they act as agents of the state first so that their roles in representing the interests of state can be enhanced. Their ethnicity as Miao may secure them from the complaints of the local people when they compromise, because they are from the community and the local

people trust them as many deputies said in the field research. Some deputies said that the local people elected them because they trust them.

A deputy enjoys forms of trust and prestige among his people. If he has ability but he does not have the trust of his people, he cannot be elected (Deputy 4).

Why did the constituents elect me? I think it was because I was brave enough to speak out. Moreover, they trusted me. They feel that I have some advantages that allow me to present their ideas in my own way during the LCPC meetings (Deputy 5).

I also gained the trust of the local people, who hold me in high regard. As a result, they elected me. Now, as a deputy, I must provide a good model for them and follow the national policies (Deputy 12).

Some deputies said that the local people trust them because they visit the villagers many times a month, or worked at grassroots level for many years, or have done practical things for them, or just simply believe that the deputy is clean-living and talented.

I solved problems for the people and won their trust... I have been working at the grassroots level for many years and the people trust me, so I have a solid base here (Deputy 16).

I have done practical things for the people and they trust me. I know how to deal with issues reported by the people (Deputy 27).

The deputies speak the Miao language to tighten their relationship with the local people in order to make them understand the difficulties of the Party and the government, as Deputy 8 said:

I often use the Miao language to talk with the Miao people, to tighten our relationship and to make them understand the difficulty of the work of the Party and the government. When the people don't understand the Party's policy, it is difficult to promote it.

The role that the deputies play in this structure of polycentric governance demonstrates that in the process of cultural tourism development, conflicts of interests between the state and the community appeared. It increased the challenge of the deputies in representing the interests of the state. However, as a "bridge linking the community and the government" (Deputy 10), the deputies ease the conflicting relations by negotiation and coordination between different

stakeholders in the locality. They still consider the interests of the state first, but their role in representing the interests of the community is accumulating in this process with the trust of the local people.

The researcher had visited this village many times and he perceived that there were multiple stakeholders in the management of the cultural tourism industry. In this structure of polycentric governance, it was the local government which empowered the deputies to play their roles in negotiation and coordination. The local government had invested large amounts of resources for economic and cultural tourism development in this village. This investment had conversely decreased the community's ability and influence to follow its own development model which had been based on a small scale with its own ethnic culture and community resources.

6.6 Conclusion

The findings outlined in this chapter indicate that the deputies regarded themselves first and foremost as agents of the state. This chapter has discussed what the deputies think in terms of their achievements and challenges in four functions: (i) promoting the strategy of the Party, (ii) enforcing laws and policies of the state, (iii) implementing livelihood projects, and (iv) developing political representation. This was done through analysing the focus groups and the individual interviews. The latter part of the chapter gave an example of the role of the deputies in representing the interests of the state in the development of cultural tourism in a structure of polycentric governance. The following four points are concluded based around these two aspects: their views on their achievements and challenges and the case example.

Firstly, the deputies are keen to represent the interests of the state under the monocentric political system and in an evolving local governance system. They act as agents of the state to promote the Party's strategies and enforce laws and policies of the state. Therefore, they are one of the actors in the local governance system. They are interested in maintaining the operation of the current political system, rather than challenging it based on their political loyalty. Such loyalty was also demonstrated in their views towards ERAS. As agents of the state, they believe that ERAS awards the local people a lot of preferential policies and promote their political rights. However, they face challenges in promoting the strategy of the Party such as the decrease of charisma of the Party at grassroots level.

Secondly, the deputies have their own perspective of the overall situation (*dajuguan*, 大局观) as agents of the state. They assist in the implementation of state policies and development projects by strengthening their supervision over the work of government in enforcing laws and policies and implementing livelihood projects because a lot of corruption emerges in these projects. This demonstrates their political representation as one of the power holders in the locality—representing the interests of the state. In the implementation of some development projects with land appropriation and displacement, social instability is a worrying outcome. Their roles as agents of the state may make them sacrifice the interests of the community to maintain social stability. They implement other people's livelihood projects of the state such as old age pension because they believe that these projects improve the interests of the local people.

Thirdly, the deputies play their roles as agents of the state in developing their political representation. On one hand, they help assure the voting rights of the local people according to the law; on the other, they enhance political power at grassroots level such as the establishment of the Village Party Branch (VPB). They face various challenges such as backward ideas, low political awareness of local people, insufficient understanding of representation and conflicts of interests. Facing these diverse challenges, their efforts to develop political representation is not an easy task.

Fourthly, the deputies' role in representing the interests of the community actually accumulates in the process of their representing the interests of the state. This is demonstrated in the structure of polycentric governance in Xijiang cultural tourism case. The deputies coordinate and negotiate for more benefits for their communities with the local governments at both county and township levels. Although in the end they didn't bring all benefits that their constituents wanted, the local governments cannot ignore the political power that the deputies bring in representing the interests of their communities. For without the coordination and negotiation of the deputies between their constituents and the local government, the local government may not solve its tensions or any conflicts with the villagers. Chapter Seven thus discusses the roles that the deputies play in representing the interests of the community towards the state.

7.1 Introduction

Chapter Six presented findings regarding the ways in which deputies of Leishan County People's Congress (LCPC) play their roles as agents of the state in representing the interests of the state towards the community. This chapter explains the ways in which the LCPC deputies play their roles as remonstrators to the state or advocates of the community who choose problems that the communities expect "to be resolved and that they can influence" (K. J. O'Brien, 1994a, p. 369) in representing the interests of the community towards the state.

The deputies visit their communities to solicit opinions and they report the diverse demands of the community for development to the LCPC. Their roles in representing the interests of the community become more important with the increased implementation rate of the motions they have submitted. With some similarity to the four functions in representing the state towards the community in Chapter Six, in this chapter, the researcher presents four different functions played by the LCPC deputies in representing the interests of the community. Each function is composed of two aspects: the achievements and challenges.

Section 7.2 provides a brief explanation of these four functions, followed by an explanation of the deputies who are from or who are seconded to the community in Section 7.3. Section 7.4 provides a more detailed analytic explanation on the four functions by an analysis of a pairwise ranking exercise in the focus groups, and the deputies' opinions in individual interviews. The researcher explains the items of achievements and challenges which have the highest score in each function in individual interviews in Section 7.5. In addition, some opinions of the deputies about the development projects under Ethnic Regional Autonomous System (ERAS) are introduced. Section 7.6 explains the roles that the deputies play in village governance and the management of cultural tourism in a structure of polycentric governance. Section 7.7 provides a conclusion based around these achievements and challenges. This implies a process of evolved local governance system in which the deputies localise centrally designed development policies and projects and the increase of the ethnic representation of the deputies.

7.2 The functions in representing the interests of the community as revealed in the focus groups

The four functions are categorised by the researcher in accordance with the achievements and challenges identified in the focus groups which are similar to that in Chapter Six. They include: (i) promoting the voice of the community, (ii) localising policies of the state, (iii) implementing livelihood projects, and (iv) developing ethnic representation. 19 achievements and challenges were reported respectively by the deputies in representing the interests of the community towards the state (Table 23).

Function 1 is the role of “promoting the voice of the community”. There are six achievements and three challenges in promoting the voice of the community; the achievements are more diversified than the challenges. Function 2 is “localising policies of the state”. There are two items for the achievements and challenges respectively. In Function 3, there are the six achievements and twelve challenges of “implementing livelihood projects”. So we can say that the deputies face more challenges than their achievements when implementing livelihood projects in representing their constituencies.

Table 23: Four functions in representing the community: Achievements and challenges

| Functions | Representing the community | |
|---|----------------------------|------------|
| | Achievements | Challenges |
| Function 1: Promoting the voice of the community | 6 | 3 |
| Function 2: Localising policies of the state | 2 | 2 |
| Function 3: Implementing livelihood projects | 6 | 12 |
| Function 4: Developing ethnic representation | 5 | 2 |
| Total | 19 | 19 |

The deputies’ role of implementing livelihood projects accounts for a prominent position and it results in many kinds of demands by the local people. Due to this and the high expectations of local people, the deputies find that they have also the most challenges in implementing livelihood projects. There are five achievements and two challenges in “developing ethnic representation”. The items of challenges in representing the community are three fewer than the achievements. Therefore, the challenges that the deputies face while playing their role in developing ethnic representation are less diversified than the achievements.

7.3 The deputies who are from and seconded to the community

In order to have a better understanding of the roles that the deputies play in representing the interests of the community, there is a need to explain the proportion of deputies who are originally from or who are seconded to the community before analysing the achievements that the deputies have made and the challenges they face.

In the LCPC, 75.8% of the 153 deputies are from the constituencies where they were born and grew up, and 24.2% deputies are seconded to the local constituencies from other regions (Table 24) by the arrangement of the LCPC. In the field research, 71% and 74% of the deputies who attended the focus groups and individual interviews are from the local constituencies respectively (Table 24). This shows that the sample of deputies approached by the researcher is more or less representative to their proportion in the total number of deputies, that is more than 70% of the deputies are from the local constituencies.

Table 24: The proportion of the LCPC deputies from and seconded to the community

| | Total | From the local community | Seconded |
|------------------------------|-------|--------------------------|----------|
| Focus Groups | 24 | 7 | 17 |
| | 100% | 71% | 29% |
| Individual interviews | 39 | 29 | 10 |
| | 100% | 74% | 26% |
| LCPC deputies | 153 | 116 | 37 |
| | 100% | 75.8% | 24.2% |

Unlike those seconded (incumbent) officials, the deputies from the local constituencies may not hold real power, but they have a “solid foundation” (Deputies 28, 29 and 39) among the local people. They think that they possess fewer resources compared to those deputies who were incumbent officials. So when they play their roles in representing the community, they think they may face more challenges than the achievements in the function “implementing livelihood projects”.

As an incumbent official, when a deputy plays his/her roles, s/he can enjoy some privileges, because they can shift or reallocate the resources to the locality where they are elected. In addition, some projects and poverty-relief funds are arranged for an official who has a leading position at a locality by the government, in order to establish his /her reputation and let him/her gain support from the constituents. The following words disclose the local reality of why an official in a leading position at the county level is welcome.

It would be better if there were leaders at the county level who were seconded to our township as deputy candidates, because they hold more resources (Deputy 10).

The resources are controlled by the local government where the officials work.

The government in a locality controls all the resources of the political and economic development, including the materials, the finances and the power (Deputy 6).

The deputies who are incumbent officials and who work in a real-power bureau of the government can easily get one or more projects.

The deputies from (government) bureaux with real power, such as poverty-relief bureaux and finance bureaux, possess resources and they can make promises on the spot to implement some projects (Deputy 30).

In most cases, the constituents evaluate whether or not a deputy represents their interests to see whether the deputy can introduce and implement a project in their community. The economic-oriented success secures a deputy's election or reelection. Therefore, the deputies try hard to import at least one project for his/her community during his/her term in the LCPC.

In several years, I will no longer be a deputy in this locality. However, I hope that the people will say that I have done some good, practical things for them ... If the opportunity arises, I will fight for more benefits on their behalf. As long as I don't violate any principles, I will do something on their behalf, such as inviting leaders to have a meal to find out more information and get the scoop on any projects. Then I will try to bring the projects into my community (Deputy 1).

I tried my best to help the people and carried out some practical projects for them. There were several facets to those projects. For example, for one involving infrastructure I won the support of the relevant government departments and built a 5.7 kilometer-long cement road to my village. In total, I have raised about 5 million yuan (US\$0.79 million) in project funds (Deputy 18).

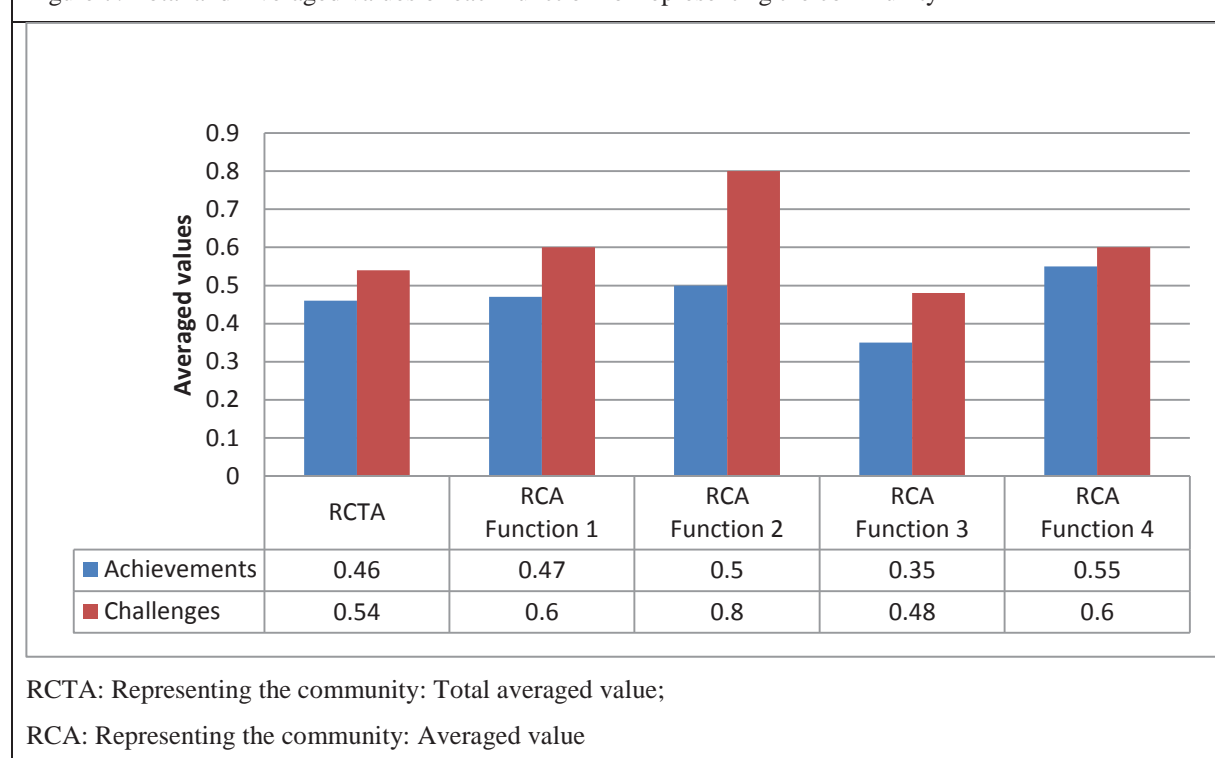
Identifying the differences between the two types of deputies helps understand the roles that the deputies play in representing the interests of the community which are discussed in the following sections in this chapter.

7.4 Analysis of the achievements and challenges in representing the interests of the community in focus groups

Looking at the total averaged values (RSTA) in representing the state (Figure 7), we can see the deputies had more challenges in representing the interests of the community than their achievements in general. In all of the four functions, the challenges outweigh their achievements.

Function 2 “localising policies of the state” has the largest disparity between the challenges and achievements compared to other functions and RSTA; Function 4 “developing ethnic representation” has the least disparity between achievements than challenges compared to other functions and RSTA. This suggests that the achievements that the deputies get and the challenges they face are more or less in a balanced situation.

Figure 7: Total and Averaged values of each function for representing the community

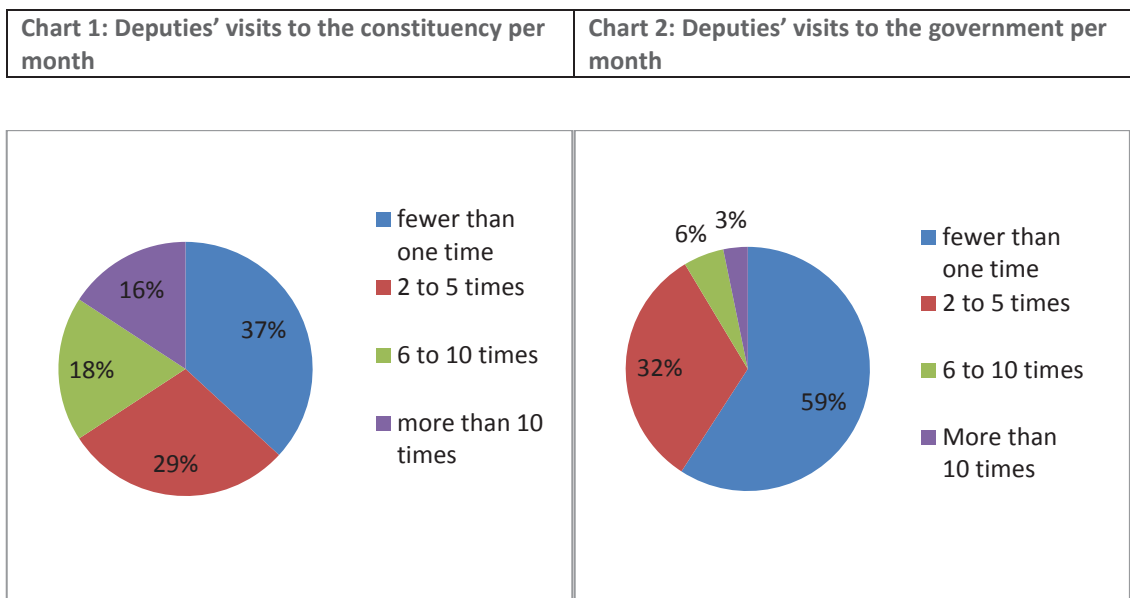


7.4.1 Function 1: Promoting the voice of community

In order to understand how the deputies promote the voice of the community, a comparative analysis of the frequency with which deputies visit their communities (Chart 1) and the frequency with which they visit government offices (Chart 2) may assist in understanding how the deputies divide their time between promoting the voice of the community and acting

as the voice of government. The deputies need to visit their constituents to understand the local needs and complaints, no matter if they are originally from or are seconded to the community. The deputies try to solve different issues for their constituencies. Therefore, they need to visit their community more often.

Of the 39 deputies who attended the semi-structured interviews, those who visit the constituencies less than one time per month is 37% (Chart 1), 22% lower than the figure 59% (Chart 2) for those who visit the government. Those who visit the community two to five times, six to ten times and more than ten times per month account for 29%, 18% and 16% respectively (Chart 1), 65% in sum; whereas, those who visit the government with the same times are 32%, 6% and 3% respectively (Chart 2), 41% in sum. The higher frequency with which the deputies visit their constituencies demonstrates that there is a need for them to liaison with the community and understand the local situation.



The deputies visit their communities for different reasons as they try to solve different issues for their constituents. They understand the diverse issues of the community as illustrated by the following two deputies.

I visit households to solicit their opinions and I visit poor families not just to know the will of the people, but also to solve issues in the village. There are also emergency cases such as flood and fire. And you also need to know the living situation of the people. Moreover, we even need to find out and know why students drop out of school temporarily (Deputy 1).

I often visit the constituencies and talk with the farmers to understand their priority issues. At the beginning, the villagers were reluctant to meet with me. Now, there are a lot of things I do for the people as a deputy (Deputy 3).

The deputies also take a pro-active manner in fighting various issues by visiting the community.

Each year, I invite the trained staff of the judicial bureau to visit the locality in order to promote laws, to train the local people and to give them support in legal issues. Doing so has helped the villagers to improve their knowledge about the law as well as their general cultural level.... I have received some good suggestions from the older cadres and people as well as the secretary of the village Party branch on the issue of the development of tourism (Deputy 7).

I represent two villages. I usually visit the farmers twice a month to know their opinions via written communication and through visits concerning the maintenance of social stability and issues of conflicts and disputes. The villagers also come to my office to report their issues once a month. In addition, I meet cadres and village representatives to discuss the construction of infrastructure, industrial development and the spiritual civilization in their villages (Deputy 9).

With ideas to solve issues for their constituencies in mind, the deputies visit the government to gain support for the local development and for the local people's livelihood projects.

I often consider the interests of the people. If the opportunity arises, I will fight for more benefits on their behalf. As long as I don't violate any principles, I will do something on their behalf, such as inviting leaders to have a meal to find out more information and get the scoop on any projects. Then I will try to bring the projects into my community ... I negotiated for a minimum subsistence security (MSS) for farmers without land. I visited the civil affairs bureau to seek a higher quota and I even quarrelled with the director of the bureau and told him that I sought a pay-out not for myself, but for those farmers (Deputy 1).

The villagers believe that I have travelled a lot and have broad knowledge and experience. The fact that I can get my hand on some projects for them is valuable ... I set up a project to build a road linking the village with the outside world. I also set up some agricultural projects for the villagers (Deputy 4).

The deputies make achievements in promoting the voice of the community but they face various challenges as well. From Function 1 in Figure 7, we can see that the deputies face more challenges in “promoting the voice of the community” than their achievements. The deputies’ representing the interests of constituents is not just theoretical, but also a practical reality. Despite the People’s Congress system in China being a quasi-parliamentary system with limited democratic representation with the election of deputies, the situation is still more arranged than a contested one, although the deputies are selected from the people that they are to represent.

| Table 5: Representing the interests of the community: Achievements | |
|--|--|
| Representing the community: achievements (RCAn=19) | Functions |
| 1. Listening to the voice of the local people * 2. Listening to the voice of the local people 3. Transmitting the voice of the people 4. Justice and fairness 5. Introducing advanced ideas and technology 6. Unity and cooperation | Function 1: Promoting the voice of the community |
| 7. Promotion of national policies 8. Guiding economic development | Function 2: Localising policies of the state |
| 9. Construction of infrastructure * 10. Construction of infrastructure 11. New rural cooperative medical care system 12. Old age pension 13. Preferential policies for farmers 14. Setting up and developing the local economy | Function 3: Implementing livelihood projects |
| 15. Setting a good example 16. Submitting motions, suggestions and criticisms 17. Carrying out oversight role 18. Promoting democratic politics 19. Doing actual things for people | Function 4: Developing ethnic representation |
| RCA: Representing the community: Achievements The asterix * refers to those items which appear two or more times in either the achievements or the challenges, or in both in Tables 5 and 6. For example, the item “Listening to the voice of the local people” appears twice, so the asterix* is marked after the first appearance of this item. | |

One of the most effective ways that the deputies represent the community is “promoting the voice of the community”. There are six items of achievements in promoting the voice of the community (Table 5⁶²): two items of listening to the voice of the local people, transmitting the voice of the people, justice and fairness, introducing advanced ideas and technology, and unity and cooperation. The two items of listening to the voice of the local people rank highest in the focus groups. This ranking demonstrates the emphasis of the deputies on listening to the voice of the constituents. They have a strong consciousness to listen to the voice of their

⁶² Tables 5 and 6 appeared also in Chapter Four to explain how to synthesise the data in the four focus groups.

constituents, particularly in recent years. They visit the constituents to “listen to their opinions, complaints and suggestions” (Deputies 4, 2, 7, 24, 25, 26, 28 and 32).

Listening to the voice of the local people has become a common practice for the deputies, no matter whether they are incumbent officials such as chairman of Township People’s Congress (TPC), LCPC chairman and heads of Township People’s Government (TPG) or they are deputies from local constituencies—common cadres, intellectuals or farmers. The deputies reported that if they hadn’t found enough time to practice listening, they felt anxious, or even stressful.

I should spend more time listening to the opinions of other teachers and villagers.

I need to understand the local situation more deeply and broadly (Deputy 24).

If I don’t give thought to their interests, I will experience a lot of pressure. So I often visit my community and listen to their complaints (Deputy 28).

Listening to the voice of the local people is regarded as an important practice by the LCPC to examine whether a deputy really does service for the people or not. Chinese central government believes that local cadres must play a crucial role in securing successful economic reform. Therefore, “mass support” is necessary and that means “the masses have to be more meaningfully involved” (Eldersveld & Shen, 2001, p. 39). The neglect of the opinions of the local people may endanger this on-going economic process according to the deputies.

The deputies do not just listen to the voice of the people, but also transmit their voice. Many recognise “transmitting the voice of the local people” as an achievement in representing the community. Most of the deputies transmit the voice of the local people by submitting motions to the LCPC or visiting the governmental bureaux of the county to report the people’s complaints to those officials who have real power. Their motions relating to many aspects of the development in their constituencies, not only include the improvement of hardware—construction of infrastructure such as transportation, and agricultural and water facilities, but also issues related to the well-being of society such as migrants and displacement, rural-urban integration and unsupervised children (See Table 20 in Chapter Five).

“Justice and fairness” is also a prominent achievement in representing the community which ranks as first in Focus Group 1. Deputies believed they made achievements in this field in various situations, in dealing with disputes, implementing government policies and development projects, or issues related to ethnic minorities.

If you deal with the forest disputes between villagers, you must be fair and uphold justice. I believe that the people will evaluate whether you are a qualified deputy or not by such criteria (Deputy 6).

A deputy plays a dual function. On the one hand, s/he promotes the state laws, regulations and policies. S/he must raise the awareness of the people about legal issues and promote fairness and justice in the implementation of government policies. On the other hand, s/he must communicate with the local people to know their views and opinions (Deputy 10).

| Table 6: Representing the interests of the community: Challenges | |
|--|--|
| Representing the community: Challenges (RCCn=19) | Functions |
| 1. Level of satisfaction 2. Difficulty in the implementation of motions 3. Insufficient prioritizing by leadership | Function 1: Promoting the voice of the community |
| 4. National policies 5. Insufficient supporting policies | Function 2: Localising policies of the state |
| 6. Difficult implementation 7. Funding 8. Construction of infrastructure 9. Livelihood 10. Project fund 11. Inadequate technology 12. Project selection 13. Lack of expertise and funding 14. Low standard of farmer's know-how 15. Weak infrastructure in rural areas 16. Integration of resources 17. Unrealistic demands by people | Function 3: Implementing livelihood projects |
| 18. Transformation of ideas 19. Personal interests above all else | Function 4: Developing ethnic representation |
| RCC: Representing the community: Challenges | |

Introducing advanced ideas and technology is another achievement that the deputies have in promoting the voice of the community. These deputies who are professional organise the other deputies “to do fact-finding in other areas” and “encourage them to understand the ideas of development in other areas” (Deputy 16). The non-professional deputies help the local people to organise activities, introduce advanced ideas on “agricultural industrialisation” and “planting” (Deputy 18).

The challenges are heavier than the achievements in “promoting the voice of the local people” due to their higher averaged value from pairwise ranking. Compared to its six achievements, the deputies face only three challenges in “promoting the voice of the local people”: “level of

satisfaction, “difficulty in the implementation of motions” and “insufficient prioritising by leadership”.

Level of satisfaction ranks the first in the pairwise ranking for Focus group 1. The decrease of level of satisfaction among local people is a lack of “responsiveness” and “nonfeasance” (Deputy 2) of the local political powers towards the complaints of the local people. Level of satisfaction shows the complexity of the locality which the deputy must confront: landless farmers are not “satisfied with their compensation” (Deputy 4) and “the people are not satisfied with the government work in terms of livelihood projects (Deputy 6)”. “It is a critical point. If deputies go beyond this point while representing the state, the people won’t feel satisfied” (Deputy 6). “No matter what we do, the people are not satisfied” (Focus group 1). However, the consequences of a lack of responsiveness and nonfeasance may lead to mass disturbances of the local people. Therefore, Deputy 2 suggested:

As a deputy and cadre at the grassroots level, it is very important to be sensitive to the local situation. If there is a dispute, we actively mediate. Safety and security are very important, and we will not proceed further if these things are lacking.

The other two challenges in “promoting the voice of the community” are the “difficulty in the implementation of motions” and “insufficient prioritising by leadership”. The deputies identified many reasons for the difficulty in the implementation of motions such as funding and expertise and “fewer projects than people require” (Deputy 8). More importantly, they recognised insufficient prioritising by the leadership as one of the main reasons for the difficulty in the implementation of motions.

Many officials only consider whether they themselves need the motions or not. They don’t consider whether a motion is useful or not (Deputy 6).

The leadership of the county doesn’t give sufficient priority to our motions and projects (Focus group 3).

Even if the deputies have identified the priority of a development issue, it’s the leading officials in the county who can decide the sequence of the development agenda, as the resources are limited in a poor area like Leishan County. Both deputies and leading officials would be happy if the motions submitted by the deputies match the top consideration of the leading officials. However, in most cases, the leading officials and the common deputies

appear to have different interest agendas. The common deputies “do not have a final say in matters” (Deputy 30) and it is the leading officials who make the final decisions.

7.4.2 Function 2: Localising policies of the state

In Function 2 (Figure 7), we can see that the challenges the deputies face are much heavier than their achievements in representing the interests of the community. This is the largest disparity among all the four functions. Many policies related to development are designed at the centre under the current monocentric governance system. Therefore, the deputies face many challenges in localising these policies. In terms of achievements, the deputies have two: “promotion of national policies” and “guiding economic development”. The deputies face two main challenges in localising policies of the state: “national policies” and “insufficient supporting policies”. The deputies believe that most of these policies aim at resolving development issues of their localities, so they promote them in representing the interests of the community.

The deputies believe that “promoting national policies” is obligatory due to their deputy status. They attend the LCPC meetings to learn the national policies and they promote them to the local people (Deputies 3, 12, 14, 20, 21, 22) and feel proud of such promotion (Deputies 21 and 26). If the farmers feel that the government’s decisions are not right, the deputies will “explain the reasons” (Deputy 3). The deputies think that the state policies, such as MSS, are very good, because the local people can get “funds in cash directly from the government for MSS” (Deputy 21). Therefore, they would like to promote such policies which will bring direct interests to the local people. The deputies can experience resistance at the beginning when the local people don’t change their mind, as Deputy 20 says:

I promote government policies to the local people. I haven’t encountered any difficulties in promoting the policies, because all of them are focused on benefitting the local people. However, resistance would decrease a lot if the mode of thinking of the people can be transformed. For example, at the beginning when we implemented the new rural cooperative medical care system (NRCMCS), many people didn’t accept it. But when they realised that this policy is really good, they demanded that they be able to join the NRCMCS voluntarily.

“Guiding economic development” is seen as common sense among deputies as the centre of their work is economic development. The deputies understand that a deputy should “support local economic development and provide assistance to resolve issues related to rural areas, agriculture and farmers” (Deputy 3). In this process, they think that they play their role as a pacesetter.

As a deputy who helps the local people with economic development, I think the most important thing is to know the market. We should know what the market demands are. We cannot plant this or that blindly without understanding the market. If what the villagers plant proves to be of no value by the market, I will be blamed. I am the village pacesetter, so I must be very careful when I offer suggestions (Deputy 11).

I convene a meeting with the TPC deputies and members of the VPB and the VC. We discuss difficulties and issues as well as the next step in the economic development. I take notes, draft a motion and submit it to the permanent committee of the LCPC during the plenary session. The leaders of the LCPC forward my motion to the government to ensure it is acted on (*zhualuoshi*, 抓落实) (Deputy 18).

In localising policies of the state, the deputies face two challenges, national policies and insufficient supporting policies. While they agree that the state policies are generally good, they also point out some disadvantages of the state policies such as “one-level down” (Focus group 3). They think that some national policies and development projects don’t reflect the local and indigenous (Miao) situation and have no supporting policies.

The state policies are generally good, stable and harmonious and take the people into consideration. However, we cannot blindly believe in policies. Some policies don’t fit in with the local Miao situation. Some can even be seen in terms of ‘the head of a tiger, but the tail of a snake’ (Deputy 11).

So in this way, the deputies think that the local government is “conservative” and they feel that in the implementation of the state policies, the local situation isn’t considered.

However, when it comes to performance, the (local) government is conservative. For example, according to State policy, both credit and funds can be awarded to livelihood projects. But the way this is done depends on industrial planning. If the government wants to promote the planting of kiwi, the farmers can only plant

kiwi. They have no other choice. Otherwise, they cannot get funds or loans for their development. Now that the government encourages the people to ‘make their own blood’ (make a living in a sustainable way), it should enact projects which suit the local circumstances or the people’s demands. There is a disparity at different levels between the good policies and the local and individual demands of the people (Deputy 32).

Besides the limitations of the “one-level down” policy model, the deputies think there is “no monitoring follow-up” in the state policies (Deputy 18). Some deputies believe that the state resources are wasted through misuse.

“The state policy (of promoting the development of small and micro enterprises in rural areas) is indeed good and, recently, the policy has become even better. However, there is no monitoring or follow-up. A company can even set up a cooperative agency to get state funds by trickery. In the end, the result is the waste of State resources” (Deputy 18).

The deputies localise the policies of the state. This is a process that they criticize those state policies which don’t match the local situation and satisfy the local demand. Their participation in local politics increases in the process of localisation. Their role in representing the interests of the community is enhancing through this process.

7.4.3 Function 3: Implementing livelihood projects

With regards to Function 3 (Figure 7), the roles of deputies in implementing livelihood projects, the challenges in representing the community are greater than the corresponding achievements. The achievements that the deputies report include the items “construction of infrastructure”, “preferential policies for farmers” (PPFs), “new rural cooperative medical care system (NRCMCS)”, “old age pension” and “setting up and developing the local economy”. This demonstrates the importance to the deputies of developing livelihood projects in the rural areas in China.

The item “construction of infrastructure” appears three times, two in the achievements and one in the challenges in representing the community. The deputies thought that they had made some achievements, but it was still a challenge with regards to the lack of infrastructure in their rural areas. “Most of the issues they (the local people) report are about the

construction of infrastructure such as transportation, and agricultural and drinking water facilities” (Deputy 33). This meant that the construction of infrastructure was a key focus of the deputies. In the archives of Leishan County there are 62 motions submitted by the deputies in 2013 relating to the construction of infrastructure and 30 of which are related to transportation (See Table 20 in Chapter Five). Some deputies believed that the improvement of infrastructure such as transportation resulted in the fading of the consciousness of the Miao ethnicity.

Our Miao verbal and written languages are Sinicized. The usefulness of the Miao language has decreased and is disappearing. Miao students are less interested and less active in studying the Miao language. The overall tendency for development is ethnic amalgamation. The consciousness of the Miao ethnicity has been fading due to the development of transportation in Leishan (Deputy 30).

When the deputies promote and implement PPFs, besides as agents of the state to promote the national policies, they are representatives of their constituencies. Despite this dual role dilemma, the deputies believed that PPFs are “various” (Deputy 16) and “very good” (Deputy 21). PPFs can solve practical issues that the farmers are facing. They suggest more PPFs for those “landless farmers” (Deputy 2) such as “re-training for their transformation” (Deputy 6). While admitting the advantages of PPFs, the deputies also expressed their worries about them. They thought that PPFs are “the cause of conflicts and social instability among the local people” (Deputy 16), because there is no “follow-up” (Deputy 18) of PPFs and some big companies benefit a lot from PPFs, rather than the villagers. While many deputies agree that they have achievements in promoting PPFs in representing the interests of the community, some of them criticise that some PPFs such as Minimum Subsistence Security System (MSS) have created conflicts and social instability.

I personally believe that preferential policies for farmers are the cause of conflicts and social instability among the local people. The local people have now got the idea of waiting, depending on the government and submitting requests (to the government). Today we are having a personal interview, so I am free to give you an example. If a family receives MSS, it means that every family member gets 15kg of rice per month and one bottle of oil per quarter. As a result, they don’t want to work. They don’t even have to plant rice. They also get a minimum allowance. In 2013, it was RMB1,810 (US\$287) per person. The family has three members, so they have money to buy meat and even to buy cigarettes. And there

are other kinds of assistance as well, such as cotton clothing and overcoats. They have developed an attitude of waiting, depending on the government and submitting requests. Others who make a living by their hard work think that it is unfair (Deputy 16).

“Old age pension” and “NRCMCS” are both achievements in representing the interests of the community. The deputies “haven’t encountered any difficulties in promoting the policies, because all of them are focused on benefitting the local people” (Deputy 20). They feel that the “old age pension” policy is “good for single elderly people” (Deputy 16), but they criticise that its coverage “is set by certain limits” (Deputy 16).

“Lack of expertise and funding” appears the most prominent challenge in representing the interests of the community and it ranks first in pairwise ranking in Focus group 4. The deputies face a lot of challenges while playing their roles. They believe that the scope of their participation in the management of State affairs is broad and entails various aspects but they “lack expertise in areas such as reform, planning, finance and statistics” (Deputy 31). Funding is always an issue, as Deputy 34 says: “Compared to other counties, we get even less funding for poverty-relief”. Lack of expertise and funding constrain the deputies from playing their roles in representing the interests of the community.

I try to import more projects for the local people. But you know that the LCPC funds are always insufficient. So, often, I can only ever carry out coordination work. The biggest challenge is still the question of funds. Second to this is the fact that we don’t have sufficient expertise (Deputy 29).

“Project selection” is a challenge recognised by the deputies in representing the interests of the community by the LCPC deputies. The deputies feel that the community must accept the project from the governmental authorities, rather than selecting a project from a range of options which fits their local situation.

The black-wool pig farming of the local variety is in the same situation. The national poverty-relief fund is not directly granted to the villagers for the purchase of the local piglets. As a result, the local farmers are not enthusiastic about raising the local variety because such pigs cannot be purchased without the supporting funds (Deputy 18).

The deputies have made achievements in implementing livelihood projects in representing the interests of the community. However, they identified the challenges which are shown in

the disadvantages of some development projects of because the “one-level down” model which undermines the interests of the local people.

7.4.4 Function 4: Developing ethnic representation

From Figure 7 we can see that in “developing ethnic representation” (Function 4), the deputies reported having greater challenges than their achievements in representing the community. However, their achievements are more diverse, including five items: setting up a good example, submitting motions, fulfilling responsibility and carrying out an oversight role, promoting democratic politics and doing actual things for people. They listed two main challenges, the transformation of ideas and personal interests above all else.

The deputies have a clear motive on “setting up a good example”, so they think that a deputy must be a model who “actively responds to State policies” and “reports the complaints of the people to the authorities” (Deputy 10). A deputy must be “a good role model with respect to obeying the laws and regulations” (Deputy 3). In the eyes of the deputies, setting a good model means different things to some of them. Mostly, this good role model must represent the interests of the constituents and bring about actual projects for his / her constituents. “Setting up a good model” is always linked with “doing actual things for people”. This was the order of priority for one focus group:

The deputies enjoy prestige among the people. Those who can lead the masses achieve wealth and have a good reputation. They can implement practical projects while setting themselves up as a model (Deputy 32).

The people elected (selected) me as a deputy and I made myself a model for them. The deputies should not only represent the people, but also speak on behalf of their interests (Deputy 30).

“Submitting motions and suggestions” is also a prominent achievement recognised by the deputies. This item ranks the first in FG 4. Many deputies talked the importance of submitting motions and they think it’s an effective way to represent the interests of their constituents.

I can contribute to my hometown and submit motions on policies which will benefit our locality and our people (Deputy 35).

Each year I submit two or three motions that represent local interests, such as the development of transportation (Deputy 7).

I submitted a motion recommending that all villages in this township have asphalt roads linking them with the outside world and that each village should have its own public vehicles (Deputy 9).

I submit motions to help the villagers realize the plans for development and I oversee the government work and suggest what can be done to further the people's interests (Deputy 28).

While admitting that they submit motions on behalf of the interests of the local people, the deputies recognise such action as a way to criticise the government.

We submitted this motion (in 2011) as a form of criticism of the government. The government paid a lot of attention to it and now a bridge is under construction. So I really do achieve some things in representing the interests of the local people, although I have difficulties in terms of funds and coordination (Deputy 33).

The tensions between, on the one hand, top-down policies from central government and, on the other hand, the increasing room for decentralized policy-making, influence the ways that the deputies play their roles as representatives of the communities. In the interviews, there are examples given by the deputies to show how they negotiate with government authorities in representing the interests of the communities.

I understood clearly that the masses must carry out development projects under the guidance of the state policies. I try to negotiate with the government to give our locality more preferential policies (Deputy 25).

7.5 An analysis of the four functions from the individual interviews

The researcher interviewed 39 deputies who are the incumbent officials, educators and farmers. These deputies provided a more detailed explanation of how they play their roles in representing the interests of the community towards the state, and what difficulties and achievements they had in this role. Similar to Section 6.4 in Chapter Six, in this section, the researcher used Nvivo to quantify the data in the individual interviews by the same classification of achievements and challenges in the focus groups. The references of each

participant were imported into Nvivo (See Section 4.9.3 in Chapter Four). The frequencies of reference point determine the deputies' priority concerns in development issues. The researcher discusses the items which have the most points in each function of role and the items which have more than ten points, because they are more representative than those which have been talked about less often.

7.5.1 A general introduction of the functions based on the points

From Table 25 below, the deputies have 208 points of achievements in representing the interests of community, 143 points more than the 65 points of the challenges they face. In total, their achievements are much greater and more diverse than their challenges. In Function 1 “promoting the voice of the community” and Function 4 “developing ethnic representation”, there are more points of achievements they have made than the challenges they face. However, in the second and the third functions “localising policies of the state” and “implementing livelihood projects, there are fewer points of achievements than the challenges they face.

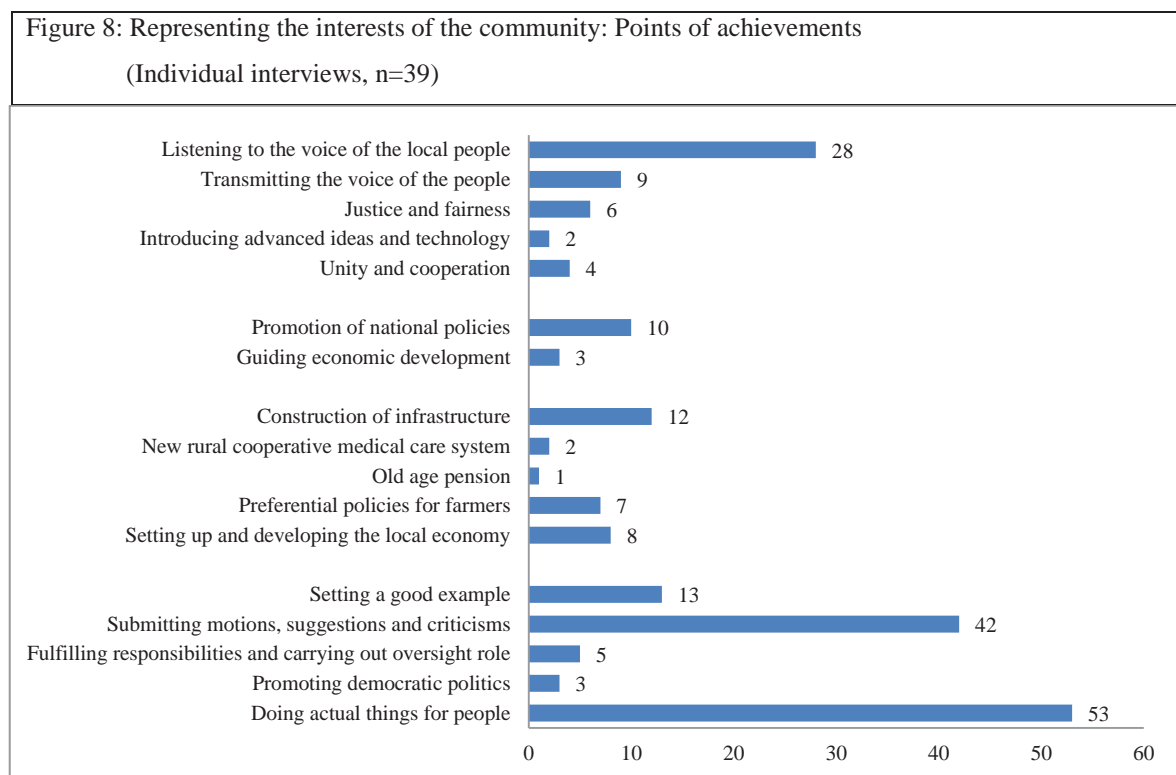
Table 25: Representing the interests of the community: Points of achievements and challenges

| Functions | Achievements (Points) | Challenges (Points) | A minus C (Points) |
|---|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Function 1: Promoting the voice of the community | 49 | 7 | 42 |
| Function 2: Localising policies of the state | 13 | 14 | -1 |
| Function 3: Implementing livelihood projects | 30 | 41 | -11 |
| Function 4: Developing ethnic representation | 116 | 3 | 113 |
| Total | 208 | 65 | 143 |

7.5.2 Analysis of the achievements and challenges in representing the state in individual interviews

On analysing all the achievements, in Figure 8, we can see that “listening to the voice of the local people” has is the highest in the first function of “promoting the voice of the people” in representing the interests of the community. Two reasons explain why the deputies take listening to the voice of the local people as the most important role.

The first is the requirement of the Party that the cadres and deputies at different governmental levels should aspire to link themselves closely with the people. The Party's "mass line", which is interpreted as doing everything for the masses, relying on them in every task, carries out the principle "from the masses, to the masses" (*cong qunzhong zhonglai, dao qunzhong zhongqu*, 从群众中来, 到群众中去), and has been transmitted from the central to the local as a key central intention. Secondly, the deputies in CPCs are directly elected by the mass (constituents). Even though the election of these deputies is not normalised in some counties, the elected understand their role as the remonstrator to reflect the opinions of their communities. Therefore, they must visit the constituencies to listen to the voice of the people so that they can transmit their opinions to the CPC and the CPGs.



For example, during individual interviews in the office of some deputies, the researcher observed three local people who reported their issues to the deputies. The deputies listened carefully and took notes. They listened carefully to the complaints of their constituents on such issues and tried to find a solution, otherwise conflicts may emerge due to "the long-term lack of responsiveness of cadres / deputies" (Deputy 2). Through listening to the opinions of the local people, the deputies on one hand believe that the state policies were generally good, on the other hand, admit that the policies such as the provision of Minimum Subsistence Security System (MSS) were unfair based on what the local people said. MSS is provided by

the county government based on a quota for each village. The quota is never enough, so conflicts and disputes emerge among the local people due to an unclear evaluation procedure.

In Figure 8, promotion of national policies has 10 points in the achievements of the second function in representing the interests of the community. The national policies play a significant role in pushing the local economic development forward. The deputies identify this and actively talk about these favourable national policies.

Construction of infrastructure in the achievements of the third function, “implementing livelihood projects”, has 12 points. Construction of infrastructure shares the same important position as in the focus groups and in the motions submitted by the deputies discussed in Chapter Five. Doing actual things for people, submitting motions and setting a good example have 53, 42 and 13 points respectively in the fourth function “developing ethnic representation”. As the achievement which has the most points, “doing actual things for people” has been a common goal for deputies who play their roles in representing the interests of community. It reflects also that the LCPC has less power compared to the CPG and the PCC, so the deputies need to be seen to be achieving practical things and then to be remembered by their constituencies, as Deputy 1 says:

In several years, I will no longer be a deputy in this locality. However, I hope that the people will say that I have done some good, practical things for them.

Regarding the challenges, there are some contrasts and similarities. In Figure 9, as the heaviest challenges in the first function, both level of satisfaction and difficulty in the implementation of motions have three points respectively. Implementing national policy has 12 points as the biggest challenge in the second function. Lack of expertise and funding is the biggest challenge in the third function which has nine points. Transformation of ideas has two points in the fourth function.

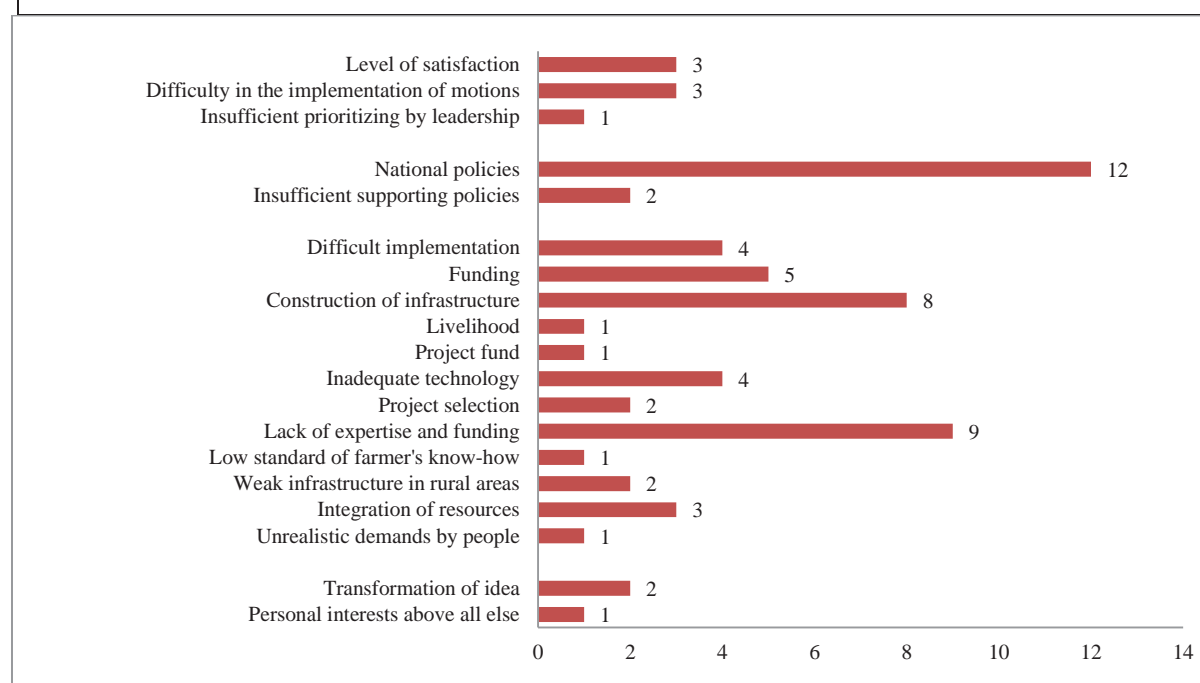
Implementing the national policies were reported as the biggest challenge that the deputies face in representing the interests of the community, because localising the policies of the state is a difficult process for the deputies. Firstly, the deputies need much time to research national policies. This requires them to have the ability and knowledge to understand and communicate with communities. Secondly, it is a difficult process as such localisation may be considered a challenge of the central authorities which, if delayed or objected to, may result in the locality not getting the financial support for a development project.

Often, the challenges that the deputies face is also a challenge for their local community's development. This demonstrates that they have the intention of playing their role with a view towards improving local development. The challenges such as construction of infrastructure are a demonstration of such awareness. Building roads in construction of infrastructure is a big challenge for local development and it can constrain the way that the deputies play their roles because the first thing local people often want is better roads, in order to improve their wealth.

I set up a project to build a road linking the village with the outside world...If you want to get rich, you must build roads first (Deputy 4).

Figure 9: Representing the interests of the community: Points of challenges

(Individual interviews, n=39)



Sometimes the challenges that the deputies face are a mixture of their own and external factors such as a lack of expertise and funding. The deputies admitted that often they have no funds or a lack of specific expertise.

So, often, I can only ever carry out coordination work. The biggest challenge is still the question of funds. Second to this is the fact that we don't have sufficient expertise (Deputy 29).

The deputies said that the local people or their locality has a lack of expertise and funding.

The technical ability of the people is quite weak. So we also need to organise training to increase their technical expertise. ... Sometimes, the fund given by the central government is limited. The local poor people are required to pay part of the total funds. But I should add that they don't have the funds to pay out (Deputy 34).

The deputies have made achievements in representing the interests of the community such as listening to and transmitting the voice of the local people and doing actual things for the local people. However, they feel that they face both internal and external challenges such as lack of expertise and funding which restrict their role as advocates of the community. Therefore, when they consider the interests of the community, doing practical projects are the primary options.

7.5.3 The deputies' views about Ethnic Regional Autonomous System (ERAS) in representing the interests of the community in individual interviews

When the deputies play their roles in representing the interests of the community, they are expected to struggle for more development projects for their communities. They talk about development projects as remonstrators of the state under the Ethnic Regional Autonomous System (ERAS). Some deputies said that they didn't feel like they had much autonomy and preferential policies are more at prefectural level and less at the county level like Leishan.

We do not feel much autonomy. On the contrary, I feel that the autonomous county enjoys more rights of autonomy. In the past, the county Leishan was a Miao autonomous county. Possibly because there were a lot of Miao and autonomous counties for different Miao and other ethnic groups in this area, the government set up the Qiandongnan Miao and Dong autonomous prefecture in 1956. Leishan Miao autonomous county became the current Leishan County. The autonomous prefecture has a much bigger area, and as a result our county has not derived much benefit from the system (Deputy 1).

The prefecture is autonomous and receives a lot of preferential policies. However, the prefecture has to distribute the resources to the different counties. When the resources reach the county level they are quite limited (Deputy 28).

The Miao people do not have a history of their complete development. The ERAS is good. However, the prefecture has not been making full use of the system to fight for more beneficial policies for the Miao people. This mission should be strengthened (Deputy 33).

In contrast to the comments of the deputies about the ERAS in Chapter Six, the comments in this chapter demonstrate that the ERAS as a governance system is not favourable to the interests of the local people because the local people experience few of the preferential policies in the ERAS. Therefore, the deputies may not promote it as they think that the interests of the local people are not included.

7.6 The roles that the deputies play in a polycentric governance structure in the cultural tourism of Upper Lande village

The concern of village development is one important topic when the deputies visit their communities to solicit public opinions. In Box 2, the researcher introduces the development of cultural tourism in Langde village.

Box 2: Development of village governance/cultural tourism in Langde village

Langde is a natural Miao village with 530 Miao people. Cultural tourism is the main industry of this village. The village has been developed as a tourist destination since 1987 with the support of Leishan local government authorities. The CPG invested in the construction of infrastructure such as the road linked to the village and sewage disposal pool to improve the hygienic condition of the village. The architecture in ULM village remains very traditional and the cultural performance given by the villagers are aboriginal.

From the beginning, in order to guarantee that each household can share income from the development of cultural tourism, a workpoint system has been introduced after the discussion in the villagers to manage the cultural tourism in Langde village. The participants of this discussion of workpoint (*gongfen*, 工分) include *zhailao* and *yilang* organisations, the VC, the villager's mutual help team and the tourist reception team. Thirty years has passed since when the workpoint system has come into effect and it keeps the income of the villagers increasing. The villagers give cultural performance to the tourists. Normally, there are about 250 villagers who participate in each performance. The concept of sharing the common resources has been rooted into the villager's heart. Although many villagers have become rich, they don't renovate their traditional dwelling houses into modern cemented architecture with the advice from the LCPC deputies.

In Langde village, each cultural performance costs RMB800-1,200 (US\$127-190), which is paid by the tourists or the agencies who/which organise the tour. The VC will take 25% of

(Continued with Box 2)

the income as the Village Tourism Foundation. This fund is used to maintain roads, performance grounds and other collective expenditure related to cultural tourism in the village. The rest 75% is distributed to the villagers in line with their work in the performance. The remuneration is paid to each household once a month based on the sum of the workpoints that each member of a household has. Each participant of the performance has different workpoints based on what work s/he does. The performers will receive cards with different workpoints. The card is delivered three times. The first delivery is for those who receive tourists at the foot of the village; the second is before the performance and the third is at the end of the performance. The old people and children are encouraged to wear costumes of Miao style. Staying at the playground but without performing, they can have one to five workpoints. At the end of each month, the VC calculates the money gained, and how much can be delivered to the participants, and how much does each workpoint value. The host of a household will then bring all the workpoint cards to receive corresponding remuneration from the VC.

The formation of village governance and the management of cultural tourism in this village is a structure of polycentric governance (Figure 10) where different actors play their roles. Different from the Xijiang case in Chapter Six, the villagers self-govern their resources and enjoy much more self- governance because they have their own “system for discussing village affairs” (Deputy 15).

All the revenues from the cultural tourism are left in the village, 25% of the revenue for the Village Committee (VC) and 75% for the villagers. In the development of the cultural tourism, the deputies play their role in coordinating with different governmental bureaux in representing the interests of the community. The deputies consider the competition of other destinations of cultural tourism, and the issue of development and protection, as Deputy 7 said:

Our villages have some very good cultural attractions and we have a lot of tourists both domestically and from abroad. However, the tourism in our township has been weakened because of the development of tourism in Xijiang. We need to find a way to catch up with them. I actively communicate with my villagers on matters of the development of tourism and the construction of hotels and guest houses. The villagers want to build cement and brick houses. However, the traditional houses in our county are wood. So we suggest to the villagers that they renovate or build wood houses in order to safeguard our tradition and attract more tourists. Both brick and wood houses cost the same. For those who build

wood houses, we coordinate with different governmental bureaux to grant them more land for foundation, if theirs is too narrow.

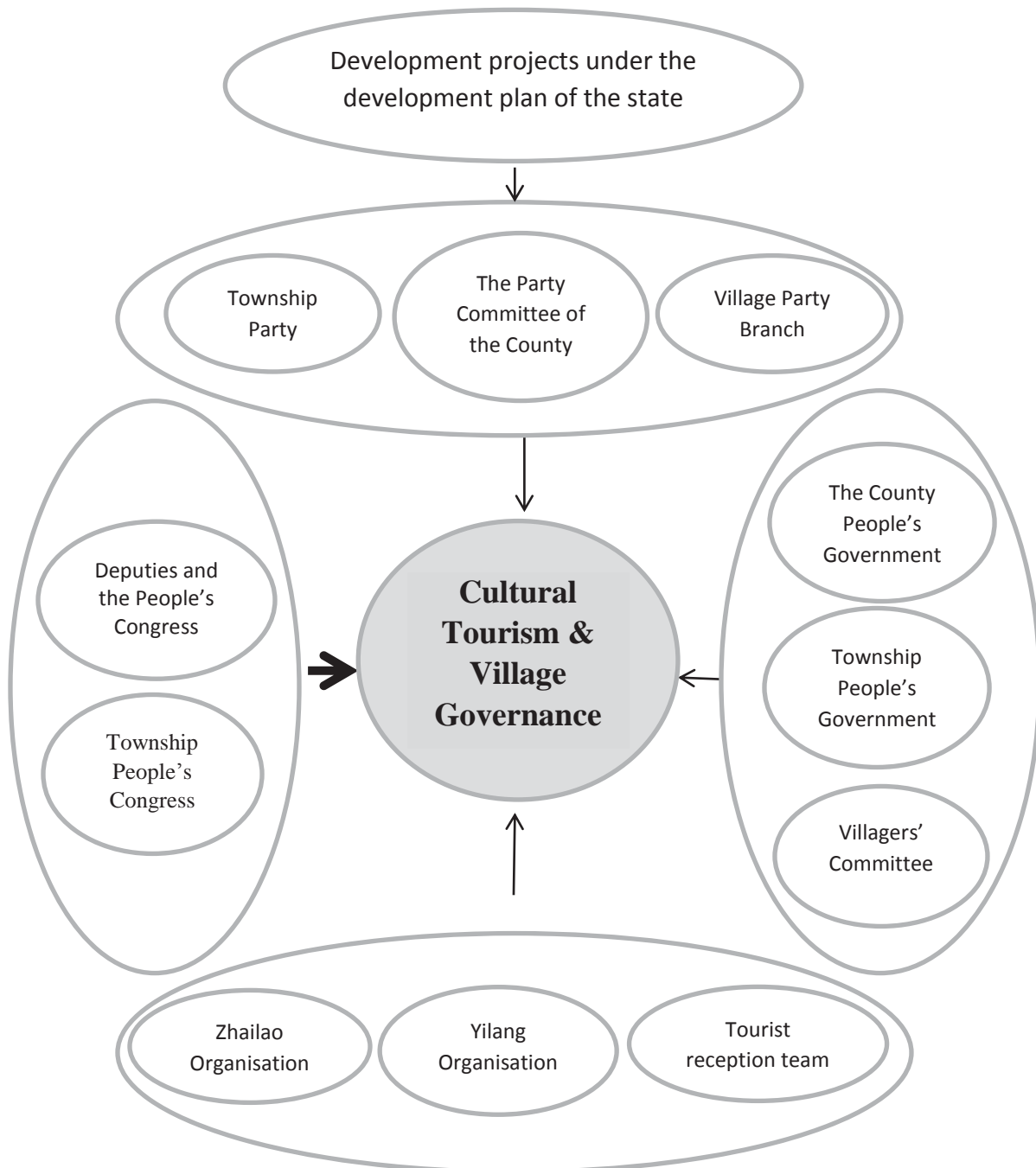
Similar to the Xijiang case in Chapter Six, the cultural tourism in Langde village is promoted and implemented under the development plan of the state. There are multiple stakeholders in the management of the cultural tourism in this village. The Party Committee of the County (PCC) and the County People's Government (CPG) work together to require the Township People's Government (TPG) to make a plan for the development project of cultural tourism in the Langde village in order to gain the financial support from the CPG. The LCPC and its deputies coordinate and negotiate with the CPG and the community to solve concrete issues such as the building of hygiene facilities, and to visit the villagers to solve any difficulties. The grassroots organisation of the Party—the Village Party Branch (VPB) promotes the Party line and reinforces the Party's influence and control over the grassroots. The Villagers' Committee (VC) is in charge of the daily operation of the village affairs and the marketing of the cultural tourism in the village. The Miao social power—the *zhailao* organisation and *yilang* organisation are responsible for organising the welcome ceremonies for tourists, cultural performances, selling products to tourists at the end of the performance, and mediating any disputes between/among villagers. The tourist reception team is in charge of the detailed reception such as bringing seats, alcohol or tea to the tourists. The villager's mutual help team helps solve the difficulties that the villagers face, such as making silver ornamentations and costumes for the cultural tourism. The deputies play a central role in coordinating and negotiating with different actors such as the CPG and the *zhailao* organisation in the Langde village in representing the interests of the community.

Many deputies believe that Miao culture can be developed through the development of their cultural tourism, but some deputies worry that some characteristics of the Miao people themselves and intrinsic reason may restrict the development of the Miao areas. The comments of some Miao deputies on their people may show that the Miao are a peaceful type of people and they may refuse change.

The Miao people are not inclined to seek comfort, personal fame or other gains. They are kind. If you know some Miao history, you will know that their migration from northern China to the southwest was for the sake of escaping from war and chaos. They migrated to the mountainous areas. This is an example of the typical Miao characteristic of 'holding themselves aloof from the world'. The

Miao people want to live an imaginary ideal life. So you can see that during the season when they are not busy, the Miao people visit their relatives and friends in different villages where they drink and dance. So the Miao areas are backward in development because of such characteristics (Deputy 33).

Figure 10: The roles that the LCPC deputies play in the cultural tourism in Langde Village
(in a polycentric structure)



This structure of polycentric governance in the field research demonstrates that as one of the plural stakeholders, the deputies play their roles as advocates of the interests of the community. They coordinate and negotiate with the local government to maximise the interests of the community in its use of common-pool resources (CPRs) of cultural tourism. It demonstrates that the main bodies of local governance have gone beyond monocentric governmental bodies and have been extended to the community—its residents and its traditional social organisations.

In his prior visits, the researcher had seen that there were multiple stakeholders in the management of the cultural tourism and village governance in this village. In this structure of polycentric governance, it was the community which empowered the deputies to play their roles in negotiation and coordination. The community possessed and controlled their own resources for development and retained its own model of development based on a small scale, but on authentic ethnic culture and community resources.

7.7 Conclusion

The findings outlined in this chapter indicate that the deputies play their roles as remonstrators to the state in representing the interests of the community. These findings cover two topics. The first topic is the achievements that deputies have made and the challenges they face in representing the interests of the community in the four functions: (i) promoting the strategy of the community, (ii) localising policies of the state, (iii) implementing livelihood projects, and (iv) development ethnic representation. The second topic is the roles that a deputy plays in representing the interests of the community in village governance and the development of cultural tourism in a structure of polycentric governance.

With regards to the first topic, firstly, the deputies play their roles in representing the interests of the community in an evolving local governance system in which the voice of local people is more listened to and transmitted than ever before. The deputies' political consciousness of doing service and their ability of implementing development projects for their communities has increased under this evolving system. The achievements that the deputies have made demonstrate the evolution of local governance. They play their roles as remonstrators to the state or advocates of the community to promote the concerns of the community. This

remonstrating is also present in the deputies' views about ERAS. Some deputies think that ERAS has fewer preferential policies for the local people.

Secondly, that the deputies play their roles as remonstrators to the state demonstrates a process of the localisation of development policies and projects. The challenges that the deputies face show that some development projects which are designed at central level and implemented at grassroots level may not match the local environment. This process implies a trend of bottom-up development which mixes localisation with indigenisation. Therefore, local governance can be regarded as a process of localising development policies and projects. Such localisation relies on the deputies' intervening in and restructuring development projects to make them fit to the local situation and the demands of the local people. As a result, the voice of the community in development activities can be better listened to and acted on by the deputies. This explains the high number of achievements identified by the deputies in the two functions: promoting the voice of the community and implementing livelihood projects.

Thirdly, the deputies play their roles as remonstrators to the state in developing their ethnic representation. As advocates of the community, they have made achievements in setting themselves as good examples, submitting motions, promoting democratic politics and doing actual things for the local people. The deputies are supported by their communities by providing their supervision over the work of government in the development projects which relate to the interests of their constituents. They face various challenges such as transformation of ideas and their personal interests. In addition to the central control, the development of their ethnic representation is also constrained by the local environment.

Fourthly, as the case study illustrates, the deputies demonstrate the growth of their role in representing the interests of the community in village governance and cultural tourism in a structure of polycentric governance. Their roles in coordination and negotiation help the local people build their capability of self-governance in local development projects.

Chapter Six and Chapter Seven have provided analytic explanation of the four functions that the deputies play as agents of the state and as remonstrators to the state as well as their roles as coordinators and negotiators in two structures of polycentric governance. Chapter Five discussed representative structure and representation of the deputies. All these findings help answer the two research questions: the ways that the deputies play their roles in representing the interests of the state and/or the community. These basic discussions contribute to a deeper

analysis of the political representation and ethnic representation of the deputies in the next chapter. They contribute to a better understanding of the Chinese local governance systems in this process of evolution.

8.1 Introduction

This chapter draws together the major themes of the findings by explaining the dual functions of the deputies of Leishan County People's Congress (LCPC). The thesis answers the two research questions: how do the LCPC deputies play their roles in representing the interests of the state towards the community, and how do they represent the interests of the community towards the state? The findings demonstrate the deputies' "role accumulation" (K. J. O'Brien, 1994a) in an evolving process of a local governance system that is transforming from local government to local governance in China. In this evolving local governance system, the deputies maintain their political representation as agents of the state. At the same time, they play significant roles in listening to and transmitting the public opinions of their communities. As a result, the demands and complaints of the communities for their economic and social development are included in the motions submitted by the deputies. These influence the decentralised strategic policy-making of the governments at the county level. The political participation of the deputies increases their ethnic representation. As 78.4% of the 153 LCPC deputies are Miao, the ethnic representation of Miao also increases in this local governance process.

The evolution of local governance systems shifts the deputies' traditional conception of consensual democracy into the idea of a competitive democracy. This evolution is a process by which the deputies perceived and identified the interest conflicts between the state and the community. This process of local governance produces some contradictory elements that can be regarded as a mirror of a complex situation such as the interweaving of decentralisation and recentralisation, and the coherence of the interests between the state and the community and the conflicts of the two interests. These contradictions may demonstrate a time lag between the policy-makers in the central government and the executors at the local government: new policies have been made at the central level but the local is still practicing the old; the local has adjusted it to adapt to the old, but new policies have been made. Speaking of the dual roles of the deputies, this reform with Chinese characteristics can be one

of the reasons that the deputies have their role dilemmas in their political and ethnic representation.

The deputies expand their power through their intervention in and restructuring of diverse development policies and projects. This power increase is also a result of the process of localisation of development policies and projects of the state. This helps the deputies increase their role in representing the interests of their communities towards the state. Their ethnic representation is also increasing and so local governance is on its way to becoming good governance as Grindle (2004, p. 525) argues that good governance implies “changes in the representation of interests and processes for public debate and policy decision-making”. This change in the representation of interests in this thesis means that the deputies increase their representation in the interests of their community, the poor or vulnerable people. Despite this, the deputies retain important political representation as agents of the state due to the Party’s control over its cadres and the central control of development policies and projects.

Based on the findings from the field research explained in Chapters Five, Six, the literature review in Chapter Two and the research background in Chapter Three, in this chapter, the discussion is centred on political representation, ethnic representation, and the dilemmas of the political and ethnic representation of the deputies. This discussion may contribute to a wider debate and understanding of the shift from emphasising the political representation to emphasising the ethnic representation of the deputies in Chinese Local People’s Congresses (LPCs). In addition, this chapter summarises the two main contributions of this research. The first contribution is the application of the ideas of polycentric governance in Chinese local context which helps for a better understanding of the process of the local governance system in Chinese ethnic and rural areas. The second contribution is the quantification of pairwise ranking in focus groups which provides an innovative method for research in development studies in real world contexts.

The concluding section of this chapter presents a summary of the discussion around the major themes of this thesis which demonstrates a link between the evolving local governance system in China, the political and ethnic representation of the deputies, and the structure of polycentric governance in Chinese Miao ethnic areas. This summary returns to the complexity of the local political environment where there exist multiple stakeholders within governmental authorities, and between them and the society in the Miao ethnic areas. While admitting that the roles that the deputies play in representing the interests of the community

towards the state are accumulating, the researcher also points out that the ethnic representation of the deputies may decrease along with the economic development which is encouraging an ethnic amalgamation, the dearth of a real local autonomy and the promotion of a central strategy that focuses on the building of the governance ability of the central government authorities.

8.2 Political representation: The role that the deputies play in representing the interests of the state towards community

As explained in Chapter Six, the roles that the deputies play in representing the interests of the state can be regarded as their political representation. Chinese ethnic and rural areas like Leishan face diverse development issues related to poverty relief and economic development as these localities are economically backward. Chinese economic reform promotes economic decentralisation from the central to the local. This economic decentralisation leads to economic federalism⁶³ which “has been accompanied by a strengthening of China’s unitary political system” (Y. Huang, 1996, p. 655). Such a unitary political system has meant that the development policies and projects are designed and made by the central government authorities. The deputies enforce these policies and implement these development projects of the state as discussed in the previous chapters. The dependence of the local on the central does not change because the deputies have to “try to negotiate with the government to give their locality more preferential policies” (Deputy 25). More preferential policies mean more development projects, because the government controls “all the resources of the political and economic development, including the materials, the finances and the power” (Deputy 6).

The local governmental authorities make their own development strategies under the central development plan such as that in Leishan County. The Party Committee of the County (PCC) and the County People’s Government (CPG) make the strategy as “aiming to create Leishan as a big tourism area and a tea county” (Deputy 22). The conformity of this strategy with the central development plan means that the county can attain financial resources from the

⁶³ Y. Huang (1996, p. 655) introduces that “unlike other large countries, China has a unitary political system and while the country has been moving toward economic federalism, its unitary political features not only have remained but have been strengthened in a number of respects”. The central tenet of the economic federalism can be tested by “endogenous policy decentralisation” (Strumpf & Oberholzer - Gee, 2002, p. 1).

central. These resources help the county improve infrastructure such as the construction of roads and agricultural facilities, and industrial development such as cultural tourism and tea planting. The local governments' dependence on the central governmental authorities determines that the central plays a dominant role in the central-local relations. Thus the central-local relations remain basically unchanged in China.

These relations influence the political representation role that the deputies play in representing the interests of the state towards the community. Therefore, in this context, the discussion of political representation of the deputies of the County People's Congresses (CPCs) focuses on these aspects: dominance of the Party, triangular relations between the Party, the County People's Government (CPG) and the CPC. The deputies play their roles in promoting the Party's strategy, enforcing centralised development policies and implementing development projects. More importantly, they help the CPG maintain social stability in representing the interests of the state towards the community where there are potential conflicts between the state and the community. Their primary political representation role is representing the interest of the state. This role remains stable and strong.

8.2.1 Political representation with the dominance of the Party through its cadre management and responsibility system

Central Government controls development policies and projects and the Party plays a dominant role in the relations between the central and the local because it also dominates the local through its complex cadre management and responsibility system. This system is based on the exchange and turnover of cadres. Top leaders of a county are appointed by the Party from other regions as Deputy 32 said:

Speaking of personnel issues, the Party's principle is such that the chief leaders of a county will not be appointed to the locality where they were born. The policy extends to the Party secretary, the head of the government, the director of the public security bureau, and the director of the Party's organizational department.

Qualified cadres are seconded to different constituencies under the arrangement of the Party and they are eventually elected as deputies. The Party secretary of the county is seconded to the Miao area from other regions of the province in order to maintain the Party's authority and to constrain the autonomy of the ethnic area, because the Party has a lack of confidence

in the political stability of ethnic areas. The Party secretary is more powerful than the head of the CPG and the LCPC in the local governance system. Its dominance over leaders and cadres in the governmental authorities ensures “the stability and consolidation of the one-party system” (A. Chen, 1999, p. 136). It recentralises its power through “the evaluation and monitoring of local leaders” (Edin, 2003, p. 36) and decreases instability, as Wedeman (2001, p. 59) says by reducing “local malfeasance by recruiting honest and upright officials”.

The Ethnic Regional Autonomous System (ERAS) inherited the historical chieftain system in which a chief from the local ethnic community governed the area by the appointment of the central government. The Party makes its commitment to appoint a local ethnic cadre from the ethnic majority of the population as the head of the CPG in accordance with the ERAS regulation and s/he must be a Party member. This inclusion of the ethnic elite into its cadre system ensures that the Party can dominate the local by dominating the elite of the local ethnic group. The Party secretary of the County and the head of the CPG in Leishan are deputies of the LCPC. The Party controls the LCPC with its membership accounting for more than 50% of the deputies.

The acceleration of the turnover of officials is also seen as a strategy to strengthen the Party’s dominance over a county. Principal officials in the leading groups of a county such as the head of CPG and the secretary of the PCC are relocated to other areas when they complete their terms. For example, the current Party secretary of Leishan County is a Han seconded from the provincial Party committee to replace the former county Party secretary who has finished his term. And the head of the CPG is a local Miao appointed by the Party’s Prefectural Committee to replace the former one who finished his term and was exchanged to other regions. On one hand, this personnel management system becomes a way to link fragmented localities as a result of economic and administrative decentralisation. On the other hand, this turnover of officials ensures that the Party has a strong political control over a locality.

With its vertical networks of cadre management system and its horizontal control over the People’s Congresses, the Party maintains its status as the most powerful political actor and “its presence is everywhere” (Deputies 6 and 10). The dominance of the Party has been identified by the deputies as “the local people implement projects and develop their industry under the large scope and framework of the Party” (Deputy 25). Therefore, strong central

control produces the interests of the state first in mind when the deputies play their roles of representation.

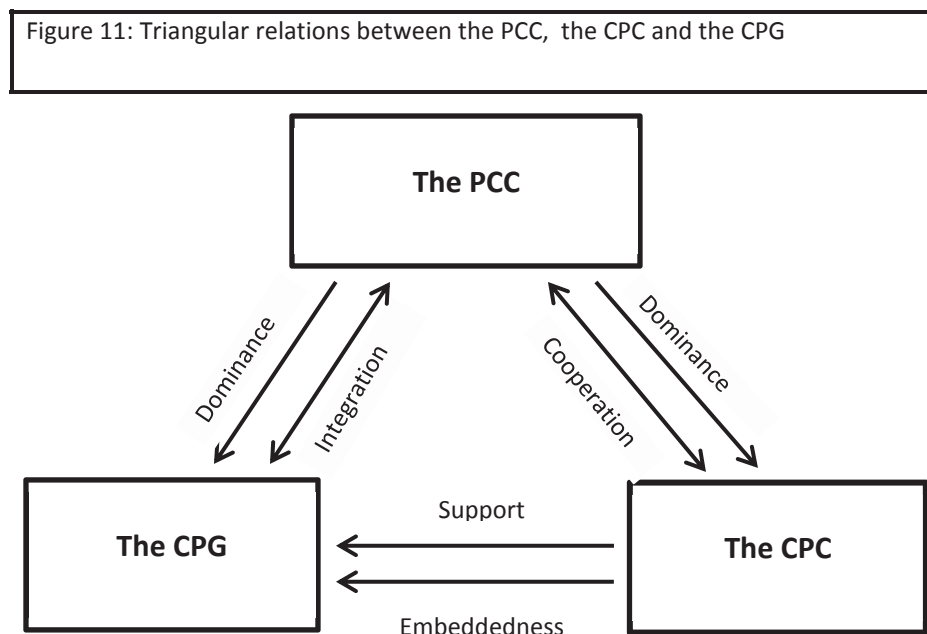
This determines that the primary role of the deputies is their political representation—representing the interests of the state towards the community as agents of the state. The deputies have achievements in developing their political representation through “assured voting rights” and “enhancing political power at grassroots level”. They implement the election law in representing the interests of the state to guarantee the people at grassroots level having the voting rights. They enhance political power at grassroots level in accordance with the Party’s principle and line: to enhance the role of the Village Party Branches (VPBs) and the organisations which are subject to the leadership of the Party such as the Association of Miao Studies (AMS) of which the head is a government official.

8.2.2 Political representation in the triangular relations between the Party, the County People’s Government, and the County People’s Congress

The Party, the County People’s Government (CPG) and the County People’s Congress (CPC) remain the main political powers in county governance in Chinese ethnic and rural areas. The adjustment of sophisticated power relations, the approaches of vertical and horizontal decentralisation, and power arrangements between the central and the local are of significance for the development space of the local governance system (Xue & Ma, 2008). The CPC and its deputies strengthen their capacity to play their roles in overseeing the work of government, but the central government authorities do not want to see that the power of the CPC and its deputies is too much so as to completely constrain the power of leaders of the Party Committee of the County (PCC) and the CPG (J. He, 2011). The Party needs the local governments and the Local People’s Congresses (LPCs) to execute its central intentions. Against such a background, the triangular relations (Figure 11) between the CPC and the PCC are cooperation and dominance; between the CPC and the CPG are support and embeddedness; between the PCC and the CPG are dominance and integration.

The relations between the CPC and the Party can be described as both cooperation and dominance (Figure 11). Even with the reduction of the Party’s charisma at grassroots level due to corruption, the Party persists in its control over the grassroots level. Many deputies of the CPCs have the political task of promoting the Party’s principle and line to expand its

control. On one hand, the Party and the CPC deputies forms a relation of cooperative partnership. On the other hand, the Party dominates the CPC, so that its strategy can be fully promoted and implemented.



The relations between the CPC and the CPG are characterised as both support and embeddedness (Figure 11). Although the level of satisfaction of the CPG becomes low in the views of the deputies, the CPG is expected to be more responsive to the issues related to development by the CPC and its deputies. The CPG makes the development strategy of the county match the local situation under the dominance of the Party. It controls the dissemination of the state development policies and projects. The CPC deputies perform as intermediaries and they do not offend the government as some deputies say that they “support the government work by means of oversight” (Deputies 23 and 6), rather than challenging the authority of the government. The CPC and its deputies are a buffer to ease tension between the government and the local people as the Party and the government direct the local development.

The deputies perform “active mediating” (Deputy 2) in representing the interests of the state. Their roles as agents of the state are “most successful in the capacity of mediators” (K. J. O'Brien, 1994a, p. 373). In this mediation, maintaining social stability comes prior to development and the deputies are expected by the CPG to help maintain social stability at the

grassroots level. They do a lot of coordination work. For example, in the land expropriation for the establishment of an economic zone in the County, a deputy (Deputy 10) reported the complaints of some local people in a remote village who requested equal compensation with those whose land is near the location of the county government. In this case, the deputy reported this issue to the Party and the government to help the villagers win the same compensation.

The relations between the PCC and CPG are both dominance and integration (Figure 11). The PCC dominates the CPG through the selection and appointment of cadres. It decides which official of the CPG can be seconded to a constituency where s/he can be elected as a deputy. The PCC and CPG make local development strategy jointly. The CPG executes the intentions of the Party. The head of the county, as vice secretary of the PCC, needs to report its work to the Permanent Committee of the PCC. In making important development strategy and dealing with development issues, the PCC and the CPG coordinate with each other. For example, in some emergency cases, such as the flood disaster in July 2015 in Leishan, the Party secretary and the magistrate of the county each lead one work team to investigate those areas which were heavily hit by the flood, after which, they coordinated with each other for an effective response.

8.2.3 Political representation: Representing the interests of the state

The deputies' political representation demonstrates that they prioritise the interests of the state. They demonstrate their political representation under the unitary dominance of the Party. They promote the Party's strategy and enforce laws and policies of the state, as O'Brien (1994a) argues that the deputies "represent state authority, explain the pattern of state extraction and justify allocations" (p. 359) and "the Party and legislative leaders never fail to mention deputies' responsibility to bring the regime and its policies to the people" (p. 367).

With the expectation from the People's Congress itself and the personal motivation for their own career development, the deputies do not evade their role and they strive for achievements in promoting the strategies of the Party. In the process of transmitting the central intentions as representatives of the state, the deputies do not consider themselves

compromised because they believe that the interests of the state match the interests of the community. As such, they do not violate the basic principle set up in the development strategy by the Party and the government.

The political representation of the deputies can be understood as a set of regulated actions as agents of the state. These actions are identified by the deputies as the four functions in representing the interests of the state: (i) promoting the strategy of the Party, (ii) enforcing laws and policies of the state, (iii) implementing livelihood projects, and (iv) developing political representation. This means that the deputies visit their communities regularly to seek the local people's understanding of the difficulty of the government and to transmit the policies of the state.

And then, as a "quasi-insider who seek attention and transmit information that may help rectify administration" (K. J. O'Brien, 1994a, p. 368), they report the public opinions and remonstrate to the People's Congress and to the officials of the government at meetings. Due to the rising consciousness of political participation in the communities and the decrease of the charisma of the Party at the grassroots level, the deputies face diverse challenges in representing the interests of the state. However, they perceive that only a capable individual can deal with these challenges and they remain loyal as agents of the state and that they are an essential part of the current power structure in the local politics.

The interactive relations between the Party, the CPG and the CPC discussed in Section 8.2.2 help understand the role that the deputies play in representing the interests of the state in the central-local relations which are dominated by the Party. The discussion on the political representation of the deputies in this section demonstrates the reality that the deputies consider the interests of the state first as agents of the state. However, their role as agents of the state does not necessarily overwhelm their ethnic representation role as representatives of the community. When the deputies supervise the work of government by playing their oversight role, they challenge the privilege of the local executive. In this regard, the deputies are not a "docile prey" of the Local People's Government (LPG), but a "bellicose challenger" (Ming Xia, 2000, p. 134). They play their roles in representing the interests of the community as the following Section 8.3 discusses. This role shift of the deputies from political representation to ethnic representation demonstrates a process of change of Chinese governance in which the interests of communities become foremost.

8.3 Ethnic representation: The roles that the deputies play in representing the interests of the community towards the state

As explained in Chapter Seven, the roles that the deputies play in representing the interests of the community can be regarded as their ethnic representation. The discussion of the ethnic representation of the deputies focuses on three particular aspects: promoting the voice of the Miao community, localising development policies that support the development of Miao community and implementing development projects that meet the interests of the local Miao people. The deputies listen to and transmit the voice of their communities. They play their roles in localising development policies and projects and implementing development projects in representing the interests of the community. Their ethnic representation means representing the interests of the Miao ethnic community from which they originate. This representation is accumulating and increases when they localise the state development policies and projects and when they coordinate and negotiate with the communities and governments in a structure of polycentric governance.

In Chinese ethnic and rural areas, the tradition that the central governmental authorities make the development plans remains unchanged. Therefore, the localities such as Leishan County show no evidence that they can design “irrational development plans” (Saich, 2011, p. 199) under the dominance of the higher-ranking governmental authorities. Despite this, the deputies are experiencing a substantial role transformation in the evolving local governance system which is moving from consensual democracy to competitive democracy. They require both the accountability and transparency of the local government by supervising its work and expanding citizen rights by listening to and soliciting the community’s opinions. They play their roles in representing the interests of the Miao ethnic community. This ethnic representation determines whether they can achieve real autonomy or not.

The deputies are accumulating their Miao ethnic representation by their persistent intervention in and restructuring of the development projects. This is a process by which the deputies increase their efforts to expand their political power. Even if there are no conflicts between the government and the local people as many deputies say, tensions between them remain. The deputies act as a “remonstrator” to the state and remonstrate on behalf of the interests of the community. Under the influence of the idea of consensual democracy, many deputies believe that those who are not satisfied are a small group, rather than the majority of

the people. They advocate the interests of this small group by coordinating and even “quarrelling with the official in-charge in the government bureaux” (Deputy 1).

Even so, the deputies are not ready to challenge the authority of the Party and the government as a whole, because they “provide a good role model with respect to obeying the laws and regulations” (Deputy 23), so that the constituents can “follow the example, and follow the Party” (Deputy 12). The deputies generally understand that they represent the interests of the community by fulfilling the four functions explained in Chapter Seven, namely (i) promoting the voice of the community, (ii) localising policies of the state, (iii) implementing livelihood projects, and (iv) developing ethnic representation. While discussing the roles that the deputies play, the question that remains unchanged is who should serve in these representative institutions and whom the deputies should represent. So listening to and transmitting the voice of the community becomes more and more important as the deputies’ political consciousness is increasing with regard to representing the interests of their communities.

8.3.1 Ethnic representation: Representing the interests of the community

Different from their political representation, the deputies’ ethnic representation shows that they prioritise the interests of their communities. The deputies do this by their intervention in and restructuring of the development projects. The Party dominates the strategy-making of a locality, but it is not directly involved in the implementation of the development policies and projects. This allows the deputies to play their roles as advocates of their communities, and as coordinators and negotiators in representing the interests of the community in implementing development projects. They play their roles as “policy providers” (Y. N. Cho, 2009, p. 98) in light of the requirement of the community, because most of them anticipate doing more actual projects for their communities. They take practical steps to representing the interests of the Miao community through the promotion of specific development projects. As is demonstrated in the motions discussed in Chapter Five, this includes their involvement in development projects such as transportation, tea industry and cultural development.

The deputies have achievements in promoting the voice of the community, localising policies of the state, implementing livelihood projects and developing ethnic representation in representing the interests of the community. In the process of mediation and negotiation as

representatives of the community, they are acting rationally and pragmatically because they have noticed that the benefits that the Miao community can get in an area cannot go beyond the level of the economic development, and cannot violate the basic principle set up in the development strategy by the Party Committee of the County (PCC). Therefore, they develop diverse strategies to win more interests for the community from one development project. For example, in the economic zone project discussed by Deputy 10 in this Chapter, the alternatives for compensation are not part of the compensation scheme and they include more quotas for minimum subsistence security (MSS), renovation of unsafe housing, more job provision and the access to PPFs as top-priority.

The increasing role that the deputies play in representing the interests of the community demonstrates that the barriers for the political participation of the community have become lower with the evolution of Chinese local governance systems. Communities can express their views through their representatives in the People's Congresses. This may lead to the professionalisation of deputies because the division of interest groups require that the deputies become fully involved in the demands and complaints of diverse groups. In the process of intervening in and restructuring the central development projects, the deputies redefine the policy-making process, even though the local governance system has become a crowded arena as the development project of cultural tourism demonstrates (See Chapters Six and Seven).

Development projects using the common-pool resources (CPRs) are intervened in and restructured by the deputies when the deputies coordinate and negotiate with different stakeholders in the community to maximise the interests of the state in the management of CPRs. They act as negotiators and coordinators of the interests of the community and support the community to promote self-governance in terms of the protection of traditional and cultural heritage and the development of ethnic cultural tourism from the government. One example shows that the deputies questioned the management of tea industry (CPRs) in the 12th meeting of the 16th LCPC. They argued that the input for the tea planting is much bigger than the output. This is due to the inefficiency and non-transparency of the work of government. Their voices imply that in the problematic management of tea industry, the interests of the community are undermined.

The lack of trust to the government promotes the deputies to rebuild the political participation of their communities in development projects such as cultural tourism and village governance

as that in Langde village shows. The structure of polycentric governance at village level sets up an interactive and cooperative self-governance model, which features the participation of villagers, social network and self-governing organisations. Such a structure facilitates the implementation of the centrally designed development projects in a way that the community can play a main role with the negotiation and coordination of the deputies between the community and the government.

The deputies are aware that it is critical to listen to the voice of the local people. It is a way of solving conflicts because “not listening to the people” causes social disturbance due to the division of interests in a society in transformation. The term of each deputy is five years. When a deputy from one constituency completes his term, the development projects s/he is involved in may be terminated, because his/her successors can have different interests. Therefore, s/he may like to have some new development projects. Development projects such as cultural tourism and agricultural facilities need to have continuous resources. So this can be very disruptive. This means that the project of development intervention needs to be re-negotiated and rebuilt, as resources are always limited. Therefore, the deputies are expected to guarantee that the voice of the community is included into the policy-making. This can avoid potential elite capture. By these means, the development projects can be implemented in a localised style which can meet the demand of the local people. However, without the explanation of policies and projects by the deputies, the constituents may not know which policies and projects can be implemented until the impact appears which may not be what the constituents would like to see.

Therefore, it is of great importance that the deputies transmit the voices of their constituents to the CPC and the CPG. This action allows the voice of the community to be heard in the policy-making process. The deputies can thus localise and implement a series of development intervention. While admitting the effectiveness of various development intervention projects, they think that some national policies and development projects don't include the local ethnic knowledge and have no supporting policies. As E. Ostrom (1990, p. 33) suggests “without a fair, orderly, and efficient method of allocating resource units, local appropriators have little motivation to contribute to the continued provision of the resource system”.

8.3.2 Ethnic representation: Extension of recognition of politics

The ethnic representation of the deputies demonstrates the extension of the recognition of politics by the Chinese government. This recognition of politics is “not just a courtesy we owe people. It is a vital human need” (C. Taylor, 1997, p. 99) ⁶⁴. The submissions of motions demonstrate that the deputies persist in seeking to support the interests of their constituents. The deputies struggle for the expansion of their power and for the interests of the community that they represent in a local political environment which is plural and complex. They practice the strategy of embeddedness into other powerful political bodies such as the Party Committee of the County (PCC) and the County People’s Government (CPG). They take actions in intervening in and restructuring development projects in order to better meet the ethnic interests of their constituents and to strengthen the ethnic identity of the whole community. The ethnic representation of the deputies is thus developed in this process.

When the deputies criticise the development projects, they understand their representation as remonstrator to the state in representing the interests of the community. They questioned whether the one-level-down projects such as the pork and tea industries (Deputy 18, and the 12th meeting of the 16th session of LCPC) can benefit the ethnic group or not. As members of the state organ, the deputies hold the idea that economic development for the whole county is the focus of all work, rather than development for a particular group. However, when they criticised the development projects, they understand their representation as remonstrator in representing their ethnic communities. There are multiple ethnic groups in a county like Leishan who co-live with each other but there is one ethnic group who dominates in the population.

Therefore, the deputies’ ethnic representation requires a policy of equality to address the relations between the major and minor ethnic groups. This may depoliticise the ethnic identity of the main ethnic group, as Ma (2009, p. 166) predicts:

When there is equality among groups along with a high level of social development, economic prosperity, democracy and cultural diversity, the tension among ethnic groups will fade and vanish as minorities do not see the need to

⁶⁴ According to C. Taylor, here “we” refer to the governments of the developed countries. Nonrecognition or misrecognition results that the indigenous and colonised people are looked upon as inferior and uncivilised. Therefore, “politics of multiculturalism” is required on behalf of minority or subaltern groups (C. Taylor, 1997, p. 98).

fight for their rights and benefits. Ethnic identity will thence lose its political meaning and cultural heritage can be enhanced.

The enhancement of cultural heritage can be seen by many activities of protection for both tangible cultural heritages such as Miao architecture (Deputies 32 and 33) and intangibles such as Miao costume, hairstyle, embroidery and language (Deputy 13), even though the political meaning of those heritages has been removed. The deputies play their roles as “network coordinator” (Stoker, 2011, p. 16). The central government authorities decentralise its power to the local, especially, to the ethnic areas, because those groups that “have historically been denied power now demand it, and central governments are increasingly unable to resist their demands” (Dillinger & Fay, 1999, p. 20). Therefore, the deputies can use their ethnicity as “a weapon in the pursuit of collective advantage” (Young, 1983, p. 660).

This recognition of politics requires the cooperation between the deputies and between them and their constituents. It is essential in achieving effective local governance. Therefore, the realisation of ethnic representation relies among other things on the participation of the public in the election of qualified deputies. The role that the deputies play in representing the interests of the community helps create participatory networks which form social capital for local development. Through the interaction and cooperation between the deputies and their constituents, new agencies such as “cooperative agency” (Deputy 19) among villagers and organisation based on “company + base + cooperative agency” (Deputy 36) have been established. These new cooperative agencies strengthen the link between the deputies and their constituents. The common interests of the Miao ethnic communities based on their Miao ethnicity are strengthened.

In this process, the deputies are carriers of the ethnic identity for the Miao ethnic groups. How they represent the ethnic people determines whether they can make use of the opportunity to increase their ethnic representation in a universal way. There are institutional issues which may restrict the ethnic representation of the deputies such as the representation structure discussed in the following section.

8.3.3 Ethnic representation: Representative structure and universal representation

The ethnic representation of the deputies is also demonstrated in their representative structure because this structure emphasises “the sophisticated use of quotas and attention to all circles” (K. J. O'Brien & Li, 1993, p. 24) in this Miao minority dominated county as is explained in Chapter Five. The representative structure is insufficient as many professions such as doctors, manager, or financier are simply categorised in social classes of farmer and intellectual. These new social classes are not included in the representative structure and they become invisible. This results in that the deputies are aware that they have general representation—representing the interests of the whole ethnic group, but they don't understand whom and what they specifically represent. Therefore, when they submit motions, they focus on the development projects of materials such as construction of infrastructure and industrial development. The motions that are related to enhancing and expanding their ethnic representation are not so visible.

When the deputy candidates are selected, they satisfy the three conditions: universality, progressiveness and representativeness. The three conditions seek to guarantee that there are deputies from all social circles in a conventional way. This may decrease the qualification of a deputy candidate and result that some deputies have insufficient understanding of representation due to their low level of education. Therefore, the deputies face the challenge of the improvement of quality and ability in developing their ethnic representation. The Local People's Congresses (LPCs) provide an institutional platform for the deputies to mediate and dispel social conflicts. So the deputies can coordinate the interests and conflicts between the state and the community and disputes and conflicts between the ethnic groups.

The deputies who represent different interests and classes can compete and bargain with each other during the meetings in the sessional period in the LPCs. This includes those deputies who represent new social occupations and can improve the universality and representation of deputies. This inclusiveness can promote the development of the LPCs as an institution where all groups which have different social interests and complaints can participate in the decision-making process through their representatives. The disputes and conflicts of all social classes are expected to be solved through a transparent policy-making process. As a result, the deputies need to coordinate and negotiate with different stakeholders: the governmental authorities, the private sectors and the traditional social organisations of the ethnic groups.

The representative structure and representation role of the deputies suggests that a reasonable and comprehensive representative structure can provide benefits to the political development of an ethnic rural area in China. The interactions of the local elite (deputies) and the common people (constituents) can promote ethnic political development to a greater level of democratic participation. The resources that the deputies hold and their involvement in rural development projects strengthen their power and reputation in their constituencies, even if it is still contested. This leads to a crucial change for Chinese local governance system. With on-going improvement in the deputies' level of education, the deputies can play their role of ethnic representation more effectively which can thus promote their professionalisation.

Professionalisation can guarantee that deputies have enough funding and resources as they work full time in a professional status. Professionalisation of the deputies of the Local People's Congresses (LPCs) is increasing and this helps guarantee that the deputies can solicit public opinions and administrate the state affairs professionally. The current non-professionalisation status demonstrates that "there are welfare benefits that deputies should enjoy but are not guaranteed" (Deputy 6). It is not a simple task to represent the state power while also representing the interests of the local people, because the deputies are expected to have broad knowledge and experience in the fields of politics, laws and management. Such an accumulation of knowledge and experience remain insufficient if the deputies are not trained professionals. In addition, it is not realistic for the part-time deputies to fully fulfil their roles. When there is a conflict between their own work and their role as a deputy in a part-time situation, the deputies typically either act in a perfunctory manner or resign. As was found in the field research, in order to making a living, some deputies had to resign to go and work in the coastal areas.

8.4 Political and ethnic representation: A win-win situation?

The stability of political representation of the deputies and the increase of their ethnic representation address the question whether the two representations is a zero-sum game or win-win situation. Under the traditional idea of consensual democracy, many deputies believe that "the decisions of the Party and the government are in accordance with the interests of the people; they do not violate these interests" (Deputy 1). Therefore, when they play their roles, their primary ideas are promoting the strategy of the Party and enforcing the laws and

policies of the state. When they struggle more for the interests of their communities, it is the need for maintaining social stability at grassroots level first rather than representing the interests of their communities that is notable.

Due to the cadre management system in which the deputies prioritise their personal political life, they consider the interests of the state first. For example, the ethnic Miao deputies who work as directors of the LCPC Special Committees are well-educated. They are professionalised and have resources to arrange and restructure development projects. They focus on the promotion of the development of their communities for a period with the promotion of the policies of the state. However, when they are shifted to other administrative areas as leading officials, they disconnect their representation for the community they are expected to represent. They become officials, rather than a delegate of their constituencies. Their political life relies on the promotion of the Party strategies and central intentions. As a result, they integrate themselves into the role as the agent of the state.

The local governments rely on the central government to support their local development in terms of society, economy and culture. They compete for more development projects under the central development plan. On the other hand, the central relies on the local to promote its principle, line and policies and maintain social stability through the deputies by having them represent the interests of the state towards the community. The symbiotic partnership is obvious in terms of implementing livelihood projects. The deputies provide “good service when it comes to the people’s livelihoods” and these issues “are related to industrial development such as pig-raising and tea and the planting of fruit trees” (Deputy 33). The symbiotic relations in these areas reflect mutual benefits of the state and the community with their own demands. Therefore, it can be concluded that the political and ethnic representation of the deputies is a win-win situation in such symbiotic relations.

Many deputies such as farmers who have a lower level of education are not professional deputies and they are from their constituencies, rather than seconded to their constituencies like the deputies who are incumbent officials. When the deputies who are farmers play their role in representing the interests of the community, their achievements may be compromised and challenges are more diverse as they hold fewer resources. The interests of the local people are rooted in economic pragmatism, rather than political participation. So when the deputies can bring some actual projects for their constituents, they are regarded by the local people as successful. Such low demand from the community restricts the desire and

possibility of the deputies to improve their ability in representing the interests of their Miao ethnic community.

One challenge that the deputies face is the “transformation of ideas” (See Chapter Seven) in developing their ethnic representation. In contrast, one challenge that they face is “backward ideas” in developing their political representation (See Chapter Six). The deputies are aware that “a deputy is a person who, in his representation of all people from one locality, will get others in the management of state affairs” (Deputy 6). In this way, their ethnic representation may result in a political representation of their communities where the Miao people are the main ethnic group but where multi-ethnic groups co-live with each other. The nuanced situation in which the deputies play their dual roles may entrap them into role dilemmas of political and ethnic representation.

As the researcher focused in the thesis on the evolving process of local governance and the motions submitted by the deputies, he did not differentiate between the responses from seconded deputies and the responses from elected deputies. The researcher acknowledges that the two categories of deputies may respond differently in terms of their achievements or challenges in the interviews, but these differences were not the focus in this research and instead the topic would be worthy of further research. For example, a seconded deputy such as the Township Party Secretary (Deputy 23) tended to talk more about building and perfecting the Party itself and emphasised the integration of the interests of the state and the community. On the other hand, the deputies (Deputy 18, 19 and 27) who were elected seemed to talk more about their struggles in acquiring development projects for their communities. Overall, the researcher felt in the fieldwork that the seconded deputies seemed to focus their responses on representing the state’s interests towards the community, whereas the elected deputies left the impression that they concentrated more on representing the community’s interests towards the state. However, this impression requires further research.

8.4.1 The role dilemmas of political and ethnic representation

In the process of playing their dual roles of representation, the deputies have gradually expanded “their freedom to engage in considerable role bargaining and role blending” (K. J. O’Brien, 1994a, p. 378). The dual functions of the deputies reflect symbiotic relations between the central and the local due to their mutual demands. These mutual demands form a

“cooperative relationship” and both parties have “constrained and supported each other’s developmentalism” (Ming Xia, 2000, p. 180). This leads to a complex interdependence between the central and the local. Economically, local government has decentralised power, but they have a lack of resources. The local development is constrained by the central development policies. The deputies localise the central’s development policies and form their own development projects. In this process, conflicts can rise between the local and the central.

In facing the conflicting interests between the state and the community in a fast transforming society and in the evolving process of local governance, there is a dilemma in the political and ethnic representation of the deputies. The political and ethnic representation of the deputies is a part of polycentric hybrid regime. There are two deliberative practices in this polycentric hybrid regime: the direct election of deputies and the deputies’ deliberation such as the work of the government and their intervention in development projects. The former demonstrates democratic elements in a one-party unitary system. The latter includes the localisation of development policies and the implementation development projects by the deputies, and it suggests also the decentralisation of decision-making in terms of development policies and projects to the communities.

The deputies presume to solve conflicts between the interests of the state and the community. They represent the interests of the state because they are trained to accept the idea “considering the interests of both the large and the small; prioritising the interests of the whole while balancing the interests of the part” (Deputy 23). They consider the state interests first because they believe that “the long-term benefits of the state will extend to the personal interests of this generation, even those of our offspring” (Deputy 4). Their consciousness of political participation is strengthened and their power of overseeing the government work and officials is expanded in the process of playing their roles in representing the interests of the state. They don’t challenge the power of the Party and the government because many deputies believe that their work is to support, rather than challenge the government. Nevertheless, a possible way to challenge the government is to represent the interests of the community first.

The deputies represent the interests of the state towards the community by means of maintaining social stability, because they believe they “cannot achieve socio-economic development without a stable society. So if there is even minor conflict, it needs to be resolved at the grassroots level” (Deputy 2). There are conflicts between the interests of the

central government and the local communities. It depends on the deputies how such conflicts are neutralised. The disagreement of some deputies with the conflicts between the interests of the state and the community demonstrates that they still think in a traditional way of consensual democracy. The transformation of social reality drives them to confront and resolve the issues of conflicting interests due to their deputy status. They are expected to maintain a sustainable way in representing the interests of the state by the government and/or in representing the interests of the community by their constituents.

For the state, the interests are stability and no social disturbances at grassroots level with the implementation of development projects. For the community, the interests are local economic development projects and how much the local people can share in this development process. The deputies shoulder the responsibility of dealing with conflicts and “as a deputy at grassroots level, his sensibility is very important” (Deputy 2). This means that the deputies must have a strong political consciousness to solve the tension between the state and the community before it develops into a conflict.

The development plan of the state promotes the realisation of the symbiotic partnership between the central and the local, because the top-designed plan is implemented by means of development projects which are localised by the deputies in order to satisfy real local demands. This is a process through which the deputies transform their ideas on development projects to match with the development framework of the state because these projects “are transmitted in the forms of political tasks” (Deputy 22) from higher-level authorities. The deputies solicit the communities’ opinions while respecting, maintaining and promoting the self-governance of the community such as their cooperation with the Villagers Committees (VCs), zhailao (chiefs of village) organisations in Langde and Xijiang villages

This multi-level governance with the central, the local governmental authorities and the community requires the deputies to be sensitive to policy coordination and project intervention because they are expected by the state to be “united in their thoughts for development” when some “particular villagers may only consider the immediate small benefits that accrue but fail to consider the larger trend involved in invigorating the development” (Deputy 4). This may apply to examples such as cultural tourism for the whole ethnic group. This coordination of the deputies is not equivalent to “the rise of multi-level and multi-agency governance with greater decentralisation” (Moran, 2011, p. 444), because the central leaders still need the leaders of Local People’s Governments (LPGs) to execute

the central's intentions, rather than the deputies of the People's Congresses (PCs). The designers of the PC system at central government do not want to see the power of the Local People's Congresses (LPCs) and their deputies become strong enough to challenge the local Party and government leaders (J. He, 2011).

In the central-local relations, the essence is the local, both "as far as governing structures and processes are concerned, and as far as the wider political life of the community is concerned" (Moran, 2011, p. 213). There is no simple separation of the central from the local because of the multi-level governance in China. The power of the central is diluted level by level from the province to the county, as the local governmental authorities at grassroots level such as the deputies always promotes the localisation of the central's development projects for the interests of the local. The central government authorities make development plans in the name of reform, but they may not have the power to direct the reform that they want, as Stoker (2003, p. 82) argues:

Central government does not have the power to command change in the direction it desires but it does have a capacity to drive national programmes of reform.

Therefore, in the process that the deputies intervene by restructuring the development projects, the power and dominance of the central government have weakened. With the deputies' increasing voices of localising development projects such as our "local situation needs to be considered when it (development project) is carried out, otherwise it is a waste of resources" (Deputy 18), the local voice is likely to make a more localised strategy of development in accordance with the local reality, rather than one-level down central development policies. The county made its own development strategy as with the tea industry and cultural tourism, rather than mining even though it is looked upon as an area rich in mines by the provincial government. The transformation and development of the local community by these development projects are due to the way the local elites desire to see them, rather than the way the central government would prefer such as the development of cultural tourism in Langde village. If Miao people don't persist in promoting and defending the regional representation, aboriginality and indigeneity of their cultures, they may gradually lose the control of this model of their local development.

Political communication can be found between the LCPC and its deputies in the Miao area in Guizhou. The LCPC organises trainings for the deputies to improve their abilities. The deputies have formed reciprocal relations with these institutions when they play their roles in

representing the interests of the state and/or the community. The deputies have autonomy to visit communities to solicit public opinions on a specific national policy when they represent the interests of the state, or visit the government bureaux to struggle for development projects when they represent the interests of the community. Such autonomy may produce common interests or interest conflicts between the state and the community as the next section discusses.

8.4.2 Interests of unanimity and conflicts

The deputies are required by the County People's Congress (CPC) to investigate the development issues of their communities. They are officially expected to reflect their opinions to local governmental authorities when issues emerge in the implementation of state policies and projects. They have a formal role in the implementation of the state livelihood policies such as minimum subsistence security (MSS), old age pension and preferential policies for farmers (PPFs). These development projects demonstrate the demand of the communities. Thus, the deputies believe that there are no conflicts of interests between the state and the community when they carry out these projects. Their roles demonstrate the unanimity of the two interests in the process of local development. The deputies are expected by the local communities to rearrange development projects that can help these communities in areas such as construction of infrastructure and cultural tourism, thus directing the process towards their local interests.

In the inclusive pluralism of consensual democracy, the deputies select coordination and compromise when dealing with the conflicts between the two interests of the state and their constituencies. On one hand, they seek to persuade the constituents to accept the situation and let them believe that the implementation of a policy or project is not controlled by a small group of people. On the other hand, they negotiate with and coordinate the government to struggle for more practical compensation for such groups of people.

Their role offers an institutional platform for mollifying and dispelling the conflicts of interests. The deputies who represent the interests of their communities compete and bargain during the debate in the People's Congress in relation to development projects. Many deputies are involved in development projects, either in their resourcing, or in decisions over the location of these projects. They mobilise their social resources and the power they have to

intervene in and restructure development projects to draw attention of the Party and the CPG, so that they can exert a more powerful influence in the local political environment. Therefore, when they play their roles in representing the two conflicting interests, they are also seeking to expand their power which may eventually lead to their autonomy from the central government.

In view of the conflicts of interests, the Party remains the power centre in “local governance” (Zhong, 2003, p. 57). In order to avoid political mistakes, the deputies make a distinction between the Party and the state by saying that they promote the Party’s principle and line, and implement the policies of the state. Admitting the Party’s leadership and central role in development means being politically conservative, while identifying that some policies of the state have problems demonstrates that the deputies have the quality to represent the interests of the community. When the deputies transmit the Party’s principle and line, and policies and strategies, and promote the policies of the state, their ethnic representation may be compromised. Many deputies lack the ability to perform more comprehensively due to their lower level of education.

This disadvantage obstructs their efficiency in performing their roles by promoting specific development projects in representing the interests of their communities, even though there is within the system a possibility of democratic participation which means that the deputies can express their voice on behalf the community more freely than those who are not deputies. Most of the deputies who are from the local constituencies are keen on promoting the interests of their communities. Their roles in community governance are not vulnerable because of their “social embedding” (Stoker, 2011, p. 29) in the communities.

Firstly, the deputies understand the obstacles that constrain them from realising the development goals of the community they represent. Secondly, they enhance the abilities which allow them to make measurable and sustainable achievements in their ethnic representation role. On one hand, they are required to promote the Party strategy and policies of the state by the Party and the government; on the other hand, they are expected to act as a participatory and responsive representative by their constituents. Due to the existence of a structure of polycentric governance in the Miao areas, the deputies can play a central role as representatives of their communities in a crowded local political arena where there are diverse stakeholders. O’Brien (1994a) argues that even the most dedicated remonstrators or

advocates of the community continue to serve as an agent of the state because it “provides political protection” (p. 373) for them.

The dilemma and interactions of the political and ethnic representation of the deputies take place in the symbolic relations between the central and the local. The gaming between the central and the local demonstrates the governance model of China as “the dual developmental state” (Ming Xia, 2000, p. 38)⁶⁵. Therefore, at the local level, “increasingly ambiguous expectations have encouraged role emergence and flexibility” (K. J. O'Brien, 1994a, p. 378) in meeting the role demands of the deputies. These expectations are either from the local government authorities which expect the deputies to play their role as agents of the state, or from the communities which expect that the deputies consider their interests first. The county governmental authorities can make economic policies and administrative decisions to complete their local development tasks with the political participation of the deputies.

The local government appears to have “more local autonomy” and there is “more local-central mutual dependency” (Eldersveld & Shen, 2001, p. 8). This greater local autonomy means that the local government can make its own economic policies and carries out poverty-relief tasks which can be seen in the development projects intervened in and restructured by the deputies in the cultural tourism and village governance. The structure of polycentric governance in these development projects contributes to a better understanding of the evolving local governance system in a locality where there are diverse development issues and multiple stakeholders in its political arena.

8.5 Contribution: A better understanding of the evolution of local governance system through the structure of polycentric governance

This research demonstrates the evolution of local governance system in Chinese ethnic and rural areas from local government to local governance, and from decentralisation to polycentric governance through the discussion of the roles that the deputies play in

⁶⁵ Xia (2000) explains the reason for his creation of the term: “the Chinese case illustrates the true nature of developmental state, only if our analysis moves one level higher to see the developmental state approach as a kind of network strategy and as a way to maintain state capacity, these important institutional innovations have helped China to maintain the integrity of the developmental state model, namely, a strong state with a developmental orientation” (p.38). So here, his dual developmental state includes two meanings: a strong government and seeking for development.

representing the interests of the state and/or the interests of the community. County governance in Chinese ethnic areas such as Leishan is a complex process and it is evolving. The county's plural political environment found in this research demonstrates the coexistence of the hierarchic control of the governmental authorities and the democratic self-governance at grassroots level. In this local political environment, there are regulatory political tasks which are carried out by the deputies such as the promotion of the Party strategy. There are also traditional institutions which are advocated by the deputies and the local people such as the mediating system based on ethnic traditional social organisations, and there is the intervention of the state power and the political participation of the communities.

The dilemma that exists in the political and ethnic representation roles of the deputies uncovers that the plural local political arena is a system with multiple stakeholders in which there exists a structure of polycentric governance. In an ethnic county like Leishan where several ethnic groups live together, the local politics is “polycentric” and many “overlapping” (Michael Dean McGinnis, 1999b, p. 2) centres exist. This was seen in the village governance and the management of cultural tourism in which there are multiple stakeholders: the deputies, the government institutions, and the villagers and their organisations. The interactions between the deputies and the local government authorities and between them and their communities, and the roles that they play in the structure of polycentric governance provide a way to have a better understanding of the governance issues and evolving local governance systems in Chinese ethnic and rural areas.

A local governance system based on this structure of polycentric governance demonstrates the devolution of resources and the process of decision-making from the government to the society and community. In the village governance and management of cultural tourism, the local people are the owners of their common-pool resources (CPRs) and the deputies help them negotiate with the government through coordinating their constituencies. The traditional ethnic social organisations enhance the internal cohesion of the ethnic society, and the deputies can play more roles in the governance of their communities in representing the interests of their communities. This structure of polycentric governance permits more space for ethnic representation of the deputies and it provides an example for local governance at county level.

The findings of the structure of polycentric governance demonstrate that the development model in Langde village is led by the local Miao ethnic community and it mobilises all

villagers to participate in cultural protection and cultural tourism. In this structure of polycentric governance, there are multiple stakeholders. This structure differs from the People's Commune model that was popularised and promoted by the central government in the late 1950s in China. The Commune model based on monocentric command had a significant impact on village and clan cultures (F. Wang, 1991). More seriously, some systems of the Commune model such as the free public dining hall produced irrational collective action: excessive consumption of food by the members of the Commune and it eventually led to the tragedy of the commons (D. Yang, 1998).

The governance model in Langde based on multiple stakeholders produces polycentric governance and it is "obviously better than the development model led by the government in terms of cultural authenticity" (Xinhua Li & Wu, 2010, p. 73). This model of development resurrects the cultural traditions of the ethnic Miao people as their ethnicity is strengthened as both a political entity and a cultural group. The self-governance of local communities results in the production of their own political power in their village governance and the management of common-pool resources (CPRs). The ethnic representation of the deputies is expanded with the participation and the empowerment of local community in this structure of polycentric governance.

The system in this structure of polycentric governance demonstrates that the authoritarianism by the leadership of the government comprises the essence. Democratic elements keep increasing such as that the deputies play their roles as negotiators and coordinators in representing the interests of the community between the governmental authorities and the communities, to gain cash income for the villagers in the development of cultural tourism. The deputies' consciousness of ethnic representation increases with the demand and expectation for their role accumulating in representing the interests of the community. They expand their ethnic representation through intervening in and restructuring the development projects in common-pool resources.

The deputies lie at the centre of coordination and negotiation between the governmental authorities and the communities in the structure of polycentric governance. In this process, traditional social organisations influence their political activities. This demonstrates the view of (Michael Dean McGinnis, 1999a, p. 2): "if the overall governance structure reinforces the capability of local groups to deal with their own problems, then user groups have an incentive to manage their own CPRs wisely", and therefore, "under these circumstances development is

likely to be sustainable”. The deputies of the local People’s Congresses are able to play their roles in promoting the political empowerment of the ethnic groups.

The deputies have greater role accumulation in the structure of polycentric governance in representing the interests of the communities. They make the voice of the local people heard more by the leadership of a locality by visiting the government or by submitting motions. Therefore, the possibility that the local people are involved in political processes such as policy-making has increased. They can be included in policy-making in a meaningful way as policy-providers. The community become less vulnerable and it is empowered through the roles that the deputies play as negotiators and coordinators in this structure of polycentric governance.

8.6 Contribution: Pairwise ranking in focus groups used in a real world research context

In this research an innovative method was employed: quantifying pairwise ranking of focus groups by normalising and averaging data. It supports and supplements the qualitative findings in the semi-structured individual interviews. Therefore, it leads to the establishment of a triangulated form of methodology. Based on the findings by the pairwise ranking, the researcher identified the priorities of many development issues that the deputies care for. As a result, this thesis is able to provide a critical view of Chinese local governance systems from the perspectives of the deputies of County People’s Congresses (CPC), in which they emphasise the central roles of the state and the local county governments, and which ignores the roles of traditional social organisations in the process of local governance.

The normalisation and averaging of the scores by means of a min-max method allowed the researcher to explain the results of the focus groups and avoided the possibility that some extreme data may influence the results of research. As the research environment and the research itself within development studies is diversified and heterogeneous, the integration of the normalised and averaged data of focus groups added rigor to the analysis. The four focus groups may have their own different top priority in terms of achievements and challenges, but the integration of the achievements and challenges in the four focus groups provided a clear sense of the development priorities across a broad group of participants.

The achievements and challenges in representing the interests of the state and/or the community that were identified and then normalised in the focus groups were supported by the findings in the semi-structured individual interviews, not precisely, but mostly, with the same priorities. These crucial development priorities are identified through the participants' open and frank responses as the researcher judged that their answers were not rehearsed in advance. The items of the achievements and challenges for the two research questions were recognised by the participants in the focus groups, and then, they are differentiated and discussed in more detail one after another in the individual interviews.

The quantification of the results from qualitative research methods helps understanding with more precision the complexity of the Chinese local political situations in ethnic minority areas. The quantification of the items of development issues reveals nuances and demonstrates priorities in local development process. For example, comparing the averaged value of the achievement in developing political representation in representing the state in Section 6.3 with the averaged value of the achievement in developing ethnic representation in representing the community in Section 7.4, we can see that the averaged value for the achievement of developing political representation is 0.45, but for developing ethnic representation is 0.55. Therefore, for this function, the achievement in representing the community is higher than that in representing the state. Comparing the averaged values for both challenges, we can see that the former is 0.36, the latter is 0.6 and the challenge for developing political representation in representing the state is therefore deemed of lesser importance than that for developing ethnic representation while representing the community.

Again, when comparing the two roles, the deputies' role in representing the state has lower values in terms of achievement, but also fewer challenges. The deputies' role in representing the community to the state has a higher value in terms of achievement, but also bigger challenges. These nuances demonstrate the complexity of local situations in China's ethnic areas. This aligns also with the researcher's general feeling that the deputies have both more achievements and challenges in representing the interests of the community towards the state in an evolving process of local governance in China. However, without the use of quantitative method, such nuance would have been more difficult to display. Overall, the results of the use of quantitative methods seem to lay a good foundation for future research in this field.

The combination of qualitative and quantitative methods provides a way of doing research in the real world for development studies. The researcher explored the priority of the

development issues through focus groups. Many similar items were also found in the semi-structured interviews afterwards. The mixed use of the two methods allowed the uncovering of prior achievements and challenges when investigating the roles that the deputies/participants of the research play in representing the interests of the state and/or the community. This reduced the subjectivity and increased the objectivity of the collected data.

8.7 Conclusion

The political and ethnic representation of the deputies discussed in this thesis presents the themes that emerged with the evolution of local governance process in the Miao ethnic areas in China. These themes include central-local relations, decentralisation, local governance and polycentric governance. These discussions deepen understanding of the ways that the deputies perceive and balance their dual roles in a county where the Miao people as one of China's ethnic minority groups are the majority of the population. The political representation reveals the deputies' "principle of state interests first" and dealing in appropriate ways with the relationship between the state and the people" (Deputy 7). The ethnic representation means that the deputies can represent the interests of the ethnic group to which they belong and it reflects that the deputies can represent the people who have "few political demands" (Deputy 10) to "participate in the management of state affairs" (Deputy 6). Four aspects can be summarised from the analysis.

Firstly, the discussion of the political and ethnic representation of the deputies in this thesis demonstrates the evolving process of local governance in China. In the process, the stakeholders of local governance in Chinese rural and ethnic areas have expanded from the local government authorities to community. As a result, the local governance system is composed of multiple stakeholders including public sectors, private sectors and ethnic social organisations. Local governance is evolving from monocentric to polycentric. The deputies play their dual roles in this evolving local governance system. Their ethnic representation role which means representing the interests of community is accumulating and increases, while their political representation role which means representing the interests of the state remains stable. In this evolving local governance system, they face a representation dilemma when conflicts of interests between the state and the community exist.

Secondly, the deputies who represent the interests of the local people and the local ethnic social organisations have begun to influence the policy-making process. In their participation in local politics, the deputies expand their power at local level, but their autonomy is still limited under the strong central control over the development policies and projects. It is evident that the deputies play their roles in intervening in and restructuring diverse development projects in a plural local political environment. Plural local interests in local government authorities and local ethnic communities in the ethnic areas make ethnic representation of the deputies become diverse and multiple. The voice for good local governance is stressed by the deputies who identified issues of institutions and local development. These local development issues are reflected in the motions submitted by the deputies. The voice of the local people has been to a large extent listened to and transmitted by their deputies, though the policy-making process is still captured by the “fragmented authoritarianism framework” (Mertha, 2009, p. 995).

Thirdly, the historical chieftain system and the ERAS system based on administrative decentralisation create a specific local context of governance in the Miao ethnic areas, which allows the ethnic groups who accounts for majority of the population govern their own inner affairs including local development. The deputies localise policies of the state by intervening in and restructuring the development projects in representing the interests of the community in this ERAS system. Their involvement in these development projects is changing the local political environment. The local governmental authorities mobilise internal ethnic power to achieve and improve the standard of their local governance. The deputies enhance their participation in policy-making in this evolving governance process. But the institutional arrangement of the ERAS does not demonstrate its advantages as a systematic administrative decentralisation which should empower the local ethnic groups due to backward ideas of the deputies and the local people. This restricts the effectiveness of the deputies’ political participation which can favor the interests of their communities in the ERAS. Therefore, compared to their political representation, the deputies have less ethnic representation. Their ethnic representation is also challenged by the perception of Miao people labelled as “holding themselves aloof from the world” (Deputy 33) by their own elite of deputies.

Fourthly, in view of the complex local situation, polycentric governance provides a political arena as a way of good local governance in which multiple stakeholders can discuss diverse development issues and the deputies play important roles as coordinators and negotiators between social organisations and governmental authorities in the management of local

development projects. This arrangement ensures that the deputies can achieve their ethnic representation in representing the interests of the community towards the state. The structure of polycentric governance in the village governance and in the management of cultural tourism provides a model of governance in which the deputies interact with the local political powers and their constituents. This structure enhances the position and power of the Miao deputies and Miao ethnic communities. Therefore, under such a structure, the roles that the deputies play in representing the interests of the community towards the state can be expanded and their ethnic representation is thus heightened.

In all, in a poverty-stricken area like Leishan in China, the ethnic representation of the deputies is restricted by the realistic demand for economic development due to its level of poverty. Therefore, development policies and projects aimed at relieving poverty is a top priority for the consideration of the deputies when they play their roles in representing the interests of the community. These development policies and projects are identified by the deputies as achievements in both representing the interests of the state and/or the community. Through these development policies and projects, they maintain strong political representation—representing the interests of the state and then they develop their ethnic representation—representing the interests of the community. They enforce and localise these state policies and implement these projects in a win-win situation with the integration of the interests of the state and the community into each other, and by this way they influence the local development agenda and expand their power.

Issues may remain in the long-term. Along with the continuous economic development in Chinese poor and ethnic areas, the ethnic representation of the deputies may decrease as “the overall tendency for development is ethnic amalgamation, “the consciousness of the Miao ethnicity has been fading due to the development of transportation” and “the whole nation is now a chessboard (or a melting pot)” (Deputy 30). The central government is implementing the strategy as the “modernisation of the national governance system and capacity” (Xi, 2014, p. 116). This strategy emphasises the building of the central governance capacity, as the central fully recognises “the urgency and importance of improving its governance performance” (Ding, 2010, p. 23). This recentralisation may limit the current level of autonomy of the deputies and reduce their efforts in enhancing their ethnic representation as remonstrators to the state and/or advocates of their communities.

The discussion of the deputies' political and ethnic representation in this thesis may provide advice for policy-making related to the deputies' roles in Local People's Congresses (LPCs). The representation roles of the deputies include two parts: political representation and ethnic representation. Their representation roles may evolve with the improvement of local governance systems such as a model of good governance and the guarantee of improving the professionalisation of deputies. There are also some issues which should be emphasised when the deputies play their roles, such as central control, limited autonomy, elite capture and insufficient and missing representation. In this section of final words, the researcher presents these ideas and issues as recommendations to those policy-makers who may be interested in them.

Part I: Institutional and governance systems that can assist the deputies play their roles better

1. The deputies can play their roles better in an institution based on cooperation

The LPCs can better demonstrate their commitment to the interests of the majority of people, as it was designed to do so by the Party. There is a need for institutional improvement within the LPCs and the cooperation between the LPCs, the Party Committee of County (PCC) and the County People's Government (CPG). The current cooperation among the three local authorities is believed to be deficient. There are many more critics of the centralised hierarchic system than in defence of it, but the role of the central governmental authorities remains dominant. Their provision of funding for development projects is continuous despite many cases of corruption and they influence the effects of these projects. The LPCs need to have a mature mechanism of cooperation with the other two government authorities in order to guarantee the implementation of these projects.

2. The deputies can play their roles better in a model of good governance

A model of good governance means that there exist polycentric structures such as discovered in village governance and the management of cultural tourism. In this context, different stakeholders can negotiate in a deliberative way to maximise the interests of the local people whom they are expected to represent. The deputies represent the contradictory or multiple interests of the state and/or the community. They are expected by the state to understand the overall interests of all ethnic groups, because this matches the “the interests of the state first”. The deputies can play their roles in representing the interests of community through negotiation and coordination with local governments and their communities. The interests of their constituents are compromised as the development plan of the state seeks for a broader development of all ethnic groups.

3. The deputies can play their roles better with the status of professionalisation

The work of non-professional deputies is obligatory and it is not regulated as a government service according to the Law of Deputy. Due to their non-professional status, many deputies have several social positions and their identity is overlapping. They regard their deputy work as a sideline occupation (*fuyè*, 副业), rather than their principal work (*zhuyè*, 主业). The non-professional deputies have no salary and there is a lack of basic welfare guarantee. Such a non-professional status means that they do not sufficient time and energy to play their roles well. The issue of the professionalisation cannot be solved in the near future, because the reform of the professionalisation of deputies involves an amendment of the Constitution of China. Only if the Constitution prohibits the deputies working in other public units, private sectors or social organisations, can the deputies be fully professionalised. If this change did occur, the situation that most deputies are non-professionals in the LCPC and in other Local People’s Congresses would be able to change.

Part II: Institutional issues need to be considered in policy-making

1. Central control

The development projects in which the deputies seek to intervene in and restructure are designed and promoted by the central governmental authorities. This tradition remains unchanged. The centre lies in a macro position where its centralised power can guarantee its political leadership towards the local. However, it may not understand the local situation at grassroots level and may not obtain complete and overall information of the local context in its policy-making process. The poorer ethnic areas face many development issues and they are highly dependent on the centre which controls the major resources and funding. The centralised policy-making process produces excess bureaucracy and privilege, which means that the local can only accept the development projects given to them by the central government. If local government hopes to get funding and support under the development plan, it has to give up its indigenous ideas and any traditional ways of development. As a result, the heterogeneity of their localities is not taken into account by the policy makers at the centre. This ignorance of the local context produces top-down policies and creates challenges for the deputies in representing the interests of the community.

2. Limited autonomy

Some deputies are embedded into other governmental authorities through the arrangement of the Party due to its continuous control of the cadres. The Party continues to control the LPCs and the local political and economic areas in order to guarantee that its strategies and development policies can be continuously implemented at grassroots level. The power tensions between the Party and other local governmental authorities happen at the local level in the context of a Party-state model. The conventional political culture admits and encourages centralization under which local autonomy and decentralisation does not become the essence of Chinese modern politics. As a result, real autonomy of the deputies and the LPC themselves may not be realised under the unitary party-state system. Their ethnic representation for their communities and constituents is thus compromised. The local

situation can be better explained and be included in policy-making process through the localisation of development projects by the deputies. A real reform of local autonomy is necessary before the deputies are able to localise the development projects, which in turn can soften the often tense central-local relations.

3. Elite capture

Some development interventions and projects are created to increase the power of participatory decision-making of communities, the local capacity building and the community's control over resources. In the process of implementing the development projects, some local elites may control large amounts of resources, and they allocate the rest to the poorer villagers. The development projects targeted at one location such as in an ethnic township can be shifted by local elite to other administrative areas that they are more familiar with, or where they may possibly have some private interests. Some local elites have strong mass mobilization ability. So development agencies could make use of them to mobilize the local people to participate into a project. As a result, this interest-oriented action makes their ethnic representation problematic, rather than expanding their political power. Such elite capture towards the development projects increases the risk of corruption and it may strengthen the patron-client relationships between the deputies and the communities.

4. Insufficient representation of women deputies

The issue of gender structure is prominent in the representative structure due to the low proportion of female deputies in the LCPC. Women are expected to have more political representation, participation and empowerment in China. Despite this, the political powers of the County Peoples' Congress (CPC) and the County People's Government (CPG) are still dominated by men. Therefore, the representative structure for women could be changed by increasing their representation in local politics. The reasonable quota for women deputies should match their proportion in the total population. Women deputies may still have an uneven proportion in the LCPC compared to their proportion in the total population. A slight rise of women deputies is possible in the future term of the LCPC due to the improvement of

women's education, the quota arrangement and their motivations for women-related development. It may still not be possible that women deputies will achieve the proportion of 45% which matches their proportion in the total population due to the influence of the local political culture and the women's desire for political participation.

5. Missing representation

The deputies will continue to play their role as remonstrators due to the increase of their political consciousness as citizens, their desire of accepting public responsibilities and their representation of communities based on their indigeneity. The representation of the deputies is not universal because the interests of those emerging groups such as doctors and managers are not represented. The current categorisation of the representative structure of deputies based on social class exposes the disadvantage that such categorisation cannot reflect the intent regarding progressiveness and superiority of the People's Congress system. The transformation of social classes leads to the diversification of interests and it catalyses diversified public complaints. There are no representatives for their interests in the CPCs. These are the people who are invisible in the political life of China. Their invisibility restricts the roles of the deputies and the expansion of power of the CPCs and their deputies.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Low Risk Notification (PN 331) of Massey Human Ethics Chairs Committee



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA

20 June 2013

Yuanheng Zheng
PhD Candidate
School of People, Environment and Planning
PN331

Dear Yuanheng

Re: Political Representation and Ethnicity of Miao Deputies in Chinese Local People's Congress at County Level: A Case Study on Ethnic Cultural Tourism in China's Guizhou Province

Thank you for your Low Risk Notification which was received on 10 June 2013.

Your project has been recorded on the Low Risk Database which is reported in the Annual Report of the Massey University Human Ethics Committees.

The low risk notification for this project is valid for a maximum of three years.

Please notify me if situations subsequently occur which cause you to reconsider your initial ethical analysis that it is safe to proceed without approval by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees.

Please note that travel undertaken by students must be approved by the supervisor and the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and be in accordance with the Policy and Procedures for Course-Related Student Travel Overseas. In addition, the supervisor must advise the University's Insurance Officer.

A reminder to include the following statement on all public documents:

"This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research."

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor John O'Neill, Director (Research Ethics), telephone 06 350 5249, e-mail humanethics@massey.ac.nz."

Please note that if a sponsoring organisation, funding authority or a journal in which you wish to publish requires evidence of committee approval (with an approval number), you will have to provide a full application to one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. You should also note that such an approval can only be provided prior to the commencement of the research.

Yours sincerely

John G O'Neill (Professor)
**Chair, Human Ethics Chairs' Committee and
Director (Research Ethics)**

cc Mr Gerard Prinsen
School of People, Environment and Planning
PN331

Mrs Mary Roberts, HoS Secretary
School of People, Environment and Planning
PN331

Assoc Prof Glenn Banks
School of People, Environment and Planning
PN331

Massey University Human Ethics Committee
Accredited by the Health Research Council

Research Ethics Office

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Appendix 2: Letter of Certificate for Field Research by Institute of Development Studies of Massey University



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
TE KURA PŪKENGĀ TANGATA

Foreign Affairs Office of Guizhou Province

No 1, Zhaiji Rd., Guiyang, 550004, Guizhou

People's Republic of China

19 April 2013

LETTER OF CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that Mr Zheng Yuanheng has fully completed his first year study in development studies in Massey University. Mr. Zheng will continue his study as a fully registered PhD student.

During his study in 2013, Mr Zheng will conduct a field research in China's Guizhou province. His focus will be on how local Miao deputies in Leishan Peoples' Congress in Guizhou's Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture play their roles, in particular, in the promotion of ethnic cultural tourism.

It would be very appreciated if the Foreign Affairs Office of Guizhou Province can offer Mr Zheng necessary help and support for his field research in Guizhou.

Professor Regina Scheyvens

Head of Institute of Development Studies,
School of People, Environment and Planning,
Massey University

Dr Gerard Prinsen

Supervisor I

A/Professor Glenn Banks

Supervisor II

Te Kunenga
ki Pūrehuroa

School of People, Environment and Planning
Private Bag 11222, Palmerston North 4442, New Zealand T 06 356 9099 extn 81755 F 06 350 5737 <http://pep.massey.ac.nz>

Appendix 3: Photo of Letter of Recommendation

This photo shows one Letter of Recommendation with the approval of field research by Leishan County People's Congress (LCPC)



Translation of the Letter

Xinjiang Township People's Congress,

This is to certify and introduce that Mr. Yuanheng Zheng will do research on the deputies of your People's Congress. Please provide him with necessary assistance!

(Sealed in red) by Leishan County People's Congress

On the date: 21 August 2013

(Note: Mr. Zheng is agreed to have an exemption for entrance ticket fee by Mr. Zu on 30 Aug 2013)

Appendix 4: Data summary of Focus Group 1

Diagram 1 / FG1: Representing the state: achievements

| Achievements | Number of Achievements | | | | | Score | Ranking |
|--|------------------------|---|---|---|---|-------|---------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | |
| 1. Minimum subsistence security system | | 2 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 4 |
| 2. Old age pension | | | 3 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 3 |
| 3. New rural cooperative medical care system | | | | 3 | 3 | 4 | 1 |
| 4. Renovation of unsafe housing | | | | | 5 | 0 | × |
| 5. Family planning policy | | | | | | 3 | 2 |

Diagram 2 / FG1: Representing the state: challenges

| Challenges | Number of Challenges | | | | | | Score | Ranking |
|---------------------------|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------|---------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | | |
| 1. Family planning policy | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 2 |
| 2. Education | | | 2 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 4 |
| 3. Livelihood projects | | | | 3 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 4 |
| 4. Conflicts and disputes | | | | | 5 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| 5. Spiritual work | | | | | | 5 | 5 | 1 |
| 6. Charisma | | | | | | | 2 | 3 |

Diagram 3 / FG1: Representing the constituency: achievements

| Achievements | Number of Achievements | | | | | Score | Ranking |
|--|------------------------|---|---|---|---|-------|---------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | |
| 1. Construction of infrastructure | | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 0 | × |
| 2. New rural cooperative medical care system | | | 2 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 3 |
| 3. Old age pension | | | | 4 | 5 | 1 | 4 |
| 4. Justice and fairness | | | | | 4 | 4 | 1 |
| 5. Promotion of national policies | | | | | | 3 | 2 |

Diagram 4 / FG1: Representing the constituency: challenges

| Challenges | Number of Challenges | | | | | Score | Ranking |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|---|---|---|---|-------|---------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | |
| 1. Funding | | 2 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 2 |
| 2. National policies | | | 2 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 1 |
| 3. Construction of infrastructure | | | | 4 | 5 | 0 | × |
| 4. Livelihood | | | | | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| 5. Level of satisfaction | | | | | | 3 | 1 |

Appendix 5: Data summary of Focus Group 2

Diagram 1 / FG2: Representing the state: achievements

| Achievements | Number of Achievements | | | | | Score | Ranking |
|--|------------------------|---|---|---|---|-------|---------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | |
| 1. Preferential policies for farmers (PPF) | | 1 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 3 |
| 2. Family planning policy | | | 2 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 4 |
| 3. Construction of infrastructure | | | | 4 | 5 | 0 | × |
| 4. Implementation of national policies | | | | | 4 | 4 | 1 |
| 5. Development of human rights | | | | | | 3 | 2 |

Diagram 2 / FG2: Representing the state: challenges

| Challenges | Number of Challenges | | | | | | Score | Ranking |
|--------------------------|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------|---------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | | |
| 1. Funding | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 1 |
| 2. Technical resources | | | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| 3. Social stability | | | | 3 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| 4. Natural resources | | | | | 5 | 4 | 1 | 3 |
| 5. Corruption | | | | | | 5 | 4 | 1 |
| 6. Project profitability | | | | | | | 0 | × |

Diagram 3 / FG2: Representing the constituency: achievements

| Achievements | Number of Achievements | | | | | Score | Ranking |
|---|------------------------|---|---|---|---|-------|---------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | |
| 1. Preferential policies for farmers (PPF) | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 |
| 2. Construction of infrastructure | | | 2 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 2 |
| 3. Listening to the voice of the local people | | | | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| 4. Introducing advanced ideas and technology | | | | | 4 | 1 | 3 |
| 5. Unity and cooperation | | | | | | 1 | 3 |

Diagram 4 / FG2: Representing the constituency: challenges

| Challenges | Number of Challenges | | | | | | Score | Ranking |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------|---------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | | |
| 1. Project fund | | 1 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 3 |
| 2. Inadequate technology | | | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 0 | × |
| 3. Transformation of ideas | | | | 3 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 1 |
| 4. Difficult implementation | | | | | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| 5. Project selection | | | | | | 6 | 3 | 2 |
| 6. Integration of resources | | | | | | | 3 | 2 |

Appendix 6: Data summary of Focus Group 3

Diagram 1 / FG3: Representing the state: achievements

| Achievements | Number of Achievements | | | | | Score | Ranking |
|--|------------------------|---|---|---|---|-------|---------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | |
| 1. National unity | | 2 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 2 |
| 2. Implementation of the Party's line, principles and policies | | | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 1 |
| 3. Promoting the development of China's western regions | | | | 4 | 5 | 0 | × |
| 4. Maintaining and supporting the state education policy | | | | | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| 5. Promotion of national industry development | | | | | | 2 | 2 |

Diagram 2 / FG3: Representing the state: challenges

| Challenges | Number of Challenges | | | | Score | Ranking |
|---|----------------------|---|---|---|-------|---------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | |
| 1. Lack of understanding of policies by the villagers | | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | × |
| 2. Conflicts of interest | | | 2 | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| 3. Backward ideas | | | | 4 | 1 | 3 |
| 4. Rural-urban income inequality | | | | | 3 | 1 |

Diagram 3 / FG3: Representing the constituency: achievements

| Achievements | Number of Achievements | | | | Score | Ranking |
|---|------------------------|---|---|---|-------|---------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | |
| 1. Listening to the voice of the local people | | 1 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 1 |
| 2. Fulfilling responsibilities and carrying out oversight | | | 2 | 4 | 1 | 2 |
| 3. Setting up and developing the local economy | | | | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| 4. Setting a good example | | | | | 2 | 1 |

Diagram 4 / FG3: Representing the constituency: challenges

| Challenges | Number of Challenges | | Score | Ranking |
|--|----------------------|---|-------|---------|
| | 1 | 2 | | |
| 1. Insufficient prioritizing by leadership | | 2 | 0 | × |
| 2. Unrealistic demands by the local people | | | 1 | 1 |

(This Diagram 4 is a special case in the pairwise ranking, because the five participants in Focus Group 3 categorised the original items only into two categories. While comparing Challenge 1 to Challenge 2, the participants chose Challenge 2 and ranks first. Challenge 1 got zero score.)

Appendix 7: Data summary of Focus Group 4

Diagram 1 / FG4: Representing the state: achievements

| Achievements | Number of Achievements | | | | | | Score | Ranking |
|--|------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------|---------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | | |
| 1. Oversight role | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 1 |
| 2. Popularising the laws | | | 3 | 2 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 4 |
| 3. Implementation of livelihood policies | | | | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 2 |
| 4. Improvement of education standard | | | | | 5 | 4 | 1 | 4 |
| 5. Enhancing political power at grassroots level | | | | | | 6 | 2 | 3 |
| 6. Assured voting rights | | | | | | | 2 | 3 |

Diagram 2 / FG4: Representing the state: challenges

| Challenges | Number of Challenges | | | | | | Score | Ranking |
|---|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------|---------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | | |
| 1. Improvement of quality and ability of deputies | | 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 |
| 2. Oversight role | | | 3 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 2 |
| 3. Soliciting public opinions | | | | 4 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 2 |
| 4. Lack of expertise and funding | | | | | 4 | 6 | 4 | 1 |
| 5. Low political awareness of the local people | | | | | | 6 | 1 | 2 |
| 6. Insufficient understanding of representation | | | | | | | 4 | 1 |

Diagram 3 / FG4: Representing the constituency: achievements

| Achievements | Number of Achievements | | | | | Score | Ranking |
|---|------------------------|---|---|---|---|-------|---------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | |
| 1. Submitting motions, suggestions and criticisms | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 |
| 2. Doing actual things for people | | | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| 3. Transmitting the voice of the people | | | | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| 4. Guiding economic development | | | | | 4 | 1 | 4 |
| 5. Promotion of democratic politics | | | | | | 0 | × |

Diagram 4 / FG4: Representing the constituency: challenge

| Challenges | Number of Challenges | | | | | | Score | Ranking |
|--|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------|---------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | | |
| 1. Lack of expertise and funding | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 1 |
| 2. Difficulty in the implementation of motions | | | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 2 |
| 3. Weak infrastructure in rural areas | | | | 3 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 4 |
| 4. Low standard of farmers' know-how | | | | | 5 | 6 | 0 | × |
| 5. Personal interests above all else | | | | | | 6 | 1 | 5 |
| 6. Insufficient supporting policies | | | | | | | 3 | 3 |

Appendix 8: Demographic information of the deputies who participated in the interviews

| No | Gender | Ethnicity | Age | Party member | Social status | Education | Social role |
|----|--------|-----------|-----|--------------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | Male | Miao | 38 | Yes | Cadre | Diploma | TG Head |
| 2 | Male | Dong | 35 | Yes | Cadre | Diploma | TPC Chairman |
| 3 | Male | Miao | 43 | Yes | Intellectual | Bachelor | CGB Director |
| 4 | Male | Miao | 47 | No | Farmer | Senior high school | VC Director |
| 5 | Female | Miao | 34 | Yes | Intellectual | Diploma | Teacher of primary school |
| 6 | Male | Miao | 48 | Yes | Cadre | Diploma | CGB Director |
| 7 | Male | Miao | 42 | Yes | Cadre | Bachelor | TG Head |
| 8 | Male | Miao | 35 | Yes | Cadre | Diploma | TPC Chairman |
| 9 | Female | Miao | 33 | Yes | Cadre | Bachelor | TG Head |
| 10 | Male | Dong | 35 | Yes | Cadre | Bachelor | TPC Chairman |
| 11 | Male | Miao | 42 | Yes | Farmer | Senior high school | VC Director |
| 12 | Female | Miao | 45 | No | Farmer | Senior high school | Villager |
| 13 | Male | Miao | 48 | Yes | Farmer | Junior high school | VPB Vice Secretary |
| 14 | Male | Miao | 54 | Yes | Farmer | Senior high school | VPB Party Secretary |
| 15 | Male | Miao | 44 | No | Intellectual | Diploma | President of primary school |
| 16 | Male | Han | 36 | Yes | Cadre | Bachelor | TPC Chairman |
| 17 | Female | Miao | 26 | No | Cadre | Bachelor | TG Vice Head |
| 18 | Male | Miao | 32 | No | Farmer | Diploma | Villager |
| 19 | Female | Miao | 38 | No | Farmer | Senior high school | Villager |
| 20 | Male | Yao | 48 | Yes | Farmer | Junior high school | VC Director |
| 21 | Male | Miao | 60 | Yes | Farmer | Junior high school | VPB Secretary |
| 22 | Male | Miao | 44 | Yes | Farmer | Junior high school | VC vice Director |
| 23 | Male | Bai | 33 | Yes | Cadre | Bachelor | Township Party Secretary |
| 24 | Female | Miao | 49 | Yes | Intellectual | Intermediate normal school | Primary school teacher |
| 25 | Male | Miao | 61 | Yes | Farmer | Junior high school | VPB Secretary |
| 26 | Male | Miao | 57 | No | Farmer | Diploma | VC Director |
| 27 | Male | Miao | 53 | Yes | Farmer | Senior high school | Villager |
| 28 | Male | Miao | 40 | Yes | Cadre | Diploma | TPC Chairman |
| 29 | Female | Miao | 43 | Yes | Cadre | Bachelor | LCPC Director |
| 30 | Male | Miao | 47 | No | Cadre | Bachelor | LCPC vice Chairman |
| 31 | Male | Miao | 37 | Yes | Cadre | Bachelor | LCPC Director |
| 32 | Male | Dong | 45 | Yes | Cadre | Bachelor | LCPC Chairman |
| 33 | Male | Miao | 35 | Yes | Cadre | Bachelor | LCPC Director |
| 34 | Male | Miao | 33 | Yes | Cadre | Bachelor | CGB Vice Director |

| Continued with Appendix 8 | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------|-----------|-----|--------------|---------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| 35 | Male | Shui | 47 | Yes | Intellectual | Bachelor | Vice Director of a middle school |
| No | Gender | Ethnicity | Age | Party member | Social status | Education | Social role |
| | | | | | | | |
| 36 | Male | Miao | 62 | No | Farmer | Junior high school | Villager, former deputy |
| 37 | Male | Miao | 45 | No | Farmer | Junior high school | Villager, former deputy |
| 38 | Male | Miao | 38 | No | Farmer | Junior high school | VC member |
| 39 | Male | Han | 40 | Yes | Cadre | Bachelor | County Party Secretary |

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