

Political Mobility of County Leaders in China: The Case of Jiangsu

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Introduction

Studies of China's political elites have made substantial gains since the 1990s. Not only have we learned much more about national political elites and their interactions, including their demographic and social characteristic as well as their institutional and factional affiliations and their political dynamics (Unger, 2002; Bo, 2007), but we have also managed to crack open the black box of local leadership and uncover the inner workings of local governance and the correlation between performance and political mobility (Huang, 1996; Bo, 2002).

However, most of the existing literature on local Chinese leadership has concentrated on provincial leaders, and few have attempted to analyze local leaders at lower levels. There are even fewer studies on China's county leaders (an exception is Guo, 2007), a group of cadres that manage about 3,000 county-level units in China. This paper attempts to serve as a prolegomenon to the study of China's county leaders as a group.¹ It begins with a survey of cadres in a top-down approach and see how far up a county leader can go in the Chinese political system. It then focuses on a case study of county leaders in one coastal province, Jiangsu, in both a top-down approach and a bottom-up approach. It draws some tentative conclusions from this case study and highlights some issues for further investigation.

1. County Leaders: How Far Up Can They Go?

1.1 Politburo members with county-level experience

Recent studies have revealed the significance of local governance experience in the selection of national political elites in China. Cadres with local experience became prominent in the 16th Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in general and in the 16th Politburo in particular (Bo, 2007, 106-107).

Upon further examination, however, it seems that county management experience is regressively critical. Among nine standing members of the 16th Politburo, eight had previous local governance experience but only two of the eight had any experience below the provincial level and none of them had any experience managing a county (Table 1). Among the rest thirteen Politburo members, excluding the military members Guo Boxiong and Cao Gangchuan, twelve had previous local governance experience. But only seven had experience below the provincial level, and four had county management experience.

¹ This paper is part of a project that attempts to deal with the determination of the political mobility of county leaders in all provincial units in China from 1989 to 2009.

Table 1 The 16th Politburo (2002)

name	birth	home	province	prefecture(city)	county
Standing Members					
Hu Jintao	1942	Anhui	Guizhou, Tibet		
Wu Bangguo	1941	Anhui	Shanghai		
Wen Jiabao	1942	Tianjin			
Jia Qinglin	1940	Hebei	Fujian, Beijing		
Zeng Qinghong	1939	Jiangxi	Shanghai		
Huang Ju	1938	Zhejiang	Shanghai		
Wu Guanzheng	1938	Jiangxi	Hubei, Jiangxi, Shandong	Wuhan	
Li Changchun	1944	Liaoning	Liaoning, Henan, Guangdong	Shenyang	
Luo Gan	1935	Shandong	Henan		
Politburo Members					
Wang Lequan	1944	Shandong	Shandong, Xinjiang	Liaocheng	Shouguang
Wang Zhaoguo	1941	Hebei	Fujian		
Hui Liangyu (Hui)	1944	Jilin	Jilin, Hubei, Anhui, Jiangsu	Baicheng	Yushu
Liu Qi	1942	Jiangsu	Beijing		
Liu Yunshan	1947	Shanxi	Inner Mongolia	Chifeng	
Wu Yi (f.)	1938	Hubei	Beijing		
Zhang Lichang	1939	Hebei	Tianjin		
Zhang Dejiang	1946	Liaoning	Jilin, Zhejiang, Guangdong	Yanbian	Yanji
Chen Liangyu	1946	Zhejiang	Shanghai		Huangpu
Zhou Yongkang	1942	Jiangsu	Sichuan	Panjiang, Dongying	
Yu Zhengsheng	1945	Zhejiang	Shandong, Hubei	Yantai, Qingdao	
He Guoqiang	1943	Hunan	Shandong, Fujian, Chongqing	Jinan	
Guo Boxiong	1942	Shaanxi	N/A		
Cao Gangchuan	1935	Henan	N/A		
Zeng Peiyan	1938	Zhejiang			
Alternate Members					
Wang Gang	1942	Jilin			

Sources:

http://news.xinhuanet.com/ziliao/2004-06/22/content_1540150.htmhttp://news.xinhuanet.com/ziliao/2002-02/22/content_285938.htm

Wang Lequan, Politburo member and Party secretary of Xinjiang, began his political career in his hometown. According to his official biographical information, Wang was born in Shouguang County, Shandong Province. And his birthplace is probably Sanyuanzhu Village in Shouguang County because one of his brothers, Wang Leyi (born 1941),² has been Party secretary of that village since 1978.

Sanyuanzhu is now a part of Sunjiaji Neighborhood, which was a township between January 1984 and September 2003.³ Since Sunjiaji did not exist before 1984, it is likely that Sanyuanzhu used to be a part of Houzhen under Shouguang before 1984.

At the age of 21, Wang Lequan became deputy head of the Houzhen People's Commune in August 1966.⁴ He was later promoted to be deputy secretary of the Chengguan People's Commune Party Committee. In April 1975, he became vice chairman of the Shouguang County Revolutionary Committee and deputy secretary of the Shouguang County Party Committee. He was promoted to be chairman of the Shouguang County Revolutionary Committee and secretary of the Shouguang County Party Committee in October 1978. He served as a county leader for seven years.

Similarly, Hui Liangyu, Politburo member and vice premier, also started his political career at grassroots levels in his hometown. He began as a staff member of the Political Department of the Yushu County Revolutionary Committee in January 1969. Three years later, he became deputy head of the Organization Department of the Yushu County Party Committee and concurrently Party secretary of the Yujia People's Commune. He was promoted to be deputy secretary of the Yushu County in December 1974 and was transferred to the Agricultural Bureau of Jilin Province in April 1977. He was a county leader for two and a half years.

In contrast, Zhang Dejiang did not start his political career at grassroots organizations. He was vice president of Yanbian University before he entered the local leadership. He became deputy secretary of Yanji, a county-level city since May 1953, in March 1983 and stayed in that position until April 1985. His county level experience lasted for two years.⁵ Finally, Chen Liangyu, former Politburo member and former Party secretary of Shanghai, served as deputy secretary and head of the Huangpu District in Shanghai for about five years from February 1987 to October 1992.⁶

In sum, of the 24 full members of the Politburo elected in November 2002, four (one sixth) had previous county management experience. They were Wang Lequan, Hui Liangyu, Zhang Dejiang, and Chen Liangyu. Wang and Hui climbed to the county-level leadership from positions of lower levels, and Zhang and Chen were transferred to county-level leadership positions from posts of similar ranks in other bureaucratic functions.

² There are seven siblings in the family. Wang Leyi is brother No. 2, and Wang Lequan, No. 3. See http://news.xinhuanet.com/house/2006-01/15/content_4054543.htm. Accessed 2/6/2009.

³ <http://www.xzqh.org/quhua/37sd/0783sg.htm>.

⁴ Houzhen was one of 21 people's communes within Shouguang County that had been established in September 1958. See <http://www.xzqh.org/quhua/37sd/0783sg.htm>. Accessed 2/6/2009.

⁵ Although Zhang's bureaucratic rank as a standing member of the Yanji Prefectural Party Committee was one of deputy prefectural (or fu ting) level, he was indeed involved in managing this county-level municipality.

⁶ Although Shanghai is a provincial-level unit, districts in Shanghai are county-level units. This is true of districts in Beijing, Tianjin, and Chongqing. For details, see *Zhongguo Tongji Nianjian* (China Statistical Yearbook (2005), 3.

1.2 Provincial Party secretaries with county-level experience

It seems that there are more provincial Party secretaries with county management experience. Of the 31 provincial party secretaries as of March 2007, 12 (38.7 percent) had served as a county leader previously (Table 2).

Table 2 China's Provincial Party Secretaries (as of March 2007)

Provinces ^a	Name	Birth	Age	Home	Province	Prefecture (city)	County
Beijing	Liu Qi	1942	65	Jiangsu	Beijing		
Tianjin	Zhang Gaoli	1946	61	Fujian	Guangdong, Shandong, Tianjin	Shenzhen	
Hebei	Bai Keming	1943	64	Shaanxi	Hainan, Hebei		
Shanxi	Zhang Baoshun	1950	57	Hebei	Shanxi		
Inner Mongolia	Chu Bo	1944	63	Anhui	Hunan, Inner Mongolia	Yueyang	
Liaoning	Li Keqiang	1955	52	Anhui	Henan, Liaoning		
Jilin	Wang Min	1950	57	Anhui	Jiangsu, Jilin	Suzhou (Jiangsu)	
Heilongjiang	Qian Yunlu	1944	63	Hubei	Hubei, Guizhou, Heilongjiang	Wuhan	Hanchuan, Dawu
Shanghai	Xi Jinping	1953	54	Shaanxi	Fujian, Zhejiang, Shanghai	Xiamen, Ningde, Fuzhou	Zhengding
Jiangsu	Li Yuanchao	1950	57	Jiangsu	Jiangsu	Nanjing	
Zhejiang	Zhao Hongzhu	1947	60	Inner Mongolia	Zhejiang	Xing'an	Jalaid
Anhui	Guo Jinlong	1947	60	Jiangsu	Sichuan, Tibet, Anhui	Leshan	Zhongxian
Fujian	Lu Zhangong	1952	55	Zhejiang	Zhejiang, Hebei, Fujian	Jiaying	
Jiangxi	Meng Jianzhu	1947	60	Jiangsu	Shanghai, Jiangxi		Chuansha, Jiading
Shandong	Li Jianguo	1946	61	Shandong	Tianjin, Shaanxi, Shandong		Heping
Henan	Xu Guangchun	1944	63	Zhejiang	Henan		
Hubei	Yu Zhengsheng	1945	62	Zhejiang	Shandong, Hubei	Yantai, Qingdao	
Hunan	Zhang Chunxian	1953	54	Henan	Yunnan, Hunan		
Guangdong	Zhang Dejiang	1946	61	Liaoning	Jilin, Zhejiang, Guangdong	Yanbian	Yanji
Guangxi	Liu Qibao	1953	54	Anhui	Guangxi	Suzhou (Anhui)	
Hainan	Wei Liucheng	1946	61	Henan	Hainan		
Chongqing	Wang Yang	1955	52	Anhui	Anhui, Chongqing	Tongling	
Sichuan	Du Qinglin	1946	61	Jilin	Jilin, Hainan, Sichuan	Changchun	
Guizhou	Shi Zongyuan	1946	61	Hebei	Gansu, Guizhou	Lingxia	Hezheng
Yunnan	Bai Enpei	1946	61	Shaanxi	Inner Mongolia, Qinghai, Yunnan	Yan'an	
Tibet	Zhang Qingli	1951	56	Shandong	Gansu, Xinjiang, Tibet	Dongying, Tai'an, Lanzhou	Dongping
Shaanxi	Zhao Leji	1957	50	Shaanxi	Qinghai, Shaanxi	Xining	
Gansu	Lu Hao	1947	60	Hebei	Gansu	Lanzhou	
Qinghai	Qiang Wei	1953	54	Jiangsu	Beijing, Qinghai		Shijingshan
Ningxia	Chen Jianguo	1945	62	Shandong	Shandong, Ningxia	Yantai, Weihai	Zhifu
Xinjiang	Wang Lequan	1944	63	Shandong	Shandong, Xinjiang	Liaocheng	Shouguang

Notes:

^a This refers to provinces, centrally administered cities, and autonomous regions.

Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macao are not included.

^b They are not party secretaries. They are directors of the Liaison Offices of their respective SARs.

Home=native province (*jiguan*)

Source: http://news.xinhuanet.com/ziliao/2002-02/20/content_476046.htm

In addition to Wang Lequan and Zhang Dejiang, as mentioned above, provincial party secretaries with county governance experience include Qian Yunlu of Heilongjiang,⁷ Xi Jinping of Shanghai,⁸ Zhao Hongzhu of Zhejiang, Guo Jinlong of Anhui,⁹ Meng Jianzhu of Jiangxi,¹⁰ Li Jianguo of Shandong,¹¹ Shi Zongyuan of Guizhou, Zhang Qingli of Tibet, Chen Jianguo of Ningxia, and Qiang Wei of Qinghai. Qian Yunlu's experience is similar to that of Wang Lequan. He also began his political career in his hometown of Dawu County in Hubei Province. He started off as a staff member in the Department of Propaganda of the Dawu County Party Committee in March 1970, became deputy secretary of the Huancheng District in Hanchuan County and concurrent Party secretary of the Xiaohu People's Commune in August 1973, was appointed deputy secretary of Hanchuan and concurrent Party secretary of the Xinhe People's Commune in May 1975, and transferred to Dawu as deputy secretary and county head in June 1979. He served as a county leader in two counties for more than seven years altogether (May 1975 to September 1982).

Xi Jinping also served as a county leader for about three years. After graduating from Qinghua University in April 1979, Xi initially worked as a secretary for Geng Biao, vice premier of the State Council (March 1978-May 1982) and standing member and concurrently secretary general of the Central Military Commission (January 1979-September 1982) (and later defense minister from March 1981 to November 1982). In 1982, Xi was appointed deputy secretary of Zhengding County in Hebei. He was promoted to Party secretary of Zhengding in the following year and was transferred to Xiamen in Fujian as a vice mayor in 1985.¹² During his first year in Zhengding, he reportedly came up with an idea to develop local tourism based on the novel of *Dream in the Red Mansion* (Qian, 2004).

Zhao Hongzhu, Xi's successor as Party secretary of Zhejiang, also had county-level management experience for about three years. Zhao joined the People's Liberation Army at the age of 18 in October 1965. After he was demobilized in October 1976, he began to work in Inner Mongolia. He became deputy secretary of Jalaid Banner (a county-level unit in Inner Mongolia) of Xing'an League (a prefecture-level unit) in October 1980 and stayed in that position until June 1983 (Shen and Zheng, 1999, 448).

Guo Jinlong once served as deputy secretary and county head of Zhongxian in Sichuan. A graduate of the Department of Physics at Nanjing University in the late 1960s, Guo was sent to Zhongxian in 1970. He became deputy secretary and county head of Zhongxian in October 1983 and worked in that capacity until January 1985. His tenure as a county leader lasted for one year and two months.

⁷ Qian Yunlu is currently vice chairman and secretary general of the Chinese National People's Political Consultative Conference (CNPPCC).

⁸ Xi Jinping is currently a standing member of the 17th Politburo, a member of the Secretariat of the CCP Central Committee, and vice president of the People's Republic of China.

⁹ Guo Jinlong is currently mayor of Beijing.

¹⁰ Meng Jianzhu is currently a state councilor and minister of Public Security.

¹¹ Li Jianguo is currently vice chairman and secretary general of the National People's Congress (NPC).

¹² For an interview with Xi Jinping on this experience, see <http://sk.cnlunet.net/sjwz/zgrw/001/001/040.htm>.

Meng Jianzhu worked as a county leader in Shanghai for five years. He was Party secretary of Shanghai's Chuansha County between September 1986 and February 1990¹³ and Party secretary of Jiading County in Shanghai between February 1990 and March 1991.

Li Jianguo had a short stint as Party secretary of the Heping District in Tianjin from September 1991 to August 1992, and Shi Zongyuan served as a county leader for a bit longer. After working in Hezheng County in Gansu for 12 years, Shi Zongyuan became deputy head of the county in January 1981. He was later promoted to deputy secretary and county head. He worked as a county leader for three and a half years until July 1984.

Chen Jianguo, Party secretary of Ningxia, had relatively less experience as a county leader. He was Party secretary of Zhifu District as well as standing member of Yantai Municipal Party Committee between October 1983 and December 1984 before he was promoted to vice mayor of Yantai.

Finally, Zhang Qingli, Party secretary of Tibet, served as a county leader for about one year and a half; and Qiang Wei, Party secretary of Qinghai, had similar experience for more than two years. Like Wang Lequan and Qian Yunlu, Zhang Qingli also began his political career in his hometown. He became deputy secretary of Dongping County in Shandong in November 1976 and was transferred to the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Youth League (CCYL) in June 1978. Twelve years later, Qiang Wei became Party secretary of Shijingshan District in Beijing in November 1990 and served in that capacity until March 1993.

1.3 Provincial governors with county-level experience

In comparison with provincial Party secretaries, more provincial governors have experience as county leaders. Out of the 31 provincial governors in March 2007, 17 (55 percent) had worked as a county leader previously (Table 3).

Surprisingly, Dai Xianglong, former mayor of Tianjin, also had experience as a county leader. He served as deputy head of Fengxian in Jiangsu between February 1982 and August 1983. It was an experience sandwiched in his long career as a banker.

In contrast, Guo Gengmao, former governor of Hebei and currently governor of Henan, is a typical local leader who has moved up in the Party-state apparatus one step at a time. He began his political career in his hometown in 1975 and worked as a Party official in two people's communes. After his two-year study in the Department of International Politics at Peking University, he was appointed deputy secretary and county head of Zaoqiang County in Hebei in September 1984. He was appointed Party secretary of the county in September 1988 and was further promoted to be deputy secretary of Xingtai Prefecture in December 1991. He worked as a county leader for five years.

Yu Youjun, former governor of Shanxi, had a slightly different experience. Formerly a school teacher and deputy director of a research institute in Guangzhou, Yu entered politics as a propaganda cadre. After only three months as deputy head of the Propaganda Department of Guangzhou Municipal Party Committee, he was appointed Party secretary of Dongshan District in November 1986. He was

¹³ <http://www.shtong.gov.cn/node2/node4/node2250/chuansha/node48168/node48170/node61494/userobject1ai50467.html>. Chuansha County was replaced by Pudong in 1993. See <http://www.coi.gov.cn/difang/shanghai/3.htm>. Accessed 2/6/2009.

transferred to Tianhe District as Party secretary in March 1990 and stayed in that position until November 1992. He had six years' experience as a county leader.

Table 3 China's Governors (as of March 2007)

Provinces ^a	Governor ^b	Birth	Age	Home	Province	Prefecture (city)	County
Beijing	Wang Qishan	1948	59	Shanxi	Guangdong, Hainan, Beijing		
Tianjin	Dai Xianglong	1944	63	Jiangsu	Tianjin		Fengxian
Hebei	Guo Gengmao	1950	57	Hebei	Hebei	Xingtai	Zaoqiang
Shanxi	Yu Youjun	1953	54	Jiangsu	Guangdong, Hunan, Shanxi	Shenzhen	Dongshan, Tianhe
Inner Mongolia	Yang Jing	1953	54	Inner Mongolia	Inner Mongolia	Jirim, Hohhot	Dalad
Liaoning	Zhang Wenyue	1944	63	Fujian	Xinjiang, Liaoning		
Jilin	Han Changfu	1954	53		Jilin		
Heilongjiang	Zhang Zuoji	1945	62	Heilongjiang	Heilongjiang	Xi'an	
Shanghai	Han Zheng	1954	53	Zhejiang	Shanghai		Luwan
Jiangsu	Liang Baohua	1945	62	Jiangxi	Jiangsu	Suzhou	
Zhejiang	Lu Zushan	1946	61	Zhejiang	Zhejiang		
Anhui	Wang Jinshan	1945	62	Jilin	Jilin, Zhejiang, Anhui	Baicheng	Lishu
Fujian	Huang Xiaojing	1946	61	Fujian	Fujian	Longyan	Gulou
Jiangxi	Wu Xinxiong	1949	58	Jiangsu	Jiangxi	Wuxi, Nanchang	Jiangyin
Shangdong	Han Yuqun	1943	64	Jiangsu	Shandong	Jining	
Henan	Li Chengyu	1946	61	Ningxia	Ningxia, Henan	Yinnan	Haiyuan
Hubei	Luo Qingquan	1945	62	Hubei	Hubei	Yichang, Wuhan	
Hunan	Zhou Qiang	1960	47	Hubei	Hunan		
Guangdong	Huang Huahua	1946	61	Guangdong	Guangdong	Meizhou, Guangzhou	
Guangxi	Lu Bing	1944	63	Guangxi	Guangxi	Nanning	Long'an
Hainan	Luo Baoming	1952	55	Tianjin	Tianjin, Hainan		Dagang
Chongqing	Wang Hongju	1945	62	Chongqing	Chongqing	Peiling	Pengshui, Peiling
Sichuan	Jiang Jufeng	1948	59	Zhejiang	Zhejiang, Sichuan	Wenzhou	Zhuji
Guizhou	Lin Shusen	1946	61	Guangdong	Guangdong, Guizhou	Huiyang, Huizhou, Guangzhou	Heping, Huizhou
Yunnan	Qin Guangrong	1950	57	Hunan	Hunan, Yunnan	Lingling, Changsha	Lengshuitan
Tibet	Qiangba Puncog	1947	60	Tibet	Tibet	Chamdo, Shannan, Lhasa	Bomi
Shaanxi	Yuan Chunqing	1951	56	Hunan	Shaanxi	Xi'an	
Gansu	Xu Shousheng	1953	54	Jiangsu	Jiangsu, Gansu	Lianyungang, Suqian	Rudong
Qinghai	Song Xiuyan	1955	52	Tianjin	Qinghai	Haidong	
Ningxia	Ma Qizhi	1943	64	Ningxia	Ningxia	Guyuan, Yinnan	
Xinjiang	Ismail Tiliwaldi	1944	63	Xinjiang	Xinjiang	Kashgar	

Notes:

^a This refers to provinces, centrally administered cities, and autonomous regions.

Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan are excluded because their leaders are non-CCP.

^b They include governors, mayors of centrally administered cities, and chairmen of autonomous regions.

Home=native province (*jiguan*)

Sources:

http://news.xinhuanet.com/ziliao/2002-02/20/content_476046.htm

Yang Jing, former chairman of Inner Mongolia and currently minister of State Ethnic Affairs Commission, also had about six years' experience as a county leader. Yang began his political career as a Chinese Communist Youth League cadre. After serving as a secretary in the general office of the Yeke Juu League (now the city of Ordos) for a year, Yang was appointed secretary of the CCYL's Yeke Juu League Committee in October 1983. Two years later, he became deputy secretary and head of the Dalad

Banner (a county-level unit in Inner Mongolia) in November 1985. He was promoted to Party secretary of the same banner in December 1988 and stayed in that office until July 1991.

Han Zheng, former acting Party secretary and currently mayor of Shanghai, served as a county-level leader in Shanghai in the 1990s. After having worked as deputy secretary and secretary of CCYL Shanghai Committee for about two and a half years (June 1990–November 1992), he was appointed deputy secretary and acting head of Luwan District in Shanghai in November 1992. Half a year later, he was made the head of the district in May 1993. In July 1995, he was transferred to the Shanghai Municipal Government as deputy secretary general under the leadership of Mayor Xu Kuangdi. His experience as the district leader was about two and a half years long.

Wang Jinshan, former governor and now Party secretary of Anhui, has the most complete resume among the provincial governors. Starting off as a middle school teacher in November 1968, he had climbed almost every step of the Chinese bureaucracy before he became governor of Anhui in January 2003. He served briefly as deputy secretary of Lishu County in Jilin between March 1982 and April 1983. He became the vice governor of Jilin at the age of 37.

Huang Xiaojing, governor of Fujian, also served as a district leader for about a year. He was made deputy secretary of Gulou District in Fuzhou in December 1983 and stayed in that position until December 1984. In the meantime, he was also concurrently head of Gulou District of Fuzhou.

Wu Xinxiong, governor of Jiangxi, had much more extensive experience as a county leader. Wu was made deputy head of Jiangyin County of Jiangsu Province in December 1983, was promoted to deputy secretary of Jiangyin in August 1984, further promoted to executive deputy head of Jiangyin in March 1986, and finally appointed deputy secretary and mayor of Jiangyin (a county-level city)¹⁴ in April 1989. By April 1992, when he was made vice mayor of Wuxi (a prefecture-level city), Wu had already accumulated more than eight years of experience as a county leader.

Li Chengyu, former governor of Henan, is also a typical local cadre. He was a standing member of the Haiyuan County Party Committee in Ningxia between July 1973 and June 1978 and vice chairman of the Huanyuan Revolutionary Committee between October 1976 and June 1978.

Lu Bing, former chairman of Guangxi Autonomous Region, was a county leader in the 1980s. After having served for three years as chairman of the Dujie Commune Revolutionary Committee and Party secretary of the Dujie Commune Party Committee, he was promoted to deputy secretary of Long'an County in December 1980 and further promoted to Party secretary of the county in May 1984 (until April 1985). He worked as a leader of Long'an for more than four years.

Luo Baoming, governor of Hainan, served as a district leader for five years in Tianjin. After more than 11 years of work in the CCYL Tianjin Committee, he was appointed deputy secretary and acting head of Dagang District in Tianjin in April 1992. One year later, he was made head of the district and became concurrent Party secretary of the district in October 1994 until July 1995. He had three years' experience as a district leader.

¹⁴ Jiangyin became a county-level city in April 1987. See

<http://www.jiangyin.gov.cn/jiangYinGov/chinese/introduce/introduce.aspx?categoryNum=0101&SingleInfo=True>. Accessed 2/6/2009.

Wang Hongju, mayor of Chongqing, has had extensive local experience. He became a standing member of Pengshui County Party Committee in February 1983 and was promoted to be its Party secretary in September 1983. He was appointed deputy secretary of Peiling Prefecture in February 1985 and became concurrent Party secretary of Peiling City in April 1988 (Peiling became a county-level city in 1983 and held the position till February 1990. Altogether his county-level management experience in two counties was more than six years.

Jiang Jufeng, governor of Sichuan, worked in his hometown of Zhuji in Zhejiang for about two decades. He held various low-level positions for three years in his hometown before he was admitted to Fudan University in October 1978. Starting from a staff member of the Propaganda Department of Zhuji County in September 1983 after his graduation, he rose successfully in the following six years within the county government and party committee. He became deputy head of the county in January 1985 and its Party secretary in February 1987. He was transferred to the General Office of Zhejiang Provincial Party Committee in June 1989. His total service as a county leader was four years and a half.

The county-level leadership experience of Lin Shusen, governor of Guizhou, is quite unique. He was vice chairman of Heping County People's Congress for almost three years from September 1980 to July 1983 but only three months as vice mayor of Huizhou (a county-level city) from July 1983 to October 1983.

Qin Guangrong, governor of Yunnan, was concurrently Party secretary of Lengshuitan (a county-level city) while he was deputy secretary of Lingling Prefecture in Hunan. He served in that dual role for less than two years from August 1988 to March 1990 before he was promoted to Party secretary of Lingling Prefecture in Hunan.

Qiangba Puncog, chairman of the Tibetan Autonomous Region, also spent three years as a county leader in Tibet. He was Party secretary of Bomi County from October 1980 to October 1983, though during that time he studied in Beijing studying at the Central Party School in Beijing for about a year (from September 1981 to July 1982).

Finally, Xu Shousheng, governor of Gansu, had extensive local experience in his hometown in Jiangsu. He was the head of a production team, deputy Party secretary of a brigade, deputy Party secretary of one commune and one district, and Party secretary of a third commune in his hometown of Rudong County in Jiangsu between 1970 and 1981. He became a standing member of the Rudong County Party Committee in December 1981, deputy secretary in April 1984, acting head in October 1985, and Party secretary in February 1990. He was a county leader for ten years.

In sum, county governance experience is necessary but not critical for top political elites in China and county-level experience is regressively correlated to the current rank of political elites. None of the standing members of the Politburo have any previous county-level management experience. One-sixth of the Politburo members of November 2002 ever served as county leaders. More than one-third of the provincial party secretaries of March 2007 worked as county leaders. And more than half of the provincial governors of March 2007 had county governance experience. It will be interesting to see whether the same regressive pattern holds for political elites at lower levels.

2. The Case of Jiangsu:¹⁵ a top-down approach

2.1 Provincial leaders

Provincial leaders in Jiangsu seem to confirm the hypothesis of regressive correlation between the county-level experience and the rank of the official in relative terms. This province has altogether 20 provincial leaders in both the standing committee of the provincial Party committee and the provincial government (Table 4): 13 standing members and nine government leaders (the governor and vice governors) with two overlapping roles. Among the thirteen standing members, four ever worked as a county leader previously. If the standing member from Jiangsu Provincial Military District is excluded in the calculation, then one third (33 percent) of provincial party leaders have previous county-level management experience.

Neither Party secretary Li Yuanchao nor Deputy Secretary/ Governor Liang Baohua had any experience as a county leader. Li Yuanchao started his political career in CCYL affairs and was one of Hu Jintao's associates in the CCYL Central Committee in the early 1980s, and he was transferred from Beijing to Jiangsu as deputy secretary in September 2000. He was concurrent Party secretary of Nanjing between October 2001 and April 2003. Liang Baohua, on the other hand, is a typical cadre of *mishu* background. He started off as a staff member (*mishu*) of the secretary section of the General Office of the Party Committee of Jiangsu Province in November 1981 and moved up to become secretary-general and standing member of the provincial party committee in December 1994. He was concurrent Party secretary of Suzhou between June 1998 and December 2000.

Zhang Lianzhen (f), the only deputy secretary of Jiangsu without any other roles in either the provincial government or provincial people's congress, had some experience as a county leader. She was deputy secretary and deputy head of Binghai County under Yancheng City in Jiangsu between April 1981 and September 1983.

Wang Guosheng, standing member of Jiangsu Provincial Party Committee and director of the Organization Department, started his political career in his home province of Shandong. He was Party secretary of Gaotang County under Liaocheng Prefecture in the early 1990s. While he was director of the Organization Department of Liaocheng Prefectural Party Committee, he became concurrent Party secretary of Gaotang County on February 20, 1993 when Party secretary Gu Qingxue of Gaotang was transferred away. Although he was promoted to deputy secretary of Liaocheng Prefecture in August 1994, he continued as Party secretary of Gaotang. He was replaced by Lu Guangye in March 1995. His tenure as a county leader lasted for two years.

Zhao Kezhi, standing member of Jiangsu provincial party committee and executive vice governor of Jiangsu, also gained his experience as a county leader in Shandong. He was deputy secretary and head of Laixi County between April 1984 and March 1987 and was deputy secretary and mayor and then Party secretary of Jimuo (a county-level city) between March 1987 and August 1991. He worked as a county leader for more than seven years.

¹⁵ As one of the most developed coastal provinces, Jiangsu is noteworthy for its innovations on cadre management in recent years, in particular in the years of Li Yuanchao as its Party secretary (2002-2007). Nonetheless, this province is chosen not to generalize about the political mobility of all county leaders in China but to provide a benchmark for studying county leaders of other provincial units in the future.

Table 4 Provincial Leaders of Jiangsu (as of March 2007)

	Name	Birth	Age	Home	Province	Prefecture (city)	County
Jiangsu							
Party Secretary	Li Yuanchao	1950	57	Jiangsu	Jiangsu	Nanjing	
Deputy Secretary	Liang Baohua	1945	62	Jiangxi	Jiangsu	Suzhou	
Deputy Secretary	Zhang Lianzhen (f)	1951	56	Jiangsu	Jiangsu	Xuzhou	Binghai
Standing Member	Feng Minggang	1946	61	Hebei	Qinghai, Jiangsu	Huangnan, Haixi	
Standing Member	Wang Guosheng	1956	51	Shandong	Jiangsu	Liaocheng, Lianyungang	Gaotang
Standing Member	Luo Zhijun	1951	56	Liaoning	Jiangsu	Nanjing	
Standing Member	Zhao Kezhi	1953	54	Shandong	Shandong, Jiangsu	Dezhou	Laixi, Jimuo
Standing Member	Chen Yiyuan				(military)		
Standing Member	Sun Zhijun	1957	50	Shandong	Jiangsu	Wuhan, Nanjing, Yangzhou	Jiangnan
Standing Member	Wang Rong	1958	49	Jiangsu	Jiangsu	Wuxi, Suzhou	
Standing Member	Lin Xiangguo	1950	57	Jiangsu	Jiangsu		
Standing Member	Li Yunfeng			Jiangsu	Jiangsu		
Standing Member	Yang Weize	1962	45	Jiangsu	Jiangsu	Suzhou, Wuxi	
Governor	Liang Baohua	1945	62	Jiangxi	Jiangsu	Suzhou	
Vice Governor	Zhao Kezhi	1953	54	Shandong	Shandong, Jiangsu	Dezhou	Laixi, Jimuo
Vice Governor	Zhang Taolin	1961	46	Jiangsu	Jiangsu	Nanjing	
Vice Governor	Zhang Weiguo	1953	54	Jiangsu	Jiangsu	Suzhou, Zhenjiang	Wujiang, Kunshan
Vice Governor	Huang Lixin (f)	1962	45	Jiangsu	Jiangsu		
Vice Governor	Li Quanlin	1949	58	Jiangsu	Jiangsu	Yancheng, Changzhou	Kunshan
Vice Governor	He Quan	1952	55	Jiangsu	Jiangsu	Xuzhou	
Vice Governor	Zhang Jiuhuan	1950	57	Jiangsu	Jiangsu	Yancheng	
Vice Governor	Qiu He	1957	50	Jiangsu	Jiangsu	Suqian	Fengxian, Muyang

Sources:

<http://www.js.gov.cn/gb/zgjs/tmzf/index.html>

http://www.js.xinhuanet.com/zhuanti/2006-08/08/content_7721728.htm

Finally, Sun Zhijun, standing member and director of the Propaganda Department of Jiangsu Provincial Party Committee, also had limited experience at the county level. He was deputy secretary and head of Jiangnan District in Wuhan, Hubei, between January 1995 and August 1997 before he was promoted to be vice mayor of Wuhan. He was transferred to Nanjing as director of the Propaganda Department and a standing member of the city's Party Committee in December 1998.

Provincial government leaders of Jiangsu seem to fare better in terms of county-level management experience. Out of nine government leaders, four (44 percent) have managed counties previously. In addition to Zhao Kezhi mentioned above, Vice Governors Zhang Weiguo, Li Quanlin, and Qiu He also had experience as county leaders.

Zhang Weiguo (born 1953) worked as a county leader in two counties in Jiangsu. He was deputy secretary of Wujiang County between September 1989 and August 1990 and Party secretary of the county between August 1990 and January 1992. He was then promoted as standing member and director of the Propaganda Department of the Suzhou Municipal Party Committee in January 1992. In October 1996, Zhang Weiguo became concurrent Party secretary of Kunshan City (a county-level city) and stayed in that office until August 2000 when he was promoted to deputy secretary of Suzhou. He was appointed vice governor of Jiangsu in February 2003.

Interestingly, Li Quanlin (born 1949) was Zhang Weiguo's predecessor as Party secretary of Kunshan. Li was deputy secretary of Kunshan for only four months (from October 1990 to February 1991) before his appointment as Party secretary of Kunshan in February 1991. He worked in that capacity for almost five and a half years until September 1996, when he was promoted to deputy director of the Jiangsu Planning and Economic Commission.

Qiu He (born 1957), a controversial figure in Jiangsu, also served as a county leader. Between June 1988 and August 1990, he worked as deputy head of Fengxian in Xuzhou to gain local experience. After working in various offices in the provincial government for six years, he assisted in founding a new prefectural-level city of Suqian and became its vice mayor in September 1996. He was concurrent Party secretary of Muyang County between December 1996 and December 2000. He was then promoted to deputy secretary and acting mayor of Suqian in December 2000. During his years as acting mayor, mayor, and especially Party secretary of Suqian, Qiu He introduced a series of controversial reform measures. He was promoted to vice governor of Jiangsu in January 2006.

In sum, since provincial party leaders in general have a relatively higher rank than provincial government leaders, the fact that the former in Jiangsu has a lower percentage (33 percent) than the latter (44 percent) in terms of county-level management experience seems to confirm the pattern of regressive correlation in China. Moreover, the percentage of provincial party and government leaders of Jiangsu (excluding the military standing member) with county-level management experience is also lower than that of provincial leaders in general. Seven individuals in the Jiangsu provincial leadership have had county-level management experience, representing 37 percent of the total number of provincial party and government leaders in Jiangsu. That is lower than the percentage (38.7 percent) of provincial party secretaries and the percentage (55 percent) of provincial governors in China.

2.2 Prefectural leaders

Jiangsu currently has 13 prefecture-level municipalities. They include Nanjing (the capital), Xuzhou, Lianyungang, Huai'an, Suqian, Yancheng, Yangzhou, Taizhou, Nantong, Zhenjiang, Changzhou, Wuxi, and Suzhou. Since we do not have complete information on all prefectural leaders in Jiangsu, the information included in Table 5 may be an underestimate. It seems that party leaders (the Party secretary, deputy secretaries, and standing members) are more likely to have county management experience than government leaders (the mayor and vice mayors). About 50 percent of party leaders at the prefectural level have had county management experience, while only 41 percent of government leaders at that level have been county leaders previously. This contrasts with the pattern of provincial leaders in general.

Nantong has the highest percentage of party leaders with experience in county management. Nine out of 12 leaders have been county leaders previously, representing 75 percent. It is followed by Yancheng (63.6 percent), Xuzhou (58.3 percent), and Wuxi (58.3 percent). Other cities that have more than 50 percent of party leaders with county management experience include Changzhou (54.5 percent), Nanjing (53.8 percent), and Suqian (50 percent). It is not clear which city has the lowest percentage due to missing information.

In contrast, Xuzhou has the highest percentage of government leaders with county management experience. Seven out of eight government leaders have had experience as county leaders, representing 87.5 percent. It is followed by Yancheng (71.4 percent), Wuxi (60 percent), Nanjing (55.6 percent),

Table 5 Jiangsu's Prefectural Leaders with County Experience (as of March 2007)

City	Party Leaders			Government Leaders			Both Party and Government Leaders		
	Freq.	Total	Percent	Freq.	Total	Percent	Freq.	Total	Percent
Nanjing	7	13	53.8	5	9	55.6	9	19	47.4
Xuzhou	7	12	58.3	7	8	87.5	12	18	66.7
Lianyungang	4	12	33.3	1	9	11.1	5	19	26.3
Suqian	5	10	50.0	5	11	45.5	10	20	50.0
Huai'an	5	11	45.5	2	8	25.0	5	15	33.3
Yancheng	7	11	63.6	5	7	71.4	10	16	62.5
Yangzhou	4	11	36.4	4	9	44.4	6	17	35.3
Taizhou	4	10	40.0	1	10	10.0	4	10	40.0
Nantong	9	12	75.0	2	9	22.2	9	19	47.4
Zhenjiang	3	11	27.3	1	8	12.5	3	17	17.6
Changzhou	6	11	54.5	4	8	50.0	9	18	50.0
Wuxi	7	12	58.3	6	10	60.0	11	20	55.0
Suzhou	6	13	46.2	5	10	50.0	9	20	45.0
Total	74	149	49.7	48	116	41.4	102	228	44.7

Source: Author's database.

Suzhou (50 percent), and Changzhou (50 percent). Again, it is not clear which city has the lowest percentage of government leaders with county management experience because of lack of complete information.

3. Political Mobility of County Leaders in Jiangsu: a bottom-up approach

3.1 Political mobility of county heads

At the end of 2006, Jiangsu had 13 municipalities, administering 106 county-level units (urban districts, county-level cities, and counties). Over a period of 17 years (1990-2006), there were 488 turnovers of the county heads in Jiangsu (Table 6). These turnovers have exhibited some interesting patterns.

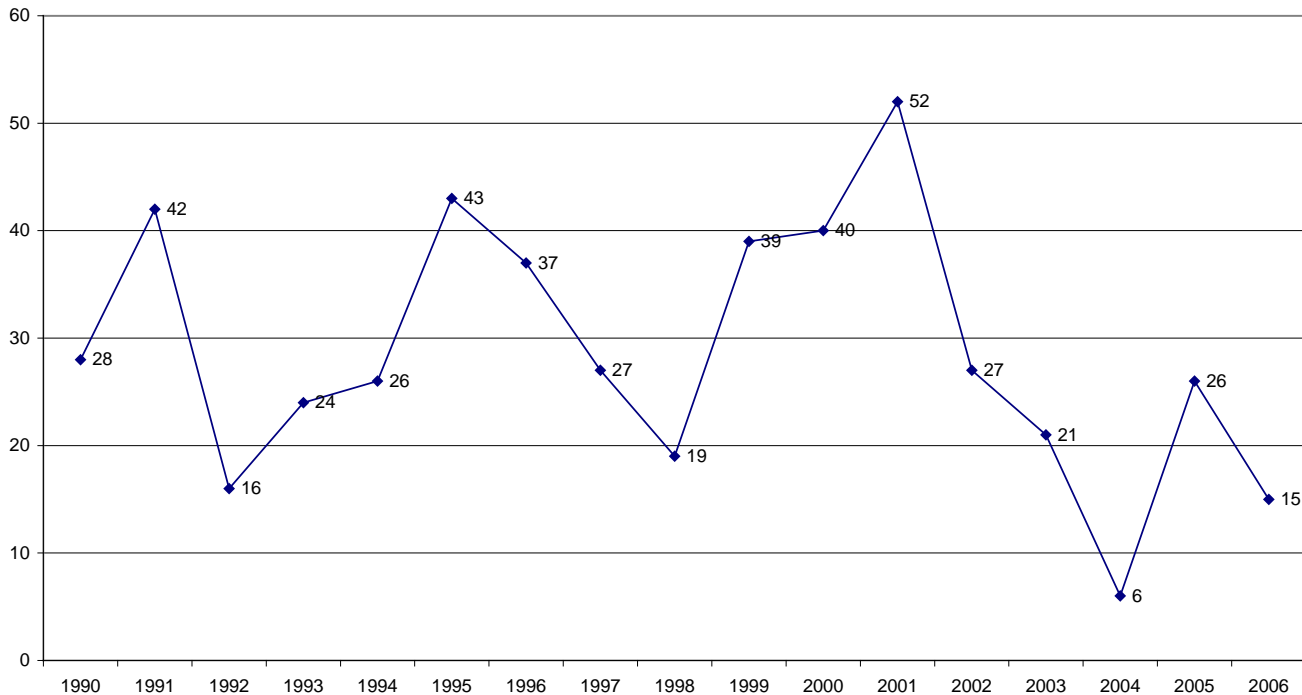
First, the spikes of turnovers do not coincide with the political cycles (Figure 1). County-level elections were held in 1993, 1998, and 2003, but the turnovers of county heads were not particularly high in these years. In 1993, for instance, only 24 county heads were replaced, one of the lowest in the four-year period of 1990-1993. The highest turnover of the period came in 1991, when 42 county heads left their positions. Year 1998 witnessed the lowest turnover in the five-year period of 1994-1998. Only 19 county heads (17.6 percent) were replaced by the end of the year. The highest turnovers came in 1995 and 1996, with the changes of 44 and 37 county heads, respectively. Year 2003 also saw the lowest turnover in the five-year period of 1999-2003. Only 21 county heads were reshuffled by the end of the year. The highest turnovers took place in 2000 and 2001, with the changes of 40 and 52 county heads, respectively.

Second, the majority of county heads who left their positions were promoted to county party secretaries. Out of 488 cases, 299 were promoted, amounting to 61.3 percent of the total.

Table 6 Political Mobility of Jiangsu's County Heads (1990-2006)

Mobility	Freq.	Percent
Promotion	299	61.3
to party secretary of the same county	211	
to party secretary of a different county	47	
to higher office in the same municipality	39	
to higher office of a different municipality	2	
Transfer	129	26.4
to a different county in the same municipality	23	
to the municipal government	103	
to a county of a different municipality	2	
elsewhere	1	
Retirement	38	7.8
to people's congress of the county	14	
to people's political consultative conference of the county	7	
to people's congress of the municipality	3	
to people's political consultative conference of the municipality	2	
complete retirement	10	
other forms of retirement	2	
Demotion	3	0.6
Unknown	27	5.5
Total	488	

Among them, 211 cases (70.6 percent) were promoted to party secretaries of the same county-level unit; 47 cases were promoted to party secretaries of another county-level unit within the province; 39 were promoted to higher positions within the same municipality; and two were promoted to higher positions of a different municipality. Evidently, most promotions occurred either in the same county-level unit or within the same municipality. Among those who were promoted to party secretaries of a different county-level unit, only two cases were promoted to a different municipality. Lu Chongyou, former county head of Jiangpu County in Nanjing, was promoted to be Party secretary of Ganyu in Lianyungang. He was later appointed vice mayor of Lianyungang and soon thereafter was imprisoned for 14 years for receiving bribes. Qu Dali, former county head of Wuxi County, was promoted in 1991 to be vice mayor of Haikou, the capital of Hainan Province. He was the only one to have been promoted to a higher position in a different province.

Figure 1 Turnovers of County Heads in Jiangsu (1990-2006)

Third, another 129 cases were transferred, representing 26.4 percent of the total. Among them, 23 people were transferred to a different county in the same municipality; 103 were transferred to positions of a similar rank in the same municipality; two people were transferred to a different municipality; and one person was transferred out of the government apparatus. Jiang Xuanmin, former head of Hongze County in Huaiyin, was transferred in 1995 to Changzhou as an investigator in the municipal development and planning commission. Chen Weiguo, former head of Guannan in Lianyungang, was transferred to Yancheng in 1998. Tang Zhongfei, former deputy secretary and mayor of Haimen, became a businessman after sixteen years (1990-2006) as a leader in Haimen.

Fourth, 38 people, or 7.8 percent, left their posts in the party and government or retired. Among them, 14 were transferred to the people's congress of the same county; three to the people's congress of the same municipality; seven to the people's political consultative conference of the same county; and two to the people's political consultative conference of the same municipality. Ten people retired completely, and another two retired partially. Fifth, only two county heads were demoted. Xu Hongyi, former head of Beitang District in Wuxi, was appointed deputy head of the Construction Bureau of Wuxi. Li Mingcai, former head of Pukou District in Nanjing, was made a deputy head of the city's Water Resources Bureau.

Finally, only one county head was dismissed from office for corruption. Fu Cheng, former head of Xuanwu District of Nanjing, was disciplined in early 2006. Born in 1963, Fu Cheng was once a personal secretary (*mishu*) of Wang Wulong, former Party secretary of Nanjing. Fu Cheng was dismissed possibly because of his involvement in corruption as Wang Wulong's personal secretary. Wang reportedly helped his brother, Wang Wenlong, in the latter's business dealings and was subsequently dismissed from his post as vice chairman of the Jiangsu People's Congress and expelled from the Party.

However, the fact that no other county leaders in Jiangsu had been accused of corruption in office did not mean that county heads in Jiangsu were basically clean. Corrupt officials were mostly not caught in office. Some of them were caught later, and some became corrupt later. Zheng Fazhong, for example, took bribes when he was the head of Siyang County in Suqian between December 1996 and March 1999. After he was made chair of the Siyang County People's Congress in March 1999, he continued to extort 'contributions' from others. He was later sentenced for eleven years for corruption. Rong Wenfeng, as another example, was mayor of Gaoyou (county-level city) and vice mayor of Yangzhou. She was found guilty of taking bribes 113 times from 37 people between 1991 and 2001 with the total amount of 1.16 million *yuan*. She was sentenced for 15 years

Another official, Wang Xinmin, was head and mayor of Jingjiang (a county-level city) in Yangzhou between 1991 and 1996 and became chair of the city's People's Political Consultative Conference in 1996. He was found in 1997 guilty on accounts of taking bribes, raping, and gambling and was sentenced to death with two years' probation. Li Yuanzhang began taking bribes when he was deputy secretary and head of Sihong County under Huaiyin between 1993 and 1996. But he was transferred to the Huaiyin municipal government as chief of the Labor Bureau in 1997 and was made chair of Sihong County People's Congress in 1998. He was caught in 2000 and sentenced for seven years. Yu Ruimao was known as a 'womanizing county head' (*hua xian zhang*) when he was head of Fengxian in Xuzhou in the early 1990s. He was transferred to the Xuzhou municipal government in 1992 as the head of Xuzhou Municipal Public Utilities Bureau. He was later made head of the Xuzhou Municipal Transportation Bureau in 1999. He was found guilty of taking bribes mainly during his tenure as bureau chief. Xu Guoxi, former head of Suqian under Huaiyin, became head of the Finance Bureau of Huaiyin municipal government in March 1991 and was found guilty of taking (together with his wife, Guan Xia) 33 bribes between 1987 and 1996. There are other similar cases, such as Zhang Donglin (former head of Tianning District and vice mayor of Changzhou), and Xu Heping (former head of Qishuyan in Changzhou).

One case in particular is related to the predominant pattern of political mobility at the county level. As mentioned above, the majority of county heads were promoted to county party secretaries. This type of promotion has been seen as an entitlement by some county heads. Hu Jianpeng is such an example. Hu was mayor of Zhangjiagang (a county-level city) from 1995 to 1997. He expected to be promoted to Party secretary of Zhangjiagang in the reshuffle at the end of 1997. However, Jiang Hongkun (currently mayor of Nanjing), then deputy secretary and vice mayor of Zhangjiagang, was appointed Party secretary of Zhangjiagang instead. Hu was appointed director of the Bonded Zone Management Committee with a deputy prefectural rank (*fu ting ji*). From then on, he decided to use his position to make money for his family.

3.2 Political mobility of county party secretaries

Compared with county heads in Jiangsu, county party secretaries have experienced fewer turnovers. During the period of 1990-2006, 454 county party secretaries left their positions with the following patterns (Table 7).

Table 7 Political Mobility of Jiangsu's County Party Secretaries (1990-2006)

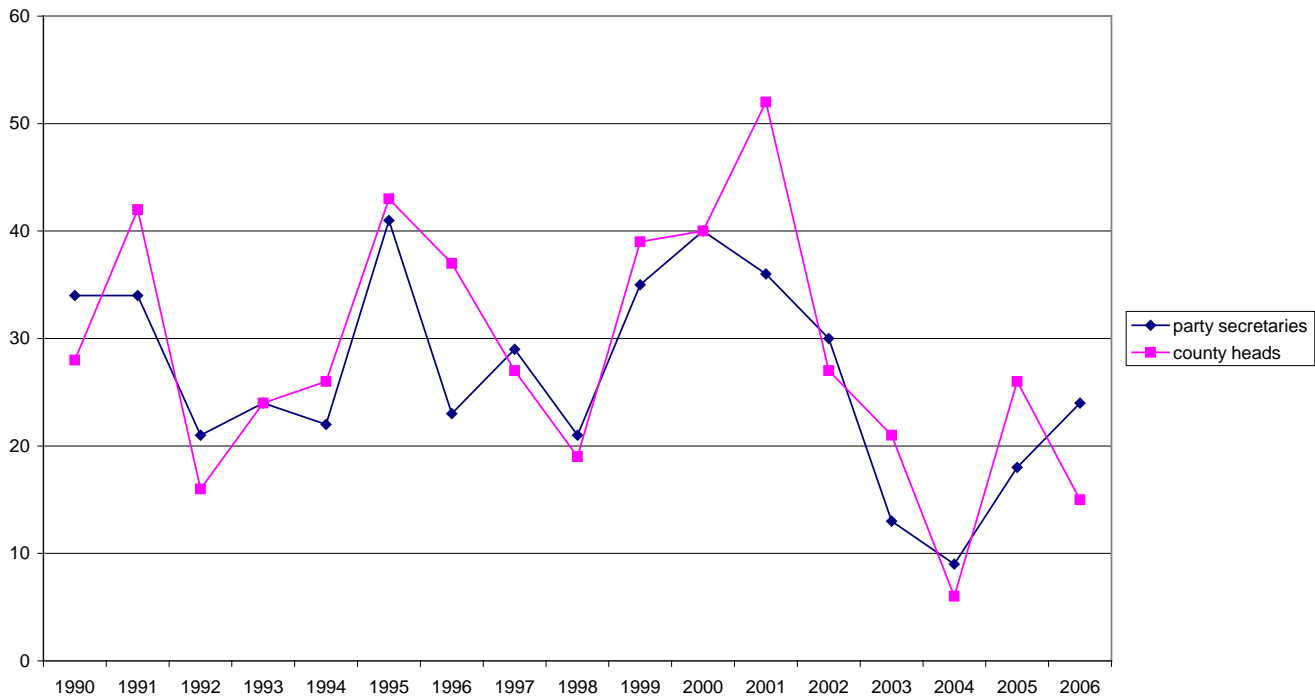
Mobility	Freq.	Percent
Promotion	192	42.3
to higher office in the same municipality	182	
to higher office of a different municipality	9	
to the provincial government	1	
Transfer	124	27.3
to a different county in the same municipality	46	
to the municipal government	71	
to a county of a different municipality	6	
to the provincial government	1	
Retirement	113	24.9
to people's congress of the county	16	
to people's political consultative conference of the county	6	
to people's congress of the municipality	39	
to people's political consultative conference of the municipality	23	
complete retirement	23	
other forms of retirement	6	
Demotion	9	2.0
Unknown	18	4.0
Total	454	

The reasons for this are manifold. First, the historical trend of turnovers of the county party secretaries paralleled that of the county heads in this period of time (Figure 2). This is because their turnovers are significantly correlated: the more county party secretaries leave their positions, the more offices are opened up for county heads.

Second, a significant number of county party secretaries were promoted. Out of 454 cases, 192, or 42.3 percent, were promoted. Among them, 182 cases were promoted within the same municipality; nine cases to other municipalities; and one to the provincial government. Evidently, promotion into a different municipality is rare; and direct promotion to the provincial government is even rarer. Tang Weixin (born 1945), former Party secretary of Sihong, Huaiyin, was later promoted to Jiangsu as deputy head of the Health Department. Among the ten people who were promoted to positions in a different municipality, one may find Xu Shousheng (governor of Gansu), Cao Xinping (major of Xuzhou), Chen Zhenyi (secretary of the Wuxi Municipal Disciplinary Inspection Commission), Yu Jiashu (currently chairman of Wuxi Municipal People's Congress), Wang Jianhua (Party secretary of Lianyungang), Huang Jipeng (vice mayor of Wuxi), Chen Zilong (currently in prison), Zhu Hongchun (vice chairman

of Nantong Municipal People’s Congress), and Wang Zhengyu (a standing member of Nantong Municipal Party Committee and secretary of Nantong Disciplinary Inspection Commission).

Figure 2 Turnovers of County Leaders in Jiangsu (1990-2006)



Xu Shousheng was promoted from Party secretary of Rudong County in Nantong to deputy secretary of Lianyungang in December 1991. Yu Jiashu was promoted from Party secretary of Wuxi County to deputy secretary of Lianyungang in December 1992. Chen Zilong was promoted from Party secretary of Huai’an in Huaiyin to vice mayor of a newly established Suqian Municipality in September 1996.

Zhu Hongchun was promoted from Party secretary of Yandu in Yancheng to director of Organization Department in Nantong in 1999. Chen Zhenyi was promoted from Party secretary of Changlang in Suzhou to secretary of Wuxi Municipal Disciplinary Inspection Commission in 2001. Huang Jipeng (born 1960) was transferred from vice mayor of Xuzhou and concurrent Party secretary of Peixian in Xuzhou to vice mayor of Wuxi in July 2003. Wang Jianhua was promoted from Party secretary of Jiangning District in Nanjing to Party secretary of Lianyungang in June 2005, replacing Chen Zhenning. Cao Xinping was promoted from Party secretary of Kunshan (a county-level city) in Suzhou to mayor of Xuzhou (a prefectural-level municipality) in June 2006. Wang Zhengyu (born 1956) was promoted from Party secretary of Gaoyou in Yanzhou to a standing member of Nantong Municipal Party Committee and secretary of Nantong Disciplinary Inspection Commission in September 2006.

Third, another 124 people (23.7 percent) were transferred. Among them, 46 were transferred within the same municipality; 71 to same-rank positions in the same municipality; six to a different municipality; and one to the provincial government. Yan Changjun, former Party secretary of Rudong in Nantong, was

transferred to Jiangsu's provincial government as a deputy director of the Grain Bureau with one-year probation.

Fourth, more party secretaries than county heads retired: 113 party secretaries versus 38 county heads. Of the retiring party secretaries, 16 went to the people's congress of the same county; 39 to the people's congress of the same municipality; six to the people's political consultative conference of the same county; and 23 to the people's political consultative conference of the same municipality. 23 people retired completely, and six people partially. Interestingly, three party secretaries became school administrators. These include Li Konghui, Zhou Dexin (born 1942), and Liu Wenyu. Their decisions might have been related to their educational background. Zhou Dexin, for instance, was a graduate of Jiangsu Normal College in 1964. After having served Changshu as mayor and Party secretary in the early 1990s, he went back to his alma mater (now Suzhou University since 1982) as vice president in 1995.

Finally, nine party secretaries, including six corrupt officials, were demoted. The most interesting case is Xing Dangying (born 1956). In a day of flood in 1956, a railway worker, Lao Xing (old Xing), discovered a wood bail floating downstream with a dying baby in it. He took the baby home and named him 'Dangying' (the baby of the Party). Dangying was a good student at school and a good worker at work. He was appointed deputy county head at the age of 32, county head (mayor) of Pizhou at 39 in 1992, and Party secretary of Pizhou at 41 in 1994. He was dismissed in July 1997 and was sentenced for life in March 1998 for taking bribes in the amount of 312,000 *yuan*. After all, even the Party baby could not resist the temptation.

Conclusion

There seems to be a negative correlation between the Chinese political elite's experience in county management and their current rank: 16.7 percent of Politburo members, 38.7 percent of provincial party secretaries, and 55 percent of provincial governors have county management experience. Provincial leaders in Jiangsu seem to confirm this national pattern: 33 percent of provincial party leaders (excluding the military standing member) and 44 percent of the provincial government leaders have county management experience. Yet prefectural leaders in Jiangsu seem to deviate from the pattern: 50 percent of prefectural party leaders and 41 percent of prefectural government leaders in Jiangsu have worked as county leaders previously.

Over a period of seventeen years (1990-2006), county leaders in Jiangsu have exhibited some interesting patterns of mobility. First, turnovers of county heads and party secretaries vary from year to year. For county heads, the range is between 5.7 percent (in 2004) and 47.7 percent (in 2001); for county party secretaries, the range is between 8.5 percent (in 2004) and 38.7 percent (in 1995). The turnovers of county heads are highly correlated to those of county party secretaries (the correlation coefficient is .813), but the spikes of their turnovers do not necessarily coincide with the political cycles.

Second, the majority of county leaders in Jiangsu were promoted. Out of 488 county heads who left their positions, 61.3 percent (299 individuals) were promoted; out of 454 county party secretaries that left their positions, 42.3 percent (192 individuals) were promoted. The predominant pattern of promotion among county heads was promotion to county party secretaries. Out of 299 cases, 258 were promoted to county party secretaries, representing 86.3 percent of the total. In contrast, the predominant pattern of

promotion among county party secretaries is promotion to higher positions within the same municipality. 182 out of 192 cases (94.8 percent) were promoted to higher offices in the same municipality.

Third, about a quarter of turnovers in the county leadership in Jiangsu were transfers: 129 (26.4 percent) county heads and 124 (27.3 percent) county party secretaries were transferred. In particular, transfers to positions of a similar rank in the same municipality are very common among both county heads and county party secretaries. Fourth, county party secretaries are more likely to retire than county heads. While 38 county heads were retired in the period of 1990-2006, 113 county party secretaries were retired during the same period. Finally, very few county leaders were demoted or dismissed from office. Only one county head and six county party secretaries were dismissed for corruption, though many more were exposed later.

What do these patterns mean in terms of the political mobility of Chinese political elites in general? First, Jiangsu's turnover patterns seem to slightly differ from the national patterns. Between 1995 and 2002, the average annual turnover rates for county heads and county party secretaries in China were 50 percent and 47 percent, respectively (Guo, 2007, 385).¹⁶ But Jiangsu's annual average turnover rates for county heads and county party secretaries during 1990 to 2006 were 27 percent and 25 percent, respectively. Similar to the national pattern of more frequent turnovers of county heads than those of county party secretaries, Jiangsu county leaders' overall turnover rate is obviously substantially lower than that of county leaders in China as a whole.

Second, in contrast to Chinese provincial leaders, Jiangsu's county leaders are more likely to be promoted. Because of the ceiling effect, only three percent of Chinese provincial leaders from 1949 to 1998 were promoted (Bo, 2002, 77). In Jiangsu, 13.5 percent of county leaders were promoted during the period of 1990-2006. County party secretaries are less likely to be promoted than county heads. Only 10.6 percent of county party secretaries in Jiangsu were promoted from 1990 to 2006, in contrast to 16.5 percent of county heads during the same period.

Third, Jiangsu's patterns of promotion seem to confirm the national patterns of promotion in general. County heads are usually promoted to be party secretaries of the same county. But Jiangsu's rate is higher than the national average, which is about 37.5 percent (Guo, 2007, 386) in contrast to Jiangsu's rate of 43.2 percent. Since there is not yet a study on the patterns of promotion of county party secretaries, it is not clear how the pattern of promotion of county party secretaries in Jiangsu to high offices within the same municipalities fares in terms of the national trend.

Finally, although few county leaders eventually make it to the Politburo, county leaders in general have great potentials for upward mobility. They can be good candidates for municipal-level positions as well as provincial-level positions. But their chances of promotion diminish at higher levels.

¹⁶ In the original text, Guo calculated the rates for county heads and county party secretaries to be 32 percent and 29 percent, respectively. But he also indicated that 18 percent of counties replaced both county heads and county party secretaries at the same time. I have added the 18 percent to the turnover rates for both.

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