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**What Affect Bureaucratic Attitudes toward the Reform of  
Integrated Administrative Executive System:  
Evidence from the Practices in two Chinese Municipalities**

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## **Abstract**

Bureaucratic attitudes are said to be important for the successful implementation of policy and reform, and has been frequently discussed within the implementation studies. However, due to the institutional uniqueness and technical difficulty, bureaucratic attitude has seldom been investigated in the Chinese context. But this cannot overshadow the role of bureaucratic attitudes in the policy process. The Reform of Integrated Administrative Executive System (IAES, *Zonghe Xingzheng Zhifa Tizhi Gaige*), as it has direct bearing on the power and responsibility of Chinese bureaucrats, provides an opportunity to examine the bureaucratic attitudes within Chinese administrative system. One of the fundamental questions about bureaucratic attitudes can be what affect the attitudes of Chinese bureaucrats. Taking this question as the major focus, this dissertation attempts to explore the factors that affect the attitudes of Chinese bureaucrats toward the IAES reform as one of the most important administrative reforms proceeding in China.

In this dissertation, the theoretical framework oriented to factors of the bureaucratic attitude is established on the basis of two classic approaches, respectively rational choice and sociological perspectives, combining with the reality of the reform. In order to test the hypotheses empirically, this dissertation uses the data of a survey on the satisfaction with current practice of IAES of government officials in two municipalities as pilot project cities of the reform. As illustrated in

statistical analysis, the concern with principal-agent relationship and part of the consideration of bureau-shaping strategy from rational choice perspective, and the identity of the reformed system and political ideology of central state have significant impact on the attitudes of Chinese bureaucrats toward the IAES reform.

**Keywords: Bureaucratic Attitude; Administrative Reform; Integrated Administrative Execution(IAE); Chinese Government**

## Table of Contents

<b>1. Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. Literature Review.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2.1 Factors that Affect Bureaucratic Attitudes of Western Literature.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2.2 Factors that Affect Chinese Bureaucratic Attitudes.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>2.3 Literature on Chinese Administrative Reform.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>3. The IAES Reform and Case Selection.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>3.1 Development of the IAES Reform.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>3.2 Case Selection.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>4. Theoretical Construction and Hypotheses Specification.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>4.1 Rational Choice Perspective.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>4.2 Sociological Perspective.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>5. Research Design.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>6. Finding and Analysis.....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>7. Conclusion.....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Bibliography.....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Appendix.....</b>	<b>55</b>

## Introduction

Bureaucratic attitudes are of great importance to their policy-oriented actions. Although consensus has not been made on how it affects the implementation, bureaucratic attitude has been scholarly affirmed to impact implementation of certain policy as well as administrative reform(e.g. Kaufman 1960 and Lipsky 1980 and May and Winter 2009; Stensöta 2012; Tummers et al. 2012). However, the significance of bureaucratic attitudes has been rarely stressed in literature related to policy implementation in China, let alone the Chinese bureaucratic attitudes toward administrative reform.

But this does not mean bureaucratic attitude is not important for Chinese administrative reform. **The reform of integrated administrative executive system (the IAES reform, *Zonghe Xingzheng Zhifa Tizhi Gaige*)** makes it worthwhile to discuss the bureaucratic attitudes to Chinese administrative reform. As part of the new wave of administrative reconstruction within Chinese government system, the IAES reform aims at integrating **the administrative executive authority (AEA, *Xingzheng Zhifa Quan*)** under specialized administrative bodies. The AEA unique in Chinese administrative system refers to a series of authorities that government uses to manage social order and regulate market activity according to different concrete administrative laws. As the effectiveness of administrative execution significantly entails the timely decision of individual bureaucrats, their thoughts on the IAES are important for the fate of the reform. Even though the reform has been put into practice since the late 90s of 20<sup>th</sup> century, the IAES is still outside the regular system of

Chinese government, and its legal status, leading department at central level and standardization of operation have not been clearly defined. All of these can affect the impressions of frontline bureaucrats on the reform. In this case, the attitudes of Chinese bureaucrats toward the IAES reform might not be indisputably positive or with little difference between individuals as commonly considered in most literature of Chinese administrative reform, which is necessary for the dissertation to explore the Chinese bureaucratic attitudes toward the reform and the factors shaping the attitudes.

Examining the attitudes of Chinese bureaucrats toward the IAES reform is of great value, not only for the related research, but also for the Chinese administrative reform in the future. More important, it can also contribute to the decision making on Chinese administrative reconstruction in prospect. The knowledge about what determine the preference of Chinese bureaucrats could help central decision makers not only revise the goals to be more adaptive to the bureaucratic reality, especially the target groups of the reform, but also predict the acceptance of the future administrative reform among the different officials under a unitary political system.

In 2015, a survey related to the satisfaction with the IAES has been operated on officials of Huanggang and Xiangyang, two municipalities of Hubei province as the pilot cities of the reform proposed by the Chinese Central Government. Relying on the data of this survey, this dissertation attempts to explore the relation between Chinese bureaucratic attitudes and relevant factors from different perspectives. Considering that bureaucrats' attitudes in different circumstances may possess

different meanings, we have to specify the definition of bureaucratic attitude in our study. Applying Anderson's classification(2017) that distinguishes between bureaucratic preferences for specific policies or changes and more fundamental norms, values or ideologies, what has been studied as bureaucratic attitude in this article refers to the former, in other word, whether a bureaucrat favors or disfavors administrative changes.

This dissertation consists of the following six sections except Introduction. The first section reviews the literature related to factors of bureaucratic attitudes, research concerning bureaucratic attitudes in Chinese context and studies which discuss the IAES reform. The subsequent section describes the status quo of the reform. Then, the theoretical framework and correspondent hypotheses for analyzing the bureaucratic attitudes toward the IAES reform have been constructed. After theoretical construction and hypotheses specification, the research design is presented. The succeeding section illustrates the finding and analysis of the empirical research. In the end, the analysis and implications of the research are concluded.

## **Literature Review**

### **Factors that Affect Bureaucratic Attitudes of Western Literature**

There have been plenty of western literature focused on bureaucratic attitudes. As early as in Kaufman(1960) and Lipsky(1980)'s works, the role of bureaucrats' attitudes in policy implementation has been frequently mentioned and tested empirically in the more recent research(Brehm and Gates 1997; Keiser and Soss 1998; May and Winter 2009; Stensöta 2012; Tummers et al. 2012). As for the factors that influence bureaucratic attitudes, which is the main focus of this dissertation, arguments so far can be classified into two major streams.

For one thing, bureaucrats' positions have been most frequently explained as their rational choice. There are three sub-branches in literature from this perspective. The first one attributes bureaucratic attitudes to the maximization of their individual utility. Following March and Olsen's logic of consequentiality(1989), namely, any exogenous change should have (concrete and relatively easily) identifiable consequence for the individual who perceives it, a bureaucrat has to consider the material consequences the administrative change might bring on himself or herself in terms of career prospect(Bauer 2012). This argument has been proved empirically to explain bureaucrats' attitudes toward administrative changes and further expanded as well. In the research on attitudes of European Commission(EC) officials toward management modernization, it is found that acceptance of EC officials toward the reform can best be explained by hierarchical rank, organizational function and expectation of fair career treatment(Bauer 2012). Besides, by exploring the attitudes of officials at

European External Action Service toward the Service, Juncos and Pomorska(2013) found that short-term career-related calculations as well as reputation and job satisfaction influence the officials' attitudes toward the Service.

Another group of scholars argue that the establishment of bureaucrats' attitudes is affected by the principal-agent relation between bureaucrats and politicians. As Huber and Shipan's policy-conflict model(2002,222) argues, if politicians delegate more autonomy to bureaucrats, officials are more likely to adopt policies that they prefer and do little to serve the interests of politicians. Since bureaucrats prefer an institutional structure that maximizes their control of information and weakens the ability of politicians to monitor their work (Moe 1984 and 1985; Weingast 1984), it is assumed that bureaucrats show negative attitudes toward the institutional changes designed to limit the ability of bureaucrats and provide more control to politicians over their bureaus. But there aren't many empirical studies to test the policy-conflict model and "develop more direct measures of bureaucratic preferences" (Huber and Shipan 2002). Conversely, among the few empirical studies testing the principal-agent models describing bureaucratic preferences during administrative changes, Gain et al.(2008) found in work of British government reform that bureaucrats reveal positive attitudes toward the change that enhances the political power in that they perceive the strong political leadership as helpful to achieve the objectives they value. Nevertheless, this group of scholars seldom consider the circumstances where the departments is not headed by politicians and staffed by officials, as classics of public administration assume(e.g. Friedrich 1940; Putnam 1974; Suleiman 1974; Kellner and

Crowther-Hunt 1980).

The third sub-branch of rational choice arguments explain the bureaucrats' attitudes by the ideal forms of bureaus they prefer. This argument can be significantly reflected by Patrick Dunleavy's bureau-shaping model (1985, 1989a, 1989b and 1991, 174-248) Due to the pursuit of large proportion of budget directly associated with policy output (Niskanen 1971) and that of increased engagement in policy formulation(Dunleavy 1991), officials "want to work in small, elite, collegial bureaus close to political power centers"(Dunleavy 1991, 202). This approach has been applied to analyze the executive agency reforms and done well in explaining the British Next Steps reform as bureau-shaping strategy of officials(Dunleavy 1991 and James 1995).Within these literature, officials present certain attitudes toward the reform based on bureau-shaping logic: reform will be supported by officials if it advocates the bureau with high discretion, small work unit, cooperative work patterns and proximity to power center(Dunleavy 1991. 202). Besides, Gains, et al. (2008) in another research on reform of local decision-making structure found the similar result that officials express less satisfaction with the reform where there is greater contact with councilors and become more satisfied where they observe quicker decision-making. Despite the contribution of bureau-shaping perspective to the analysis of bureaucratic attitudes, the approach mostly focuses on senior officials and lacks empirical verification in other circumstances (Marsh et al., 1988; James, 1995; John, 2003).

Apart from rational choice, another group of scholars assert that the formation of

bureaucrats' attitudes can be sociologically explained. First, compared with direct acquirement, bureaucrats tend to follow the logic of appropriateness and develop attitudes by internalizing norms and values from their institutional environment even early on their lives (Converse 1964; March and Olsen 1989; Johnston 2001; Loveless and Rohrschneider 2008; Rohrschneider 1994; Wildavsky 1987). Second, bureaucrats abide by what accepted as shared values and norms developed from their specific working places (Ban 2010). In this way, bureaucrats' attitudes might to some extent reveal the norms or identity of their departments or bureaus, as the (unwritten) rules that prescribe the attitudes and behaviors that are (or are not) appropriate in the context of the group (Nijstad and van Knippenberg 2008). Moreover, political ideology also plays a role in shaping bureaucratic attitude (Anderson 1998; Hooghe 2009; Stensöta 2012).

Several empirical studies support the role of socialization in shaping bureaucrats' attitudes. As for forces inside the organization, Oberfield (2009) found that, despite some shifts in the default rule-following identities, the police and welfare caseworkers remained tethered to their entering rule-following identities, suggesting that training, entrants peers and experienced workers can affect the workers' views. Moreover, both self-selection and on verse group recruitment can take effect on the bureaucrat's attitudes (Hooghe 2005). Similarly, whether there is a match between bureaucrat's value and the organizational culture can determine the satisfaction with the organization (Ban 2011). Considering organizational change, experience can decide bureaucrats' attitudes, as Bauer (2012) argues that those who have experienced certain

kinds of change may indeed demonstrate less opposition to it. And Juncos and Pomorska(2013) argues that identity of the EU and that of the role for EU in the world stage work differently on EEAS officers' attitudes toward the service.

In addition to the two main approaches to bureaucrats' attitudes, other accounts have also been taken into considerations. Some would argue that bureaucrats' attitudes may come from certain ideas as proxies for them to be part of the institutions: (normal, rationally bounded) individuals (with limited resources) turn to proxies, cues, or heuristics as intellectual shortcuts in order to "position themselves with respect to new features in their environment" (Hooghe and Marks 2009; Simon 1997). However, the effect of intellectual cues on bureaucratic attitudes is not significantly presented in the real case(e.g. Bauer 2012). Besides, Anderson (2016) finds that the ways bureaucrats perceive the policy could also affect their positions on this policy. However, most of these claims either rest in theoretical or hypothetical stage with few empirical tests or present high contextuality which is hard to make same contribution as the two main streams to the school of bureaucratic attitudes.

In sum, current literature on bureaucratic attitudes provide systematic perspectives that contribute to the explanation of the sources of bureaucratic attitudes, but most of the literature focus on the bureaucrats in classic western democratic institutions/Anglo-American government institutions, with few concentrating on other part of the world such as Chinese political-administrative system. But it could be helpful for the studies dissecting Chinese bureaucratic attitudes to construct the theoretical framework and at the same time test the availability of the existing theories

to explain Chinese bureaucratic attitudes toward administrative reform.

### **Factors that Affect Chinese Bureaucratic Attitudes**

Among current literature focused on Chinese bureaucrats, it is hard to find research that directly analyzes Chinese bureaucratic attitudes, let alone the factors that affect the attitudes. It tends to be that attitudes toward the central decisions have been seldom detected or examined and that officials tend to be unwilling to reveal their personal information despite the attempts to collect bureaucratic attitudes. This can be attributed to either the political sensibility of the topic technically or the nature of hierarchical Chinese political-bureaucratic system so that subnational government have to nearly unconditionally follow the directives from the national government(Fan 2014). However, despite the lack of direct observation on bureaucratic attitudes, existing studies imply certain patterns of Chinese bureaucratic attitudes which can be reflected by the policy positions of Chinese government officials, and they suggest some insights on the factors that influence the preferences.

As most of studies touching upon Chinese bureaucratic preferences focus on the central-local relationship, a principal-agent relationship between national government(principal) and subnational governments(agent) has been commonly regarded as the determinant factor that shapes the behavior of Chinese bureaucrats. However, this principal-agent relationship is different from the classic western counterparts in that the local leaders are selected de facto by the leaders of the Communist party at central state in China. This selection process and the rest of the personnel about local officials relies on a performance-based promotion mechanism in

which officials with the strongest performance is most likely to get promoted by the presumably unified and far-horized local leadership(Olson 1993; Olson and McGuire 1996). Therefore, preferences of officials on policy implementation can be attributed to the promotion competition. It has been found that local officials tend to choose to implement the policies which could produce highly achievable, measureable, significant and even innovative results (Edin, 1998; Cai, 2004; Zhou, 2004).Moreover, unlike its relative impersonality and fairness in the election-based system argued by Weber's illustration of bureaucracy, the merit-based promotion mechanism under the Chinese system of direct appointment, due to the strong control from superior on subordinate, is difficult to escape from the effect of the taste of the senior officials who select their subordinates, thus the preferences of officials in lower level on policy implementation may have to be in line with the interests of officials in upper level(Harding, 1981; Shirk, 1993).

Apart from "the promotion pressure", another group of scholars proposed that Chinese officials' policy positions can be explained by the interest conflict between local government and central state. Due to the characteristics of Chinese Style Federalism-fiscal decentralization accompanied with political centralization(Qian and Weiganst et al. 1997; Zheng 2006), despite the compliance to central mandate, local government may selectively implement policies which benefit local interests (O'Brien and Li,1999; Chung, 2000). It has also been empirically found that local officials showed unwillingness to implement central policies unfavorable to local enterprises they support and conform to those which protect the local economy(Kostka and

Hobbs 2012). Besides, the bureaucratic preference as rational choice is arguably affected by the characteristics of the posts or even personalities of the officials themselves. As for the former, Zhang et al.(2007), Wang et al.(2008) and Yu et al.(2014) find that term of office can be one important factor that affects bureaucratic preference in which the officials with shorter term are more prone to support policy innovation than officials with longer term; and Wang et al.(2009) argue that officials at the frequently substituted posts are less likely to implement economic policy.

Above all, there is a lack of systematic analysis on Chinese bureaucratic attitudes toward administrative reform. Although current literature implied Chinese bureaucratic attitudes and some factors that could decide the attitudes, most of the time they have been reflected by the frequency of participation, success or failure of implementation, and policy input, it is hard to find studies directly dissecting bureaucratic attitudes. And none of them provides a complete theoretical framework to explain the formation of Chinese bureaucratic attitudes. The bureaucratic attitudes have been commonly treated in terms of preference on policy implementation so that the factors can be partial, with others being overlooked. But these studies as references are conducive for this dissertation to analyze Chinese bureaucratic attitudes.

### **Literature on Chinese Administrative Reform**

There are plenty of works focused on Chinese administrative reform. Most of the attempts to examine Chinese administrative reform are case studies. As for the single-case studies, scholars view administrative reform in either different areas

(Zheng & Liu 2012; Fan 2018) or various sectors(Chen & Hu 2005; Shen 2018). Besides, other scholars pay special attentions to the lack of compatible theoretical guidance for the reform. Even though it has been found that a lot of western theories can explain the legitimacy of Chinese administrative reform, none of them is fully compatible to guide the reform(Yan 2012; Han 2015; Ding and Fang 2016; Zeng and Zhang 2018). Another important aspect is the shortcomings within the current institutional design as barrier to the implementation of the reform(Jiao 2012; Li 2016; He 2016). Apart from institutional defects, what have been frequently disputed from this aspect also include the interest conflicts between departments of different functions or different levels within the system(Cao and Duan 2017), and the expectation of the relationship between departments after the reform(Zeng and Wei 2017). And, after illustrating the problem or difficulty of achieving the reform target, some works even proposed possible strategies to improve the reform(Zhang 2012; Liu and Zhou 2008; He 2016; Zou and Yang 2014).

In addition, there are also comparative studies. Some of them compare the practice of administrative reform in different Chinese localities. This sort of studies examine the different patterns of localization of the administrative reform(Ding and Zhu 2017; Ye and Ouyang 2018) and further discuss both the replicability of administrative reconstruction in other sectors and the implication of the localization for central decision making(Zhu and Lu 2017; Liu 2018). Another group of scholars compare Chinese administrative reform with the similar administrative reconstruction in other countries. These works mainly discuss the difference between Chinese

structure and western counterparts and what Chinese administrative reform can learn from foreign institutional change (Li 2009; Liu 2010; Ding and Pan 2016; Han 2015).

Unlike the studies of Chinese administrative reform discussed from the macro- and meso-perspective, the efforts on individual bureaucrats in administrative reform from the micro-perspective are too shallow. The political sensitivity of the topic and the uniform compliance under the “promotion pressure” in the unitary political system might be the reasons for the difficulty of observing the nuance in attitudes between Chinese bureaucrats, especially for the administrative reform advocated by the central leadership. However, in the few attempts to discover the bureaucratic behaviors in administrative reform, the attitudes toward reform present significant disparity between Chinese bureaucrats (Zhou 1993; Xiao 2007). Even although the potential relationship between bureaucratic attitudes toward administrative reform and certain factors that influence the result of reform in macro aspect has been somewhat mentioned (Cao 2017), all these hints of Chinese bureaucratic attitudes have not been specially analyzed as the central focus of those works.

Despite the lack of focus on bureaucratic attitudes within the literature of Chinese administrative reform, the current studies provide important background information for this dissertation to explore Chinese bureaucratic attitudes toward of the IAES reform. In turn, by incorporating western theories with Chinese realities, this dissertation attempts to fill theoretical and empirical gaps within the research of Chinese bureaucratic attitudes toward the reform.

## **The IAES Reform and Case Selection**

Although the IAES reform has been experimented nationwide, the progress varies and the problems stemming in the process cannot be overlooked, which is also the reason this dissertation addresses the various attitudes toward the reform among Chinese bureaucrats. Thus, it is necessary to first generally describe the IAES reform, as well as the application in the two municipalities selected as case study in this dissertation.

### **Development of the IAES and Its Significance to Chinese Administrative System**

In order to build an administrative system compatible with socialist market economy, the administrative reforms in its early stage, so-called institutional reforms(Zhengfu Jigou Gaige) in 1982, 1988, 1993 and 1998 were designed to manage the stability of newly introduced market economy in China and to adapt national control and protection to the rapid economic development(Mueller, Milton, and Tan, Z. 1997). However, as the reform in a long period of time serves mostly the economic development, the public service delivery as another important governmental function has been overshadowed. Thus, in order to meet the increasing demand for better public service of Chinese citizen, the next wave of administrative reform, so-called IAES reform, started from 1987, focuses on transforming functions, streamlining structure and enhancing efficiency in government<sup>1</sup>(Wang and Qiu, 2002).

The construction of IAES parallels what have been emphasized in the current

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<sup>1</sup> To be more specific, the contents of this round of Chinese administrative reform include: transforming functions, reengineering processes, reorganizing structures, clarifying functions, reducing examination and approval and improving management in government.

Chinese administrative reform. Government executive bodies play a significant role in the progress of Chinese administrative reform at this stage (Xia, 2016). To ensure the public service provision, it is important for Chinese governmental bodies to fully utilize the AEA so as to maintain both social and market orders. However, stiff structure, responsibility and power conflict between executive bodies, lack of formalized regulation and overstaffing largely hinder the Chinese administrative execution. One major attribute to the problems could be the fragmented operation in the separate and insulated local administrative executive bodies (Ding and Fang 2016). Thus, strategically integrating the executive forces scattered in the regionally and functionally divided administrations can be one measure to improve the efficiency of administrative execution, which also matches the idea of functional transformation in the current administrative reform. In this way, the IAES reform has been significantly advocated by the central leadership.

The construction of IAES enjoys legislative support from Chinese central state. The Law of Administrative Punishment of P.R.C(1997) has endorsed the legal status of the integrated administrative executive(**IAE**) body for the first time: a provincial-level government has the ability to appoint a special administrative body to only exercise the authority of administrative punishment used to be partly exercised by all local frontline administrative bodies. And the subsequent two central directives(2000 and 2002) reinforced the integration of the execution of administrative punishment, setting up the integrated system of administrative punishment by legislation from both institutional and executive perspectives, which

eventually becomes the current nationwide administrative punishment system of urban management. Another directive issued in 2003 for the first time defines the IAES which is no longer confined to administrative punishment but to encompass all administrative executive works(Wudazhiku 2015).

After the new group of central leadership came to power, the IAES reform has been granted with new legislative support. First, the further expansion of the IAES has been stressed in the decision of the third plenary session of the 18<sup>th</sup> Conference of Chinese Communist Party(CCCP)(2013). After discussion in the fourth plenary session of the 18<sup>th</sup> CCCP, the Central Committee made new arrangements in the directive of constructing the IAES first time in a specific sector: urban management(2015). As a consequence, the National Bureau of Urban Management was established in September 2016. Thus, the IAES reform has been currently at the core of the central legislation.

The key to integrating the AEA is to standardize behaviors, coordinate operation, combined with more transparency and high efficiency (16<sup>th</sup> CCP Congress, 2002). Such systematic innovation has been proceeding both vertically and horizontally. Horizontally, the reform manages to concentrate the operation of administrative execution within a single executive entity. Generally, there are two types of integration with such focus on the cross-departmental integration(Kuabumen Zhenghe) and the giant-departmental integration(Dabuzhi Zhenghe): the former is to set up a new administrative body external to the regular administrative setting for coordinating different functional departments, so as to collaboratively exercise the AEA; the latter

integrates the AEAs of each functional department into one department specialized in administrative execution. Besides, the reform in vertical direction lays emphasis on distinguishing the authority of IAE bodies between district and county. Although county(Xian) and district(Qu) enjoy the same administrative ranking, district government subordinates to municipality government while county government is independent from the realm of municipal administration, which has more autonomy. Thus, it is necessary to carefully decide which levels of executive bodies to be kept after the integration of the AEAs in both municipality and county.

The IAES has been applied nationwide and experimented in over 130 cities since the first pilot project in 1997. In 2002, the system was applied to the experiment of administrative punishment in which 82 cities participated. Up to 2015, the number of cities involved rise to 133. Besides, the IAES has been practiced in different sectors. Urban management is the first and most affected field of administration. The administrative executive bodies in separate functional departments of urban management have been integrated into an independent system specially for administrative execution(2015). Following urban management, the experiments of IAES have been extended to the regulation of cultural and tourism market(2016), food and drug safety(2013), environment protection(2016) and transportation(2014).

Even though the reform has been exercised for over two decades, the problems in practice are significant. First, despite the legislative supports for the IAES, most of the central directives only work as guidelines for the local experiment and various

executive bodies claim themselves to be the administrative executive bodies<sup>2</sup>. As a result, it might be difficult to clarify the only authoritative administrative executive body. For instance, such violations as illegal parking have to be terminated through administrative coercions, while such coercions for the same events might be exerted multiple times by different governmental bodies since all of them claim to be the authoritative bodies for such coercive measures.

Besides, another consequence for the non-existence of concrete law at central level is a lack of uniform regulatory instructions for the operation of the IAE bodies. As most of the local or departmental regulations which executive bodies use as references established at different times and circumstances, there are few connections between these regulations and sometimes there are overlaps or even contradictions on the terms for same issues, which bewilders the frontline officials and even endangers the effectiveness and public credibility of administrative execution.

Moreover, the integration of the administrative executive bodies is far from complete. First, the transformation of functions has not gone smoothly during the integration process. One problem that hinders the transformation comes from the standard to distinguish the IAE bodies from regular government bodies. There are three ways to decide the realm of the IAE bodies: by the range of the authority of the specific IAE department, through the agreement between functional departments and

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<sup>2</sup> There are many competent departments within Chinese administrative system that can appoint the authoritative bodies of administrative execution in that most of the functional departments have already had the authority to operate administrative execution since their establishment. In this way, the regulation of the functional department, local legislation, and even informal rules as convention within the administrative system can define such authority.

IAE departments, or according to the decision of State Commission Office for Public Sector Reform(SCOPSR). This mixed standard can cause conflict between IAE bodies and regular functional bodies during the process of integrated administrative execution(IAE). Another issue can be the incompatibility between the competence of the executive bodies required by the reform and the ability of executive bodies within the IAES. Second, it is not an easy task to encourage the separate functional bodies to collaborate under the IAES. For one thing, departments lack motivations to collaborate for the IAE. As executive bodies of the IAES are extracted from regular functional departments, they are no longer the subordinates of the functional departments. Thus, there is no linkage for these executive bodies to collaborate with the regular functional departments. What makes the matter worse is the lack of provincial superior to command the local IAES. Without coercive mandate from provincial superior, the regular functional departments are less likely to collaborate with the administrative executive bodies in the newly integrated system.

In addition, the bureaucrats within the IAES are problematic. The expanded realm of the IAE departments also implies the more workloads the officials have to bear in the concrete administrative execution. As response, the IAE departments recruit a considerable number of co-workers to assist the IAE, and the executive squads(*Zhifa Dadui*) have been formed by the compound of regular frontline officials and co-workers. However, the criteria for employing these co-workers are not strict, which cannot guarantee the expertise of the IAE, and these co-workers do not have the authority to directly exercise administrative execution but still have to rely on the

decision of the regular officers. Thus, the operation of executive squads at the frontline might not divide the heavy workloads that regular officials have to bear, but place additional burden of administering their co-workers within the squads on their shoulders, which could produce negative effect on the executive efficiency.

Moreover, even for the regular officials, their identities within the executive bodies are still confusing. Most of regular officials of the IAE departments used to work in regular functional departments with the settled organizational types(Bianzhi) in Chinese governmental institution.<sup>3</sup> But the organizational type of the IAE departments has not been defined in Chinese governmental institution. Therefore, bureaucrats can be quite puzzled about the organization types of their working places, which makes it in turn quite difficult for the IAES to manage its staff coming from different types of government organization. Besides, Chinese bureaucrats care so much about the organizational types of their departments inasmuch as such organizational types of government bodies are directly linked to the wages and welfare of the officials. These officials used to enjoy wages and welfare standardized by the organizational types of their original departments as regular Chinese government bodies. However, there is nothing in the central directives describing the wages and welfare that officials of the IAE bodies should enjoy. The perfunctory but common strategy to deal with this confusion is to maintain the levels of salary and welfare of these officials in the original departments. As a result, the difference in salary and welfare owing to the difference in organizational types of original

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<sup>3</sup> There are generally two organizational types: Administrative Bodies(Xingzheng Jiguan) and Public Service Provision Bodies(Shiye Danwei).

departments makes it difficult for the officials to develop the identity as membership of the IAES, and might even do harm to their enthusiasm for the IAE.

Above all, both the progress and challenges are significant during the practice of IAES across the country. Government officials as the frontline practitioners of the IAE could profoundly understand the changes as well as the problems brought by the reform, which can be reflected by their attitudes toward reform. More importantly, despite the mandatory characteristic of Chinese administrative reform, the enthusiasm of these officials for the IAE to a great extent determines the progress of this reform. And the problems with the current practice can affect the motivations of the officials within the IAES. Thus, it is of great value for the dissertation to examine the frontline officials' attitudes toward the IAES reform and what can be attributed to their attitudes.

### **Case selection: Two Municipalities in Hubei Province of China**

This dissertation chooses the officials from two municipalities of Hubei Province in China—Huanggang and Xiangyang as cases to detect officials' attitudes toward the IAES, with several reasons as follows: First, the two municipalities enjoy rich experience of the IAES reform. As early as 2005, the first IAE squad responsible for both the census and inspection of the unregistered for household registration has been established in Xishui County of Huanggang. Similarly, in 2009, Xiangyang municipality became the first pilot project city to apply the IAES in the sector of commerce and manufacture. So far, the IAES reform in the two municipalities has gone through over 10 years at all local levels of administrative bodies. Second, the

innovation has been applied comprehensively across the administrative executive bodies of the two municipalities. Apart from the urban management, the governments of these two municipalities have made attempts on other sectors in which the IAES system has not been widely put into practice. For instance, Xiangyang has made efforts to integrate the authorities of transportation administrative execution from departments of highway, local water, public transport and urban traffic and as a result established the IAE bureau of transportation. Third, the two municipalities have also made attempts on cross-sectoral integration of the administrative executive forces. For instance, the cross-sectoral IAE has been applied to the administration of food and drug safety in Huanggang. Similar attempts have also been made in Xiangyang on the regulation of cultural and tourism market: the establishment of the IAE squad for cultural and tourist industries integrates the authorities of administrative execution scattered in administrations of cultural protection, tourism, broadcasting and media.

Thus, the IAE practice in Xiangyang and Huanggang can comprehensively reflect *de facto* change that IAES brings on administrative execution, which is more likely to be perceived by the officials than other pilot projects. In this way, the opinions of officials from the two municipalities are typical for the dissertation to discover bureaucratic attitudes toward the IAES reform.

## **Theoretical Construction and Hypotheses Specification**

After description of the general information about the reform and case the dissertation selects as research object, this section presents the possible factors that affect the officials' attitudes toward the IAES reform and correspondently makes the hypotheses that await to be tested in the two selected municipalities. Even though the attitudes of Chinese bureaucrats have not been researched extensively in the literature, the arguments related to bureaucratic attitudes from western studies reviewed previously could be used to shape the discussion of the bureaucratic attitudes toward the IAES reform. Combining with the realities of the reform, there are generally two types of factors affecting the attitudes of Chinese officials toward the IAES reform: rational choice perspective and sociological perspective.

### **Rational Choice Perspective**

Officials' rational choices as the maximization of their individual utility can affect their attitudes toward the reform. As Niskanen (1971, 1973) referred in his budget maximizing model, salary, perks, public reputation, power and patronage are all included in the utility of a bureaucrat. Following the logic of consequentially (March and Olsen, 1989), officials care about the material consequence the organizational change brings on their utilities. In Chinese context, under the "promotion pressure" as result of performance-based promotion mechanism (Olson 1993), the change in the likelihood of the career advancement is one of the most important impacts brought by the administrative reform which officials are concerned with. As the personnel of Chinese local government system is substantially operated

by local leadership (Olson and McGuire 1996), officials who are closer to the local heads are more informed of their superiors' preferences and in turn their performance are more likely to be observed by the selecting committee formed at local leadership. In this way, in the local IAES, officials with higher administrative ranks are more prone to get promoted since they can be more informed by the central directive transferred from local leadership and know more about the idea of how the integration of administrative execution will be applied locally designed by the local leadership. Thus, the first hypothesis can be made:

*H1: Official with higher administrative rank is more supportive to the reform.*

Apart from career advancement, officials also are concerned with the effect of reform on their wages and welfare determined by their posts. As previously mentioned, the level of wages and welfare of Chinese government officials is partly decided by the organization type of their post, and the officials with the posts of regular organizational types enjoy better wages and welfare than officials who have not been categorized in regular government institutional setting. However, the IAES reform at the frontline include a considerable number of temporary government employees and the organizational type of integrated executive body has not been categorized. Thus, the officials used to work in the departments of regular organizational types might worry about the effect the reform can bring on their utilities in terms of salary and welfare. So the second hypothesis can be made:

*H2: Official of regular organizational type is less satisfied with the reform*

Besides, the officials' attitudes toward the reform can be affected by their rational

choice as response to the principal-agent relationship. As argued in the classic principal-agent models, the more autonomy is delegated from the principals, the more prone the agents are to serve their own interests (Huber and Shipan 2002, 222). Thus, the self-interested local agents prefer organizational settings that maximize their control and reduce monitoring from their principals (Huber and Shipan 2002; Moe 1985; Weingast 1984). In the IAES reform, the local officials as frontline agent seems benefit from the principal-agent relationship during the local experiment of IAES. From the last section, the authority of administrative execution used to be exercised by administrative executive bodies under separate functional departments responsible for all affairs of certain sectors, but such bodies possessed limited autonomy and were highly supervised by the upper level. But the integration of authorities of administrative execution split those executive bodies from original functional departments and form the specialized IAE departments. As the AEAs have been concentrated within the newly organized IAES, the executive bodies can get rid of the constraints of their former departments and enjoy more autonomy than they used to. As for the frontline officials, due to the lack of uniform administrative laws as reference for the administrative execution, they can frequently use their discretion to exercise their administrative executive authority. Since there has not been any department set in the provincial level (the ceiling of local government institution) as the local commander to provide surveillance for the concrete operation of IAES at local level, the officials can be less supervised when they do their regular jobs. Thus, as the beneficiary of the principal-agent relationship within IAES, officials tend to be

positive to the reform. The corresponding hypotheses can be:

*H3: Official with the expectation of more discretion is more satisfied*

*H4: Official with the expectation of less supervision from upper levels are more satisfied*

Moreover, officials' attitudes toward the reform can reflect their preferences of the working environment; in other words, such attitudes can exhibit a "bureau-shaping" response to the reform. From Dunleavy's perspective on bureaucratic behavior, apart from pecuniary components of their utilities (e.g. salary and welfare), bureaucrats also care about their work-related utilities (e.g. interest and importance of their work tasks). In this way, bureaucrats can rationally pursue the design of their bureau as "small, elite, collegial bureaus close to political power centers"(Dunleavy 1991). However, the IAE bodies lack regular caseworkers, which requires large number of temporary executive forces from different sources---most of them are not the regular civil servants but non-government employees with the IAE experience and they don't have the authority to make final decisions. Besides, these frontline IAE bodies are far from political center; the only way to communicate with the political leadership is through the occasional inspection tour(*Xunshi*). Therefore, if Chinese officials within the IAES have the same pursuit of "bureau-shaping" strategy with emphasis on closer approximation to "staff" (rather than "line") functions, a collegial atmosphere and a central location (Dunleavy 1991, 202), they might reveal sort of dissatisfaction with the current executive bodies with large redundancy of temporary employees, lack of expertise and distance from political center. Thus, the

hypothesis related to “bureau-shaping” behavior can be:

*H5: Official with expectation of small working unit is less satisfied with the reform.*

*H6: Official with expectation of better quality of colleague is less satisfied with the reform.*

*H7: Official with expectation of central location is less satisfied with the reform.*

### **Sociological perspective**

First, one possible factor from sociological perspective that affects officials' attitudes toward the reform can be the identities within the default institutional setting. Following the logic of appropriateness (March and Olsen 1989), individuals can develop preferences through the internalization of the norms and values of the social environment even early on their lives (Converse 1964; Rohrschneider 1994; Wildavsky 1987). Similarly in government setting, officials' judgments can be deeply affected by the identity within the extant government system as the informal rules to prescribe the appropriateness to accept the organizational changes (Nijstad and Van Knippenberg 2008). It is easy to infer that the longer the officials stay in the long-standing government system, the less likely they will accept the organizational changes since the identity of default government setting have already been deeply rooted in their judgments. As for the circumstance of IAES reform, officials used to work in the departments of regular government system for a long time cannot easily accept the change brought by the reform, owing not only to the change in power and responsibility or in salary and welfare concerning with their posts, but also to the identities formed in the default environment within the functional departments. And

the longer they stayed in their original departments of regular government system, the less they are supportive to the reform. Thus, the hypothesis related to the seniority of official can be made:

*H8: Official with longer seniority is less satisfied with the reform*

Apart from the influence of default government setting, the identity of newly established integrated administrative system also matters the officials' attitudes towards the reform. As Ban argues, through both formal training and inculcation of cultural value and the informal process, individuals acquire and adapt to the specific culture of a new workplace once they enter(2011). And Bauer also found that individuals who previously had contact with certain organizational change may reveal less opposition to it(2011). In this way, the identity of IAES or even the rhetoric surrounding it can give the officials more positive impressions and make them reveal relatively more positive attitudes toward the reform. Within IAES, compared with officials in the regular functional departments, the identity of the IAE forces is more likely to form among the officials of the IAE bodies. Besides, those who have already experienced the IAE practice are more likely to internalize the idea of the reform. Thus, the hypothesis related to IAES identity can be:

*H9: Official of the IAE body is more satisfied with the reform than official of regular government body.*

*H10: Official with the IAE experience is more supportive to the reform.*

In addition, the political ideology can also affect the officials' attitudes toward the reform. It has been found in the western literature that the left-right political

continuum strongly determines the people's perception of the welfare state(Keiser 2010; Holmberg and Oscarsson 2008; Rudolph and Evans 2005). Moreover, political ideology has also been argued to affect the ways in which bureaucrats at lower levels achieve goals designed by the higher-level governments (Riccucci 2005; Keiser 2010). Although the effect of political ideology is seldom discussed in the literature of Chinese government, it is interesting to tentatively put western arguments about the relation between political ideology and bureaucratic attitudes in Chinese context. As this dissertation focuses on the factors that affect bureaucratic attitudes toward the reform, political ideology here will only be considered as sociological factor to attitudes of Chinese officials while how individual is affected by the political ideology will not be discussed. Since the construction of IAES has been considered as one of the major tasks to build service-oriented government proposed by the Chinese Central Committee, officials who are informed of the idea of service-oriented government can be more supportive to the IAES reform. In this dissertation, whether officials perceive the idea of comprehensively promoting the service-oriented government as proposed by the central state is the criterion to define the effect of political ideology. Therefore, the hypothesis related political ideology can be:

*H11: Official who perceives the idea of constructing public-service-oriented government is more satisfied with the reform.*

Table 1: Hypotheses of the Factors of Chinese Bureaucratic Attitudes toward the IAES Reform

Approach	Category	Variable	Hypothesis
Rational choice	Individual utility	H1 administrative rank	Official with higher administrative rank is more supportive to the reform.
		H2 organizational type of the post	Official of regular organizational type is less satisfied with the reform
	Principal-agent relationship	H3 discretion	Official with expectation of more discretion are more satisfied
		H4 supervision	Official with expectation of less supervision from upper levels are more satisfied
	Bureau-shaping	H5 size of working unit	Official with expectation of small working unit is less satisfied with the reform.
		H6 quality of colleague	Official with expectation of better quality of colleague is less satisfied with the reform.
		H7 location	Official with expectation of central location is less satisfied with the reform.
Sociology	Default setting	H8 seniority	Official with longer seniority is less satisfied with the reform
	Identity of the reformed system	H9 type of working unit	Official of the IAE body is more satisfied with the reform than official of regular government body.
		H10 previous experience	Official with the IAE experience is more supportive to the reform.
	Political ideology	H11 political ideology	Official who perceives the idea of constructing public-service-oriented government is more satisfied with the reform.

## Research Design

After discussing the possible factors affecting the officials' attitudes toward the IAES reform with their corresponding hypothesis being listed, the dissertation will test these hypotheses empirically. Prior to the statistical analysis, the data collection, control variables and the specification of the dependent variable will be presented in this section.

As previously described, the data come from an attitudinal survey of administrative officials in Huanggang and Xiangyang, the two municipalities in Hubei Province as pilot cities of the IAES reform in China. A total of 760 officials were sampled (disproportionate stratified random sample), of whom 723 completed the survey(response rate 95.1%). Of all the questionnaires spread and collected, 401 of 423 officials from Xiangyang finished the survey(response rate 94.8%), and 322 of 337 officials from Huanggang answered the questionnaire(response rate 95.5%). All the officials who complete the survey belong to the government departments which will play or have already played a role in the IAES, regardless of whether they are regular-government-post officers or not. The administrative ranks of the officials completing the survey range from Office/Clerk(*Keyuan*)<sup>4</sup> from vice provincial/vice minister(*Fusheng/Fubu*)<sup>5</sup>, which ensures the comprehensiveness of the empirical research. The questionnaire consisted of over 20 questions touching upon all the hypotheses proposed by the dissertation, including background, attitudes toward the

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<sup>4</sup> Keyuan is the lowest regular administrative rank of Chinese government system.

<sup>5</sup> Fusheng/Fubu is the highest regular administrative rank of the local administrative executive bodies within Chinese government system.

IAES, information about the post, expectation to the reform, role of the reform. The types of options of answers for each question include Yes/No and the level of agreement or disagreement based on the specification of Likert Scale (from 1 to 5). Apart from questions oriented to the variables hypothesized in the theoretical construction as this dissertation attempts to explore, there are also questions related to the control variables which are not the focus of this research. “Sex”, “Education Level” and “Age” have been included in the question set of background as control variables since these variables lack the theoretical support for their effects on bureaucratic attitudes toward the reform; none of them can be categorized as either rational choice or sociological approach to explain bureaucratic attitudes as this dissertation concentrates on.

Once the information about the data collection and control variables has been illustrated, the specification of the dependent variable has to be described before the statistical analysis. The dependent variable to reflect the officials’ attitudes toward the IAES reform is specified on the basis of a set of questions related to the satisfaction of the IAES reform. The general question was, “Regarding IAES operation in the current local government system, what do you think of the following aspects of IAES?” The sub-branches led by this general question include “the IAE forces execute with high efficiency”, “the IAE forces have a good working style”, “the IAE bodies operate with honesty”, “the administrative executive bodies are capable of exercising the authority of administrative execution” and “the IAE bodies execute with justice”.

Relying on principal component analysis (PCA), the dependent variable was

constructed out of five questions, which all reflect the officials' positions on the IAES reform. As PCA reveals, all five variables load to one factor. Therefore, their values can be extracted and interpreted as a single dependent variable indicating the general attitude toward the IAES reform. These data contribute to the dependent variable in the subsequent regression analysis.

## Finding and Analysis

Before conducting the regressions, it is necessary to provide the descriptive statistics about officials' attitudes toward the reform. The following graphs present the satisfaction of the officials in the two municipalities with the five aspects of the IAES reform. Figure 1 indicates the percentage of officials in the sample of two municipalities who display positive attitude toward the reform (by satisfied or very satisfied with the aspects of the IAES reform), remain neutral, or reveal negative attitudes (by unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with the statement). And Table 2 offers the detail of the distribution of the officials' attitudes.

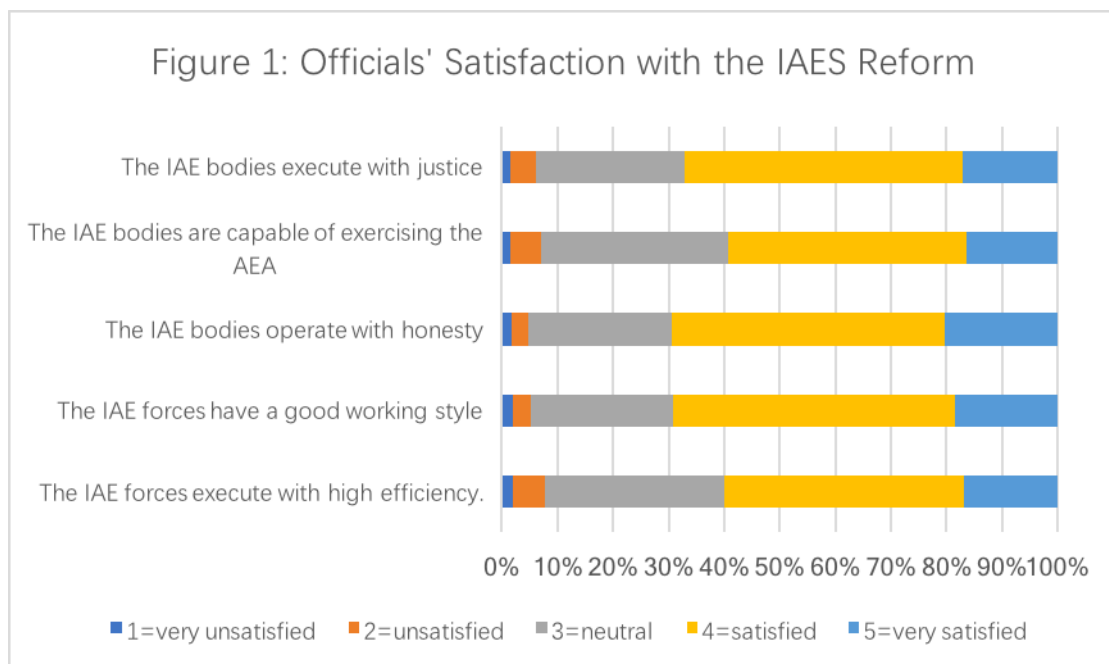


Table 2: Officials' Satisfaction of the IAES Reform

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	N
The IAE forces execute with high efficiency.	3.68	0.787	1	5	673
The IAE forces have a good working style	3.82	0.818	1	5	672
The IAE bodies operate with honesty	3.84	0.824	1	5	673
The IAE bodies are capable of exercising the AEA	3.69	0.841	1	5	672
The IAE bodies execute with justice	3.77	0.829	1	5	674
Total	3.76	0.823	1	5	

Note: The answer scale ranges from very unsatisfied(=1) to very satisfied(=5);

N=number of respondents; Total=overall mean value of respondents.

From Figure 1 and Table 2, it can be observed that for each aspect of the IAES reform, the proportion of the positive attitudes is greater than that of the negative attitudes and the mean satisfaction is all above 3(neutral attitudes). Such distribution indicates the positions of the officials on the IAES reform are positive in general, which parallels the supportiveness as result of high conformity among Chinese local officials to the reform advocated by the central state under the hierarchically unitary political system. However, despite the majority of positive attitudes toward the reform, there is variance in the degree of satisfaction with the reform between officials as only around one fifth of the officials are very satisfied with the reform on every aspect of the operation and none of the mean respectively is more than 4(satisfied), which

implies that there should be factors other than Chinese political system that affect the officials' attitudes toward the reform, as expected by this dissertation.

After introducing the descriptive statistics of the officials' attitudes toward the IAES reform, the statistical analysis (ordinary least squares regression) oriented to the hypothesis testing can be processed. Table 3 presents the result of the regression. From the table, it is not difficult to find that variables from both rational choice and sociological perspectives do correlate with the officials' satisfaction with the reform.

As for the rational choice approach, the effect of variables as different type of rational choice on officials' satisfaction with the reform varies in significance. The rational choice as response to the principal-agent relationship between central state and local authorities has the most significant effect on shaping the officials' attitudes toward the reform. Both variables related to this perspective reflect the impact which parallels with the hypotheses respectively. Officials with the expectation that the reform brings more discretion on local executive bodies are more satisfied with the IAES reform, compared with those without such expectation; and officials with the expectation that the reform reduces the supervision from national government also reveal higher level of satisfaction than those who do not have this expectation. However, only part of the variables of rational choice as bureau-shaping strategy significantly affect the officials' attitudes toward the reform. As expected, officials who have preference on the quality of their colleagues show less satisfaction with the IAES reform. Nevertheless, there is no significant difference in attitudes between officials who prefer small working unit and those without such preference, or between

officials who expect the central location of the executive bodies and those who do not have this wish. This indicates the difference in the content bureau-shaping strategy between Chinese officials and their counterparts in classic western bureaucratic system; both officials pursue the bureau of high elitist style while the Chinese officials might not have such strong desire for small and central-located working unit as western bureaucrats possess. Moreover, neither administrative rank nor organizational type of the post as the variables related to maximization of individual utility presents significant correlation with officials' satisfaction with the IAES reform, which suggests that the concern of individual utility is not the drive of officials' attitudes toward the reform.

Besides, the effect of variables from sociological perspective is showed to be significant. First, the existence of the identity of the newly formed integrated system apparently has an impact on officials' attitudes toward the reform. Officials who used to participate in the operation of IAES show more positive attitudes toward the reform than those who do not have past experience of the IAE. Besides, officials who work in the IAE bodies display more satisfaction with the reform than officials who work in the regular functional bodies. Such effects imply that the formation of the identity of the newly established IAES either by working in the specialized bodies for the IAE or even just through the involvement of the practice of IAE, do help officials to build better impression on the reform. Moreover, the influence of the political ideology from the central state also shows great significance. As showed in the table, officials who have better understanding of the construction of the public-service-oriented

government advocated by the central state are more satisfied with the IAES reform, which confirms that officials regard the IAES reform as an approach to achieve the construction of service-oriented government and more importantly suggests that the central political ideology does have an impact on bureaucratic attitudes toward the reform. However, the seniority within the regular government system does not have significant effect on officials' attitudes toward the reform, which implies that the default setting of the regular government system in China is not a determinant factor to bureaucratic attitudes toward the reform.

The impact of the control variables on officials' attitudes toward the reform has also been noticed. Neither the gender nor the education level of the officials affect their satisfaction with the reform. However, it is showed that officials' satisfaction with the reform is affected by their ages; the "elderly" officials per se are less satisfied with the reform. Upon the completion of the regression for all variables, the variables with significant coefficient have been extracted and a new model has been formulated on the basis of these variables. A second regression has been processed on the new model and all coefficients of variables are again significant as expected, which implies that these factors do have impact on officials' attitudes toward the reform.

In sum, the officials' attitudes toward the IAES reform can be explained by both rational choice behavior of individual official and certain kind of socialization process. The official's rational choice as response to principal-agent relationship or "bureau-shaping" strategy can to some extent determine their attitudes toward the reform. The existence of the identity of IAES and central political ideology from

sociological perspective also plays a role in shaping bureaucratic attitudes toward the administrative reform.

Table 3: Regression Models: Officials' Attitudes toward the IAES Reform

		Model 1	Model 2
Rational Choice			
Individual utility	H1 administrative rank	-0.034 -0.077	
	H2 organizational type of the post	0.038 -0.157	
Principal-agent relationship	H3 discretion	0.327*** -0.113	0.342*** -0.095
	H4 supervision	0.242*** -0.09	0.293*** -0.083
Bureau-shaping strategy	H5 size of working unit	-0.045 -0.121	
	H6 quality of colleague	-0.004** -0.002	-0.005*** -0.002
	H7 location	0.066 -0.12	
Sociology			
Default setting	H8 seniority	0.041 -0.031	
Identity of the reformed system	H9 type of working unit	0.321*** -0.118	0.347*** -0.106
	H10 previous experience	0.400* -0.212	0.427** -0.2
Political ideology	H11 political ideology	0.181* -0.107	0.208** -0.096
Control Variables			
Sex		-0.133 -0.087	
Age		-0.121** -0.059	-0.098** -0.041
Education Level		-0.073 -0.053	
Constant		-0.475 -0.3	
R <sup>2</sup>		0.153	

Note: Dependent Variable: Satisfaction with the reform; Standard errors in parenthesis; \*\*\*p<0.01, \*\*p<0.05, \*p<0.1

## **Conclusion**

The IAES reform has been launched and advocated by the Chinese central state for over two decades and both success and problems of the reform have been frequently reviewed, but few people have ever had doubts on how Chinese government officials, with first-hand experience of the administrative reform, regard the reform and why they could have such attitudes toward the reform. This dissertation has made attempted to answer these questions. Under the hierarchically unitary political system, the Chinese bureaucrats tend to display their supportiveness to the administrative reform and this has also been confirmed empirically in this research. However, the statistical analysis of this research also shows that not all of the Chinese officials present absolute conformity to the reform and a considerable number of officials are mildly satisfied or even present negative attitudes toward the reform, which has not been recognized by former literature on the IAES reform. Besides, what is more important is that such nuance in attitudes entails reasonable explanation. Thus, the main issue at the core of this dissertation is not how Chinese officials assess the IAES reform but how to best explain Chinese bureaucratic attitudes toward a specific administrative reform.

With the assistance of western theories of bureaucratic attitude combined with the realities of the reform, this research constructs the theoretical framework specialized for officials' attitudes toward the IAES reform. In the previous research, both rational choice and sociological hypotheses have been applied in ad hoc manner to explain bureaucratic attitudes toward administrative reforms within the western government

settings. And due to the political sensitivity of the topic, it is extremely difficult to examine the attitudes of government officials in China. As a consequence, little solid knowledge of bureaucratic attitudes, either theoretical or empirical, in Chinese context has so far been available. This dissertation systematically construes hypotheses from the two theoretical approaches to explain attitudes of Chinese bureaucrats and put them to an empirical test in Chinese context. In this way, there are several implications, from the perspective of evidence, the practice of the reform, theoretical development and prospects for the research of similar topic, which can be drawn from this dissertation.

In aspects of the evidence acquired from the statistical analysis, this research finds that the individual attitudes of Chinese officials toward the IAES reform can be explained by both rational choice and sociological approaches. However, the predictors in these two approaches are different from their counterparts in other contexts. As for rational choice approach, neither the administrative rank nor the organizational type of the official's post determines the satisfaction with the operation of the reformed administrative system, which implies that the rational calculation of individual utility does not drive officials to support the IAES reform. Besides, despite the high pressure and limited autonomy for Chinese local bureaucrats within the principal-agent-like central-local relationship, when they encounter the IAES reform, these officials still desire more discretion and less supervision from the upper-levels as described in Huber and Shipan's principal-agent model(2002). Nevertheless, only part of the "bureau-shaping" hypotheses can be applied to explain the officials'

attitudes toward the reform: if the officials prefer high-quality colleagues, they will be less satisfied with the reform than those who do not have such preference. From sociological perspective, time of service(seniority) as effect from default regular administrative setting is not the predictor of officials' attitudes toward the reform. On the contrary, the identity of IAES and the central political ideology do affect officials' attitudes toward the reform. That is, officials who feel themselves as part of IAES will be more satisfied with the reform and officials who recognize the idea of central state on constructing the public-service-oriented government will be more prone to support the reform.

Moreover, the evidence from the research implicitly acknowledges the tasks the reform currently has to sort out. Although it is not the central focus of this research, the descriptive statistics of the factors also confirm the existing problems during the practice of IAES. The large proportion of officials with expectation of more discretion were eventually proved to be more satisfied with the reform, which on the other hand suggests the lack of universal and formal legal references for the exercise of administrative executive authority; the significance of the impact from the expectation of less supervision from upper levels indicates that there is still not a permanent superior body as leadership of IAES at either top of local administration or central state; and from the expectation of high quality colleague, it is not difficult to infer that the administrative executive level of local forces is still far from being compatible with IAES as drawn in the blueprint of the reform. Since such problems have been reflected on the attitudes of the officials with first-hand experience of the reform,

there is little doubt that they should be paid special attention to. Thus, in order to make progress in the practice of the reform, Chinese governments still have to make efforts to solve these problems.

Such evidence contributes to the theoretical development of the research concerned with not only explaining Chinese officials' attitudes toward the IAES reform in specific, but also the bureaucratic motivation of Chinese officials in general. First in general, as variables from both rational choice and sociological perspectives effectively explain the Chinese officials' attitudes toward the IAES reform, this dissertation provides a theoretical framework for subsequent research to further explore the Chinese bureaucratic motivation. Second, although individual utility calculation has proved significant in analysis of western government officials, none of the variables related to this argument has been significant in effect in this research, which places doubts on the explanatory power of individual utility maximization in the context of the IAES reform. Does the rational calculation of individual cost and benefit only makes sense in western contexts? What if Chinese officials care for their individual utilities at other types of administrative changes? Similar questions could be asked upon hypothesis related to default setting from sociological perspective. Third, only one of the three variables of bureau-shaping can be used to explain the Chinese officials' attitudes toward the reform in this research, which questions the applicability of the Dunleavy's bureau-shaping model, especially that of the preference of small unit and central location for explaining Chinese bureaucratic attitudes. Thus, further efforts are required to discover whether the current

bureau-shaping model stemmed from western arguments can explain officials' attitudes toward reform in other circumstances of Chinese administrative reform, or/and whether there are different contents for the bureau-shaping strategy in Chinese contexts.

This research also has implication for the prospect of the related research. First, since this dissertation is an empirical research to explore the attitudes of Chinese government officials toward the IAES reform which has been practiced nationwide, future research should apply the models in different cases so as to examine whether the results from different locations are still robust. Second, this research finds that the age of Chinese officials significantly affects their attitudes toward the reform, which can inspire the future research on attitudes of Chinese officials to explore the factors from approaches other than the ones proposed in this research so as to expand the explanatory power of the theoretical model. Moreover, from the finding of this research, the problems existing in the reform reflected by the factors that decide officials' attitudes coincide with those argued in the previous literature, which suggests that more efforts should be made on behaviors and motivations of Chinese officials, in order to better discover the problems during the implementation of administrative reform.

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## Appendix

**TABLE A1: Factor Analysis**

Factor Analysis/Correlation Method: Principal-Component Factors Rotation: (Unrotated)			Number of Observations = 676 Retained Factors = 1 Number of Params = 5	
Factor	Initial Eigenvalues	Difference	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.990	3.624	79.797	79.797
2	.366	0.058	7.320	87.117
3	.308	0.134	6.161	93.278
4	.174	0.012	3.484	96.762
5	.162	-	3.238	100.000

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

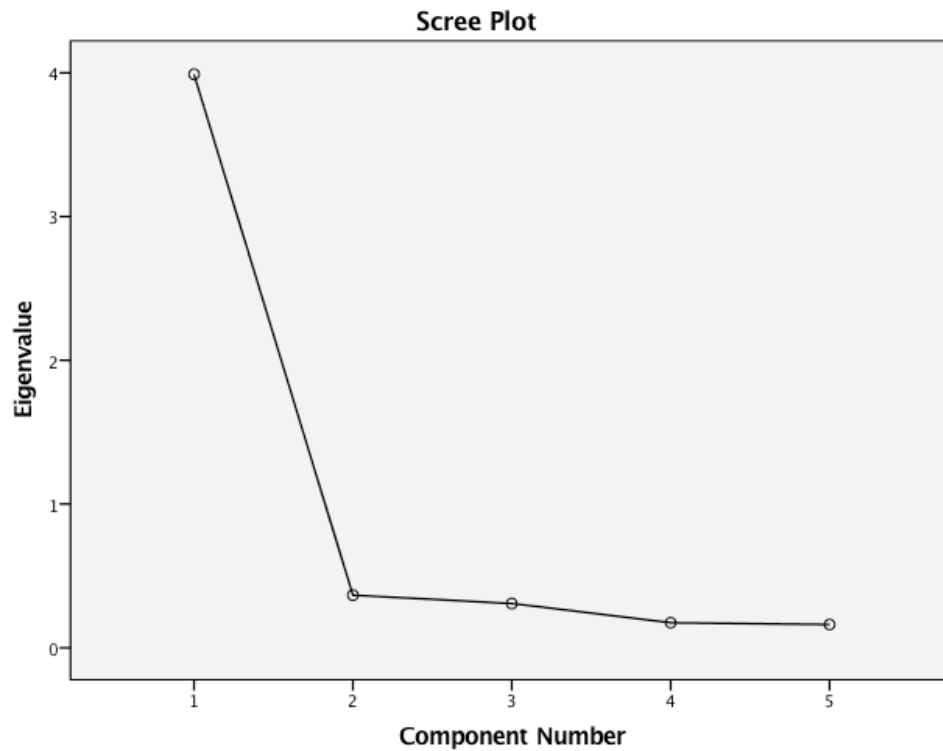
### KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.877
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2915.152
	df	10
	Sig.	.000

### Factor Loading(pattern matrix) and Unique Variances

Variable	Factor 1	uniqueness
Working efficiency	.919	.221
Working style	.901	.230
Operation honesty	.894	.226
Working capability	.884	.224
Executive justice	.868	.218

**Figure A2: Scree Plot of Eigenvalues**



**Table A3: Coding of the Independent Variables**

Approach	Category	Variable	Hypothesis	Coding
Rational choice	Individual utility	H1 administrative rank	Official with higher administrative rank is more supportive to the reform.	1= Keyuan and below 2= Kezhang and FuKezhang 3= Fuchuzhang 4= Chuzhang 5= Futingzhang and above
		H2 organizational type of the post	Official of regular organizational type is less satisfied with the reform	1= official of regular organizational type 0= other
	Principal-agent relationship	H3 discretion	Official with expectation of more discretion are more satisfied	1= official with expectation of more discretion in IAES 0= official without the expectation of more discretion in IAES
		H4 supervision	Official with expectation of less supervision from upper levels are more satisfied	1= official with expectation of less supervision from upper levels 0= official without the expectation of less supervision from upper levels

	Bureau-shaping	H5 size of working unit	Official with expectation of small working unit is less satisfied with the reform.	1= official with expectation of small working unit 0= official without expectation of small working unit
		H6 quality of colleague	Official with expectation of better quality of colleague is less satisfied with the reform.	1= official with expectation of better quality of colleague 0= official without expectation of better quality of colleague
		H7 location	Official with expectation of central location is less satisfied with the reform.	1= official with expectation of central location 0= official without expectation of central location
Sociology	Default setting	H8 seniority	Official with longer seniority is less satisfied with the reform	1= 0-5yrs 2= 6-10yrs 3= 11-15yrs 4= 16-20yrs 5= over 20yrs
	Identity of the reformed system	H9 type of working unit	Official of IAE body is more satisfied with the reform than official from regular government body.	1= official of Integrated Administrative Bodies 0= official of Regular Functional Bodies
		H10 previous experience	Official with the experience of IAE is more supportive to the reform.	1= official with the experience of IAE 0= official without the experience of IAE
	Political ideology	H11 political ideology	Official who perceives the idea of constructing public-service-oriented government is more satisfied with the reform.	1= Official who perceives the idea of constructing public-service-oriented government 0= Official who does not perceive the idea of constructing public-service-oriented government