

The University of Hong Kong

香 港 大 學



Department of Politics and Public Administration

Presents

# Government-nonprofit Relation in Mainland China: A Preliminary Examination

Local governments in China have been actively seeking to create a complementary government-nonprofit relation to deal with its service and legitimacy problems. Government-nonprofit relation has shifted from informal contracting to formal contracting, and to competitive contracting in recent year, demonstrating a trend to forge formal, effective and accountable collaborative relations. Yet such a transition faces many barriers and are often limitedly successful. By applying institutional, transaction cost, and resource dependence theories to China's context, we find that governments are often driven by institutional pressures to adopt competitive contracting, and governments often face the challenges of economizing transaction costs and handling mutual resource dependence in its implementation. These forces led to the prevalence of "decoupling" to meet these competing pressures at the sacrifice of competition: that is many contracts only appear competitive. We conducted interviews, participant observations and a questionnaire survey to study a large-scale social service contracting program in Shanghai. The results provide evidence of weak competition. Local governments in Shanghai were not able to effectively coordinate competitive bidding and thus strategically kept a decentralized implementation and management system based on existing relations.

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**Yijia Jing** is professor in Public Administration and Associate Dean of the School of International Relations and Public Affairs at Fudan University, editor-in-chief of a Chinese journal, *Fudan Public Administration Review*, and member of the editorial boards of *International Public Management Journal* and *Journal of Public Administration* (Chinese). He got his BA and MA in economics from Peking University, MA in sociology from University of Maryland, and Ph.D. in public policy from the Ohio State University. He conducts research on privatization, governance, collaborative service delivery, and comparative public administration. He is particularly interested in the formation, performance, and consequences of collaborative governance in transitional countries and is the director of the Center for Collaborative Governance Research at Fudan University.

**Date: January 17, 2013 (Thur)**

**Time: 4:30 pm**

**Venue: Room 9.66, The Jockey Club Tower**

**Language: English**

*(Tea & coffee will be served at 4:15 pm)*

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