

Chapter 1

Introduction and Research Methodology

1.1 Introduction

Corruption exists in every economy, although it differs in its form, scope, and how each culture and society defines it. Due to its clandestine nature, corruption is very often difficult to quantify but in countries in which officials have excessive influence over distribution and economic management decisions, the opportunities for official corruption are considered to be widespread. A high level of income inequality, conflicts between changing moral and civic codes (often prevalent in countries undertaking a transition from a colonial to an independent regime, or from one regime to another), low government salaries, and weaknesses in government enforcement methods are generally accepted as the main causes of official corruption in developing countries (Yeh, 1987).

In the case of China, political corruption is said to be rampant. At the same time, the growth of the Chinese economy has been unparalleled in history. Meanwhile, the new democracies of South Korea and Taiwan are facing problems with political corruption. On the other hand, Russia has neither experienced less political corruption nor enjoyed badly needed economic growth, despite the development of democracy. The problem of political corruption is complex in China. This research will discuss political corruption in China from the perspective of government's efforts to combat corruption. The research will explain the role of political

corruption and the practical efforts to combat corruption in Chinese political context.

In China there is a proverb that says: ‘kill only mosquitoes and flies, but not fight tigers’. This proverb implies that only unimportant, lower level corrupt bureaucrats, the ‘mosquitoes and flies’ are punished, while the real culprits, the ‘tigers,’ remain free. The expression ‘tigers’ in this case may either point to higher-level leaders or to the system itself. In the 1950s it aimed at all those who indulged in ‘bureaucratism,’ i.e. putting their personal positions and career ahead of serving the public. The proverb was also used by the students in the Tian Anmen Square demonstrations in 1989, but this time it was aimed at the party and government leadership, which was accused of shielding its corrupt members from investigation and punishment.

1.2 Problem of Study

The situation has changed since Jiang Zemin comes into power. Spearheaded by the Chinese President and Chinese Communist Party General Secretary Jiang Zemin, the government of China has stepped up its anti-corruption campaigns and is cracking down on personal abuses of power by party, army, and government officials alike. Especially in the 1990s, efforts to combat corruption in China have taken on new forms. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has openly proclaimed that it is going for the ‘tigers’ as well as the ‘mosquitoes and flies.’ As part of an ongoing effort to stop the rising tide of official corruption that was unleashed in the course of the economic reforms initiated by Deng Xiaoping in 1978, a number of middle and high level political officials have been tried and sentenced for political corruption. Among them were Chen Xitong, former Mayor and Party Secretary in Beijing and member of the

CCP Politburo. After the enactment of China's Criminal Law in 1982, and the re-installment of judicial authorities in the 1980s, the Chinese leadership has raised claims of legality in its rule. The question remains whether the law and efforts to combat corruption can function satisfactory in a country that is still entirely dominated by the rule of the CCP.

1.3 Objective of Study

The main objective of this report is to analyse and examine what factors impede efforts to combat corruption in China. The purpose of this objective is two folds: first, to put the issue of political corruption in a larger societal context and to analyse it as an integral part of the Chinese political environment. The study seeks to examine how changes in the political and bureaucratic structure indirectly affect the scope and level of political corruption. Secondly, the study seeks to analyse how definitions of corruption affect the design of anti-corruption campaigns and thereby its efficacy.

1.4 Scope of Study

The levels of political corruption are affected not only by politics in the narrow sense, as normally exercised by governments, but also by a number of other factors in and outside the larger political environment' (White, 1998). The scope of the analysis is limited to the Chinese political and bureaucratic structures, and does not deal very much with outside factors affecting corruption and efforts to combat corruption.

1.5 Methodology of Study

The methodology basically consists two parts. The first deals with creating a theoretical framework for studying the cases. The second provides a descriptive analysis of t the role of political corruption in the greater Chinese political environment. The framework provides a discussion on the definition of political corruption and its political consequences in China. It also provides a descriptive analysis of efforts to combat corruption at the policy-making and implementation levels. A number of cases are presented to exemplify the problems encountered in combating corruption.

1.6 Limitation of Study

The discourse on political corruption in China is fairly limited. Political corruption is more often a topic for news reporting. Since political corruption is a very sensitive political topic, in China statistics and other material on political corruption are classified and not widely available. The high level of secrecy in the Chinese Communist Party and the government apparatus classifies most materials, making them unavailable. The choice of available material from Hong Kong and other Western countries is much larger, but they consist primarily of secondary sources and newspaper clippings. To obtain materials this study relied on of articles and papers from Western sources on political corruption in China. In addition, he study collected some materials from internal publications of the CCP in China.

2.7 Organization of Study

This study is divided into three parts. Part I is theoretical and Part II is empirical, Part III provides the final conclusion. Part I deals with problem issues. The first issue: how does the Chinese leadership define political corruption, and how does this definition affect the design of its anti-corruption campaign? To examine this issue, the study looks at corruption from a number of perspectives. The second issue is: what are the main goals and purposes of anti-corruption campaign of the CCP, and what role does this campaign play in the party's overall political agenda? In Part II of this research, the discussion deals with the limitations of efforts to fight corruption at both the policy-making and implementation levels. The report concludes with a summary of the main findings and policy recommendation for consideration.