Title
Student, major; Mentor1, department1; Mentor2, department2

Background

While the overall standard of living for the average person in China has increased significantly since a few decades ago due to the Great Leap Forward (1961) and the Grand Reform and Opening (1978), China's period of rapid and condensed growth has left negative repercussions on society — environmental degradation, labor rights abuse, and a neglected healthcare system being a few of them.[6,8] Because of China's fractionalized population and vast terrain, there has, in the recent years, been a shift of responsibility to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and third-party aid groups to provide support and services when the government fails to or is unable to do so. However, because of China's tight governmental controls, NGOs have had great difficulty in establishing themselves in China, and the failure rate of international NGOs has been exceptionally high.[3] In fact, many NGOs, being forced to formally register with the state and allow a party official to oversee operations, have even been dubbed "GONGOs" or government organized nongovernmental organizations.[10] As of 2012, China was reported to have only around 460,000 NGOs in operation.[5] This stands in sharp contrast to India, where there is a smaller population of people,[2,4] but a presence of 3.3 million NGOs as of 2009[7], seven times the number in China.

While changing norms and increasing international pressure has pushed the Chinese government to become more accepting of certain NGOs, such as environmental NGOs,[8] they still largely suppress others, such as the numerous labor rights NGOs that have recently emerged in the Guangdong Province.[1] Many other health care NGOs as well as domestic organizations for the elderly have failed due to insufficient communication with the government, competition with other NGOs, and failure to establish a good image within the community (e.g. the Guo Mei Mei Red Cross scandal[9]). Such events have paved the way for much discourse on the likelihood of a successful humanitarian culture in China.

Research Statement

This project will be a comparative study of why NGOs across five different categories — medical/health services, environment, education, elderly/disabled people, and labor/human rights —fail in China, and how some organizations are able to overstep those obstacles and succeed in China's current political and economic climate.

Project Goals and Objectives

Despite there being a large number of studies relating NGO operational challenges to China's controlling, authoritarian political system, there have been fewer studies that focus on other causes of NGO failure, such as cultural misconceptions of aid organizations or perhaps financial obstacles. Furthermore, previous research does little comparative analysis across and within different NGO sectors. Through my research, I hope to not only fill in these holes and help deepen the knowledge base of NGOs in China, but I also hope to gain a better understanding of challenges in developmental economics/politics, a field I plan to study in graduate school and work with in my future career in foreign services.

Project Impact

By highlighting common causes of failure within each NGO sector and ways that these obstacles have been (or can be) circumvented, I hope that my research can help increase the presence of NGOs in China in the near future. An increased number of NGOs and aid groups would help create higher standards of living for many people who sit on the bottom of the income curve and are unable to obtain education, health care, or other resources due to poverty traps and the very limited reach of China's governmental aid. This would enable China to not just develop quickly, as it is currently doing, but also create a more stable, prosperous, and healthy environment for the people, from the grassroots level up.

Methodology

The core of my project would be conducted in Hong Kong, which is a current hub for many NGOs that operate in Mainland China. My decision to study in Hong Kong lies predominantly on the openness of government and freedom of speech and media, which will enable me to extract information on sensitive topics, such as human rights or democracy, with more ease. Throughout this project, I will also work closely with Professor Wu Fengshi at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, a renowned professor at CUHK's Department of Government and Public Administration who has had extensive research experience with NGOs in Asia. Prior to my arrival in Hong Kong, I will do preliminary research by reading papers from academic journals as well as news sources, and begin to compile a list of NGOs that I want to study for each of the five different sectors. My goal is to collect information for five organizations within each sector, giving my mentors and I a total of 25 NGOs to cross-analyze. While two of the five NGOs for each sector can be from literature review or previous case studies that I have researched thoroughly, the other three must be NGOs that I will interview

onsite in Hong Kong. By conducting first-hand research, I can ensure that the data that I analyze is up to date and accurate. However, it is still important that I base my interview questions on previous research so as to document any progress or changes in NGO operations and challenges from the past. Because my project deals with human subjects, I will submit the project to the IRB for approval prior to departure and comply with all rules, regulations, and training requirements.

Upon my arrival in Hong Kong in mid-September, I will begin to work with Professor Wu to devise survey/interview questions for the NGOs on my list. These questions will probe into the types of challenges that NGOs could possibly face, such as: the nature of registration process of NGOs in China, how the government stays involved the NGO and whether or not the government has attempted to control the organization's decisions, if the NGO has had difficulties in financial sustainability, if the NGO has ever had any conflicts with any other NGOs, etc. These interview questions will then be sent to [MENTOR] to ensure that the phrasing is appropriate, and when the questions are approved, then I will begin to set up interviews with the help of Professor Wu. Interviews will then be conducted from November to the beginning of March. Because English is an official language in Hong Kong, interviews will be conducted in English when possible, and if needed, Mandarin will be used as well.

After the data collection is completed, I will compile and cross-analyze the data from the various NGOs with the help of my mentors. By carefully examining the causes for failures or obstacles reported by each NGO and organizing the information in tables and charts, I hope to find correlations in the data within and between the NGO sectors. Along with finding trends in common obstacles, I hope to also propose solutions to the obstacles using research as well as any success stories in case studies as examples. I will then prepare a write-up to corroborate my findings and submit my paper to the journals and publications I mentioned above.

Project Timeline

	May/Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Review literature	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Submit project to IRB	X											
Create NGO survey list		X	X									
Draft interview questions				X	X							
Finalize intrvw. questions					X							
Interview/survey NGOs						X	X	X	X			
Compile/analyze data						X	X	X	X	X	X	
Write report											X	X

Anticipated Results and Dissemination
From my research and studies so far, I hypothesize that different NGO sectors face very different sets of problems and challenges. While it's difficult to say for certain prior to my research project how they will differ, I expect to see human rights NGOs suffer from more government-/communication-related barriers, while medical NGOs may suffer from challenges to financial sustainability. Throughout the project, I also expect to uncover challenges to NGO establishment that I am not currently aware of. Because this project will only analyze a total of 25 different NGOs, a number that I feel is feasible for my limited time and resources, it is also possible that I will not be able to find as many correlations within my data as I would like to. However, this project will serve as a good launching point for future analyses that other people do, and it's also very likely that I will continue working on this in years to come.

At the end of this project, I plan to write a paper to submit to the International NGO Journal and the Penn State Journal of International Affairs, as well as Caravel, USC's journal for undergraduate research. I also plan to submit shorter articles to publications such as the South China Morning Post and The Economist.

Personal Statement
Since I was young, seeing the disparity between the struggles of my family in rural China and my own comfortable life in America incited my desire to bridge the gap between the two standards of living. From my childhood to now, it has been my goal to assist in the development of China's most underprivileged areas. Even though news and media today portray China as a powerful and successful country, little light is shed on the people in the central and western provinces who are still in need and unable to improve upon their conditions. I hope that through this research project, I will be able draw attention those in need and help improve the lives of the people in a country that is so heavily a part of who I am.

References

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7. Shukla, Archna. "First Official Estimate: An NGO for Every 400 People in India." *Indian Express*. N.p., 7 July 2010. Web. 18 Feb. 2013.

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9. Wong, Edward. "An Online Scandal Underscores Chinese Distrust of State Charities." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, 04 July 2011. Web. 18 Feb. 2013.

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Magellan Scholar BUDGET FORM

Student's Name:

Student salary	Hours	Rate	Subtotal
	Estimated number of hours student will work	Enter the hourly wage	
Research hours during semesters when enrolled in classes	130	$7.00	$910.00
Research hours during semesters when NOT enrolled in classes			$0.00
Fringe: Student salary * student fringe rate (What is fringe? See budget instructions or guidebook)			
Enrolled in classes	$910.00	0.55%	$5.01
NOT enrolled in classes	$0.00	8.30%	$0.00
Materials/Supplies	Enter sub-total from below:		$0.00
Travel	Enter sub-total from below:		$2,200.00
	TOTAL:		$3,115.01
	Amount requested for MGS award:		$3,000.00

Budget Justification

Student Salary: Indicate estimated number of student research hours per week and hourly rate separated by semesters when student is enrolled in classes or not enrolled in classes (generally fall or spring vs summer semesters).

Giving myself 13 working weeks each semester (26 weeks for the year) with 5 hours of research per week alongside the rest of my classes at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, I anticipate working a total of 130 hours on this project. The hourly wage of $7/hr is based off of what I feel is a reasonable average from my peers and classmates who have also participated in paid undergraduate research.

Materials/Supplies: Indicate items, quantity, and estimated price. *Be sure to include taxes on all purchases.*

As my project consists only of reading papers and journals, speaking with professors at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and collecting data from NGOs around Hong Kong and Mainland China, I will not need any materials for this project outside of what I own already.

Travel: Indicate location, purpose of travel, estimate itemized costs (transportation, lodging, registration, etc).

The average round-trip plane ticket to Hong Kong can cost anywhere from $1800 – 2100 USD, depending on the demand for tickets during the season, and the time at which the ticket is purchased. As my research project must be conducted abroad in Hong Kong, the plane ticket expense will take up a large portion of my Magellan fund. The remaining $100-400 will be used for transportation from the Chinese University of Hong Kong to the center city on Hong Kong island, as well as any trips I may take to Mainland China.

Each round trip metro ticket to center city costs around $2-3 USD, and I anticipate making at least 30 trips over the course of the year to visit NGO offices and interview NGOs, a total of $60-90 USD. Because Hong Kong so closely borders the Guangdong Province, a breeding spot for many labor rights organizations, I hope to also be able to make a visit there as well to study the environment. A round-trip train ticket to the Guangdong Province would cost roughly $80 USD.

I will pay for any funds that exceed the allotted $3000 out of my own pocket.