Chapter 14
Public Mobilization and Organization for Crime Prevention in China: A Case Study of the Fengqiao Police Station in Zhejiang Province

Kuang Cuiye and Liu Junling

Abstract Community policing aims at preventing crime through public-police partnership. The “Fengqiao Experience,” which came into being at Zhuji County in eastern China’s Zhejiang Province in 1963 and focuses on public engagement to resolve conflicts for social harmony, has been widely applied to community policing leading to a safer China. However, the impact of the “Fengqiao Experience” on crime prevention in China is understudied internationally. This article examines how the general public have been mobilized and organized for crime prevention in China by conducting a case study of the Fengqiao Police Station in Zhejiang Province. The results show that the Fengqiao Police Station has set an example in adhering to and developing the “Fengqiao Experience,” whose essence is the public mobilization and organization for the public safety in the past few decades and upon which more and more police stations using the example of the Fengqiao style have been built up, which is the extensive application of the policing mass line as well as part of the modernization of social governance in contemporary China.

Keywords China · Public engagement · Crime prevention · “Fengqiao Experience” · The Fengqiao Police Station · Case study
Introduction

Public safety, with the top priority of crime prevention, retains the public good. Governance, as the latest development of public administration, includes at least two branches according to Bevir and Rhodes: governance as the new public management (NPM) and governance as networks referring to self-organizing and inter-organizational networks (Hughes, 2015, pp. 123–143). Practically speaking, each country has its own ways to maximize the public interest and ensure the public safety through governance, allowing for the government and the public to work effectively together.

The principal contradiction facing Chinese society in the new era is that between unbalanced and inadequate development and the people’s ever-growing needs for a better life according to the nineteenth National Conference of the Communist Party of China (CPC) (People’s Daily, 2017), the governing party in the People’s Republic of China (PRC). Without public safety, there would be no happy life for the people. History is a “textbook” for the present and future. In order to settle disputes inside villages promptly and keep social harmony, the government (including the Fengqiao Police Station) and Fengqiao residents in eastern China’s Zhejiang Province jointly founded the “Fengqiao Experience” (FE) in early 1960s, which embodies the CPC’s mass line (serving the people and relying on the people). Since then, the Fengqiao Police Station (FPS) has kept on applying the FE to crime prevention, resulting in the strong sense of people’s safety, satisfaction, and happiness. To promote social harmony, the Chinese government has for decades called on the public sectors to adhere to and develop the FE. The Ministry of Public Security (MPS), the headquarters of the Chinese National Police, has been expanding the implementation of the FE in the past 57 years. It was in 2019 that the MPS initiated a long-term campaign to build up Fengqiao-style police stations nationwide.

According to The People’s Police Law of the People’s Republic of China, adopted in 1995 and revised in 2012 by the Standing Committee of National People’s Congress (the Chinese top legislative body), the Chinese police is made up of five parts, namely public security police, state security police, prison police, judicial police of the people’s courts, and judicial police of the people’s procuratorates (prosecutors offices). The Regulation on Organizational Management of Public Security Agencies was issued by the State Council (the national executive body or central government) in 2006. In accordance with the related laws and regulations (including the PRC People’s Police Regulation and The Organizational Regulation on Police Station adopted by the standing committee of the NPC in 1957 and 1954, respectively), some key points are vital to public security administration: the public security police is responsible for internal security, law enforcement, public order maintenance, and service provision, and serving the people is its fundamental nature and mission; the public security police has a hierarchical structure (with a combination of centralization and decentralization) including the Ministry of Public Security (MPS), provincial-level public security departments,
municipal-level public security bureaus, and county-level public security bureaus, which are all under the dual leadership indicating that the MPS is the headquarters of the public security police and that the public security police at every level is led by both the corresponding Party committee and government, and its superior public security agency; and police stations taking charge of grassroots policing at the township level are established by the county-level public security bureaus themselves (Ke & Li, 2007, pp. 167–176, 313–327; Luo, 1995). For example, the Fengqiao Police Station is established by the Zhuji Public Security Bureau, which answers both to the county-level Zhuji City Party committee and government and to the Shaoxing Municipal Public Security Bureau, the overhead public security entity.

The aim of this study is to share the Chinese practice in the public mobilization and organization for crime prevention by conducting a case study of the Fengqiao Police Station in Zhejiang Province. Based on historical materials and field studies in a number of police stations and from the perspective of social governance indicating cooperation of the government and the public for the maximization of public interests, this article reviews literature on the FE which demonstrates the CPC’s mass line, addresses the history of the FPS as well as its advances in enhancing the public engagement for crime prevention, introduces the MPS’s initiatives to expand more Fengqiao-style police stations, and concludes with the future of crime prevention through police-public partnership in the framework of the Chinese modernization of national governance.

The “Fengqiao Experience” as the Model for Crime Prevention in China: Literature Review

The Fengqiao Police Station is well known as the pioneer site to uphold and develop the FE (China Police Daily, 2019c) and has drawn much attention of Chinese researchers in recent years. Review of literature on the FE revealed five major areas of exploration: evolution, components, sources, expansion, and research trends.

Formation of the “Fengqiao Experience”

The FE’s formation happened in Fengqiao District (including 15 communities similar to townships) in Zhejiang’s Zhuji County from June to September, 1963, where the socialist education piloting was conducted. At first, some villagers preferred to use force against the “problematic people,” including landlords who had exploited fellow villages with cruelty before the establishment of the PRC, and even to put few of these people into prison if necessary. But after some debates organized by the provincial work team at Fengqiao, the villagers came to agree on the cost-effective
persuasive way. Facts have shown that the open and objective rating of daily performances of “problematic people” and then respectful persuasion and training could not only result in the effective change of the attitudes of these “problematic people,” but also ensures human rights, less conflicts, effective crime prevention, and lasting social harmony. The successful experience on the resolution of conflicts inside villages was reported to the MPS in October, and when Mao Zedong, the then CPC leader, was informed of the related reports by the MPS in October and by Zhejiang Provincial Party Committee as well as the MPS in December, respectively, Mao Zedong suggested twice in his written instructions spreading nationwide the experience in mobilizing and relying on the public masses to resolve conflicts inside villages for social stability with more pilot education and training. The CPC Central Committee formally issued the notice to spread the FE nationwide both in January 1964 and in January 1965. Since then, the FE has been a Chinese benchmark for resolving conflicts and preventing crimes by mobilizing and organizing the public, which is consistent with the CPC’s mass line (Compiling Group of History of People’s Public Security of China, 1997, pp. 324–328; Compiling Group of Overview of Key Events of Public Security Work Since the Founding of the People’s Republic of China, 2003, pp. 259–283; Lu, 1999; Yang, 2018; Yu, 2006).

Components of the “Fengqiao Experience”

The FE has kept pace with the times and has been spread across China for nearly six decades (Chu & Feng, 2020; Jin, 2000, pp. 2–29). According to the Research Group of Zhejiang Provincial Public Security Department (2008, pp. 37–56), people in Fengqiao created the experience of “relying on and mobilizing the public masses and resolving conflicts inside villages promptly in an effort to reduce possible arrests and maintain public order” in the 1960s. The FE continued to be developed in early years of reform and opening up, and has been described as the practice of “combining leadership of the Party and government, public engagement, resolution of conflicts, crime prevention, maintenance of social stability, and the advancement of local development together in an effort to ensure that small affairs could be dealt with inside the village while bigger problems could be solved inside the township.” The CPC’s Central Political & Legal Commission and Zhejiang Provincial Party Committee jointly held a conference marking the creation of the FE in November 2018. Owing to this relatively recent development, the FE has been described as the practice of “five upholding,” namely, “upholding Party building, upholding the orientation of people, upholding community-level self-governance, ethics-based governance and law-based governance, and upholding human prevention, material prevention, technical prevention, and psychological prevention, as well as upholding social governance based on collaboration, participation, and common interests” (Research Group of the “Fengqiao Experience” of China Law Society, 2018, pp. 28–54).

The evolution of the FE has shown its main components as follows: first, people orientation is the essence, i.e., people’s safety is the top goal, and people’s
participation does matter; second, the CPC’s leadership is the key guarantee for the success; third, law-based resolution of conflicts or disputes inside the community promptly is the theme as well as the unique way to prevent crimes; fourth, the competency (e.g., how to mobilize and organize the public) of governmental employees including police officers is the precondition; and fifth, seeking truth from facts, policy piloting, and keeping pace with the times are the cores of FE model and methodology. In fact, the FE, indicating the CPC’s mass line, shares with governance the points of maximizing public interests in a democratic and law-based way.

Sources of the “Fengqiao Experience”

Chinese scholars have analyzed factors affecting the formation and development of the FE theoretically and practically. Feng (2000, pp. 68–75, 2020) found that the FE was based on the CPC theory on how to balance social stability and development, and how to differentiate and tackle two kinds of qualitatively different contradictions with the people’s internal contradiction as the theme, and that the FE was also based on Chinese traditional culture of “harmony” and “cooperation” as well as “education on ethics.” Yan (2000), pp. 139–161) focused on the role of the CPC theory on how to understand and tackle the people’s internal contradictions. Some researchers analyzed the relationship between the FE and Chinese tradition of people orientation (Ye, 2004). In addition, some scholars have insisted that the FE is the application of the mass line, part of CPC philosophy, and also the outcome of the grassroots practice of crime prevention, especially resolution of conflicts in Zhejiang Province and beyond (Chu & Feng, 2020; Zhu & Zhou, 2019, pp. 3–24).

Spread of the “Fengqiao Experience”

The FE was created in Fengqiao District, outlined first by the Zhejiang Public Security Department, and reported to Mao Zedong and the CPC Central Committee by the MPS together with Zhejiang Provincial Party Committee. The FE, as a tool for Chinese modernization of grassroots-level social governance in the new era, is playing an important role in the building of a safe China as well as in the rule of law across China (Chu & Feng, 2020; Wang & Chu, 2018, pp. 3–30). The FE, which prioritizes public engagement, is not only popular among police stations and rural areas, but also is widespread to many urban communities (Shi, 2019), people’s courts, people’s procuratorates, justice administrative agencies, and other public sectors across China (Legal Daily, 2018b, 2018c). In the era of big data and artificial intelligence, the FE has enriched its methods and tools to serve the people and engage people both online and offline to enhance public safety (National Research Center for Rule-of-Law Indicators of China Academy Social Sciences, 2019, pp. 1–8; Zhu & Zhou, 2019, pp. 48–63).
In order to advance the modernization of the national system and capacity for governance, some scholars expect to deepen the FE research by paying more attention to international comparison, quantitative approach, and the application of the FE to urban governance, policing, and some other fields. Chu and Feng (2020) found that, on the one hand, the FE has been studied from various perspectives resulting in large quantity of books and articles; on the other hand, there is much room for researchers to enhance empirical study, the comparison between FE and related experience outside China, as well as FE’s theoretical framework. It is suggested that the FE could be studied from the global perspective and that the term “Fengqiao Experience” could be replaced by that of “Fengqiao Theory,” if possible (The Research Group of the “Fengqiao Experience” of China Law Society, 2018, pp. 179–194).

Based on the previous research on the FE as the theoretical framework, this study next addresses the theme of public mobilization and organization for crime prevention by dealing with the following questions from a policing perspective: What is the brief history of the Fengqiao Police Station (FPS), the pioneer in upholding and developing the FE? What are the advances of the FPS in mobilizing and organizing the public for crime prevention? What are the main causes for the success of the FPS? How should one evaluate the initiative to expand more Fengqiao-style police stations nationwide in recent years? How will the Chinese modernization of state governance further impact crime prevention in China?

**Brief History of the Fengqiao Police Station**

The FPS was established in July 1950. Ever since the FE came into being in 1963, the FPS has been in the vanguard of grassroots-level policing, upholding and developing the FE which represents the mass line of the CPC.

**The First Stage (1950–1978)**

Fengqiao, which was called Fengqiao District from the 1950s to the 1980s and has been called Fengqiao Township since 1992, is situated in the east of Zhuji County in the eastern Zhejiang Province’s Shaoxing Municipality. Fengqiao Township, covering an area of 165 square kilometers, with 29 villages and five neighborhoods and over 80,000 residents and migrant workers (Zhejiang Daily, 2019a), has received much popularity nationwide, for it was chosen as one of China’s models of rural governance in 2019 for its lasting social development and harmony (Zhuji Daily, 2020).
There are two stages in the history of the FPS, with the initiation of a policy of reform and implementation in December 1978 as the division line. In the first stage (1950–1978), the jurisdiction of the FPS was larger than it is currently, with a jurisdiction of around 15 communities similar to townships, and there were usually only five police officers assisted by a policing liaison official (reporting to both the police station and the community) within each community and a public security director (reporting to both the village and the policing liaison official) within each village, with education of “problematic people” and prevention of juvenile delinquency as top priorities. The officers of the FPS and their assistants took an active part in founding and applying FE for the maintenance of public security. All the village public security directors were mobilized, organized and trained as informants and assistants of the FPS, as well as village supervisors of public security, which was the precondition for the mobilization and organization of the villagers.

Chen Youtang, a native of then Fengqiao District’s Fengxi Village, served as the village director of public security from 1950 to early 1980s. He supported the provincial work team and the FPS in 1963, and insisted that the “problematic people” and their family members should be respected equally, evaluated justly, and persuaded with facts for quality education and less conflicts. Owing to the mobilization and organization of Chen Youtang and the FPS, the villagers were convinced, and the “problematic people,” including Chen Yinlin (a former landlord), were moved by Chen Youtang’s kindness and were ultimately determined to transform themselves (Yü, 2018, pp. 29–41). Chen Youtang spent most of his time in supporting the FPS and organizing villagers for greater public harmony. Without the assistance of Chen Youtang and many other village directors of public security, the FPS could never have mobilized and organized the villagers so effectively for the prevention and resolution of conflicts. Chen Youtang was elected as a delegate of the fifth National People’s Congress in 1980 and was awarded the first-class merit by Zhejiang Provincial Public Security Department for founding and maintaining the FE for several decades (China Youth Daily, 2019).

Among the police officers of the FPS at the first stage who were leaders of village public security directors and community policing liaison officials, was Xu Genxian, who served as the FPS leader between 1971 and 1981 (Zhejiang News, 2018). Following the Provisional Regulation on the Organization of Public Security Committee, adopted by the central government in 1952, as well as the FE representing the CPCs mass line, Xu’s team of five police officers sponsored seminars from time to time, organizing and training the community policing liaison officials and village public security directors as their predecessors had done, and calling on the trainees to uphold the FE and rely on the public for prevention and resolution of conflicts. Most of the “problematic people,” such as the female landlord named Chen Wanqing, changed their attitudes and worked hard in the village owing to objective evaluation, respectful persuasion, and just oversight organized by Xu and his colleagues, assistants at the communes, and villages as well as the villagers (Lu, 2013; Yi, 2018, pp. 68–79).
The Second Stage (Since 1978)

In the past four decades, the FPS has faced new challenges, such as cybercrime, needs of migrant workers, and economic disputes owing to urbanization, market economy, and information technology. The FPS has been actively involved in the comprehensive management of public order and later rural governance in the new era by upholding and developing the FE to better mobilize and organize the public for crime prevention. More police officers have joined the FPS, and currently there are 33 police officers and 69 auxiliary police (Yao & Zhang, 2019). Although the situation, demographics, policing priorities, and methods have changed, the FPS’s mission, values, and fine traditions have remained. The FE or the mass line has been the lasting predictor of the success of the FPS in crime prevention and police-public partnership over the past 57 years.

In the early 1990s, community policing, which shares the point of “crime prevention through partnership” with the FE, began to spread in China. The FPS continued to mobilize and organize the public, by facilitating the joint crime prevention and controlling network made up of public security organizations at villages, teams of protecting villages and factories as well as other volunteers, and by implementing the “four-ahead-of method” of conflict prevention and resolution based on the practice of local people. The “four-ahead-of method” indicates that organization building goes ahead of security work, prediction goes ahead of prevention, prevention goes ahead of meditation, and mediation goes ahead of aggravation (Joint Research Group of Zhejiang Provincial Public Security Department, Shaoxing Municipal Party Committee and Zhuji City Party Committee, 2008, pp. 412–422). The FPS also promoted the “four-building activity” (Lu, 1999, pp. 56–74), which includes the building up of civilized villages, units, communities, and roads. As a result, conflicts were addressed inside villages promptly, crime rate remained very low, and the public was very satisfied with the FPS’s service and mobilization (Yang, 2000, pp. 284–300).

In the new era since the opening of the 18th CPC National Congress in 2012 social governance has advanced rapidly. According to the 3rd Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee held in 2013, the overall objective of comprehensive deepening of reform is to improve and develop the socialist system with Chinese characteristics and to advance the modernization of the national system and capacity for governance (People’s Daily, 2013). The 19th CPC National Congress held in 2017, put forth the task of establishing a social governance model based on collaboration, participation, and common interests (People’s Daily, 2017). More and more social organizations have joined the FPS in the law-based prevention and resolution of conflicts. Currently, the Mediation Center of Lao Yang and the Volunteer Police of Red Maple are well known as representatives of the 240 social organizations in the Township of Fengqiao (China Police Daily, 2019a; Yi, 2018, pp. 216–234).

“Lao Yang,” meaning Mr. Yang, whose name is Yang Guangzhao, is the chief of the Mediation Center of Lao Yang, which has been very popular among the
public for its law-based quality mediations in the past decade. Yang joined the FPS in 1986 and served as a community police officer across the following 22 years. He was invited back to the FPS after his retirement in 2008, setting up the Mediation Center of Lao Yang with four retired legal workers as volunteer mediators of civil conflicts, and changing the mediation office into the mediation center 2 years later. The Mediation Center of Lao Yang has dealt with nearly 2000 minor conflicts, 98% of which have been settled successfully, and the satisfaction rate of the public has remained 100% (China Youth Daily, 2019). Lao Yang and his team have contributed to the development of the FE to ensure that conflicts are solved inside the village or township promptly. Local people usually say “contact Lao Yang if you have any trouble.” He has used up over 100 notebooks, in which 10,000 conflicts have been recorded. Yang was chosen as one of the ten “national-level people’s mediation experts” by the Ministry of Justice in 2018 (Legal Daily, 2018a).

Chen Rongzhou, a shop owner, founded the Volunteer Police of Red Maple in July, 2017, under the guidance of Zhao Xin, who is an FPS community police officer. Chen and his teammates have formulated the organization’s mission (i.e., adhering to law and justice and striving for public safety and goodness), as well as regulations such as the Charter of Volunteer Police of Red Maple, and the Plan for the Building of Volunteer Police of Red Maple. In 2018, there were 119 members in 20 groups in this social organization, who were involved in the management of migrant people, patrol in streets, resolution of conflicts, legal publicity, community rehabilitation, and rescue service (Yi, 2018, pp. 216–234). It is a common experience that the volunteers, mainly the shop owners, gather in front of Chen Rongzhou’s shop at 6 o’clock each evening and begin to patrol in the streets. In addition, the Volunteer Police of Red Maple has set up its branches at villages, assisting auxiliary police led by community police officers. From time to time, local residents inform the volunteers of suspicious activities and some other information, intelligence and clues through WeChat or phone call, and the volunteers report to the FPS immediately, with the situations being dealt with effectively (China Police Daily, 2017).

Altogether 18 chiefs have worked in the FPS since 1950, and 10 of them were met by Zhao Kezhi, the Minister of the MPS, who attended the seminar on the expansion of Fengqiao-Style Police Station in November 2019 (China Police Daily, 2019b; Shaoxing Daily, 2019). The FPS chiefs and police officers have been acting as mobilizers and organizers in crime prevention, effectively guiding social organizations. For example, it was aiming to serve the people by settling civil disputes and to better connect with the public and the FPS when the former FPS Chief Zhang Ying asked the retired officer Yang Guangzhao to set up “the Mediation Office of Lao Yang.” And Chief Zhang Ying and his team upheld and developed the FE by serving the public both online and in person. To the understanding of the former chief, the police could never survive whenever separating or disagreeing from the public, just as fish could not live without water (Yi, 2018, pp. 150–161). Zhao Xin, one of the community police officers who was responsible to mobilize and organize the public, bears in mind
the FPS’s tradition of policing mass line, paying frequent visits to residents by bike, and serving and protecting them. The above-mentioned Volunteer Police of Red Maple was co-founded by Chen Rongzhou, the shop owner and by Zhao Xin (China Police Daily, 2018b). More and more residents, merchants, and migrant workers in the Township of Fengqiao have been mobilized and organized for the shared safety of the public with the assistance of Volunteer Police of Red Maple and other social organizations as well as the auxiliary police within the villages.

It is obvious that owing to the “Fengqiao Experience,” the police and the public have been working together to resolve conflicts and prevent crimes effectively in Fengqiao since the experience was founded in 1963.

**Advances of the Fengqiao Police Station in Public Mobilization and Organization for Crime Prevention**

In the new era starting from 2012, the FPS has been developing the FE to ensure the public safety is maintained as before, and the advances of the FPS in public mobilization and organization are embodied in the Fengqiao policing model which can be described specifically as follows:

**One Goal: People’s Satisfaction**

A police station serves as the comprehensive frontline police unit or “the last mile in policing” in China, whose purposes lie in low rate of crimes, good public order, social stability, and public satisfaction. The personnel of the FPS have kept their mission firmly in mind with the people’s satisfaction as their final goal and fundamental evaluation criteria of policing. The education on the PE or the policing mass line by the veteran police officers is among required lessons for each recruit. Owing to its achievements in public service and crime prevention, the FPS has been awarded and identified as the national “people’s satisfactory police station” in 1999, and the national “people’s satisfactory public service team” in 2019 (www.cpd.com.cn, 2019b), and the rate of public satisfaction shown in each survey by the third sector has remained nearly 99% over the last few years (Zhejiang Daily, 2019b).

**Two Concepts: People-oriented Policing**

The public orientation of the FPS can be illustrated with two concepts meaning that policing should serve the public expectations and that police officers serve the people at all times. Specifically speaking, the decision-making of the FPS results from
the public’s requests and suggestions, and police performance evaluation is mainly determined by the people. About 60% of FPS personnel have been deployed to villages and neighborhoods as community police officers, who are busy delivering services to households and individuals, organizing residents for crime prevention, hosting routine seminars and debates on building up safe communities, interacting with the public for feedback and opinions face-to-face and through WeChat, 24 h a day and 7 days a week (www.cpd.com.cn, 2019b).

**Three Priorities: Crime Prevention**

Aiming to enhance crime prevention and public satisfaction, the FPS has prioritized three main tasks, namely, law-based resolution of conflicts promptly inside villages or the township with the assistance of multiple stakeholders, protection of people around the clock, and seamless public services. A conflict resolution network has been set up facilitated by the FPS, with “Conflict Resolution Center of Lao Yang” acting as the backbone, with village public security directors and volunteers from township court, procuratorate and justice administration, as well as some social organizations joining together as the conflict resolution volunteers association, and with the FPS leaders, community police officers, and village auxiliary police responsible for conflict resolutions of three levels of police station, police stops, and villages, respectively. Smart policing and grid management with police officers among the organizers have been added to the community policing responsibilities. Police services are more and more conveniently delivered to the public with the FPS service unit incorporated into the township online service center, thanks to the “without-the-need-for-a-second-trip” public administrative reform in Zhejiang Province over recent years (Legal Daily, 2020; Zhejiang Daily, 2019a; Zhuji Daily, 2019).

**Four Bases: Public Engagement**

In order to better mobilize and organize the public, and to advance grassroots social governance, the FPS has facilitated the construction of fours bases: first, the construction of the Museum of the FE and FPS to demonstrate the mass line in policing, which is the police tradition and philosophy; second, the construction of Office of Volunteer Police of Red Maple to attract and organize volunteers from all walks of life; third, the construction of the Office of Security Experience Hall to enhance the self-protection awareness and techniques of the general public based on participants’ experience covering traffic safety, drug control, fire control, emergency relief, prevention of theft and fraud; and fourth, the construction of the Cultural Garden of Law and Safety composed of the safety square, rule-of-law gallery, publicity screen, and wall of village rules and family rules, where lawyers, judges, community officers, and Fengqiao-born elites can deliver lectures on law and safety if necessary (The General Office of Zhuji Public Security Bureau, 2019).
**Five New Small Projects: Service for the People**

To satisfy the public’s ever-growing individualized needs, the FPS has paid much attention to five new small projects as follows: clearing small cases which are directly related to the public’s safety and happiness and then returning stolen goods and money to victims; tackling small issues to benefit the public to improve police-community relations; relieving small problems, such as innovative management of rented houses and better services for migrant workers as well as prevention of organized crime; providing small assistance to neglected children, elderly people, and the disabled; and offering small benefits including daily patrols of volunteers, such as the Fengqiao grandmother’s involvement in fighting domestic violence (The General Office of Zhuji Public Security Bureau, 2019; Zhejiang Online, 2019).

**Six Mechanisms: Capacity Building**

To improve its capacity-building and policing effectiveness and efficiency, the FPS has built up six mechanisms, namely, the mechanism of serving the public around the clock, the mechanism of routine police-public interaction and communication, the mechanism of vertical prevention and crime control, the mechanism of in-depth police-public cooperation, the diversified mechanism of resolution of conflicts, and the mechanism of refined scientific performance evaluation (The General Office of Zhuji Public Security Bureau, 2019).

**Analysis of the Practices of the Fengqiao Police Station**

Having analyzed the FE theoretically and reviewed the practices of the FPS historically, this study moves on to the analysis of the practices of the Fengqiao Police Station, which have been working to mobilize and organize the public for crime prevention over the past decades.

**Diverse Effects of the Fengqiao Police Station’s Practices**

The great achievements of the FPS can be categorized into the following aspects:

First, the social harmony has been maintained, and the rate of public’s satisfaction of the police has remained high in Fengqiao at all times. The survey conducted by researchers in 1998 showed that 99.50% of the 958 respondents were satisfied and basically satisfied with police service (Yang, 2000, pp. 284–300). The surveys conducted by the third sector in 2019 and previous years showed that Fengqiao residents’ sense of safety and rate of satisfaction had been around 99% and 98%,
respectively (Zhejiang Daily, 2019b), and the people preferred to live and work in Fengqiao because of their sense of safety and harmony (Yi, 2018, pp. 216–234). Fengqiao was chosen as one of the pioneering townships of rural governance by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of the PRC partly owing to the endeavors of the FPS to effectively perform the tasks focusing on law-based prevention and resolution of conflicts inside villages and township promptly (Farmers Daily, 2019).

Second, the public have widely been involved in policing, and police-community cooperation has done much to support crime prevention in Fengqiao. In each stage, the FPS acts as the mobilizer and organizer of the public within Fengqiao under the united leadership of the Party committee and government. The extensive public participation owes to at least two kinds of public mobilization and organization. On the one hand, the FPS personnel spend most of their time in listening to the public’s opinions, preventing and settling disputes, enhancing the people’s awareness and skills on self-protection, and then if possible, facilitating inter-organizing networks of crime prevention joined by village security directors, auxiliary police, volunteers in the jurisdiction; on the other hand, the police facilitate self-organizing networks of hundreds of social organizations such as the Meditation Center of Lao Yang and Volunteer Police of Red Maple. The current situation is that more and more residents have been active in crime prevention, serving the township in various ways (China Police Daily, 2019a).

Third, the personnel of the FPS have continuously improved their competencies while implementing the mass line of the CPC in policing represented by the FE. The mass line, as Mao Zedong put in northwest China’s Yan’an in the 1940s, includes the concept of the masses (i.e., the public) indicating that the common interests of the overwhelming majority of the people should be the final destination and evaluation criteria of any activity and that ordinary people should be relied upon, mobilized, and organized for their own interests, together with the methodology of mass work, indicating that effective leadership over the public masses requires decision-making based on the public’s needs and wisdoms, and then implementation and improvement of policy based on public support and criticism (Mao, 1943, pp. 897–902, 1945, pp. 1029–1100). The FPS has been carrying out the fine tradition of the CPC to effectively prevent crimes through partnership with the public, resulting in public safety as well as public trust. Both the awareness of the public’s orientation and the methodology of public mobilization and organization have become part of the organizational culture of the FPS. A number of police officers have become well-known experts in the implementation of the mass line and therefore very popular among community members; some of them have been chosen as outstanding police officers at the national and provincial levels (Lu, 1999, pp. 56–74; www.cpd.com.cn, 2019b).

Fourth, the practices of the FPS have been widely regarded as a benchmark of Chinese grassroots policing. Many times, the central government, as well as the MPS and Zhejiang Province, have awarded the FPS various prizes, encouraging it to continuously take a lead in upholding and developing the FE for crime prevention and advancing the modernization of grassroots social governance (www.cpd.com.cn, 2019b). Large quantities of delegations from inside and outside Zhejiang
Province have visited the FPS for experiences on crime prevention, which has greatly benefited and will further benefit community policing efforts and social harmony nationwide. The late leader Mao Zedong recommended the FE to the whole country twice in 1963 (Lu, 1999, pp. 56–74); and it was in 2003 and 2013 that President Xi Jinping suggested upholding and developing the FE representing the CPC’s mass line, due to the remarkable achievements of the FPS (Wang & Chu, 2018, pp. 3–12; www.gov.cn, 2013). Community safety is foundational and critical to national security and the public’s well-being, and therefore what the personnel of different FPS generations have achieved is of great value especially in contemporary China.

In addition, it can be forecast that, with its increasing influence in China, the public mobilization and organization of the FPS for crime prevention will attract more attention from foreign scholars and practitioners. In 1999, Dr. Hans-Juergen Kerner, the then chairperson of the Academic Committee of International Society for Criminology, conducted a field study on crime prevention within the Township of Fengqiao and was surprised to find that there were only 15 police officers in the police station, there were around 100,000 residents within the Township of Fengqiao, the ratio of police to residents is 1.5 per 10,000 people, but the crime rate was kept so low (5 crimes per 10,000 residents). The German criminologist asked the police officers there: “How could you achieve this?” The answer was that it was by relying on the cooperation of the public that the FPS succeeded in preventing crimes and keeping people safe (Chinapeace.gov.cn, 2019; Zhu & Zhou, 2019, pp. 23–24).

**Main Factors Affecting the Fengqiao Police Station’s Success**

From the perspective of public governance, the main factors affecting the successful practices of the FPS can be analyzed as follows:

The primary factor is upholding the concept of public orientation and crime prevention first. The public governance and the mass line are similar in maximizing the public interest, optimizing the system for the government-public cooperation, and enhancing the governance capacity. The Fourth Plenary Session of the CPC 19th Central Committee (People’s Daily, 2017) called on the Chinese public sectors to advance social governance by implementing the mass line. The FPS has been applying the FE, whose essence is the mass line, to rural policing and has been maximizing the public safety by prioritizing crime prevention. The FPS strategy for crime prevention includes several dimensions, namely serving the people around the clock, addressing the conflicts inside villages and township promptly, and ensuring public safety (Jin, Jiang, & Mao, 2020; Zhejiang News, 2017). The law-based resolution of conflicts has done much good to social harmony and police-community relations. Community policing within Fengqiao, which is people-centered and problem-oriented, has proved effective and has kept pace with the times. The FPS has achieved its goal to reduce crimes as much as possible and to increasingly satisfy the people over the course of nearly six decades. As the pioneer of upholding
and developing the FE, the FPS is sparing no effort to advance the modernization of social governance by putting the people’s utmost interest, especially public safety first and prioritizing crime prevention in the new era (Legal Daily, 2020).

The second factor is relying on the people to build up the policing networks. Public governance indicates more “steering” (guidance) and less “rowing” by the government, as well as policy networks including self-organizing and inter-organizational networks (Hughes, 2015, pp. 123–143; Rhodes, 2020, pp. 25–52). The personnel of the FPS are always making clear that the police could never provide quality service and prevent crimes alone. They trust in the people, rely on the people, and then mobilize and organize the people, while serving and protecting the public.

Just as Wilson and Kelling’s “broken windows” thesis stated, crime seemed to increase dramatically in neighborhoods where visible signs of social decay and disorder were present (Wilson & Kelling, 1982). The FPS team has learnt from the practice that community policing should be proactive, problem-oriented, and information-based. To tackle various kinds of social problems at different stages, they have been taking comprehensive measures covering public service, law enforcement, patrol, law-based resolution of conflicts, legal education, and guidance on the construction of social organizations, which show to some extent the Chinese strategy for comprehensive management of public order and the vertical, law-based, professional and smart system of crime prevention and control (Xu, 2016, 2019). Owing to insufficient police human resources, the FPS has been mobilizing and organizing the residents online and offline, and hundreds of social organizations like the Volunteer Police of Red Maple and then the majority of residents have been involved in public service, conflict resolution, and crime prevention. Both self-organizing networks and inter-organizational networks have been built up, volunteering to assist the police station in diverse ways. The extensive public participation has promoted democratic policing in Fengqiao. Facts show that the FPS could hardly prevent crimes so effectively and enhance its legitimacy increasingly, without the trust and support of social organizations, volunteers and residents, or without the collaboration with related agencies (Lu, 1999, pp. 56–74; www.cpd.com.cn, 2019b; Yi, 2018, pp. 216–234).

The third factor is attaching great importance to police competency, highlighting the skills of public mobilization and organization. The achievement of the governance goal and the building up of the governance system both depend on the governance capacity, including the capacity to mobilize and organize the public to a greater extent. According to the late CPC leader Liu Shaoqi, the competency of mobilizers and organizers is the determining predictor of effectiveness of the mass line; mobilization refers to the process of listening to and serving the public, figuring out the direction, and then trying to enable the public to understand the organizational plan; and the organization toward mobilization refers to the process of leading the public in establishing cooperative organizations and related rules, and then uniting the people to put the plan into effect; and the mobilization and organization should be conducted over and over again to achieve the organizational goal and the shared interest of the public, keeping pace with the times (Liu, 1945, pp. 314–370).
The following are the main steps that the FPS has taken to enhance the police capacity to mobilize and organize the public for crime prevention: first, as is mentioned above, each recruit is required to learn the history of the PE and the FPS, highlighting the mass line and to learn from veteran police officers in communicating with the public and resolving conflicts; second, all the members including community police officers are required to optimize their capacity to mobilize and organize the residents while serving and protecting the public; third, seminars, competitions, and sharing experiences about the policing mass line are sponsored frequently for frontline officers to share their stories and experiences; fourth, those who are good at public mobilization and organization and popular among the residents have more opportunities to be awarded and promoted; fifth, police officers are encouraged to enhance their theoretical knowledge and learn from the residents from all walks of life to benefit public mobilization and organization (China Police Daily, 2018a; www.cpd.com.cn, 2019a; Yi, 2018, pp. 204–215). Since 2017, the FPS has implemented the system that each police officer is required to pay visits to at least 20 households each week to make friends with residents and provide targeted services with feedbacks of residents (www.cpd.com.cn, 2019b). In summary, the FPS has been building the learning of organization for regular police and auxiliary police to enhance their competency to better mobilize and organize the public for joint crime prevention.

**Initiatives to Expand more Fengqiao-Style Police Stations**

The MPS initiated a nationwide campaign in 2019 to expand more police stations to incorporate the Fengqiao style. It is expected that crime prevention through public mobilization and organization will be dramatically improved across the country.

*The proposal on how to develop and uphold the “Fengqiao Experience” by public security agencies nationwide in the new era* was issued by the MPS in March, 2019. According to the MPS, the public security police are required to better perform their functions and tasks, to promote the innovation on social governance, to better prevent and resolve various social contradictions and disputes, and then to maintain national security and social harmony. The priorities include the leadership by the CPC, the mass line, law-based and prompt conflict resolution inside the community, public safety through prevention, grassroots construction of public security, and comprehensive promotion of the FE in the new era. The policing mass line, which is among the highlights in the document, should be complemented in all work of each police station, trying to promote the integration of self-governance, law-based governance, and moral governance, to promote the establishment of a social governance model based on collaboration, participation, and common interests, and to advance the socialization, standardization, specialization, and intellectualization of governance (www.mps.gov.cn, 2019).

After the process of implementation, step-by-step recommendation, strict review, and public notification, the MPS nominated 100 police stations as the first group of
Fengqiao-style police stations from among 54,000 police stations across China in November 2019 (Xiamen Daily, 2019). All of the nominated police stations are at the forefront of maintaining the FE, the policing mass line, and have succeeded in intensifying the public sense of gain, happiness, and safety (China Police Daily, 2019b). Among them are the Fengqiao Police Station in eastern China’s Zhejiang Province, that is well known for the public mobilization and organization for law-based prevention and resolution of conflicts inside the village and township; the Niujie Police Station in Beijing that has done a great job in public education on self-protection and enhancement of ethnic group solidarity; the Baogang Police Station in southern China’s Guangdong Province where a combination of smart policing and face-to-face visits has benefited public participation and crime prevention; the Shishan Police Station in southern China’s Hainan Province that is characterized with the “Banyan Policing” through which community police, volunteers, and villagers usually sit together under the large banyan tree, exchanging views on crime prevention and addressing disputes between villagers if necessary; the Ciping Police Station in southern China’s Jiangxi Province that has been recognized for its policing model showing that “each police officer is 110, the police call for service, and each resident is a public security assistant”; the Longli Police Station in southwestern China’s Guizhou Province that makes use of village tradition and rules to mobilize and organize the villagers for crime prevention; the Chengguan Police Station in central China’s Henan Province that implements the “one- auxiliary-police-for-each-village” policing mechanism in order to facilitate the networking for the public to be involved in conflict resolution and intelligence-led policing; and the Chengguan Police Station in northwest China’s Gansu Province that has been facilitating the vertical crime prevention and control system with the public engaged extensively, and upholding and developing the working method created by Ma Xiwu who acted as a court judge of Shannxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region in the 1940s and hosted trials and meditations fairly and justly by applying the mass line and seeking truth from facts, to name just a few (www.cpd.com.cn, 2019c). To get closer to the public and deliver better services, the chiefs of the aforementioned 100 Fengqiao-style police stations including Yang Yefeng, the chief of the FPS, jointly called on the Chinese police officers to be involved in the upcoming nationwide activity of “visiting 10 million households by one million police officers” at the awarding ceremony in 2019 (China Police Daily, 2019c).

In addition, eastern China’s Shandong Province nominated 50 provincial-level Fengqiao-style police stations from among 2600 police stations in December, 2019 (China Police Daily, 2019d). As the FE birthplace, Zhejiang Provincial Public Security Department decided to turn all of the 1178 police stations into Fengqiao-style police stations within 3 years since 2019 (Zhejiang Daily, 2019a). Each provincial-level public security department has its plan to expand more Fengqiao-style police stations within China. It is reported that a new patch of 100 Fengqiao-style police stations will be chosen from tens of thousands of police stations in China every 2 years (www.people.com.cn, 2019).

For one and a half years, the authors have done some field studies on community policing and police human resource management in a number of Chinese frontline
police stations in the following places: Beijing’s Xicheng; Fujian Province’s Longyan and Xiamen; Zhejiang Province’s Jiaxing and Huzhou, as well as Hangzhou in southeastern China; Shanghai’s Huangpu; Anhui Province’s Lu’an and Jiangsu Province’s Wuxi in eastern China; Hunan Province’s Yueyang; as well as Jiangxi Province’s Ganzhou and Ji’an in southern China; Hubei Province’s Huang’an and Henan Province’s Xinyang in central China; Shandong Province’s Yantai and Hebei Province’s Shijiazhuang in northern China; Shaanxi Province’s Yan’an in northwestern China; Liaoning Province’s Shenyang; and Dandong in northeastern China. What the authors have found is that local police are active in and local people are supportive of building up the Fengqiao-style police stations to carry on the policing mass line. Facts have shown that more participation of the public, addressing law-based conflict within the community promptly, smart policing based on big data and artificial intelligence technology, effective and efficient responses to emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic under the united leadership of the Party and government, low rate of crime, and better police services have led to increasing public satisfaction with the police, although each police station is unique in its specific steps and initiatives based on the actual situation of each respective jurisdiction.

The ongoing campaign to expand more Fengqiao-style police stations is vital for the modernization of Chinese social governance and many aspects of national governance, because the people in neighborhoods and villages account for the majority of the Chinese population. Community policing directly influences the well-being of the general public as well as the building of a safer China.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, the “Fengqiao Experience,” which serves as the Chinese method of crime prevention through police-public partnership, has been benefiting the grassroots social governance in China, and the Fengqiao Police Station, which has been in the vanguard of upholding and developing the “Fengqiao Experience” in the past decades, is the top example of mobilization and organization for crime prevention. In fact, the building of a safe China and the rule of law across China have resulted from the CPC’s mass line, the tunnel to good social governance in China. As President Xi Jinping has emphasized, the Chinese people should firmly adhere to the path of social governance under socialism with Chinese characteristics and will further improve the system of social governance under Chinese socialism so as to ensure that the Chinese people can live and work in tranquility and the whole country can enjoy enduring social stability and peace (Xi, 2017, pp. 414–417).

According to the Fourth Plenary Session of the CPC 19th Central Committee held in October 2019, China is expected to uphold and perfect the social governance system based upon collaboration, participation, and common interests, characterized with Party committee’s leadership, governmental responsibility, democratic consultation, social collaboration, public involvement, legal guarantee, and scientific support, in an effort to build a safer China, where people live a happy life.
Society will remain harmonious by highlighting the “Fengqiao Experience” for prevention and resolution of conflicts; vertical, the law-based, specialized, and smart crime prevention and control system; the unified and effective emergency management system and responsibility system for workplace safety; the grassroots-level social governance network, including the management and service grid and with a integration of self-governance, law-based governance, and ethics-based governance; as well as the pursuit of a holistic approach to national security and the improvement of the system for national security (www.xinhuanet.com, 2019). It can be forecast that public mobilization and organization for crime prevention will play an even more important role in social governance, part of China’s governance for the new era, aiming to meet the people’s ever-growing needs and demands for a better life.

The Chinese public mobilization and organization for crime prevention, with the practices of the Fengqiao Police Station as the benchmark, indicates not only the maximization of the people’s interests, seeking truth from facts, keeping pace with the times from the perspective of philosophy, but also the networking governance, law-based governance, policy piloting, as well as community policing related to the broken-windows theory.

The authors suggest maintaining, developing, and institutionalizing the “Fengqiao Experience” and the success of the Fengqiao Police Station to better serve and protect the public, which is a clear example of the successful application of the CPC’s mass line, and also promoting international exchanges on crime prevention and police service delivery for all to learn from each other and to benefit the public globally.

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