**Appendix**

*Sample characteristics*

In the 2007 sample, the response rate was 95%. The participants’ gender ratio was approximately 50:50 (692 men and 641 women), 21 per cent were from Tsinghua University (N=275), 32 per cent from Peking University (N=419), 38 per cent from Renmin University of China (N = 507), and 9 per cent from other universities (N = 129).[[1]](#footnote-1) 270 (21%) of them were CCP members, 34% had applied or were planning to apply for membership, and 590 (45%) were not members. Most of the students were studying technology-related majors (N = 522, 39%) and economics (22.5%). Their ethnic background was most often Han Chinese (N=1231, 93%), whereas 91 respondents (7%) classified themselves as belonging to an ethnic minority.

Response rate of the 2011-2012 sample was approximately 93%, and we obtained 771 valid responses. The participants’ gender ratio was approximately 56–44 (416 men and 325 women), 14% were from Fudan University (N = 94), 14% from Shanghai Jiaotong University (N = 94), 15% from Nanjing University (N = 104), 21% from Zhejiang University (N = 142), 8% were from Tsinghua University (N = 76), 11% from Peking University (N = 76), 9% from Renmin University of China (N = 63), and 8% from other universities (N = 51).[[2]](#footnote-2) Twelve percent of respondents refused to report their home institution (N = 96). The respondents were in average 21 years old (ranging from 17 to 34 years). 182 (25%) of them were members of the CCP or probationary members, 205 (28%) had applied or were planning to apply for the membership, and 347 (47%) were not members. Most students were study- ing engineering (N = 140, 19%) or economics (N = 101, 14%). Their ethnic background was most often Han Chinese (N = 695, 93%), whereas 48 respondents (7%) classified themselves as belonging to an ethnic minority.

1. These students from other universities happened to be at one of the three selected universities when the sampling was done. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. These students from other universities happened to be at one of the three selected universities when the sampling was done. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)