Coding Scheme for Constructing an Identity Scale to Analyze Changes in One China Identity: Evidence from Taiwanese Student Delegations Visiting Mainland China

The dependent variable used in the study was the change in the sense of the One China identity, and the independent variables were the changes in the impression of Mainland China, regime acceptance, and preference for authoritarianism. The measurement of the four variables is described as follows.

Changes in One China Identity

One China identity was measured from five dimensions. Participants were asked to express the extent of their agreement with the following five statements.

National sentiment was measured by responses to the statement that "Taiwanese compatriots are members of the extended family of the Chinese nation."

Policy preferences were measured by responses to the statement that "'One Country, Two Systems' is the best model for cross-strait reunification."

Acceptance of the precondition for negotiation was measured by responses to the statement that "the 'One China' principle is the foundation for political negotiation between Taiwan and Mainland China."

Sentiment toward Taiwan's global status was measured by responses to the statement that "there is only one China in the world and Taiwan is an inalienable part of China."

Finally, the attitude toward the legitimacy of China was measured by responses to the statement that "the government of the PRC is the only legitimate government in the whole of China (including Taiwan)."

A 4-point Likert-type scale was used to rate the five statements ("1" = "totally disagree," "2" = "disagree," "3" = "agree," and "4" = "totally agree"). Higher ratings indicate a greater sense of One China identity. Cronbach's α for the five items was 0.73 and 0.83 in the first and second rounds of the survey, respectively. Therefore, the reliability of the internal consistency of the scale is satisfactory.

The mean value of the ratings of the five items was used to determine the perceived sense of One China identity. Subtracting the rating of the One China identity in the first round from that in the second round of surveys yielded the value that signified the change in the sense of One China identity (with a maximum possible change of -3 to 3). A positive value obtained from the subtraction indicates a positive change in the

sense of the One China identity.

Changes in the Impression of Mainland China

The scale used to measure participants' impressions of Mainland China included three items: "What is your impression of the people of Mainland China?" "What is your impression of the national leaders of Mainland China?" and "What is your overall impression of Mainland China?" A 4-point Likert-type scale was used to rate the three items (1 = "very bad," 2 = "bad," 3 = "good," and 4 = "very good"). Cronbach's α for the three items was 0.67 and 0.69 in the first and second rounds of the survey, respectively.

The mean value of the ratings of the three items was used as the rating for the impression of Mainland China. Subtracting the rating of the impression of Mainland China in the first round from that of the second round of surveys yielded the value that signified the change in the impression of Mainland China (a maximum possible range of -3 to 3). A positive value obtained from the subtraction indicates a positive change in the impression of Mainland China.

Changes in the Acceptance of the CPC Regime

The item used to measure participants' acceptance of the CPC regime was "On a scale from 0 to 10 (0 means "very much dislike" and 10 means "like very much"), what is the rating you would give to the government of Mainland China?" Subtracting the rating of the regime acceptance in the first round of surveys from the second round of surveys yielded the value that signified the change in regime acceptance (a maximum possible range of -10 to 10). A positive value obtained from the subtraction indicates a positive change in the acceptance of the regime.

Changes in Preference for Authoritarianism

The item used to measure participants' preference for authoritarianism was "Strong and powerful leaders are more important than sound laws." A four-point scale was adopted (1 = "totally disagree," 2 = "disagree," 3 = "agree," and 4 = "totally agree"). Subtracting the rating of the preference for authoritarianism in the first round of surveys from that in the second round of surveys yielded the value that signified the changes in the preference for authoritarianism (a maximum possible range of -3 to 3). A positive value obtained from the subtraction indicates a positive change in the preference for authoritarianism.

Control Variables

A dummy variable was introduced to measure gender ("male" = 1 and "female" = 0).

Previous experiences visiting Mainland China were measured using the following item: “How many times have you been to Mainland China, with the exception of the present trip?”

A dummy variable was introduced to measure prior experience (“with prior experience of visiting Mainland China” = 1 and “without prior experience visiting Mainland China” = 0).

The timeline of the delegation’s visit to Mainland China was calculated by subtracting the inauguration date of President Tsai Ing-wen (May 20, 2016) from the days between the departure date of the latest trip. The result was then converted to the number of months by dividing it by 30. If the departure date of the trip was prior to the inauguration day, the value was negative; otherwise, the value was positive.