Codebook

How the Pro-Beijing Media Influences Voters:
Evidence from a Randomized Field Experiment

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This codebook accompanies the dataset for "How the Pro-Beijing Media Influences Voters," a randomized controlled trial conducted during Taiwan's 2020 general election. This study preregistered a two-wave panel design with a baseline survey administered before the intervention and an endline survey administered afterward and post-election. Participants were recruited through an online panel administered by Qualtrics and its local partners in Taiwan.

This document describes the variables, values, and coding logic for the analysis dataset. The following variables allow for the reproduction of all tables and figures contained in the manuscript.

Variable	Description / Question	Values / Codes
`gid`	**Unique ID** *System generated unique identifier for each participant*	*String*
`wave2`	**Study Completer** *Participants completing both survey waves*	0 = No 1 = Yes
`age`	**Age** *What is your age?*	[20, 84]
`female`	**Gender** *What is your gender?*	0 = Male 1 = Female
`special_ municipality`	**Urban Residence** *`Location`==Taipei, Taoyuan, New Taipei, Taichung, Tainan, or Kaohsiung*	0 = No 1 = Yes
`edu`	**Education** *What is your highest level of education?*	0 = No school 1 = Primary school 2 = Middle school 3 = High school 4 = Professional college 5 = University 6 = Graduate program and above
`full_time`	**Employment Status** *Current full-time employment?*	0 = Part-time/Other 1 = Full-time
`married`	**Marital Status** *Are you married?*	0 = No 1 = Yes

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Variable	Description / Question	Values / Codes
`income_cat`	**Income** *What is your monthly household income?*	1 = < 27,000 2 = 27,001–38,000 3 = 38,001–49,000 4 = 49,001–59,000 5 = 59,001–69,000 6 = 69,001–80,000 7 = 80,001–92,000 8 = 92,001–109,000 9 = 109,001–140,000 10 = 140,001–190,000 11 = 190,001–240,000 12 = 240,001–290,000 13 = 290,001–340,000 14 = > 340,000
`father_islander`	**Ethnic Background** *What is your father's ethnicity?*	0 = Other 1 = Minnan Taiwanese
`taoism`	**Religion** *What is your religious affiliation?*	0 = Other 1 = Taoism
`partyid`	**Partisan Support/Leaning** *Which party do you support or lean on?*	1 = KMT 2 = DPP 3 = New Party 4 = PFP 5 = TSP 6 = Green Party 7 = NPP 8 = TPP 9 = Tree Party 10 = None
`spectrum`	**Political Predisposition** *Which party do you support or lean on?*	1 = Pan Blue (`partyid` = 1, 3, 4) 2 = Nonpartisan (`partyid` = 8, 9, 10) 3 = Pan Green (`partyid` = 2, 5, 6, 7)
`pan_blue`	**Pan-Blue/PRC-Friendly Respondent** (Ref: `spectrum` ==1)	0 = No 1 = Yes
`independent`	**Nonpartisan Respondent** (Ref: `spectrum` ==2)	0 = No 1 = Yes
`pan_green`	**Pan-Green/PRC-Skeptical Respondent** (Ref: `spectrum` ==3)	0 = No 1 = Yes

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Variable	Description / Question	Values / Codes
president_2016	**Vote Choice in 2016** *Which party's candidate did you vote in the 2016 election?*	1 = KMT 2 = DPP 3 = PFP 4 = Didn't Vote 5 = Below 20 6 = Don't remember
president_2016_voted	**Turnout in 2016** *Did you vote in the 2016 general election?*	0 = No 1 = Yes (president_2016<=3)
president_2012	**Vote Choice in 2012** *Which party's candidate did you vote in the 2012 election?*	1 = KMT 2 = DPP 3 = PFP 4 = Didn't Vote 5 = Below 20 6 = Don't remember
president_2012_voted	**Turnout in 2012** *Did you vote in the 2012 general election?*	0 = No 1 = Yes (president_2012<=3)
nwpaper_pref_apple	**Newspaper Preference** *which online newspapers do you prefer?*	0 = Other 1 = Apple Daily
sanlih_show	**TV Program Preference** *Rank your preference for watching SET's New Taiwan Refueling (relative to CTi's Deep Throat News, One Piece, and Girl's Power)*	1 = Least-Preferred 2 = Third-Preferred 3 = Second-Preferred 4 = Most-Preferred
strait_relation	**Cross-Strait Position** *Which position on cross-strait relations do you lean toward?*	1 = Unify Immediately 2 = Independence Imm. 3 = Status Quo → Unify 4 = Status Quo → Indep. 5 = Status Quo → Decide 6 = Status Quo Indef.
identity	**National Identity** *Do you consider yourself as Taiwanese, Chinese, or Both?*	1 = Taiwanese 2 = Chinese 3 = Both
conditions	**Treatment Condition** *Random assignment after baseline for non-CT existing consumers.*	1 = Control 2 = Placebo 3 = Treatment 4 = Existing Consumer
control	**Control Group Indicator** (Ref: conditions ==1 & ≠ 4)	0 = No 1 = Yes
placebo	**Placebo Group Indicator** (Ref: conditions ==2 & ≠ 4)	0 = No 1 = Yes
treatment	**Treatment Group Indicator** (Ref: conditions ==3 & ≠ 4)	0 = No 1 = Yes

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Variable	Description / Question	Values / Codes
china_times	**Existing CT Consumer (Nonexperimental Group) Indicator** (Ref: conditions ==4)	0 = No 1 = Yes
avg_browsing	**Average Daily Browsing Time** *During 2-week incentivized period.*	*Continuous (Seconds)* Min: 0 Max: 1796.1
full_complier	**Treated Complier (Full)** (Ref: avg_browsing $\geq$ 180 seconds)	0 = Noncomplier 1 = Complier
min_complier	**Treated Complier (Minimum)** (Ref: avg_browsing $\geq$ 60 seconds)	0 = Noncomplier 1 = Complier
turnout_w1	**Turnout Intention (Baseline)** *Do you plan to vote in the 2020 election?*	0 = No/Undecided 1 = Yes
turnout_w2	**Actual Turnout (Endline)** *Did you vote in the 2020 election?*	0 = No 1 = Yes
turnout_change	**Change in Turnout** *Note: Calculated as (Endline - Baseline)*	[-1,1]
pres_vote_w1	**Vote Intention (Baseline)** *If the presidential election were held today, which candidate would you vote for?*	1 = Han 2 = Tsai 3 = Soong 4 = Undecided
pres_vote_w2	**Actual Vote (Endline)** *Which presidential candidate did you vote?*	1 = Han 2 = Tsai 3 = Soong 4 = Null Vote
vote_han_w[1,2]	**Vote for Han** (Ref: pres_vote_w[1,2] ==1)	0 = No 1 = Yes
vote_han_change	**Change in Vote for Han** *Note: Calculated as (Endline - Baseline)*	[-1,1]
vote_tsai_w[1,2]	**Vote for Tsai** (Ref: pres_vote_w[1,2] ==2)	0 = No 1 = Yes
vote_tsai_change	**Change in Vote for Tsai** *Note: Calculated as (Endline - Baseline)*	[-1,1]
vote_song_w[1,2]	**Vote Intention for Soong** (Ref: pres_vote_w[1,2] ==3)	0 = No 1 = Yes
vote_song_change	**Change in Vote for Soong** *Note: Calculated as (Endline - Baseline)*	[-1,1]
vote_undecided_w1	**Undecided Choice at Baseline** (Ref: pres_vote_w1 ==4)	0 = Has a Vote Intention 1 = Undecided
han_thermo_w[1-2]	**Favorability toward Han** *Scale: 1 (Dislike) to 10 (Like)*	[1, 10]
tsai_thermo_w[1-2]	**Favorability toward Tsai**	[1, 10]

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Variable	Description / Question	Values / Codes
song_thermo_ w[1-2]	**Favorability toward Soong**	[1, 10]
relative_thermo_ w[1-2]	**Han-Tsai Relative Favorability** *Note: Calculated as (Han score - Tsai score)*	[-9, 9]
relative_thermo_ change	**Change in Han-Tsai Relative Favorability** *Note: Calculated as (Endline - Baseline)*	[-18, 18]
Components of PRC Index:		
china_thermo_w[1, 2]	**1. Favorability toward PRC** *Scale: 1 (Dislike) – 10 (Like)*	[1,10]
ch_econ_inf_w[1, 2]	**2. Impact of PRC's Growth** *How has Mainland China's economic growth impacted Taiwan's economy?*	1 = Very Positive 2 = Somewhat Positive 3 = Fairly Negative 4 = Very Negative
ch_threat_w[1,2]	**3. PRC's Military Threat** *How much PRC's military is a threat to Taiwan?*	1 = Major 2 = Minor 3 = None
ch_usa_power_w[1, 2]	**4. US-China Competition** *Will China surpass the US as the leading global power within 10 years?*	1 = Def. Will 2 = Prob. Will 3 = Prob. Won't 4 = Def. Won't
strait_trade_w[1, 2]	**5. Cross-Strait Trade Preference** *Do you favor expanding or reducing economic ties with Mainland China?*	1 = Greatly Reduce 2 = Slightly Reduce 3 = Maintain 4 = Slightly Increase 5 = Greatly Increase
xidada_w[1,2]	**6. Trust in Xi's Global Leadership** *How much do you trust the president of China Xi Jinping to do the right thing in world affairs?*	1 = Strongly Distrust 2 = Somewhat Distrust 3 = Somewhat Trust 4 = Strongly Trust
hk_protest_w[1,2]	**7. Support for HK Protests** *How much do you support the ongoing HK protests?*	1 = Strongly Oppose 2 = Somewhat Oppose 3 = Neutral 4 = Somewhat Support 5 = Strongly Support
hk_radical_w[1,2]	**8. Justification of Radical Tactics** *How much do you agree that when the HK govt. fails to listen, protesters are justified in using radical tactics*	1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Somewhat Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Somewhat Agree 5 = Strongly Agree
prc_index_w[1-2]	**INDEX: PRC-related Attitudes** *Composite mean of the 8 items above*	*Continuous* Min: 1 Max: 5

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Variable	Description / Question	Values / Codes
`prc_index_change`	**Change in PRC Index Score** *Note: Calculated as (Endline - Baseline)*	*Continuous* Min: -3 Max: 3.12
`interest_campaign_w[1,2]`	**Political Interest** *Interested in election campaign so far?*	1 = Not at All 2 = Not Very 3 = Moderately 4 = Quite 5 = Very Much
`concern_election_outcome_w[1,2]`	**Political Attentiveness** *Care who wins this presidential election?*	1 = Not at All 2 = A Little 3 = Some 4 = A Good Amount 5 = Very Much
`overall_polinews_consumption_w[1,2]`	**Overall News Diet** *Average frequency of accessing news via:* □ TV News □ Newspapers □ Social Media □ News Portals? *Note: Composite mean of the 4 items*	1 = Often 2 = Sometimes 3 = Rarely 4 = Never *(Range: 1–4)*
`pnews_days_w[1,2]`	**Election News Consumption** *Average daily time spent on election news?*	1 = None 2 = < 30 Mins 3 = 31–60 Mins 4 = 1–1.5 Hours 5 = 1.5–2 Hours 6 = > 2 Hours
`website_quality`	**Website Quality** *How would you rate the quality of news reporting on the website?*	1 = Very Bad ... 7 = Very Good
`website_strength`	**Argument Strength in News Reports** *Are the arguments presented in the news reports strong or weak?*	1 = Very Weak ... 7 = Very Strong
`positive_emotion`	**Positive Emotion** *After reading website news, did you feel* □ Enthusiastic? □ Hopeful? *Note: Composite mean of the 2 items*	1 = Not at all ... 7 = Extremely strong *(Range: 1–7)*
`negative_emotion`	**Negative Emotion** *After reading website news, did you feel* □ Angry? □ Disgusted? *Note: Composite mean of the 2 items*	1 = Not at all ... 7 = Extremely strong *(Range: 1–7)*

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Variable	Description / Question	Values / Codes
`reactance`	**Psychological Reactance** *Agree with statements about website news?* ▫ It threatens my freedom to choose candidates ▫ It tries to make decisions for me ▫ It attempts to manipulate my views ▫ It tries to pressure me *Note: Composite mean of the 4 items*	1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Somewhat Disagree 3 = Neutral / DK 4 = Somewhat Agree 5 = Strongly Agree *(Range: 1–5)*
`ct_rmedia`	**Perception of Beijing's Proxy** *Agree that CT is "Red Media"?*	1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Neutral 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree
`list_exp_group`	**List Experiment's Group Indicator** *A list experiment was embedded in the endline survey. Random assignment to treatment or control group among participants (See Sec H.3 of the Supplementary Material for the design)*	0 = Control 1 = Treatment
`itemcount`	**Item Count** *How many of the listed actions did you took?*	[0,5]