

Social Policies and Vote Choice

In the 2012 Taiwanese Presidential Election¹

Chun-Ying Wu

PhD student, Department of Government, The University of Texas at Austin

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The aim of this research is to examine if Taiwanese citizen's attitude toward left-wing social policies influence his/her vote choice in 2012. In many European countries, left-right wing ideologies as well as positions on social welfare policies are important factors to distinguish major political camps. However, such social class issue was not a salient political issue in Taiwan due to two major reasons: first, during the authoritarian times before the 1990s, Taiwan had experienced rapid economic growth but was a social welfare laggard (Wong, 2004), therefore Taiwan lacks the tradition of welfare state regimes. Second, after democratization, although the major opposition party of the 1990s, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), is the advocate of social welfare policies², the sensitive condition of the Taiwan Strait made the position of Cross-strait policies and national identity the most powerful determinant of a Taiwanese citizen's political preference.

However, in the past few years economic inequality and youth unemployment rate in Taiwan has become worse. According to the Ministry of Finance, in 2005, the average income of the wealthiest 5% family was 55.13 times larger than the average income of the poorest 5% family, and this number was 96.56 in 2011. In 2009, the unemployment rate hit record high 5.85%. In addition, the youth unemployment rate of Taiwan in 2013 is 13.17%, which is higher than global average and the rate of South Korea and Japan.³ During the 2012 Taiwanese Presidential Election, the major challenger Ing-Wen Tsai, the chairperson of the biggest opposition party DPP, raised the issue of economic inequality during the electoral campaign⁴ and proposed a series

² One of the major factions in the DPP is called "Welfare State Alliance faction" which supports for building a welfare state.

³ See Liberty Times <The youth unemployment rate is rising; Youth may become poor in the future>, December 13th, 2014.

⁴ "Creating a better social welfare net" is one of the major promises Tsai made during the presidential campaign, "she plans to make large public investments in education, social security and affordable housing". See Taipei Times. <Tsai Ing-wen launches her campaign>, July 3rd, 2011.

of social policies.⁵

Although Tsai lost the election eventually, there have been more and more demands for redistributive policies from the civil society in Taiwan; although it cannot be denied that the cross-strait policy is still salient, social class issues cannot be ignored in the current Taiwanese politics. On March 29th in 2015, the foundation of the Social Democratic Party in Taiwan caught many people's and media's attention.⁶ The policies it proposes (social welfare program, old-age pensions, and tax increase on corporations, etc.) can be classified into left-wing ideological policies (Mair, 2007).

Both Tsai in 2012 and the current SDP use social policy to attract voters, therefore it is necessary to examine the voting behavior of Taiwanese citizens. In this article, I would like to probe the decision of voters in 2012: did individual position on social policies affect their voter choice? If the answer is yes, did Tsai benefit by her proposals of social policy in the 2012 election? The results of study can help people evaluate the effect of campaign strategy which tries to de-emphasize the ideology of Taiwan independence or unification with China and focus on domestic policy.

In the past, many voting behavior studies in Taiwan have offered many models to explain the important factors which influence Taiwanese' political preference (Chen, 2000; Cheng, 2014). However, they hardly examine the effect of attitude toward domestic policies on vote choice. Using the survey data of 2013, I find that respondent's position on social policies did affect their vote choice. The more conservative attitude a vote had toward social policies, the more likely he/she would vote for the KMT (the Nationalist Party) candidate Ying-Jeou Ma. This result verifies my argument that ideology was still salient in the Taiwanese politics, but the influence

⁵ See Ing-Wen Tsai. 2011. <White Paper on Social Welfare Policy>. http://www.iing.tw/2011/10/blog-post_25.html

⁶ See Taipei Times. <Activists set to launch Social Democratic Party>. February 18th, 2015.

of domestic policy cannot be completely ignored.

In the following sections, I will introduce the past studies of voting behavior in Taiwan, and then I will discuss my argument, model, and data analysis.

Voting Behavior in Taiwan

Since the 1960s, political scientists have been studying how voters decide which party or candidate they would vote for. The most influential study of voting behavior, *The American Voter*, indicates that the combination of party identification, issue preferences and candidate evaluation is the strongest factor to influence voter's choice (Campbell et al., 1960; Lewis-Beck et al., 2008). The authors highlight the effect of the psychological attachment, which is typically rooted in early adult socialization processes (Huber, Kernell, Leoni, 2005), to a political party on voting decisions, therefore this model is called "social psychological approach".

Another famous approach of studying voting behavior assumes that voters make voting decision based on the calculation of benefits; they evaluate their own and each major party's position on the spectrum of ideology or salient issue, and then calculate the distance of their own position and each party's position and form their vote preferences (Downs, 1957; Macdonald et. al, 1991). Although there are debates on whether a political party should adopt a median place (Down, 1957) or an extremer place (Iversen, 1994; Kedar, 2005) on the spectrum of major issues, this economic approach does enhance the importance of individual position on political preference.

Both approaches affect voting behavior study in Taiwan. Due to the modern history of Taiwan and the development of relationship between Taiwan and China, Taiwanese political scientists focus on the effect of ethnic identity (whether a citizen identifies herself as a Taiwanese, Chinese, or both) and positions on the unification-independence issue (whether a citizen support for unification with China,

maintaining the status quo, or independence from China) on political support (Wu, 1999; Chen, 2000; Sheng, 2002), and the former related to party identification (Chen, 2000; Cheng, 2009) while the latter had direct impact on vote choice (Sheng and Chen, 2003). Party identification is powerful of explaining vote decision of Taiwanese citizens (Chen and Tsai, 1997; Chen and Keng, 2008; Cheng, 2014). In addition, Tsai and Hsu (2005) use the economic approach to research how Taiwanese form their voting decision when Taiwan was adopting Single Non-transferable Voting system in legislative election.

In a well-developed democracy, economic inequality is usually an important political issue. Lin, Chu, and Hinich (1996) found that in addition to the unification-independence issue, socioeconomic justice issue was also an important dimension of social cleavage. Marsh (2003) found that the objective social class (level of education, white or blue collar job) has somewhat different positions on left-right wing spectrum.⁷ However, this social cleavage neither affects people's vote choice nor sustain at the first decade of 21st century. Using survey data gathered after the 2001 legislative election, Sheng and Chen (2003) indicate that "social welfare issue and environmental protection/economic development issue are still not so salient in Taiwan". Lin and Chu (2008) also found that unification-independence issue was the only dimension of social cleavage and the cleavage of socioeconomic justice issue had disappeared in 2004. However, Wong (2010) found that cross-strait economic integration issue did divide supporters of the pan-blue camp (led by KMT) and the pan-green camp (led by DPP).

After Taiwan signed the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) with China in 2010, how the trade policy affects political support has caught scholars'

⁷ But People's subject social class identification appears to have little to do with whether they are conservative or non-conservative (Marsh, 2003).

attention. Lin and Hu (2011) found that capitalists and managers preferred to sustain the pan-blue camp while working class and self-employed are more likely to support the pan-green camp because ECFA benefits the former class and hurts the latter class. Chang and Hsu (2012) also found the class voting has emerged in 2012 due to the influence of ECFA on social class and family economy.

In sum, most voting behavior studies in Taiwan employ social psychological approach, and among the three variables which have the most critical influences on voting (Jacoby, 2010), party identification strictly dominates the voting behavior of Taiwanese citizens. Regarding issue attitudes, the past studies focus on unification-independence issue, which is actually an ideology rather than a policy or regulation. Some scholars notice the economic inequality issue and test the effect of China trade policy on political support. However, when economic inequality has become salient, what people care about does not limit to the cause of inequality (support for ECFA or not), they also expect that politicians can make domestic policies to deal with this problem.

Arguments and Hypotheses

Even though class voting is believed to be declined in European countries, scholars found that the phenomenon of voting for welfare state policies still exists (Gingrich and Häusermann, 2015). Furthermore, Morten and Quadango (2003) pointed out that people in a country with high unemployment rate are more likely to support for welfare policies for the unemployed, the sick and the old. In Taiwan, the high unemployment rate in 2009, the high youth unemployment rate before the 2012 presidential election and the quicker growing wealth gap after 2009 offer a preferable environment for attitudes toward social policies to have more effect on vote choice.

During the 2012 presidential election, the major candidate Tsai suggested many

modifications of the current welfare system and proposed social security policy targeting unemployed people.⁸ In contrast, the other major candidate Ma emphasized more on economic development and further economic integration with China. Therefore I hypothesize that **people who prefer more public expenditure on social policies would be more likely to vote for Tsai.**

It is necessary to define the term “social policies” before I introduce the independent variable. Although “social welfare” is not strange to ordinary people, it would be arbitrary to assume that people’s definitions of this noun are identical. In Taiwan, social insurance and social welfare are usually perceived as different domains of policy (Lin, 2012: 14); the former refers to direct assistance for disadvantaged group such as elders and unemployed people and the latter can be referred to a variety of social policies including public housing, elder and children care, public health and medical care, public education, or even community development and police service. Therefore I use two different indicators to measure the ideological left-wing inclination of citizens. The first one is “social security policy”, which represents the concrete and direct financial aid to specific disadvantaged group. The second one is “social welfare program”, which is an abstract noun and defined differently by each citizen.

Data Sources, Variables and Model

The data set I use in this study is Taiwan’s Election and Democratization Study, 2013 (TEDS 2013): Benchmark Survey. This survey was conducted by National Chengchi University between June and August in Taiwan in 2013.⁹ The sample size

⁸ See Ing-Wen Tsai. 2011. <White Paper on Social Welfare Policy>. http://www.iing.tw/2011/10/blog-post_25.html (written in Chinese)

⁹ I do not use TEDS 2012 survey data in this study because the vote share in the 2012 survey data is significantly different from the vote share in reality. According to the Central Election Commission, in

is 2292.

The dependent variable is vote choice in the 2012 presidential election. I recode 0 if the respondent voted for Ing-Wen Tsai and 1 if the respondent voted Ying-Jeou Ma in the 2012 presidential election. The third candidate James Soong received less than 3% of vote in the 2012 presidential election; respondents who voted for Soong are recoded as missing value.

The major independent variables are derived from a series of variables which gather opinions about public expenditure. The variable *social security policy* is the combination of respondents' position on unemployment benefits and old-age pensions, which are direct financial assistance to recipients. The variable *social welfare program* come from the direct question which asks respondents whether they support for more expenditure on welfare benefits. The higher score a respondent gets, the more conservative attitude he/she hold on this issue.

In the model I also control some variables. First, the traditional social cleavages in Taiwan - national identity and unification-independence position – cannot be ignored. Second, party identification has been verified as the most powerful factor to explain the voting behavior of Taiwanese, so I also use party identification as the control variable. Third, since the emergence of social class voting in Taiwan is related to the trend of economic inequality, I use social class as the control variable to ensure the effect of attitudes toward vote choice is not the reflection of the relationship between social class and vote choice. The fourth control variable is family income. I assume that whether people support for social policies is based on consideration of

2012 the electorate number was 18,086,455 in which Tsai got 6,093,578 (33.69%) and Ma got 6,891,139 (38.1%). However, the 2012 survey shows that Tsai got 30.26% of vote from the whole respondents and Ma got 45%. Using the t test for comparing the sample proportion to the population proportion, I find Tsai's vote was significantly underestimated (t-value=-3.1) while Ma's vote was overestimated (t-value=6.7). In the 2013 survey data, Tsai's vote was not significantly underestimated (t-value=-1.17) and Ma's vote was still overestimated (t-value=4.54), so finally I decide to adopt the 2013 survey data.

self-interest, therefore people who have lower income are more likely to feel insecure about their future; they are vulnerable to unemployment and they worry about old-age living. Putting this variable into the model can help clarify the effect of position on social policy issue.¹⁰ The other variables are demographic characteristics: education level, gender and age.

In order to interpret the model conveniently, I set up a “baseline individual” by recoding “holding neutral position on social policies”, “male”, “junior high school degree”, “Taiwanese national identity”, and “middle level of income” as 0 in each corresponding variable and assigning “maintaining status quo”, “pan-green supporter”, “manual worker”, and “50-59 years old” as control group. In other words, respondents whose personal characteristics completely fit the conditions above would get zero in all of the control variables, and he/she is the baseline individual in this model. By adopting this step I can easily derive the probability of this baseline individual voting for Ying-Jeou Ma from the constant in the regression model. Regarding the way of recoding all variables I use in this study, please refer to the appendix.

Because the dependent variable has only two values: voting for Ma (1) and voting for Tsai (0), it is not suitable to use the method of least squares to estimate the parameters. First, a specific independent variable value can only have two error values because the dependent variable only have two values, and this will violate the assumption of OLS model that the errors should follow a normal distribution. Second, the homoscedasticity assumption of OLS model will also be violated because the variance of y is $\text{Var}(y|x) = \text{Pr}(y = 1|x) [1 - \text{Pr}(y = 1|x)] = x\beta(1 - x\beta)$ and the variance of error will vary when independent variable values vary, and that will make

¹⁰ Using economic perceptions as the control variable would be ideal because citizens may be more likely to support for social policies if they think the economic condition will be worse in the future. However, using this variable to predict vote choice can be problematic since respondents took the result of the election into account when they are answering this question. In other words, electoral losers are more likely to be pessimistic about the economy because the candidate they support lost.

a biased standard error of estimated coefficient. Third, the predicted value of the OLS model may exceed the scope of 0 and 1, it will be weird to have a predicted value that larger than 1 or smaller than 0.

Therefore here I employ the binary logistic model to estimate the relationship between the dependent variable and independent variables:

$$\text{logit}(x) = \ln \left[\frac{\Pr(y = \text{voting for Ma}|x)}{1 - \Pr(y = \text{voting for Ma}|x)} \right] = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \dots + \beta_k x_k$$

Data Analysis

A typical issue voting should contain the availability and the accessibility of the issue; the former measures the extent to which respondents can place themselves and each major candidate's position on this issue and the latter refers to how important this issue is to respondents (John et al. 1989). The 2013 survey did not ask respondent to assess each candidate's place on this issue.¹¹ However, there are 29.6% of respondents perceive social welfare, unemployment, wage, senior citizen stipend...etc. as the most important issue in current Taiwan.¹² It is clear that the social policy issue has become salient.

The following table presents the result of the binary logistic model:

¹¹ In the 2012 survey, there is a question which asks respondents to assess their own, KMT's and DPP's position on the spectrum of "maintaining the current welfare system – actively promoting the welfare system". However, because the question asks respondents to assess the position of each political party rather than each presidential candidate, whether it is a good measurement of availability in this study is questionable. Nevertheless, there are 93.04% of respondents could place their positions on this issue and 80% of them can place themselves and the two major party on the spectrum.

¹² The question is: "currently, what would you say are the most important problems facing the country?" The answers which relate to economic inequality are: gap between the rich and the poor (3.97%), unemployment issues (15.53%), social welfare (0.61%), housing justice (0.65%), wage issues (7.98%), senior citizen stipend (0.09%), social equality and justice (0.04%), youth unemployment (0.17%), and welfare of the people (0.57%). The calculation of the proportions include respondents who answer "none" or "don't know" or refuse to answer.

Table 1: Issue Attitudes and Vote Choice in the 2012 Presidential Election

	1	2	3	4	5
SS Policy	0.187*** (0.045)	0.168** (0.052)	0.247*** (0.072)	0.222** (0.079)	0.197* (0.086)
SW Program	-0.057 (0.080)	-0.076 (0.089)	-0.112 (0.128)	-0.089 (0.141)	-0.067 (0.158)
U-I position					
<i>(control group: status quo)</i>					
Unification		0.719*** (0.202)		0.113 (0.315)	0.143 (0.322)
Independence		-0.901*** (0.158)		-0.385 (0.253)	-0.287 (0.277)
National ID					
<i>(Taiwanese=0)</i>					
Chinese or Both		1.558*** (0.140)		1.075*** (0.225)	1.032*** (0.244)
Party ID					
<i>(control group: Pan-Green)</i>					
Pan-Blue			6.357*** (0.334)	6.010*** (0.344)	5.927*** (0.364)
Neutral and Others			3.076*** (0.225)	2.979*** (0.235)	2.891*** (0.248)
Income					
					0.004 (0.041)
Social Class					
<i>(control group: manual worker)</i>					
Managerial and Professional				-0.114 (0.272)	-0.128 (0.293)

Clerical and Assistant				-0.166 (0.275)	-0.159 (0.296)
Farmer and Fisher				0.236 (0.390)	0.255 (0.462)
Age (control group: 50-59)					
20-29 years old	-0.794*** (0.214)	-0.270 (0.238)	-0.366 (0.337)	-0.079 (0.366)	-0.121 (0.380)
30-39 years old	-0.773*** (0.178)	-0.725*** (0.204)	-0.104 (0.287)	-0.071 (0.311)	-0.257 (0.328)
40-49 years old	-0.180 (0.170)	-0.085 (0.191)	-0.112 (0.301)	-0.067 (0.326)	-0.178 (0.344)
60 years old and above	-0.022 (0.172)	0.152 (0.190)	-0.204 (0.265)	0.052 (0.280)	-0.009 (0.314)
Gender (Male=0)					
Female	0.332** (0.113)	0.660*** (0.130)	0.117 (0.186)	0.367 (0.211)	0.233 (0.226)
Education (junior=0)					
	0.222*** (0.048)	0.213*** (0.053)	0.052 (0.077)	0.137 (0.094)	0.150 (0.107)
Constant	0.322* (0.154)	-0.496** (0.182)	-2.526*** (0.264)	-3.002*** (0.339)	-2.807*** (0.362)
<i>N</i>	1539	1496	1535	1440	1249
<i>McFadden's R²</i>	0.039	0.188	0.579	0.601	0.599

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Note: the mean of variance-inflation factor (VIF) of model 5 is 1.51.

Model 1 contains only independent variables and demographic characteristics (education, gender and age). Model 2 pluses the traditional social cleavages – national identity and unification-independence issue – in the model. Model 3 controls party identification and Model 4 controls social cleavages, party identification and social class. In model 5, I add family income to test if wealth people who hold positive attitudes toward social policies are still affected by his attitudes while voting. Because the independent variables in the model 5 seem to be correlated with each other, I also calculate the mean of variance-inflation factor in order to make sure that there is no collinearity phenomenon. The mean of VIF in the model 5 is 1.51, and there is no VIF value of individual independent variable exceeds 2, so I do not have the collinearity question here.

Individual position on social security policy has significant effect on vote choice while position on social welfare does not. And the effect of the estimated coefficient of social security policies on vote choice fits my hypothesis: the more conservative attitude a respondent holds, the more likely he/she would vote for Ma. And the effect is still significant after I control for the level of family income in model 5, which means Tsai's proposal for promoting social policies attracted people who support for the idea of this proposal rather than people who have the least level of income.

In model 1, female and people with high level of education show a more probability of voting for Ma while young voters prefer Tsai to Ma. In model 2, both dimensions of traditional political cleavage show significant effect on voting behavior, and the affecting direction is consistent with what political scientists expect: people who support for unification with China tend to support for Ying-Jeou Ma, who urges further economic integration with China, and people who advocate independence from China tend to vote for Ing-Wen Tsai, who proclaims that the future of Taiwan should be decided by Taiwanese alone. However, this effect disappears after

controlling respondents' party identification.

Both party identification and national identity have strong effect on voting behavior. Like the findings of past studies, party identification is still the most powerful factor to explain voting behavior of Taiwanese. In addition to the estimated coefficients, the enhancement of McFadden's R-squared from model 2 to model 3 also confirms this finding. National identity is actually not polarized in Taiwan; according to the data of Trends in Core Political Attitudes among Taiwanese,¹³ in 1994, 20.2% of Taiwanese citizens identified themselves as a Taiwanese, 26.2% identified themselves as a Chinese and 44.6% gave the answer "both Chinese and Taiwanese"; however, in 2012, the three proportions have become 54.3%, 3.6% and 38.5%, respectively. In the survey data used in this study, 82% of respondents with Chinese or double identification casted their vote for Ma, while 59% of respondents with Taiwanese identification voted for Tsai. Social class is surprisingly failed to predict vote choice in the 2013 survey data.

Baseline Individual

As I have mentioned in the previous section, the baseline individual is: a 50-year-old male who holds middle position on social policy issues, has a junior high degree of education and median level of family income, is a manual worker, supports for DPP and maintaining the status quo (regarding the relationship between Taiwan and China in the future), and identifies himself as a Taiwanese. This baseline individual is common in Taiwan society, and he gets zero in all of my independent variables. In other words, I can simply use the constant term to estimate the probability of this baseline individual voting for Ma in 2012 according to model 5:

$$\Pr(y = 1 | \text{all of } X_s = 0) = \frac{\exp(-2.807)}{1 + \exp(-2.807)} = 0.1104$$

¹³ Sources: Election Study Center, N.C.C.U., important political attitude trend distribution. <http://esc.nccu.edu.tw/course/news.php?Sn=166>

And if he has a friend who shares the same characteristics with him except for the national identity, then the probability of his friend voting for Ma will be:

$$\Pr(y = 1 | X_{\text{Chinese or double ID}} = 1) = \frac{\exp(-2.807+1.032)}{1+\exp(-2.807+1.032)} = 0.2583$$

Finally, if the friend of this baseline individual moves his position on social policies issues toward the direction of “the government should increase public expenditure on old-age pensions or unemployment benefits” by one unit, then the probability of this friend voting for Ma will be: $\Pr(y = 1 | X_{SS\ policy} =$

$$X_{\text{Chinese or double ID}} = 1) = \frac{\exp(-2.807+1.032-0.197)}{1+\exp(-2.807+1.032-0.197)} = 0.2222$$

Conclusion

In this article, I revisit the voting behavior in the 2012 Taiwanese presidential election. Using the social psychological approach, I have three major findings. First, my hypothesis is partly verified. Citizens who support for more social welfare policies did not prefer Tsai to Ma in 2012, but citizens who support for more social security policies did. Here I have an explanation: basically Taiwanese people do not oppose many social welfare programs such as social work service, public housing or public medical care which is applied to everyone. Even though Tsai’s voters show more support for social welfare benefits, this gap does not account for vote choice if I control other factors.¹⁴ Social security policy offers direct assistance to specific recipients, and when Tsai proposed these policies, Taiwan is experiencing a period of high unemployment rate and growing inequality between rich and poor, therefore the

¹⁴ I use model 2 with the two independent variables separately, and the result shows that after controlling demographic characteristics and traditional social cleavages, position on social welfare still has no impact on vote choice without the influence of social security policy attitudes; in contrast, position on social security policy still has significant effect on vote choice without the influence of social welfare attitudes, so I can preclude the possibility that the influence of social welfare attitudes on vote choice is affected by the social security policy attitudes in the table 2.

gap in attitudes toward social security policy between people who do not need and people who need was significant and cause the different consideration of voting decision.

Second, party identification is still powerful of affecting Taiwanese voters' decision. Since supporters of pan-green camp (DPP) and pan-blue camp (KMT) are quite loyal to their party while voting, how to obtain more votes from non-partisan will be important to candidates and parties in the future. Third, national identity is proved to be important to vote choice, and people who identify themselves as Taiwanese are more likely to vote for the DPP candidate. This result implies that the current trend of changes in national identity, which indicates the increasing proportion of Taiwanese identity, will be beneficial to DPP in the future general election. In contrast, position on unification-independence spectrum does not affect voting behavior after controlling other variables. This result shows the increasing importance of domestic policy in presidential election even though Ma won the 2012 election eventually.

Although this study only focuses on one country, the result can inspire scholars to study the effect of issue attitudes on voting behavior in other Asian countries. For example, the winner of the 2014 Indonesian presidential election, Jokowi Widodo, especially mentioned problems of social justice, inequality and poor people during the election campaign. In Malaysia, opposition party union (Pakatan Rakyat, means People Alliance) also raised the value of equality and social welfare in the latest general election. Traditional social cleavages along contextual lines (ethnicity, sub-culture, or religion) are rooted in many Asian countries, but economic inequality brought by economic integration with global market has emerged in them. Is the effect of social policies proposed by a major candidate on voting behavior significant? This is an interesting question to comparative political behavior studies.

Back to the question I raised in the introductory section: is it good for Tsai or the Social Democratic Party to adopt the campaign strategy which de-emphasizes the unification-independence issue and emphasizes social policies? The result of this study gives a positive but not absolute answer. Tsai was benefited from social policy issue; when voters move their positions from “support for the current social policies” to “support for more expenditure on social policies”, the probability of their voting for Tsai did increase. But this study cannot tell its reader whether the salient of social policy issue was temporary in 2012 or has become solid since 2012. This need further research in the future.

Appendix: Variable

1. Independent variables

Vote Choice: 0 if the respondent voted for Tsai; 1 if the respondent voted for Ma

2. Independent variables:

All respondents were informed that “more public expenditure could require a tax increase while less public expenditure could require a reduction in those services” before they were asked to answer the following question: *Thinking about public expenditure on 1) UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS 2) OLD-AGE PENSIONS 3) WELFARE BENEFITS, should there be much more than now, somewhat more than now, the same as now, somewhat less than now, or much less than now?* For each question, I recode “much more than now” as -2, “somewhat more than now” as -1, “the same as now” as 0, somewhat less than now as 1, and much less than now as 2 and then calculate the summation of all questions.

Positions on Social Security Policy: (1) + (2)

Positions on Social Welfare Program: (3)

3. Control Variables

Party Identification: Pan-Blue (KMT, NP, PFP), Pan-Green (DPP, TSU), Neutral or Other (CCP, Green)

National Identity: Taiwanese Identity, Chinese Identity, Both (Taiwanese and Chinese)

Unification-Independence Issue: Unification, Independence, Maintain the status quo

Gender: 0=male 1=female

Level of Education: -2=No Formal, -1=Elementary, 0=Junior High, 1=Senior High, 2=Junior College, 3=Undergraduate and above

Family Income: -4 to 5, 0= median level of income

Occupations: 1=management/profession 2=assistance/clerical 3>manual 4=farmer/fisher/miner

Age: 20-29 years old, 30-39 years old, 40-49 years old, 50-59 years old, 60 years old above

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