

# How Government-Controlled Media Shifts Policy Attitudes through Framing\*

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## Abstract

Research shows that government-controlled media is an effective tool for authoritarian regimes to shape public opinion. Does government-controlled media remain effective when it is required to support changes in positions that autocrats take on issues? Existing theories do not provide a clear answer to this question, but we often observe authoritarian governments using government media to frame policies in new ways when significant changes in policy positions are required. By conducting an experiment that exposes respondents to government-controlled media—in the form of TV news segments—on issues where the regime substantially changed its policy positions, we find that by framing the same issue differently, government-controlled media moves respondents to adopt policy positions closer to the ones espoused by the regime regardless of individual predisposition. This result holds for domestic and foreign policy issues, for direct and composite measures of attitudes, and persists up to 48 hours after exposure.

**Keywords** framing, media, public opinion, policy change, China, experiment

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## **A.1. Ethics**

The primary ethical concern in this paper, as with any experimental study of media effects, is that the experiments would alter policy preferences in politically meaningful ways. Our substantive focus helps us address this concern because we are interested in focusing on specific policy issues rather than on propaganda that aimed to promote support for the regime, to strengthen state legitimacy, or to promote a cult of personality. In addition, because our research focuses on changes in state policy positions, our experiment does not promote any hegemonic political views.

A secondary ethical concern is that the respondents who participate in the survey may experience retaliation if their responses deviate from the preferred policy positions of the Chinese regime. We guard against this threat by not collecting any personally identifiable information, and by securely storing the data. We obtained approval from our universities' Institutional Review Boards for all aspects of the research.

## A.2. Sources of the Video Segments

TABLE A1. SOURCES OF THE VIDEO SEGMENTS

No	Date	Channel & Program	Headline	Issue & Position
1	7/25/2017	CCTV4 China News	China Foreign Ministry Expresses Support for Resolving South China Sea Issues to Benefit both China and the Philippines as well as Regional Peace and Development	Foreign Policy – Dove
2	7/12/2017	CCTV13 International News	Philippine Ministry of Foreign Affairs Issues Statement for Dialogue and Cooperation with China	Foreign Policy – Dove
3	7/12/2016	CCTV4 China News	So-called Arbitration Result is Completely Invalid at the Legal Level	Foreign Policy – Hawk
4	5/25/2013	CCTV4 China News	The Philippines “Makes Waves” on the South China Sea Issue	Foreign Policy – Hawk
5	5/19/2020	CCTV13 Morning News	Accelerate SOE Reform and Reform of Monopolistic Industries	SOE Reform – Market
6	10/18/2019	CCTV13 News Live	SOE Reform Has Achieved Landmark Results	SOE Reform – Market
7	10/11/2016	CCTV1 Evening News	Unwaveringly Uphold the Party’s Leadership over SOEs	SOE Reform – State
8	9/13/2015	CCTV13 Focus	Issued by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council – Guiding Opinions on Deepening the SOE Reform	SOE Reform – State

### **A.3. Video Transcripts (English Translations)**

**SOE: Market** In 2014 Ministry of Finance data showed that there were 15 million enterprises nationwide, and state-owned accounted for less than 1% of enterprises but assets controlled by state-owned enterprises accounted for at least 30% of total assets. As a crucial component to economic reform and development, the evolution of state-owned enterprises plays a decisive role in the development of China's national economy.

[SOE Expert Interview] The biggest problem for most SOEs is that they bear a lot of policy burdens because they need to bear a lot of responsibilities and you don't know how much policy burden they bear. It is uncertain how much subsidies the government should give them. Their optimal choice may be to ask the government for more subsidies, but then they have no incentive to improve their overall performance and efficiency. If SOE managers and employees do not perform well, you will find that SOEs performance will be worse than that of private enterprises. Government departments can measure the performance of SOEs using relative measures, and use this as a basis to provide incentives to SOE managers.

The key to the SOE reform is to ensure it operates in a market-oriented manner, to increase its competitiveness in the market such that the market can play a decisive role in resource allocation. We must break barriers in institutional obstacles, improve the regulatory system, follow market forces, reduce burdens, strengthen health, improve quality, and enhance efficiency in order to truly make SOEs competitive and independent market players.

**SOE: State** In 2014 Ministry of Finance data showed that there were 15 million enterprises nationwide, and state-owned accounted for less than 1% of enterprises but assets

controlled by state-owned enterprises accounted for at least 30% of total assets. As a crucial component to economic reform and development, the evolution of state-owned enterprises plays a decisive role in the development of China's national economy.

[SOE Expert Interview] Now SOEs are responsible for some of the most important tasks of the national economy. So they are indispensable to the entire national economy, and for supporting the entire national economy. Because we are a country where public ownership is central, it is feasible for the government to take the lead in reforming SOEs. Whether it is from the perspective of its profit rate, or from the perspective that the government plays an irreplaceable role in the process of reforming SOEs, you can see more aims of this SOEs reform. We should improve efficiency rather than simply privatizing it.

The fundamental attribute of SOEs is that they are inherently unified with the people. The government controls and invests SOEs on behalf of the people. Adhering to the policy of SOEs reform led by the state is consistent with the realization of the interests of the whole people. The public welfare and historical mission of SOEs have determined that the political core and political leading role of the government should be fully exerted in SOE reform. Top-down design should be strengthened, so that SOEs responsible for the national economy and people's livelihoods can be strengthened with confidence.

**SOE: Control** In 2014 Ministry of Finance data showed that there were 15 million enterprises nationwide, and state-owned accounted for less than 1% of enterprises but assets controlled by state-owned enterprises accounted for at least 30% of total assets. As a crucial component to economic reform and development, the evolution of state-owned enterprises plays a decisive role in the development of China's national economy.

[SOE Expert Interview] At present, there are actually a lot of views on the reform of SOEs. SOEs are responsible for some of the most important tasks of the national econ-

omy. So they are indispensable to the entire national economy. SOEs are enterprises invested or controlled by the government, including not only the central government or federal government, but also the local governments. As an organizational form of production and management, SOEs have the characteristics of commercial and public welfare, and their commercial performance is the pursuit of preserving and increasing the value of state-owned assets. The establishment of SOEs is usually to achieve the goal of national economic adjustment, and to play a role in reconciling all aspects of the national economy. SOEs have a certain administrative nature. Due to historical reasons, the classification of Chinese SOEs is quite complex. According to international practice, enterprises investing in state-owned assets or holding more than 50% of their shares are SOEs. Therefore, enterprises with investments in state-owned assets within the scope of China are regulated by law.

Since the reform and opening up, great achievements have been made in the development of SOEs. At present, China has become a world economic power. To realize China's economic status as a powerful country in the world, we need a number of large and internationally competitive enterprises. However, the existing problems of SOEs, such as the administrative character of the management system, and generalization of the functions, do not give full play to their vitality. We are ready to fight a protracted and tough war, and we are committed to achieving new results in the key links of reform.

**China-Philippines: Dove** The Republic of Philippines, referred to as the Philippines, is located in the western Pacific Ocean. It is a multi-ethnic archipelago country in Southeast Asia, covering an area of 299,700 square kilometers. Its population exceeded 100 million in 2016. Inhabitants of the Philippines were migrants from the Asian continent, who established the kingdom of Sulu, a maritime power around the fourteenth century. In

1946, the Philippines became independent. On June 9, 1975, China established diplomatic relations with the Philippines. Disputes around the sovereignty of the South Island Reef and the demarcation of the sea area are the main obstacle in the development of China-Philippines relations.

[Foreign Policy Expert Interview] In the past short year, especially since Duterte came to power, the cooperation between China and the Philippines has been fruitful in various fields. China has become the Philippines' largest trading partner, import market and exporter. From January to July this year, the bilateral trade volume also reached 28 billion US dollars, with year-on-year growth of 7.6%. At the same time, the Philippines is also aware that China's Belt and Road initiative will bring short-term and long-term strategic opportunities to the Philippines and ASEAN countries in various ways. Actually, The efforts made by both countries are consistent with the Philippines' long-term goal of seeking common prosperity and achieving common growth. As the world changes, we think that China-Philippines relations have much room for development and cooperation.

On the relationship between China and the Philippines, China's position is that the common interests of the two countries are far greater than the differences. Both sides will adhere to friendly cooperation, common development, peace, and stability. To make China-Philippines relations good and neighborly and cooperation stable and far-ranging, the focus should be on long-term interests and regional stability, to deeply promote pragmatic cooperation between China and the Philippines in different fields. Let more cooperation come to the two countries and two peoples faster and more broadly, to push China-Philippines relations to a new stage.

**China-Philippines: Hawk** The Republic of Philippines, referred to as the Philippines, is located in the western Pacific Ocean. It is a multi-ethnic archipelago country in South-

east Asia, covering an area of 299,700 square kilometers. Its population exceeded 100 million in 2016. Inhabitants of the Philippines were migrants from the Asian continent, who established the kingdom of Sulu, a maritime power around the fourteenth century. In 1946, the Philippines became independent. On June 9, 1975, China established diplomatic relations with the Philippines. Disputes around the sovereignty of the South Island Reef and the demarcation of the sea area are the main obstacle in the development of China-Philippines relations.

[Foreign Policy Expert Interview] In the relationship between China and the Philippines, the South China Sea issue is the key. On the stage of international relations, national interests are clearly the eternal theme. National sovereignty and territorial integrity are essentially the bottom line of diplomacy. To further develop the China-Philippines relations, both parties must ensure that the relationship is in the right direction. The Philippine side must realize that on the issue of the South China Sea, China has historical claim (to the islands). China has also been following international law and international practice throughout. Any diplomatic action that does not respect this bottom line can only complicate and worsen the relationship between the two countries. National sovereignty and territorial integrity are sacred and inviolable. If the Philippine side cannot clarify its position on the issue of the South China Sea in line with China's position, it will not only harm the friendship of the two peoples and the interests of both sides, but also pose a big threat to lasting peace and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region.

China's position on the relationship between China and the Philippines is that the two sides must ensure that bilateral relations are moving steadily in the right direction. On the issue of the South China Sea, China has historical rights. China has also been following international law and international practice. National sovereignty and territorial

integrity are sacred and inviolable. If the Philippines cannot fully understand this, it will not only harm the national interests of both sides, but also run counter to the enduring peace, prosperity and stability of the entire Asia-Pacific.

**China-Philippines: Control** The Republic of Philippines, referred to as the Philippines, is located in the western Pacific Ocean. It is a multi-ethnic archipelago country in Southeast Asia, covering an area of 299,700 square kilometers. Its population exceeded 100 million in 2016. Inhabitants of the Philippines were migrants from the Asian continent, who established the kingdom of Sulu, a maritime power around the fourteenth century. In 1946, the Philippines became independent. On June 9, 1975, China established diplomatic relations with the Philippines. Disputes around the sovereignty of the South Island Reef and the demarcation of the sea area are the main obstacle in the development of China-Philippines relations.

[Foreign Policy Expert Interview] In the relationship between China and the Philippines, the South China Sea issue is the key. On the stage of international relations, national interests are clearly the eternal theme. The relationship between China and the Philippines is impermanent like soldiers and water. The same is true of geopolitics. The diplomatic relations between China and the Philippines have actually undergone many historical transformations. To further develop the China-Philippines relations, both parties must ensure that the relationship is headed in the right direction.

When dealing with the Philippines, China must consider the situation, not only maintaining national sovereignty, but also adopting flexible strategies at the right time. China should seek common points while reserving difference, make the best use of the circumstances, and push forward China-Philippines relations.

## A.4. Predisposition Questions

Panel A of Table A2 shows questions used to measure predisposition on market economy, along with their corresponding signs (1 or -1) used to construct the index (bigger means more pro-market). Panel B of Table A2 shows questions used to measure predisposition on national sovereignty, along with their corresponding signs used to construct the index (bigger means more dovish/less nationalistic).

TABLE A2. QUESTIONS MEASURING PREDISPOSITION

No.	Question	Sign
<i>Panel A: On Market Economy</i>		
1	Privately-run schools should be restricted.	-1
2	Private capital should be encouraged to set up private hospitals to provide convenient and high-quality services to those willing to pay high prices.	1
3	Private ownership and sale of land should be allowed.	1
4	When the market price of grain is low, the government should purchase grain from farmers at a price higher than the market price.	-1
5	People should be allowed to freely exchange foreign currency.	1
6	Chinese enterprises' overseas investment should not be solely for profit, but should be guided by national strategies.	-1
7	The defense industry should be open to private capital.	-1
<i>Panel B: On National Sovereignty</i>		
1	The government should prohibit artists who support Taiwan independence and Hong Kong independence from performing in the Chinese mainland.	-1
2	Foreign journalists who regularly publish negative reports about China should be allowed to enter China.	1
3	China's core diplomatic strategy should be to break through the containment of China by Western countries led by the United States.	-1
4	When military conditions are sufficient, China can consider unifying Taiwan by force.	-1
5	There should be a statutory holiday to commemorate Chairman Mao's birthday.	-1
6	Those who publicly disrespect the national flag and national anthem should be subjected to criminal punishment.	-1
7	Chinese citizens should be allowed to hold foreign citizenship.	1

## A.5. Summary Statistics

TABLE A3. SUMMARY STATISTICS

	<i>W1 Outcomes and Checks</i>			<i>W2 Outcomes and Checks</i>		
	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.
Agree to market reform (1, 2 or 3)	830	2.16	0.96	354	2.22	0.96
An index of market-oriented reform	823	0.00	1.00	351	0.12	1.03
Agree to more cooperation (1, 2 or 3)	830	1.57	0.74	354	1.53	0.73
An index of dovish foreign policy	825	0.00	1.00	353	0.00	0.98
Pass SOE manipulation check	830	0.83	0.37	354	0.94	0.23
Identify SOE media content as pro-market	830	0.44	0.50	354	0.46	0.50
Identify SOE media content as pro-state	830	0.28	0.45	354	0.30	0.46
Agree policy toward SOE reform is correct (1, 2 or 3)	794	2.30	0.51	350	2.26	0.51
Pass FP manipulation check	830	0.98	0.15	354	0.89	0.31
Identify FP media content as hawkish	830	0.07	0.26	354	0.12	0.32
Identify FP media content as dovish	830	0.46	0.50	354	0.50	0.50
Agree policy toward South China Sea is correct (1, 2 or 3)	800	2.46	0.53	347	2.36	0.54
	<i>Covarites</i>			<i>Covarites (W2 Sample)</i>		
	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.
Female	830	0.41	0.49	354	0.41	0.49
Age	830	31.1	8.71	354	31.8	8.68
High school	830	0.24	0.43	354	0.19	0.39
Junior college	830	0.13	0.34	354	0.13	0.33
College or above	830	0.43	0.49	354	0.59	0.49
Minority	830	0.03	0.18	354	0.04	0.19
Religious	830	0.17	0.37	354	0.18	0.39
Single	830	0.45	0.50	354	0.40	0.49
Having worked	830	0.77	0.42	354	0.82	0.38
Public sector worker	830	0.16	0.37	354	0.17	0.38
Being reported to	830	0.38	0.49	354	0.47	0.50
CCP member	830	0.13	0.34	354	0.15	0.36
Having used VPN	830	0.37	0.48	354	0.41	0.49
English proficiency [1, 5]	830	2.91	1.13	354	3.13	1.08
Income category [1, 10]	830	4.60	2.03	354	4.93	1.93
Self-reported social class [1, 10]	830	5.22	2.06	354	5.66	1.94

*Note:* W1 and W2 refer to Wave 1 and Wave 2, respectively.

## A.6. Balance Tables

TABLE A4. BALANCE TABLE: WAVE 1

Outcome Variables	Female	Age	High school	Junior college	College or above	Minority	Religious	Single	Having worked	Public sector worker	Being reported to	CCP member	Having used VPN	English proficiency	Income category	Self-reported social class
	(0 or 1)	[18, 50]	(0 or 1)	(0 or 1)	(0 or 1)	(0 or 1)	(0 or 1)	(0 or 1)	(0 or 1)	(0 or 1)	(0 or 1)	(0 or 1)	(0 or 1)	[1, 5]	[1, 10]	[1, 10]
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)
Treatment1: Market	0.018 (0.042)	0.491 (0.733)	0.011 (0.037)	-0.020 (0.028)	0.013 (0.042)	0.014 (0.016)	0.010 (0.031)	-0.039 (0.042)	-0.016 (0.035)	-0.009 (0.031)	0.028 (0.042)	0.020 (0.029)	0.058 (0.041)	-0.077 (0.097)	-0.056 (0.172)	-0.045 (0.175)
Treatment1: State	-0.048 (0.042)	-0.201 (0.745)	-0.024 (0.036)	0.028 (0.030)	0.008 (0.042)	0.004 (0.014)	0.022 (0.032)	-0.001 (0.043)	-0.030 (0.036)	0.014 (0.032)	-0.035 (0.041)	-0.000 (0.028)	0.018 (0.041)	0.090 (0.097)	-0.060 (0.172)	0.238 (0.174)
Treatment2: Dove	0.079* (0.042)	0.462 (0.758)	0.017 (0.036)	0.008 (0.028)	0.052 (0.042)	0.004 (0.015)	-0.030 (0.033)	-0.066 (0.042)	-0.015 (0.036)	-0.024 (0.031)	0.021 (0.041)	0.014 (0.028)	0.018 (0.041)	0.137 (0.097)	-0.122 (0.176)	0.151 (0.175)
Treatment2: Hawk	0.012 (0.041)	-1.244* (0.730)	0.027 (0.036)	0.024 (0.029)	0.033 (0.042)	0.015 (0.016)	-0.060* (0.032)	0.029 (0.043)	0.023 (0.035)	-0.020 (0.032)	0.016 (0.041)	0.034 (0.029)	-0.002 (0.041)	0.169* (0.097)	-0.322* (0.170)	0.258 (0.173)
Constant	0.386*** (0.038)	31.311*** (0.693)	0.230*** (0.033)	0.120*** (0.026)	0.391*** (0.038)	0.023** (0.010)	0.188*** (0.030)	0.479*** (0.039)	0.785*** (0.032)	0.172*** (0.029)	0.371*** (0.038)	0.111*** (0.026)	0.345*** (0.037)	2.802*** (0.090)	4.780*** (0.154)	5.021*** (0.164)
Observations	830	830	830	830	830	830	830	830	830	830	830	830	830	830	830	830
R-squared	0.008	0.008	0.002	0.004	0.002	0.002	0.005	0.007	0.002	0.002	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.007	0.004	0.006
F test <i>p</i> -value	0.147	0.142	0.790	0.503	0.796	0.666	0.377	0.173	0.735	0.845	0.612	0.711	0.681	0.207	0.433	0.298

*Note:* Robust standard errors in parentheses. \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.1$ .

TABLE A5. BALANCE TABLE: WAVE 2

<i>Outcome Variables</i>	<i>Female</i> (0 or 1)	<i>Age</i> [18, 50]	<i>High school</i> (0 or 1)	<i>Junior college</i> (0 or 1)	<i>College or above</i> (0 or 1)	<i>Minority</i> (0 or 1)	<i>Religious</i> (0 or 1)	<i>Single</i> (0 or 1)	<i>Having worked</i> (0 or 1)	<i>Public sector worker</i> (0 or 1)	<i>Being reported to</i> (0 or 1)	<i>CCP member</i> (0 or 1)	<i>Having used VPN</i> (0 or 1)	<i>English proficiency</i> [1, 5]	<i>Income category</i> [1, 10]	<i>Self-reported social class</i> [1, 10]
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)
Treatment1: Market	0.051 (0.064)	-0.316 (1.132)	0.069 (0.053)	-0.038 (0.042)	-0.027 (0.064)	-0.001 (0.026)	0.059 (0.049)	-0.036 (0.063)	-0.020 (0.048)	-0.041 (0.051)	-0.016 (0.065)	0.011 (0.048)	0.021 (0.064)	-0.201 (0.142)	-0.242 (0.244)	-0.133 (0.254)
Treatment1: State	0.006 (0.064)	-1.397 (1.117)	-0.031 (0.048)	0.011 (0.046)	0.039 (0.065)	-0.014 (0.022)	0.047 (0.051)	0.013 (0.065)	-0.048 (0.051)	-0.088* (0.050)	-0.084 (0.066)	-0.047 (0.046)	0.033 (0.065)	0.068 (0.144)	-0.036 (0.253)	0.212 (0.239)
Treatment2: Dovish	0.111* (0.064)	0.706 (1.143)	-0.027 (0.048)	0.036 (0.044)	0.030 (0.064)	-0.010 (0.022)	-0.035 (0.053)	-0.151** (0.062)	0.033 (0.050)	-0.011 (0.051)	0.050 (0.065)	-0.034 (0.046)	-0.036 (0.064)	0.050 (0.142)	-0.147 (0.257)	0.378 (0.248)
Treatment2: Hawkish	-0.035 (0.064)	-2.174* (1.136)	0.051 (0.054)	-0.012 (0.042)	0.021 (0.065)	0.017 (0.026)	-0.105** (0.050)	0.015 (0.066)	0.025 (0.052)	-0.073 (0.050)	0.055 (0.066)	-0.010 (0.049)	0.005 (0.066)	0.098 (0.145)	-0.307 (0.253)	0.418 (0.257)
Constant	0.366*** (0.058)	32.830*** (1.087)	0.168*** (0.047)	0.128*** (0.040)	0.567*** (0.060)	0.040** (0.018)	0.194*** (0.047)	0.451*** (0.060)	0.827*** (0.045)	0.242*** (0.051)	0.463*** (0.061)	0.176*** (0.048)	0.400*** (0.059)	3.126*** (0.141)	5.178*** (0.226)	5.367*** (0.219)
Observations	354	354	354	354	354	354	354	354	354	354	354	354	354	354	354	354
R-squared	0.018	0.023	0.019	0.008	0.004	0.005	0.018	0.025	0.004	0.014	0.008	0.007	0.002	0.012	0.007	0.014
F test <i>p</i> -value	0.172	0.0586	0.185	0.602	0.865	0.709	0.146	0.0450	0.840	0.317	0.574	0.718	0.948	0.340	0.620	0.282

*Note:* Robust standard errors in parentheses. \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1.

## A.7. Manipulation Checks

We include manipulation checks immediately after each video. The first multiple-choice question following the SOE reform video asks “What share of total assets do SOEs account for?” and the second multiple-choice question asks respondents to identify the main message of the video. After the China-Philippines video, the first multiple-choice question asks “What foreign country was discussed in the video?” and the second multiple-choice again asks for the main message of the video.

The placement of the manipulation check before the first measurement of outcomes introduces a risk of priming respondents. To address this concern, we compare treatment effects between respondents who passed and failed the manipulation checks (see Appendix Table A9) and do not find significant differences between these respondents. That, in combination with the fact that the manipulation checks were administered in the same way across the treatment and control groups, gives us confidence priming effect are minimal (though cannot be completely ruled out).

The manipulation checks show that respondents are able to correctly answer actual questions about the videos. Columns (1) and (4) of Table A6 show that most of the respondents (83.4% for SOE reform, 97.5% for China-Philippines relations) correctly answer the factual questions after watching the two videos.<sup>24</sup>

In terms of comprehending the policy position espoused in the video, the vast majority of respondents are able to correctly identify the policy position of most of the videos. Columns (2) and (3) of Table A6 show that 75.5% of respondents who are assigned to the Market condition identify the SOE media content as pro-market (as opposed to 24.5% under the Control condition), and 61.2% of those who are assigned to the State condition

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<sup>24</sup>Because treatment was assigned at the individual level, we use robust standard errors throughout this paper. Clustering standard errors at the provincial level gives almost identical substantive results.

TABLE A6. MANIPULATION CHECK

<i>Outcomes</i>	<i>Pass SOE</i>	<i>Identify</i>	<i>Identify</i>	<i>Pass FP</i>	<i>Identify</i>	<i>Identify</i>
	<i>manipulation</i>	<i>SOE media</i>	<i>SOE media</i>	<i>manipulation</i>	<i>FP media</i>	<i>FP media</i>
	<i>check</i>	<i>content as</i>	<i>content as</i>	<i>n check</i>	<i>content as</i>	<i>content as</i>
	<i>(0 or 1)</i>	<i>pro-market</i>	<i>pro-state</i>	<i>(0 or 1)</i>	<i>dovish</i>	<i>hawkish</i>
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Treatment1: Market	0.060*	0.510***	-0.049*	0.011	-0.038	0.029
	(0.032)	(0.037)	(0.027)	(0.014)	(0.034)	(0.022)
Treatment1: State	0.020	0.080**	0.477***	0.011	-0.031	0.015
	(0.033)	(0.038)	(0.036)	(0.014)	(0.036)	(0.021)
Treatment2: Dove	-0.077**	-0.024	0.023	-0.001	0.501***	-0.021
	(0.032)	(0.038)	(0.032)	(0.012)	(0.036)	(0.014)
Treatment2: Hawk	-0.040	-0.033	0.048	-0.011	-0.183***	0.127***
	(0.030)	(0.038)	(0.033)	(0.014)	(0.037)	(0.025)
Outcome Variable Mean:						
~Full sample	0.834	0.443	0.278	0.975	0.460	0.075
~Treatment1 = Neutral	0.807	0.245	0.135	0.967	0.478	0.062
~Treatment2 = Neutral	0.872	0.452	0.274	0.979	0.356	0.039
Observations	830	830	830	830	830	830
R-squared	0.012	0.203	0.280	0.002	0.334	0.064

*Note:* Robust standard errors in parentheses. \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1.

identify the media content as pro-state (as opposed to 13.5% under the Control condition). Column (5) shows that 85.7% of the respondents who are assigned to the Dove condition identify the media content as dovish (as opposed to 35.6% under the Control condition). However, as shown in column (6), only 16.6% of those who are assigned to the Hawk condition identify the media content as hawkish (as opposed to 3.9% under the Control condition).

The fact that only 16.6% of respondents identify the Hawk condition as hawkish is because of the way we word this question. After asking respondents, “What foreign country was discussed in the video?”, we then ask: “The main message of the video was ” (这则新闻主要讲述的是:), where respondents can choose from 3 options: (1) China-Philippine relations have ups and downs, and geopolitics is a key factor affecting the relationship between the two countries (中菲两国关系起起伏伏，地缘政治是

影响两国关系的关键因素); (2) The irresponsible attitude of the Philippines on the South China Sea issue has made Sino-Philippine relations increasingly tense (菲律宾在南海问题上不负责任的态度, 使得中菲两国关系日益紧张); and (3) The common interests of China and the Philippines outweigh differences. Seeking common ground and mutual prosperity is key to the relationship between the two countries (中菲两国的共同利益大于分歧, 求同存异、共同发展是两国关系的主旋律). We code (1) as neutral, (2) as hawkish, and (3) as dovish. While (3) clearly denotes the frame of the dovish treatment (cooperation/mutual prosperity), (2) does not clearly capture the frame of the hawkish treatment of sovereignty and territorial integrity. In addition, option (1) “ups and downs” (起起伏伏) have a negative connotation in Chinese. Among those in the hawk condition, 66.4% chose (1), and 16.6% chose (2). In the Dove condition, 85.7% chose (3). As a result, while we acknowledge an issue with question wording, we believe it is unlikely that this invalidates the internal validity of the Hawk treatment. Finally, most respondents, 86%, report that our video segments came from CCTV.<sup>25</sup>

## **A.8. Main Results**

## **A.9. Robustness Checks of Main Results**

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<sup>25</sup>In the experiment, we asked respondents whether the videos come from CCTV, local television news, internet news, or other. To further validate this validity of our treatment, we conducted a separate online survey with 409 respondents in January 2021 where options respondents could select for the sources of the video were expanded to Central state-controlled TV news (CCTV), local state-controlled TV news, domestic non-state media, foreign media, other non-government source (followed by fill-in-the blank text entry), and “I don’t know.” In this follow-up survey, 83% of respondents identified CCTV as the source of these videos (87% among those who passed attention filters), 7% domestic non-government media (7% among those who passed attention filters), 3.7% local state-controlled media (2.5% among those who passed attention filters), 2% foreign media (1% among those who passed attention filters), 0.5% other non-government sources (0% among those who passed attention filters), and 3.7% don’t know (2.5% among those who passed attention filters).

TABLE A7. TREATMENT EFFECTS ON POLICY PREFERENCES: SOE REFORM

Outcome variables	Agree to more market competition as opposed to state control (1, 2 or 3)			An index of market-oriented reform (mean = 0; sd = 1)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Treatment1: Market	0.332*** (0.076)	0.336*** (0.076)	0.307*** (0.078)	0.290*** (0.086)	0.292*** (0.086)
Treatment1: State	-0.344*** (0.082)	-0.354*** (0.081)	-0.363*** (0.082)	-0.194** (0.083)	-0.196** (0.083)	-0.199** (0.084)
Treatment2: Dove	-0.180** (0.079)	-0.190** (0.079)	-0.175** (0.080)	-0.122 (0.087)	-0.131 (0.087)	-0.131 (0.089)
Treatment2: Hawk	-0.159** (0.077)	-0.149* (0.077)	-0.157** (0.078)	-0.194** (0.085)	-0.182** (0.085)	-0.188** (0.086)
Female		-0.110 (0.068)	-0.100 (0.069)		-0.139** (0.069)	-0.149** (0.071)
Age/10		0.081 (0.350)	0.022 (0.352)		0.789** (0.372)	0.747** (0.371)
Age squared/100		0.005 (0.049)	0.012 (0.049)		-0.083 (0.053)	-0.077 (0.053)
High school		0.047 (0.104)	0.075 (0.106)		-0.126 (0.113)	-0.111 (0.115)
Junior college		0.207* (0.114)	0.222* (0.116)		0.088 (0.127)	0.074 (0.129)
College or above		0.241** (0.108)	0.246** (0.111)		0.147 (0.118)	0.147 (0.120)
Minority		0.158 (0.174)	0.131 (0.189)		-0.291* (0.166)	-0.360** (0.167)
Religious		-0.073 (0.083)	-0.043 (0.086)		-0.161* (0.088)	-0.161* (0.092)
Single		-0.088 (0.095)	-0.107 (0.098)		0.141 (0.099)	0.175* (0.101)
Having worked		0.067 (0.101)	0.054 (0.101)		-0.060 (0.104)	-0.051 (0.106)
Public sector worker		-0.023 (0.092)	-0.032 (0.092)		-0.177* (0.101)	-0.193* (0.104)
Being reported to		-0.228*** (0.081)	-0.238*** (0.084)		-0.108 (0.088)	-0.106 (0.089)
CCP member		-0.167* (0.101)	-0.140 (0.102)		0.049 (0.107)	0.028 (0.109)
Having used VPN		-0.029 (0.071)	-0.032 (0.072)		0.103 (0.075)	0.088 (0.076)
English proficiency		0.005 (0.037)	-0.000 (0.038)		0.074* (0.042)	0.067 (0.041)
Income category		0.006 (0.021)	0.019 (0.022)		0.006 (0.023)	0.013 (0.024)
Self-reported social class		-0.017 (0.018)	-0.017 (0.019)		-0.039** (0.020)	-0.034* (0.020)
Outcome Variable Mean: ~Full sample	2.165	2.165	2.165	0.000	0.000	0.000
~Treatment1 = Neutral	2.167	2.167	2.167	-0.035	-0.035	-0.035
~Treatment2 = Neutral	2.256	2.256	2.256	0.090	0.090	0.090
Control variables	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Provincial fixed effects	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Observations	830	830	830	823	823	823
R-squared	0.088	0.126	0.160	0.044	0.100	0.125

Note: Robust standard errors in parentheses. \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1.

**TABLE A8. TREATMENT EFFECTS ON POLICY PREFERENCES: SOUTH CHINA SEA**

Outcome variables	<i>Agree to policies that emphasize more on cooperation than sovereignty (1, 2 or 3)</i>			<i>An index of dovish foreign policy (mean = 0; sd = 1)</i>		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Treatment1: Market	-0.003 (0.061)	-0.013 (0.059)	-0.008 (0.059)	0.054 (0.083)	0.055 (0.084)
Treatment1: State	-0.000 (0.061)	-0.011 (0.060)	-0.024 (0.060)	-0.032 (0.083)	-0.037 (0.083)	-0.059 (0.084)
Treatment2: Dove	0.165*** (0.063)	0.149** (0.063)	0.155** (0.064)	0.189** (0.083)	0.166** (0.083)	0.178** (0.084)
Treatment2: Hawk	-0.318*** (0.058)	-0.307*** (0.059)	-0.307*** (0.059)	-0.266*** (0.087)	-0.288*** (0.088)	-0.264*** (0.090)
Female		-0.043 (0.050)	-0.045 (0.051)		0.175** (0.071)	0.164** (0.071)
Age/10		0.304 (0.288)	0.379 (0.293)		0.179 (0.387)	0.088 (0.396)
Age squared/100		-0.032 (0.041)	-0.042 (0.042)		-0.034 (0.055)	-0.021 (0.056)
High school		-0.057 (0.082)	-0.073 (0.082)		-0.193* (0.114)	-0.193* (0.113)
Junior college		0.053 (0.086)	0.020 (0.088)		-0.085 (0.121)	-0.069 (0.123)
College or above		0.128 (0.085)	0.108 (0.088)		0.048 (0.117)	0.069 (0.119)
Minority		-0.224** (0.091)	-0.277** (0.115)		-0.129 (0.150)	-0.191 (0.154)
Religious		0.057 (0.066)	0.038 (0.067)		-0.073 (0.093)	-0.125 (0.093)
Single		-0.086 (0.076)	-0.083 (0.076)		-0.006 (0.106)	-0.033 (0.109)
Having worked		0.005 (0.079)	0.007 (0.080)		0.037 (0.110)	0.025 (0.114)
Public sector worker		-0.109 (0.073)	-0.107 (0.074)		-0.139 (0.103)	-0.108 (0.103)
Being reported to		-0.033 (0.063)	-0.025 (0.065)		-0.140* (0.084)	-0.126 (0.087)
CCP member		-0.147** (0.073)	-0.143* (0.078)		-0.026 (0.117)	-0.007 (0.123)
Having used VPN		0.131** (0.053)	0.112** (0.056)		0.094 (0.075)	0.068 (0.078)
English proficiency		-0.011 (0.029)	-0.011 (0.030)		0.009 (0.043)	0.009 (0.044)
Income category		-0.011 (0.015)	-0.013 (0.015)		-0.018 (0.021)	-0.022 (0.022)
Self-reported social class		0.025* (0.015)	0.028* (0.016)		0.032 (0.020)	0.027 (0.021)
Outcome Variable Mean: ~Full sample	1.578	1.575	1.575	0.000	0.000	0.000
~Treatment1 = Neutral	1.573	1.573	1.573	-0.013	0.024	0.024
~Treatment2 = Neutral	1.630	1.630	1.630	-0.013	0.024	0.024
Control variables	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Provincial fixed effects	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Observations	830	830	830	825	825	825
R-squared	0.074	0.130	0.156	0.035	0.069	0.094

*Note:* Robust standard errors in parentheses. \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1.

TABLE A9. TREATMENT EFFECTS ON POLICY PREFERENCES: ROBUSTNESS CHECK

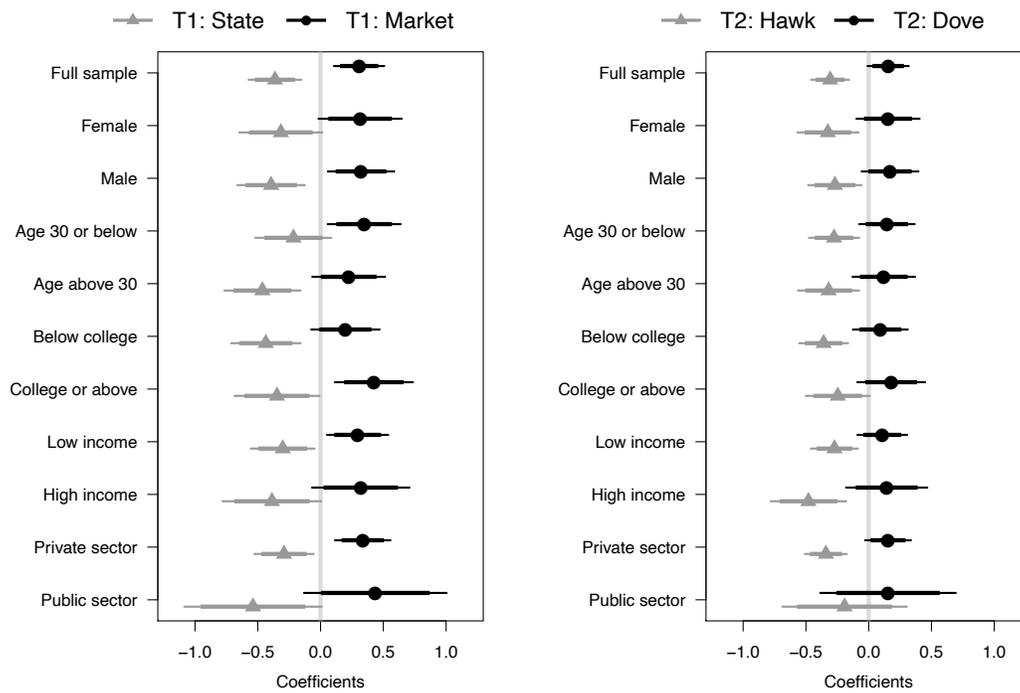
<i>Criterion</i>	<i>Full Sample</i>	<i>Identify</i>	<i>Pass age</i>	<i>Pass both</i>	<i>Agree policy</i>	<i>Agree policy</i>
		<i>media</i>	<i>consistency</i>		<i>toward SOE</i>	<i>toward the</i>
		<i>source as</i>	<i>filter and</i>	<i>manipulatio</i>	<i>reform is</i>	<i>South China</i>
		<i>National</i>	<i>not a</i>	<i>n checks</i>	<i>correct</i>	<i>Sea is</i>
		<i>TV Station</i>	<i>speeder</i>		<i>correct</i>	<i>correct</i>
<b>Panel A</b>						
	<b><i>An index of market-oriented reform (mean = 0; sd = 1)</i></b>					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Treatment1: Market	0.316*** (0.088)	0.373*** (0.097)	0.329*** (0.096)	0.325*** (0.101)	0.316*** (0.091)	0.297*** (0.087)
Treatment1: State	-0.199** (0.084)	-0.208** (0.092)	-0.191** (0.089)	-0.211** (0.095)	-0.212** (0.086)	-0.184** (0.085)
Treatment2: Dove	-0.131 (0.089)	-0.156 (0.099)	-0.171* (0.096)	-0.106 (0.101)	-0.083 (0.093)	-0.097 (0.089)
Treatment2: Hawk	-0.188** (0.086)	-0.279*** (0.094)	-0.215** (0.091)	-0.220** (0.096)	-0.180** (0.088)	-0.181** (0.085)
Outcome Variable Mean	0.000	0.011	0.016	0.030	-0.012	-0.020
Control variables	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Provincial fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	823	708	754	679	769	785
R-squared	0.125	0.144	0.130	0.124	0.127	0.127
<b>Panel B</b>						
	<b><i>An index of dovish foreign policy (mean = 0; sd = 1)</i></b>					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Treatment1: Market	0.047 (0.086)	0.073 (0.093)	0.037 (0.092)	0.050 (0.094)	0.069 (0.090)	0.047 (0.085)
Treatment1: State	-0.059 (0.084)	-0.043 (0.091)	-0.058 (0.091)	-0.023 (0.091)	-0.061 (0.087)	-0.046 (0.087)
Treatment2: Dove	0.178** (0.084)	0.208** (0.092)	0.181** (0.091)	0.140 (0.094)	0.191** (0.089)	0.202** (0.085)
Treatment2: Hawk	-0.264*** (0.090)	-0.286*** (0.097)	-0.291*** (0.096)	-0.353*** (0.098)	-0.262*** (0.093)	-0.247*** (0.089)
Outcome Variable Mean	0.000	0.001	-0.020	-0.016	-0.009	-0.017
Control variables	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Provincial fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	825	710	755	680	771	786
R-squared	0.094	0.119	0.103	0.122	0.098	0.099

**Note:** Robust standard errors in parentheses. \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1. A full set of individual characteristics and provincial fixed effects are being controlled for in all regressions.

## A.10. Subgroup Analysis

In Figure A1, the left panel plots the coefficients of pro-market (black) and pro-state (gray) conditions on the index of preference for market-oriented reform and the right panel plots the coefficients of dove (black) and hawk (gray) conditions on the index of preference for dovish foreign policy.

FIGURE A1. TREATMENT EFFECTS ON POLICY PREFERENCES: SUBGROUP ANALYSIS



(a) SOE Treatments (T1) on Market Index

(b) FP Treatments (T2) on Dove Index

## A.11. Treatment Effects on Other Outcomes

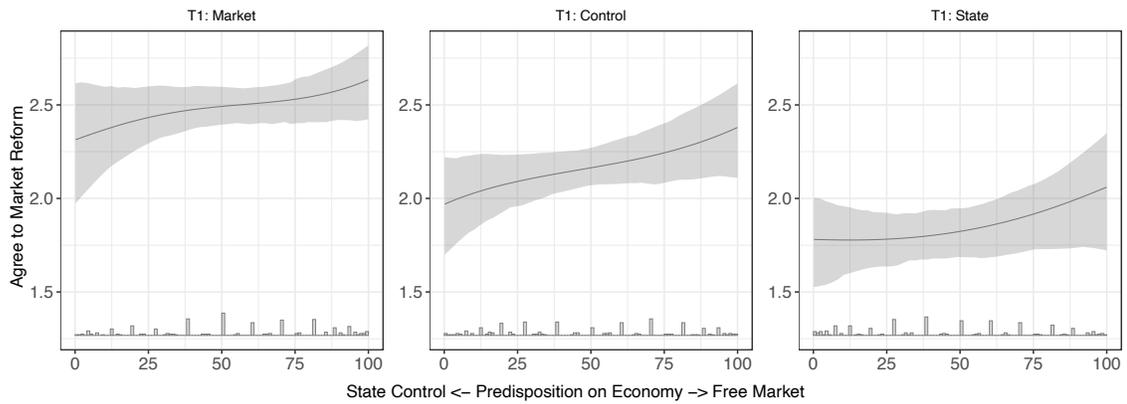
TABLE A10. TREATMENT EFFECTS ON OTHER OUTCOMES

	<i>Patriotism index</i>	<i>Nationalism index</i>	<i>Efficacy index</i>	<i>Trust in the central government [1, 10]</i>	<i>Trust in the local government [1, 10]</i>	<i>Self-reported complaint- making (0 or 1)</i>	<i>Self-reported voting in NPC (0 or 1)</i>	<i>Self-reported discussion on government policies (1, 2, 3 or 4)</i>
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Treatment1: Market	-0.156*	0.016	0.033	-0.169	-0.007	-0.006	0.013	0.047
	(0.087)	(0.085)	(0.071)	(0.166)	(0.178)	(0.034)	(0.031)	(0.050)
Treatment1: State	0.044	0.101	-0.050	0.084	0.069	-0.015	0.001	0.031
	(0.084)	(0.082)	(0.070)	(0.159)	(0.188)	(0.034)	(0.030)	(0.051)
Treatment2: Dove	0.018	0.042	0.129*	0.033	-0.036	-0.025	-0.034	0.076
	(0.085)	(0.080)	(0.070)	(0.159)	(0.187)	(0.034)	(0.031)	(0.053)
Treatment2: Hawk	0.056	0.134	0.062	0.080	0.119	-0.005	-0.040	0.087*
	(0.083)	(0.083)	(0.070)	(0.174)	(0.186)	(0.033)	(0.031)	(0.049)
Outcome Variable Mean	0.000	0.000	0.000	8.145	6.731	0.207	0.169	2.218
Control variables	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Provincial fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	828	823	822	830	830	830	830	830
R-squared	0.118	0.188	0.404	0.077	0.113	0.147	0.159	0.261

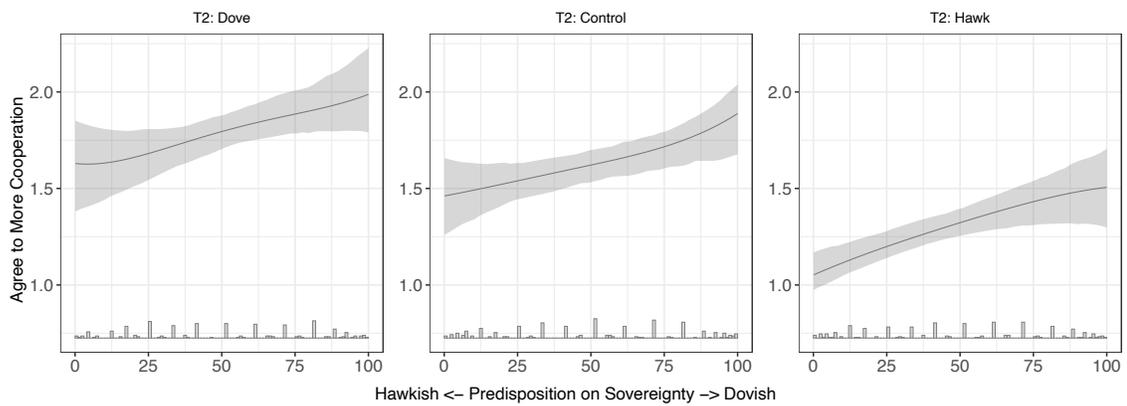
**Note:** Robust standard errors in parentheses. \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1. A full set of individual characteristics and provincial fixed effects are being controlled for in all regressions.

## A.12. Predicted Outcome based on the Treatments, Predisposition, and Political Knowledge

FIGURE A2. PREDICTED OUTCOME AND PREDISPOSITION GIVEN TREATMENT



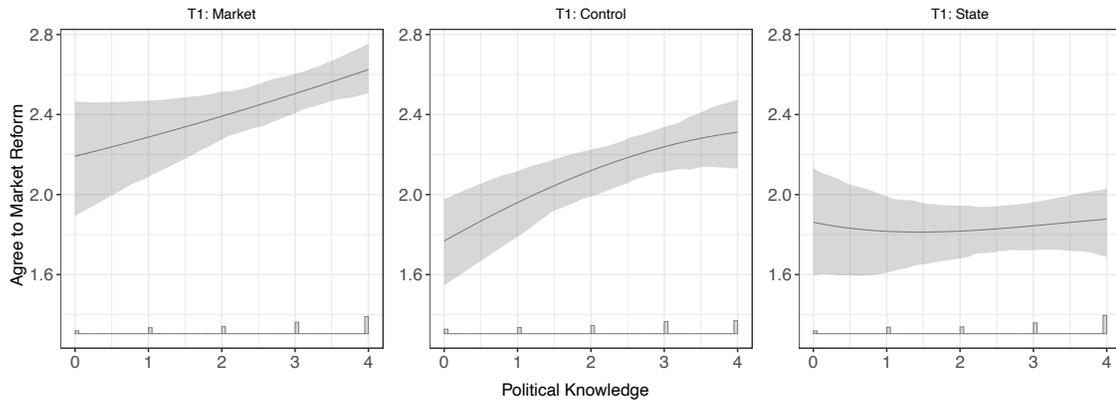
(a) Treatment 1 on Agreeing to Pro-Market Reform



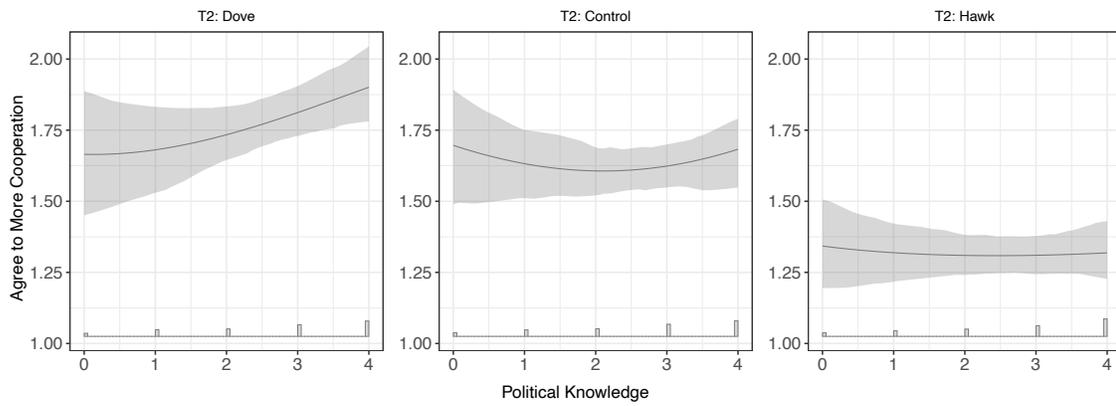
(b) Treatment 2 on Agreeing to More Cooperation

*Note:* The histogram at the bottom of each plot shows the number of respondents under each treatment condition at different values of predisposition (in percentile).

FIGURE A3. PREDICTED OUTCOME AND POLITICAL KNOWLEDGE GIVEN TREATMENT



(a) Treatment 1 on Agreeing to Pro-Market Reform

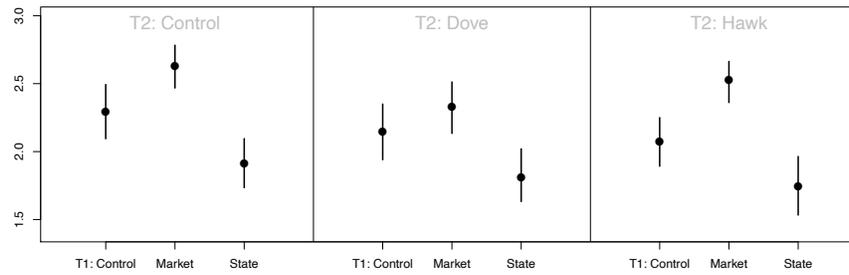


(b) Treatment 2 on Agreeing to More Cooperation

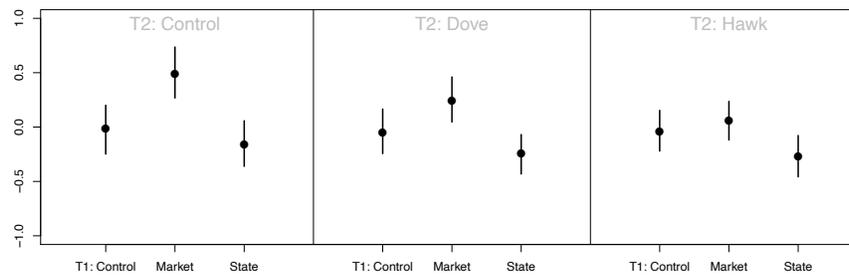
*Note:* The histogram at the bottom of each plot shows the number of respondents under each treatment condition at different values of political knowledge.

## A.13. Potential Interactive Effects of the Treatments

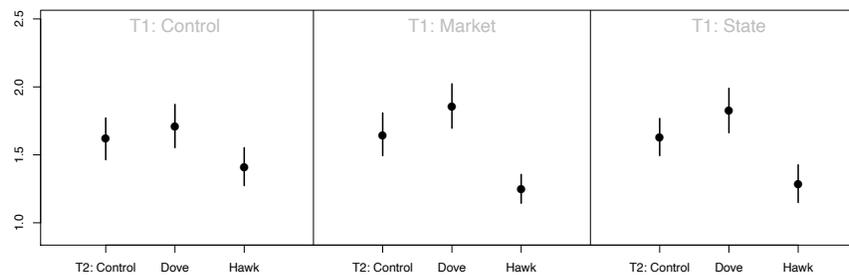
FIGURE A4. INTERACTIVE EFFECTS OF THE TREATMENTS



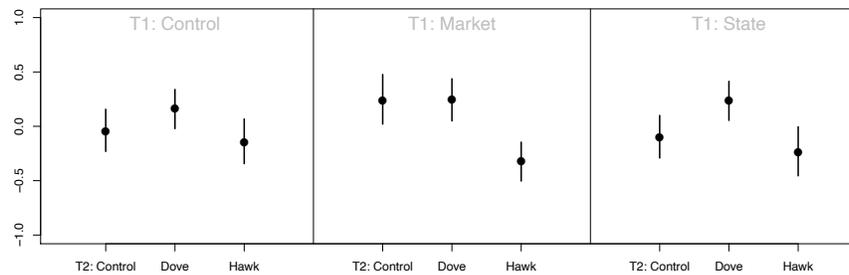
(a) Outcome: Agree to Market Reform



(b) Outcome: An Index of Market-oriented Reform



(c) Outcome: Agree to More Cooperation



(d) Outcome: An Index of Dovish Foreign Policy

*Note:* The above figures show the average outcomes in subgroups defined by Treatments 1 and 2. The confidence intervals are based on bootstrap of 1,000 times. The index of market-oriented reform and the index of dovish foreign policy are normalized to have mean 0 and standard deviation 1.

## A.14. 48-Hour Follow-up Results

Although the profiles of respondents who complete the follow-up survey appear to be mostly balanced across the treatment conditions (see Table A5), the potential for endogenous attrition, that the 37% of respondents who do not respond to the follow-up survey may have done so for reasons related to the first round of the survey, exists and could generate bias in the casual estimate of the follow-up survey. Therefore, results based on the follow-up sample should be taken with a grain of salt. Table A11 in the Appendix presents the results of manipulation checks conducted in the second survey. Columns (1) and (4) indicate that 48 hours after the videos were shown to the respondents, most of the respondents could correctly answer the factual question regarding the two issues. Moreover, columns (2), (3), (5), and (6) of Table A11 suggest that a significant proportion of them could still identify the main position of the two videos.

TABLE A11. MANIPULATION CHECK AFTER 48 HOURS

<i>Wave 2 Outcomes:</i>	<i>Pass SOE manipulation check (0 or 1)</i>	<i>Identify SOE media content as pro-market (0 or 1)</i>	<i>Identify SOE media content as pro-state (0 or 1)</i>	<i>Pass FP manipulation check (0 or 1)</i>	<i>Identify FP media content as dovish (0 or 1)</i>	<i>Identify FP media content as hawkish (0 or 1)</i>
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Treatment1: Market	0.001 (0.030)	0.386*** (0.062)	-0.047 (0.051)	0.027 (0.043)	-0.102* (0.062)	0.030 (0.042)
Treatment1: State	0.001 (0.029)	0.028 (0.065)	0.412*** (0.058)	0.031 (0.044)	-0.071 (0.065)	-0.042 (0.037)
Treatment2: Dovish	-0.010 (0.029)	-0.169*** (0.064)	0.107* (0.056)	0.052 (0.041)	0.294*** (0.064)	0.037 (0.031)
Treatment2: Hawkish	-0.022 (0.032)	-0.089 (0.065)	0.038 (0.055)	0.036 (0.045)	-0.113* (0.067)	0.215*** (0.045)
Outcome Variable Mean:						
~Full sample	0.944	0.463	0.302	0.890	0.497	0.116
~Treatment1 = Neutral	0.941	0.322	0.186	0.872	0.542	0.127
~Treatment2 = Neutral	0.957	0.547	0.274	0.872	0.427	0.034
Observations	353	353	353	353	353	353
R-squared	0.133	0.181	0.252	0.085	0.182	0.187

*Note:* Robust standard errors in parentheses. \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1.

Table A12 presents the estimated treatment effects on the full and recontact samples.

Table A11 shows that a significant proportion of respondents who answer the second wave survey can still identify the main position of the two videos.

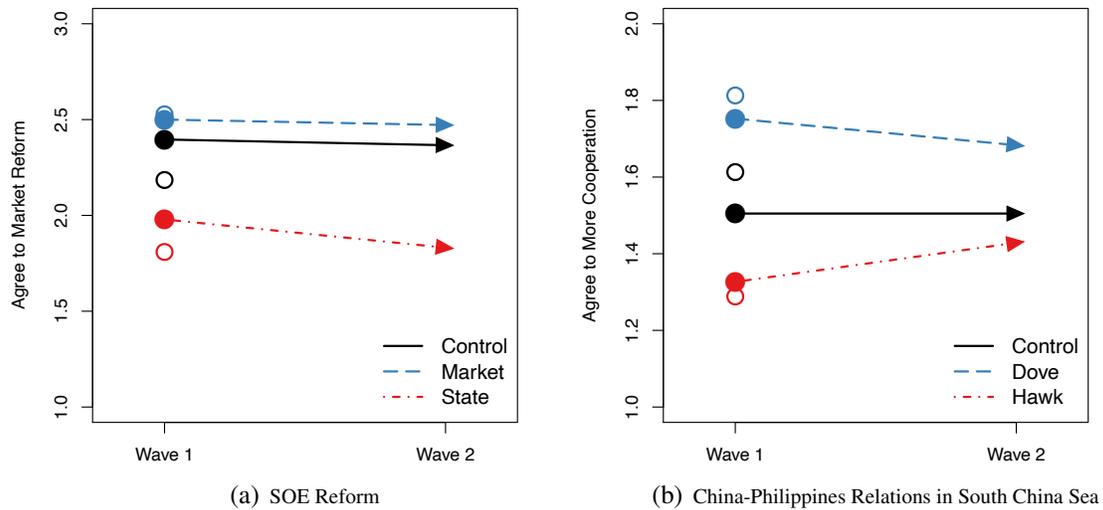
TABLE A12. TREATMENT EFFECTS ON POLICY PREFERENCES IN 48 HOURS

<i>Panel A</i>	<i>SOE Reform</i>					
	<i>Agree to more market competition as opposed to state control (1, 2 or 3)</i>			<i>An index of market-oriented reform (W1: mean = 0; sd = 1)</i>		
	<i>Full Sample: w1 outcome</i>	<i>Two-wave Subsample: w1 outcome</i>	<i>Two-wave Subsample: w2 outcome</i>	<i>Full Sample: w1 outcome</i>	<i>Two-wave Subsample: w1 outcome</i>	<i>Two-wave Subsample: w2 outcome</i>
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Treatment1: Market	0.307*** (0.078)	0.202* (0.118)	0.139 (0.117)	0.316*** (0.088)	0.317** (0.135)	0.022 (0.142)
Treatment1: State	-0.363*** (0.082)	-0.378*** (0.130)	-0.525*** (0.131)	-0.199** (0.084)	-0.287** (0.125)	-0.458*** (0.141)
Treatment2: Dovish	-0.175** (0.080)	-0.254** (0.125)	-0.238* (0.131)	-0.131 (0.089)	-0.116 (0.143)	-0.172 (0.139)
Treatment2: Hawkish	-0.157** (0.078)	-0.178 (0.126)	-0.192 (0.128)	-0.188** (0.086)	-0.037 (0.132)	-0.123 (0.139)
Outcome Variable Mean: ~Full Sample	2.165	2.274	2.218	0.000	0.040	0.128
~Treatment1 = Neutral	2.168	2.314	2.339	-0.035	0.023	0.254
~Treatment2 = Neutral	2.256	2.410	2.341	0.090	0.093	0.199
Control variables	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Provincial fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	830	353	353	823	351	350
R-squared	0.160	0.207	0.201	0.125	0.245	0.194
<i>Panel B</i>	<i>Foreign Policy</i>					
	<i>Agree to policies that emphasize more on cooperation than sovereignty (1, 2 or 3)</i>			<i>An index of dovish foreign policy (W1: mean = 0; sd = 1)</i>		
	<i>Full Sample: w1 outcome</i>	<i>Two-wave Subsample: w1 outcome</i>	<i>Two-wave Subsample: w2 outcome</i>	<i>Full Sample: w1 outcome</i>	<i>Two-wave Subsample: w1 outcome</i>	<i>Two-wave Subsample: w2 outcome</i>
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Treatment1: Market	-0.008 (0.059)	-0.071 (0.087)	0.049 (0.095)	0.047 (0.086)	0.076 (0.133)	-0.068 (0.141)
Treatment1: State	-0.024 (0.060)	-0.043 (0.095)	0.136 (0.101)	-0.059 (0.084)	-0.125 (0.138)	-0.065 (0.137)
Treatment2: Dovish	0.155** (0.064)	0.117 (0.093)	0.063 (0.101)	0.178** (0.084)	0.198 (0.138)	0.050 (0.138)
Treatment2: Hawkish	-0.307*** (0.059)	-0.162* (0.091)	-0.055 (0.102)	-0.264*** (0.090)	-0.053 (0.147)	-0.200 (0.149)
Outcome Variable Mean: ~Full Sample	1.578	1.541	1.533	0.000	-0.047	0.000
~Treatment1 = Neutral	1.573	1.568	1.474	-0.013	-0.066	0.001
~Treatment2 = Neutral	1.630	1.521	1.512	0.024	-0.136	-0.004
Control variables	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Provincial fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	830	353	353	825	352	352
R-squared	0.156	0.236	0.151	0.094	0.137	0.093

**Note:** Robust standard errors in parentheses. \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1. A full set of individual characteristics and provincial fixed effects are being controlled for in all regressions.

Figure A5 is a visual representation of the mean outcome variables for the survey containing the government media videos (Wave 1) and the 48-hour follow-up survey. The

FIGURE A5. PERSISTENCE OF THE TREATMENT EFFECTS



*Note:* The hollow dots represent outcome variable means in respective treatment groups for the full sample (Wave 1 only); outcome variable means in respective treatment groups for the subset of respondents who participated in both waves are represented by solid dots (Wave 1) and arrows (Wave 2), respectively.

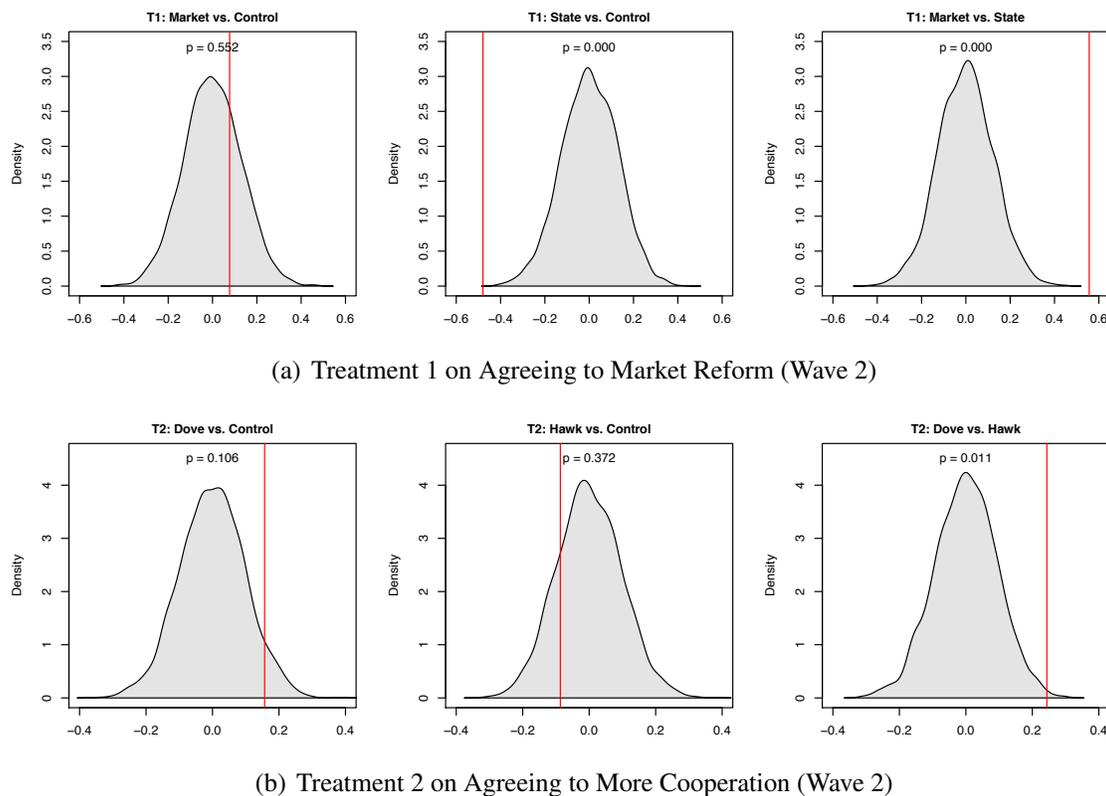
left panel of Figure A5 shows that the views from Wave 1 of respondents who also complete the 48-hour follow-up (solid circle) persist in the 48-hour follow-up (solid triangle). Respondents exposed to the Market condition (dashed blue line) remain strongly supportive of market-oriented reform of SOEs, while those exposed to the State condition (dot-dashed red line) remain less supportive of market-oriented SOE reform. The right panel of Figure A5 shows similar trends of persisting views for the China-Philippines relations videos, with those exposed to the Dove condition remaining more supportive of cooperation and those exposed to the Hawk condition less supportive of cooperation. These results are generally similar when we use the index of preferences for market-oriented reform and South China Sea (see Table A12 for full regression tables).

Due to power limitations, we conduct permutation tests on the effects of Treatment 1 and Treatment 2 against the sharp null that these treatments have zero effects on outcomes

measured in the follow-up survey. Figure A6 presents the results using direct questions as outcomes and Figure A7 shows the results using the composite indices.

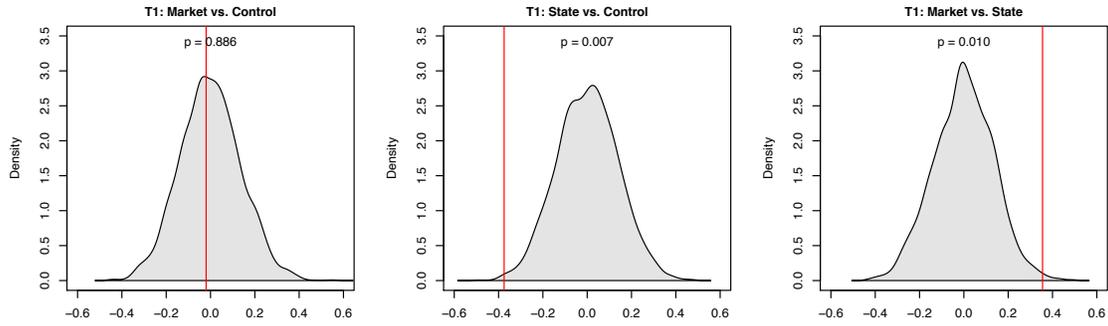
Figure A6 shows that we can reject the sharp null hypotheses of zero effects in comparisons between the State and Control conditions with Treatment 1, between the Market and State conditions with Treatment 1, and between the Dove and Hawk conditions with Treatment 2, with a high level of confidence (with  $p$ -values equal to 0.001, 0.000, and 0.012, respectively). These results indicate that, at least for some respondents, the treatments had a lasting effect up to 48 hours.

FIGURE A6. TREATMENT EFFECTS IN WAVE 2: RANDOMIZATION INFERENCE

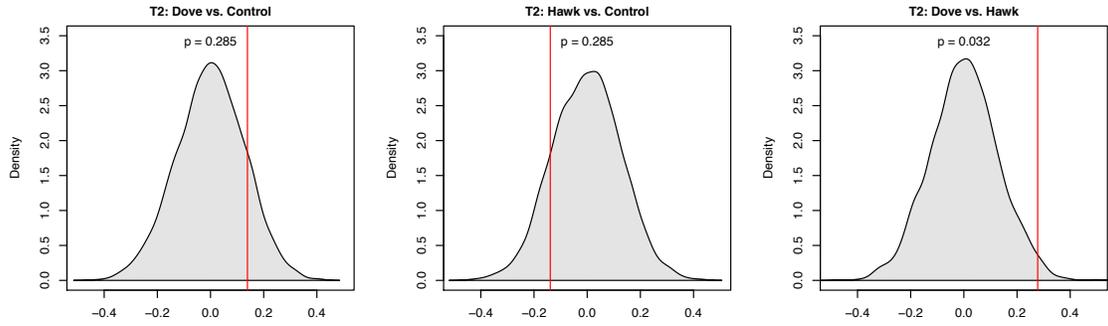


*Note:* The above figures show the results from permutation tests on the treatment effects on Wave 2 outcomes: agreeing to market-oriented SOE reform and agreeing to a more cooperative approach in China's dealing with the Philippines. For each outcome, we reshuffle Treatment 1 and Treatment 2 from the complete sample (Wave 1) without replacement 3,000 times. In each run, we repeatedly estimate a linear regression of a Wave 2 outcome on the reshuffled treatment indicators and save the estimated coefficients, based on which the density plots are drawn. The red vertical lines indicate coefficients using the real data.

FIGURE A7. TREATMENT EFFECTS IN WAVE 2: RANDOMIZATION INFERENCE



(a) Treatment 1 on Agreeing to Market Reform (Wave 2)

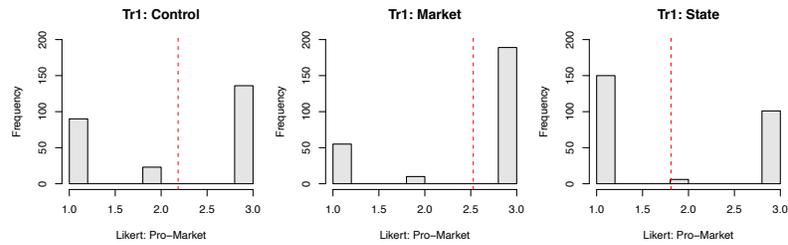


(b) Treatment 2 on Agreeing to More Cooperation (Wave 2)

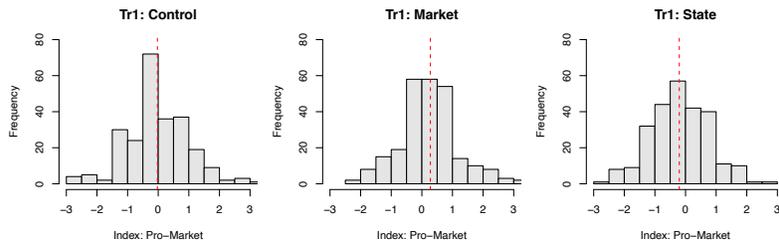
*Note:* The above figures show the results from permutation tests on the treatment effects on Wave-2 outcomes: an index of market-oriented SOE reform and an index of dovish foreign policy. For each outcome, we reshuffle Treatment 1 and Treatment 2 from the complete sample (Wave 1) without replacement for 3,000 times. In each run, we repeatedly estimate a linear regression of a Wave-2 outcome on the reshuffled treatment indicators and save the estimated coefficients, based on which the density plots are drawn. The red vertical lines indicate coefficients using the real data.

## A.15. Outcome Variable Distribution

FIGURE A8. OUTCOME VARIABLE DISTRIBUTION BY TREATMENT 1

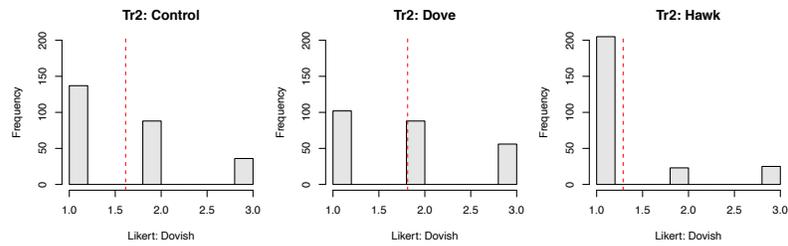


(a) Direct Question on a 3-Point Likert Scale

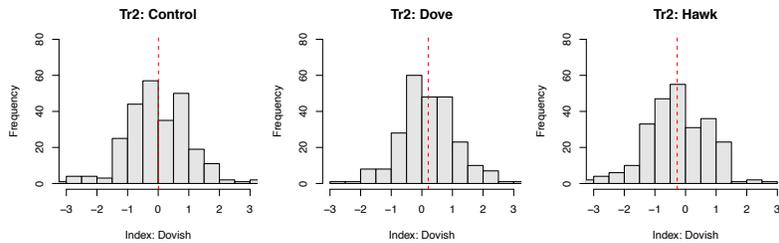


(b) Multi-Item Index

FIGURE A9. OUTCOME VARIABLE DISTRIBUTION BY TREATMENT 2



(a) Direct Question on a 3-Point Likert Scale



(b) Multi-Item Index

## A.16. Variable Definitions (next page)

TABLE A13. VARIABLE DEFINITIONS

Variable	Question	Options
<i>Individual Characteristics</i>		
Female	What is your gender?	1 = female; 0 = male.
Age	Which year were you born?	
Province	Which province is your permanent residency?	
Education	What is your highest level of education attainment?	1 = primary school; 2 = secondary school; 3 = vocational middle school; 4 = high school; 5 = junior college; 6 = college; 7 = master's; 8 = Ph.D.
Minority	What is your ethnicity?	0 = Han; 1 = otherwise.
Single	What is your marital status?	0 = married; 1 = otherwise.
English proficiency [1, 5]	What is your level of English proficiency?	1 = do not speak English at all; 2 = can say a few sentences; 3 = can speak and read a little; 4 = can manage conversations, but not fluently; 5 = can speak fluently.
Income category [1, 10]	What is your total disposable income, including salaries, stipends, and allowances?	10 categories, from low to high.
Religious	Do you have a religion?	1 = yes; 0 = no.
CCP member	What is your political affiliation?	1 = Chinese Communist Party; 0 = otherwise.
Self-reported social class [0, 10]	What do you think is your social class on a 0-10 scale?	0 = the bottom of the society; 1 = the top of the society.
Having worked	Have you ever had a full-time job?	1 = yes; 0 = no.
Public sector worker	What is the nature of your employer?	1 = SOEs or the government; 0 = otherwise.
Being reported to	In your job, are there any people who report to you?	1 = yes; 0 = no.
<i>Questions Measuring Predisposition</i>		
Pre-disposition on market economy: component 1	Privately-run schools should be restricted.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Pre-disposition on market economy: component 2	Private capital should be encouraged to set up private hospitals to provide convenient and high-quality services to those willing to pay high prices.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Pre-disposition on market economy: component 3	Private ownership and sale of land should be allowed.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Pre-disposition on market economy: component 4	When the market price of grain is low, the government should purchase grain from farmers at a price higher than the market price.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Pre-disposition on market economy: component 5	People should be allowed to freely exchange foreign currency.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Pre-disposition on market economy: component 6	Chinese enterprises' overseas investment should not be solely for profit, but should be guided by national strategies.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Pre-disposition on market economy: component 7	The defense industry should be open to private capital.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Pre-disposition on national sovereignty: component 1	The government should prohibit artists who support Taiwan independence and Hong Kong independence from performing in the Chinese mainland.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Pre-disposition on national sovereignty: component 2	Foreign journalists who regularly publish negative reports about China should be allowed to enter China.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.

Pre-disposition on national sovereignty: component 3	China's core diplomatic strategy should be to break through the containment of China by Western countries led by the United States.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Pre-disposition on national sovereignty: component 4	When military conditions are sufficient, China can consider unifying Taiwan by force.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Pre-disposition on national sovereignty: component 5	There should be a statutory holiday to commemorate Chairman Mao's birthday.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Pre-disposition on national sovereignty: component 6	Those who publicly disrespect the national flag and national anthem should be subjected to criminal punishment.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Pre-disposition on national sovereignty: component 7	Chinese citizens should be allowed to hold foreign citizenship.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.

*Questions regarding the SOE reform*

Pass SOE manipulation check (W1)	According to the video, what is the percentage of assets controlled by the SOEs in China?	1 = 30%; 0 = 20%; 40%; 50%; do not know.
Pass SOE manipulation check (W2)	What is the video that you saw recently mainly concerned about?	1 = SOE reform; 0 = reform of private enterprises; reform of joint ventures; do not know.  1 = The key to the SOE reform is top-level design; state-led SOE reform can be successful. 2 = The key to the SOE reform is marketization and adhering to the principle of making SOEs competitive and independent market players. 3 = Many problems exist in the SOE reform; we should be ready for a long and difficult battle.
SOE media content	What is the main content of the video?	0 = Completely incorrect; 1 = a little bit incorrect; 2 = in general correct; 3 = completely correct.  1 = SOEs should be bigger and stronger; the SOE reform should be primarily led by the government; the key to its success is top-level design. 2 = Marketization is the key to the SOE reform; we should allow inefficient SOEs to be driven out by the market. 3 = SOEs are state-owned assets; as long as the value of these assets is preserved and increases, any measure is justifiable.
Agree policy toward SOE reform is correct (0, 1, 2 or 3)	Do you think the policy toward the SOE reform described in the video is correct?	
Agree to market reform (1, 2 or 3)	Which of the following is closest to your opinion toward the SOE reform?	
Index of market-oriented reform: component 1	Both SOE and private enterprises are pillars of the Chinese economy; therefore, there is no need to give special treatment to SOEs.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Index of market-oriented reform: component 2	SOEs bears a lot of policy burden; therefore, it is totally reasonable for the state to support them with (special) policies.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Index of market-oriented reform: component 3	The goal is to have the market to play a decisive role in resource allocation; hence, to maintain a high or low proportion of SOEs in the economy is not the goal.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Index of market-oriented reform: component 4	Private enterprises contribute 80% of the employment in China; therefore, they need more support than the SOEs.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Index of market-oriented reform: component 5	Sectors related to national security and important to the national economy and people's livelihoods must be controlled by state-owned enterprises.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Index of market-oriented reform: component 6	The government should not use fiscal resources to give subsidies to companies that are on the verge of bankruptcy but hire many employees.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Index of market-oriented reform: component 7	The government should use various measures to help SOEs go out and have them hold advantageous positions in international competition.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.

Index of market-oriented reform: component 8	For government procurement projects, SOEs should receive more preferable treatment than private enterprises.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Index of market-oriented reform: component 9	The government should introduce market competition to sectors in which SOEs are monopolies in order to strengthen the dynamism of SOEs.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.

*Questions regarding the South China Sea*

Pass FP manipulation check	The previous video concerns the relationship between China and what country?	1 = the Philippines; 0 = Vietnam, the United State; Indonesia; do not know.
FP media content	What is the main content of the video?	1 = The irresponsible attitudes of the Philippines on the issue of the South China Sea makes the Sino-Philippines relations increasingly tense. 2 = The common interests between China and the Philippines are bigger than the disputes; the main theme of the relations is cooperation. 3 = The China-Philippines relations fluctuate and the key factor is the issue of the South China Sea.
Agree policy toward South China Sea is correct (0, 1, 2 or 3)	Do you think the policy toward the South China Sea described in the video is correct?	0 = Completely incorrect; 1 = a little bit incorrect; 2 = in general correct; 3 = completely correct.
Agree to more cooperation (1, 2 or 3)	Which of the following is closest to your opinion toward the South China Sea?	1 = China's sovereignty and territorial integrity is sacred and inviolable; China cannot concede an inch on the issue of sovereignty. 2 = The international situations are changeable; the way China handles the China-Philippines relations should change with environments and situations; 3 = In order to maintain peace and stability of the region, China should table sovereign disputes with the Philippines and the two countries should jointly extract natural resources.
Index of dovish foreign policy: component 1	On the issue of South China Sea, sovereignty is the premise; only under this premise, cooperation on economic and trade issues can be discussed.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Index of dovish foreign policy: component 2	Economic interest is an important component of the national interest. (We) should table the disputes on sovereignty and maximize economic interests.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Index of dovish foreign policy: component 3	To maintain a long-term stable cooperative relationship with the ASEAN countries including the Philippines is more important than de facto control of a few islands.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Index of dovish foreign policy: component 4	Economy is a short-term interest and territory is a long-term interest. (We) should seize any opportunity to strengthen the control of islands in the South China Sea.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Index of dovish foreign policy: component 5	The government should safeguard national unity and territorial integrity through diplomatic and economic measures as much as possible to avoid military conflicts.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Index of dovish foreign policy: component 6	If it is in the nation's interest, China can unilaterally impose economic or trade sanctions on other countries.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Index of dovish foreign policy: component 7	The government should attach as much importance to the development military power as it does to the development of the economy.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Index of dovish foreign policy: component 8	When faced with military conflicts, China should not use preemptive military tactics.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Index of dovish foreign policy: component 9	China should forgo the diplomatic principle of "to hide one's capacities and bide one's time" and defend its rights more resolutely on international platforms.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Media source	What do you think is the source of the two videos?	1 = CCTV; 0 = local TV news; Internet news; others.

<i>Political knowledge</i>		
Political knowledge 1	Which of the following cities is not a provincial capital?	1 = Dalian; 0 = Nanning, Dalian, Wuhan, Nanjing, No idea.
Political knowledge 2	Which of the following countries is not a permanent member of the UN Security Council?	1 = Germany; 0 = United States, China, Russia, UK, No idea.
Political knowledge 3	During the past 5 years, what is roughly the average real GDP growth rate of China?	1 = 7%; 0 = 5%, 13%, 20%, No idea.
Political knowledge 4	Which of the following is the current Prime Minister of the Great Britain?	1 = Teresa May; 0 = Tony Blair, David Cameron, Jeremy Corbin, No idea.
<i>Other indicators</i>		
Patriotism: component 1	I am happy that I am a Chinese.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Patriotism: component 2	In general, China is better than most other countries.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Patriotism: component 3	When other people criticize China, I feel that they are criticizing me.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Patriotism: component 4	Even if I can choose to become a citizen of another country, I prefer to be a Chinese citizen.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Patriotism: component 5	I feel proud and lucky to be Chinese.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Nationalism: component 1	Unless China achieves modernization, foreign countries will manage to exploit China.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Nationalism: component 2	The modern diplomatic history of China is a history of China being victimized and beaten by foreign powers.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Nationalism: component 3	"The century of humiliation" describes not only China's past, but also how foreigners treat China today.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Nationalism: component 4	Foreign criticisms of China always have ulterior motives and we as Chinese should refute them resolutely.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Nationalism: component 5	China should be the leader of East Asia because of its long history and splendid civilization.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Trust in the central government	Do you trust the central government?	10-point Likert scale. 1 = not trust at all; 10 = trust completely.
Trust in the local government	Do you trust the local government?	10-point Likert scale. 1 = not trust at all; 10 = trust completely.
Efficacy: component 1	People like me do not have the ability to evaluate government performance.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Efficacy: component 2	Government officials do not care about opinions of people like me.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Efficacy: component 3	The government can timely respond to opinions and suggestions of ordinary citizens.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Efficacy: component 4	Politics is too complicated for people like me to understand.	5-point Likert scale. 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree.
Having used VPN	Have you used a VPN during the past year?	1 = yes; 0 = otherwise.
Complaint-making	Have you provided suggestions to the government using various channels during the past year?	1 = yes; 0 = no.
Voting in local NPC elections	Have you voted in a local NPC election during the past year?	1 = yes; 0 = no.
Discuss government policies	Do you discuss topics concerning government policies?	1 = almost never; 2 = rarely; 3 = often; 4 = almost every day.