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Cayleigh Jackson April 9, 2020

Repression and Response: A Study of Citizen Attitudes in China

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Abstract

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How does the use of repression affect the overall public attitudes of citizens toward their government? I propose that repression will change a citizen's private attitudes and public attitudes differently. Publicly, attitudes will change to be *more* supportive of the government after repression due to fear and preference falsification, while privately, citizens will be more pessimistic and less supportive of the government, even if they are unwilling to publicly express that sentiment. I test for these attitude changes using a difference-in-differences design that accounts for preference falsification, looking at the aftermath of two specific repressive incidents in China in 2015. My overall results are mixed, with some support that citizens do publicly express more direct government support after repression.

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I. Introduction

How does the use of repression affect the overall public attitudes of citizens toward their government? Public protest and expression of grievances serve as signals of dissatisfaction for those in power, allowing leaders to take note of constituent feelings and resolve dissent. When dissent is harshly repressed, it cuts off the potential for peaceful resolution without meaningfully addressing the original grievance, logically creating deeper dissatisfaction. It follows that approval for the government should fall in the aftermath of a repressive incident.

However, the context of repression complicates this logic. Harsh repression is most often employed by authoritarian regimes, and studies of nondemocratic regimes have long emphasized the importance of the state having a strong coercive capacity, linking it to an authoritarian regime's longevity (Belin 2004), prospects for survival (Levistsky and Way 2010), and ability to remain stable after a loss in legitimacy has occurred (Skocpal 1979). Repression here is a population control tactic, aimed at stifling dissent—and empirical evidence would suggest that it is often effective in doing so. This creates a divide between internally and externally expressed views: is repression so effective at stifling dissent that citizens are no longer willing to express further disapproval toward the government? If that is the case, what happens to publicly expressed attitudes after repression, and are these public attitudes indicative of the respondent's true feelings?

In practice, it is quite difficult to answer this question. While there are a number of survey methods designed to discover views respondents are hesitant to express, most authoritarian regimes are unlikely to approve independent surveys of this nature, especially surveys surrounding sensitive topics like government approval. There are also ethical challenges of setting up an experiment where "repression" is the treatment or identifying and isolating those

who have been a victim of it for study. Much of the work that surrounds citizen reaction to repression bypasses attitudes altogether, focusing instead on mobilization—i.e. those likely to engage in a backlash protest (Aytac, Schiumerini, and Stokes 2017), or join a terrorist group (Bueno de Mesquita 2005) after a repressive incident occurs. Other work focuses on determining which citizens will mobilize against an authoritarian regime and when (Aldama, Vasquez-Cortez, and Young 2019; Pearlman 2016). Because dissenting attitudes are a necessary precursor to dissenting action, and mobilization is an observable occurrence, these concrete actions are often used as a proxy to represent overall citizen attitudes in response to repression. However, studies of this nature only focus on the few outspoken, and do not capture the attitudes of those who cannot overcome coordination or collective action problems enough to take concrete action. As such, there are still significant holes in how attitudes after repression have been catalogued, and filling that gap is the motivation for this study.

In this thesis, I build off of previous work on preference falsification in China (Jiang and Yang 2016) and apply it to two specific instances of repression in modern Chinese protest. Taking advantage of a highly-protested financial scam that took place during the time a nationwide social survey in China was conducted, I employ a differences-in-differences design to examine changes in citizen attitudes from survey data before and after the repressive response was employed, using the date of the repression as the "treatment". I hypothesize that due to the fear-response of repression and the need to falsify preferences when in a state of fear, citizens will publicly proclaim stronger support for the government in direct survey questions about government support, while simultaneously expressing the discontent that repression causes via more indirect questions. In doing this, I can provide a look into the use of repression as a tactic

from a new angle—capturing not just the effect of repression on the few who mobilize, but also the effect it has on everyday people, in both overt and subtle ways.

I choose to focus on China in my analysis for a handful of reasons. First, protest in China has a large and robust body of literature surrounding it, and protest in modern China continues to be a growing and relevant phenomenon. When the Chinese Ministry of Public Security previously released statistics on "mass incidents[1]", it showed a stark trend upward—with 8,700 reported incidents in 1993, 32,000 in 1999, all the way up to 87,000 in 2005. After 2005, potentially due to public image concerns from cataloguing this trend, the Ministry of Public Security stopped releasing statistics on mass incidents altogether. Some Chinese scholars have continued to make their own unofficial estimates, and there is general consensus that the number of daily incidents in China has continued to trend higher—some estimating there were as many as 180,000 incidents in 2010 alone (Sun 2011).

Second, the use of repression as a response to protest is a particularly interesting puzzle in China. The act of protesting itself is not prohibited; however, many of China's laws include vague caveats that grant the government legitimacy to crack down on protests. Article 105 of the Criminal Law of the People's Republic of China, for example, outlines punishments for "[w]hoever organizes, plots, or acts to subvert the political power of the state and overthrow the socialist system". Article 50 of China's 2007 Emergency Response Law frames 'mass incidents' as a type of public security emergency, and outlines that during incidents "endangering public security", police will be immediately sent out to "take the appropriate compulsory measures according to law to restore social order as soon as possible". Yet despite having the capabilities and legal framework to crack down on unrest and popular protest, the Chinese government

[1] The term for "mass incidents", *quntixing shijian,* is broad enough to include all types of protest, including petitions, sit-ins, rallies, traffic-blocking, riots, etc.

frequently does not do so. Sometimes protests are tolerated or even given state-sponsored media coverage. Sometimes concessions are made, and grievances are addressed. Sometimes the government *does* choose to crack down on a protest, forcibly dispersing crowds and arresting participants. A 2019 study that broadly categorized the state response to 2,931 protests in China between 2006 and 2017 found that repression was used 49.66% of the time, while negotiation, downplaying of the protest, or no response made up the rest of the instances (Wang et. al 2019)—nearly a perfectly even split.

Given China's unique circumstance of having large numbers of protest that are both regularly repressed and regularly not repressed, I can use China's case to isolate and examine repression when it is used compared to when it is not, better assessing the effect of a repressive response. By focusing on citizen attitudes—in addition to contributing to a gap in the literature on authoritarian regimes and repression—I also capture sentiment toward the government that provides valuable insight into the citizen-state relationship in China. In a time when China's power and influence on the global stage is rapidly expanding, better understanding how repression is perceived in the Chinese context, as well as unraveling how citizens are affected by responses to growing unrest in China, is a valuable and timely pursuit. Studying events within a single country also allows me to control for a number of confounders, creating results with a higher validity that may be able to be generalized to other similar regimes.

This thesis will be organized as follows: I first provide a brief overview into the literature on repression in authoritarian regimes and preference falsification. Next, I lay out my theoretical framework that highlights the effects of repression and how I expect these effects to be reflected in citizen attitudes across two frontiers ("expressed support" and "actual support"). I then provide broad context for unrest and government responses in China, covering both popular

trends and major findings of previous scholarly work. Afterward, I provide case context for the repressive incident I am using as a treatment, then discuss the data and methods I use to assess citizen attitude change. I lastly discuss my results, draw conclusions, and provide insight into fruitful areas for potential future research in this field.

II. Literature Review

The Use of Repression

For authoritarian regimes, repression of dissent is an indispensable tactic to increase the cost of collective action (Tilly 1978) and is linked to the regime's overall survival and success in the long run (Tilly 1978; Skocpol 1979; Bellin 2004; Levitsky and Way 2010). Repression is a form of "costly signaling" (Li and Elfstrom 2020), in which the government bears the cost of using excessive force in order to signal its determination and ability to maintain complete control. It creates fear that can protect the regime from potential future action—dissidents in a state of fear both express less dissent and are more pessimistic about the possibility that other dissidents will protest (Young 2018).

States with a very strong coercive capacity often have an incentive to overreact to minor threats in a phenomenon similar to economist Reinhard Selton's "chain store paradox" —a game theory model that explains how a chain store will do better in the long run if it purposely loses profit in order to kill competition in some cities, so long as that show of strength dissuades rival stores from challenging the chain store in other cities (1978). For an authoritarian regime, reacting with disproportionately heavy repression in one instance can dissuade future dissenters from bothering to mobilize in future instances; this avoidance of future dissent can be instrumental in keeping the long-term stability of the regime. This sentiment has even been

expressed in the Chinese context—Lee Kuan Yew, the first prime minister of Singapore, once famously quoted Deng Xiaoping saying in the aftermath of Tiananmen Square: "If I have to shoot 200,000 students to save China from another 100 years of disorder, so be it."

However, repression does not always work in the ways intended. Using excessive force against civilians can lead to economic hardship in the form of being cut off from trading partners and incurring sanctions (Almedia 2003); it also carries a risk that protestors will respond with a tactical escalation, creating a "protest spectacle" that is even more disadvantageous to the state (O'Brien and Deng 2013). The body of work that suggests that repression quells protests (Hibbs 1973; Tilly 1978) is rivaled in size with literature that suggests repression backfires to create more dissent (Hess and Martin 2006; Francisco 1996, 2004).

Studies on repression and its aftermath often focus on observable choices—either the choice of the government to use repression knowing that other less-costly options might be available (Greitens 2016), or the choices of citizens responding to repression by either backing down or escalating via backlash protests (Stephen and Chenoweth 2008). Some literature suggests that the repression of peaceful protests is a foundational part of causing peaceful protest to turn violent (Lichbach 1989; Hess and Martin 2006). Repression, by nature, can make martyrs of resistance figures and create focal points for resistance, and these scholars have used that phenomena to explain how anti-government sentiment is strengthened by repression, pointing to increases in violence after repression has been employed.

A smaller subset of literature in this field looks to emotional theories or the psychological effects of repression on citizens. Some work looks at the effects of emotion as it relates to social protest movements more generally (Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta 2001), while others use emotions as the foundation for examining certain phenomena or movements, such as explaining

why men rebel (Gurr 2017) or the emotional microfoundations of the Arab uprisings (Pearlman 2013). Only a very small group of work examines emotion in regards to repression specifically—Lauren Young's work uses an experiment to test the physiological effects of fear on dissenters, finding that being placed in a state of fear makes dissenters less likely to express their dissent, be more risk averse, and be more pessimistic about whether other dissenters will step up to protest (2018).

I build my theory off of these concepts of the emotional effects of repression and the state of fear in everyday citizens that repression causes. I hypothesize that due to the effects being in a state of fear is demonstrated to have on action and attitudes, the aftermath of repression should create notable changes in public attitudes expressed via social surveys as well. Given the unique context for public expression of opinion in authoritarian regimes, I frame the attitude changes I expect to find within the concept of preference falsification.

Preference Falsification

"Preference falsification", as was coined by Timur Kuran in 1997, is defined as "the act of deliberately misrepresenting one's genuine views and wants under perceived social pressure". As it relates to survey literature, preference falsification has been found to be prevalent in numerous situations, such as hiding attitudes toward minority groups (Gilens, Sniderman, & Kuklinski, 1998; Kane, Craig, & Wald, 2004) or falsely reporting doing socially desirable activities such as voting (Bernstein, Chadha, and Montjoy 2001). The stronger the perceived pressure to say the "correct" answer, the more likely a respondent is to falsify their response.

In authoritarian regimes, this pressure comes from the state and the need to express support for it. Ethnographic works in authoritarian regimes support this idea, such as Vaclav Havel's

work in Eastern Europe (1990) or Lisa Weeden's work in Syria (1999)—both of which discuss how citizens privately did not believe claims about their leaders or the government, but publicly revered them. This case-study evidence, combined with the empirical knowledge that authoritarian regimes often monitor what their citizens say and do and punish those who speak out (Linz 2000), creates strong evidence that preference falsification is likely a widespread phenomenon in authoritarian regimes.

However, the literature on preference falsification as it applies to authoritarian regimes is still small. In democratic regimes, preference falsification can often be detected on a large scale through the use of survey experiments—but doing experiments of this nature in an authoritarian regime is much more difficult. Detecting preference falsification in regard to repression, a carefully controlled authoritarian tactic that has already been proven to have a fear effect on citizens, is even more so. Knowing this, I use a framework put forth by Jiang and Yang (2016), who conducted one of the few studies on preference falsification in an authoritarian regime, to construct a theory that can be tested using preexisting survey data. This allows me to contribute to the literature of both repression and preference falsification in authoritarian regimes while avoiding the logistical challenge of conducting an independent survey experiment.

III. Theory

Little work has been done to empirically assess changes in citizen attitude after repression. However, the existing literature surrounding repression shows with a handful of key takeaways: (1) repression can increase dissent and dissatisfaction, causing mobilization toward violence (Hess and Martin 2006, Aytac, Schiumerini, and Stokes 2017), (2) repression can cause fear in everyday citizens—a response that may make them less likely to express dissent and more

pessimistic about the probability of others mobilizing (Young 2018), and (3) repression most often occurs in an authoritarian context, where citizens feel pressure to falsify their preferences, such as extolling leaders they don't actually support (Havel 1990, Weeden 1999).

Combining all of these findings, I propose a theory that repression will change citizen's private attitudes and public attitudes differently. Due to the fear response that repression causes and the pressure to falsify preferences in an authoritarian regime, I propose that publicly, citizen attitudes will change to be *more* supportive of the government in the aftermath of a repressive incident. However, due to the evidence that repression can cause citizens to escalate their actions—indicating greater citizen discontent—I also hypothesize that privately, citizens will be more pessimistic and less supportive of the government after repression, even if they are unwilling to publicly express this sentiment. Therefore, experiencing repression should cause a dual attitude change in citizens—one reflected by their public attitudes, and one reflected by their private attitudes.

I also propose that this attitude change should not only occur in the people who first-hand experienced the repression, but also in the general public surrounding the incident. The primary idea for this comes Haifeng Huang's work on propaganda. Huang, whose research also focuses on the Chinese context, maintains that the purpose and signaling power of propaganda comes from the government's ability to maintain a unified message and impose it on the citizens—the actual contents of the propaganda are irrelevant. Even if the propaganda itself convinces no one, the signal of a government's organizational ability and strength it grants by simply existing is enough to influence citizens who are exposed to it (2015). Following this logic, I claim that the utilization of overt repression in response to a protest—regardless of the issue or ultimate outcome of the protest—is enough to influence citizen attitudes. In the same ways that the

signaling power of propaganda extends beyond its actual message, the effect of publicly using repression should extend beyond just those concerned about the actual protest issue. Anyone in the locality who is able to perceive a repressive response employed by the local government should have their attitude impacted by that response.

The theoretical framework for my empirical analysis, as well as the skeleton for much of this theory itself, comes from Junyan Jiang and Dali Yang's work on preference falsification in China. Their 2016 paper uses social survey data in China from a time of a political purge, employing tactics to assess survey question responses and determine respondent's levels of "expressed support" and "actual support" toward the government in the midst of the scandal. "Expressed support" is determined via questions that *directly* ask respondents about political support for the state, while "actual support" is determined from a subset of questions that are less direct and sensitive, but still reflect attitudes toward the state. During the politically contentious time, Jiang and Yang find that increased expressed support coincided with a simultaneous decrease in actual support.

I argue that repression in response to a protest will have a similar effect on survey data responses. A public attitude change can be represented by these direct, straightforward questions. Citizens in a state of fear will be unwilling to express bold claims against the government in public surveys, and therefore will falsify their true feelings of discontent after repression. This creates an expected convergence toward higher expressed support for the government on direct survey questions.

Yet my theory also proposes a simultaneous change in private attitudes. Like Jiang and Yang, I can use vaguer and less sensitive questions to try to capture a respondent's true private attitude. Since I am expecting find higher private dissatisfaction, there should be a decrease in

support on questions that are less direct and are freer for citizens to answer without falsifying their preferences. Therefore, my main hypotheses are:

> H1: *In the aftermath of unrest responded to with repression, survey respondents from the region affected will express an increase in expressed support toward the government.*
>
> H2: *In the aftermath of unrest responded to with repression, survey respondents from the region affected will express a decrease in actual support toward the government.*

To test this, I perform a double difference-in-differences study that assesses attitudes before and after two specific instances of repression in China. These two incidents occurred at the start of a long series of protests to a financial fraud scandal in 2015, in the cities of Yunnan and Shanghai, respectively. I compare attitude changes before and after the repression in groups separated by location—looking at those inside the locality where the repression occurred and those outside of it. This allows me to isolate the effect being able to perceive an act of repression has on general citizen attitudes.

However, to fully understand the context of these incidents as well as how this general theory applies to the Chinese case, it is important to have a strong conceptual understanding of unrest in China and the literature that surrounds it more broadly. In the next section, I provide brief contextual background for modern Chinese protest.

IV. Context

Unrest in China

The study of protest in contemporary China overall has had a significant shift since the 1980s. Prior to then, the study of unrest and contention in communist China was dominated by

structuralist, historical studies that focused on large-scale events, or "massive eruptions" (O'Brien, 2008). The last of this "big event" style literature largely surrounded the famous student protest movement in Tiananmen Square in 1989. Around this time, and in line with China's rapid economic development, the structure of protest began to change in China—and the literature surrounding it shifted into the more mundane, focusing on the context and consequences of daily, small-scale unrest across the country.

Despite barriers, scholars have done well to collect, classify, and categorize the many instances of protest occurring in these smaller scales. As such, there is general consensus on the primary issues of contention. In a 2017 study to create a protest dataset from Chinese social media, Han Zhang and Jennifer Pan highlight key issues that have been identified as drivers of collective action in contemporary China, a few of which I highlight below:

1. *Labor protest* (Blecher 2002; Su and He 2010) — Defined as two categories of "unpaid wages" and "taxis[2]" in the Zhang and Pan data, labor protest is the broadest and most common category of unrest in China, with other scholars finding it to make up around 40% of all protest (Wedeman 2009; Gobel, 2017). Precise reasons to mobilize vary, but most relate to low/unpaid wages, unfair layoffs, or poor working conditions (Blecher 2002). Labor protests occur in every province of the country, although they are more prominent in China's South (China Labor Bulletin 2020).
2. *Land/Eviction* (Guo 2001, Zhao 2009) — Previously the most common type of protest in China (Gobel and Ong 2012), protest against forced eviction and the collection of land to use it for other projects has been extraordinarily commonplace in modern China. In 2003-04, Guangzhou police reported it to be the number one cause of unrest in the city, making

[2] The taxi industry in China is one of the most active in strikes and protests, which is why it makes up its own category in the Zhang and Pan data. Some scholars have studied taxi industry protests specifically; see Hess (2009)

up 23% of all protests, and even higher in the city of Chengdu at 61% (Tanner 2005). A 2011 estimate by Landsea Initiative reported that dissatisfaction with land grabs made up 65% of all collective action in China in 2010, although there is some contention about this number (Gobel 2017).

3. *Environment* (O'Brien 2008; Deng and Yang 2013; Mertha 2008)—Protests against environmental issues such as water/air pollution or the construction of chemical plants have also been strong grievance issues in China. Rural environmental protest has been the focus of much study of dissent in China, although it is interesting to note that some scholars have found it makes up a very small proportion of unrest overall (Gobel 2017).
4. *Ethnic/religious* (Tao 2019) — Compared to other issues, it is particularly difficult to assess protests by ethnic minorities, such as the Uyghurs in western China, or religiously motivated collective action. There is conjecture that protests of this nature are more swiftly and thoroughly cracked down upon with little allowance for demonstration (Hillman and Tuttle 2016). Regardless of the unknowns, it is an observable broad category of unrest in modern China.
5. *Welfare* — In recent years, there has been growing expressed dissent over government failures to provide promised benefits, such as missing or inadequate pensions (Hurst and O'Brien 2002) or dissatisfaction with medical treatment (Liebman 2013). There has also been a number of veterans protesting the treatment and benefits they have received after service (Diamant and O'Brien 2014).

Studies of these issues have been largely disaggregated. Even within the same protest issue, China scholars must contend with China's size and internal variation to assess how political opportunities vary across group and space (O'Brien 2008). For example, within the issue of labor

protest, scholars have focused on strikes by specific groups, such as migrant workers (Halegua 2008; Friedman and Lee 2010), specific industries, such as the taxi cab industry (Hess 2009; Wright 2018), or specific regions, such as the northeast (Lee 2007) or the south (Su and He 2010). Few studies have been conducted to assess the protest landscape of China broadly as a whole, largely due to the data difficulties of doing so. Nevertheless, there are broad commonalities in what moves Chinese citizens to mobilize, regardless of the issue they are protesting.

Many scholars agree that a lack of adequate official channels to solve grievances pushes Chinese citizens to mobilize (O'Brien 2008; Gobel and Ong 2012; Wong and Peng 2015), and that the opportunity for resistance is largely created by the structure of China's political system, i.e. the separation between national and local levels of governance (Cai 2008, Chen 2012). For example, the *xinfang* system, China's official "letters and visits" system of hearing citizen complaints, is largely understood to be inadequate in keeping up with the extent of citizen demands (Chen 2008; 2012). China's political structure delineates the broad task of "maintaining social stability" to local governments (Edin 2003), and in turn these local government leaders are often the targets and triggers of citizen ire (Cai 2008). Not only are county and prefectural leaders less formidable than provincial or national officials from the citizen perspective (O'Brien 2008), but the separated structure allows the central government to effectively shift blame, portraying themselves as an "umpire who can punish corrupt low-ranking officials" (Wong and Peng 2015). Therefore, directing anger at local officials is not directly threatening to the regime, and so it remains the channel that is both allowed by the central government and pursued by the people.

Interestingly, despite the fact that anger at local officials and the shortcoming of official channels is what is primarily pushing citizens onto the streets, there is also general consensus that Chinese citizens *prefer* to rely on and appeal directly to local governments and official channels when engaging in protest. Coined as "rightful resistance" by Kevin O'Brien and Lijiang Li in 1996, the concept relies on three things: (1) it operates near the boundary of an authorized channel, (2) it employs the rhetoric and commitments of the powerful to curb political or economic power, and (3) it hinges on locating and exploiting divisions among the powerful. Rightful resistance necessitates seeking the attention of rather than attempting to avoid the elites, and it is "noisy, public, and open" (O'Brien and Li 1996). Example of tactics used in rightful resistance are waving printed copies of the laws the protestors assert local officials are violating or threatening to "skip levels" and seek the audience of higher-ranking officials (Tanner 2005). It stresses adherence to the law and takes advantage of China's political hierarchy, and in this way, it not only does not challenge the overall political structure of China, but actually reinforces its legitimacy by only operating within it. The theory of rightful resistance has since become a foundational part of understanding the goals and methods of Chinese citizens in protesting. It paints a picture of how protesters in China carefully balance satisfaction with dissent, placing themselves in a position to push for their goals without delegitimizing the state. As scholar Yao Li eloquently puts it, "the Chinese state permits some (albeit limited) space for protest, [and] most protesters confine themselves to this space" (2017).

There is, however, contention about what the implications of rightful resistance are, especially as they relate to the overall stability of the Chinese Communist Party regime. In O'Brien and Li's original piece, they conclude that the use of rightful resistance is a product of a growing "rights consciousness" among the citizens, who are slowly having the concept of

exercising their rights as a citizen seep into popular discourse (1996). Other scholars reinforce this idea, emphasizing the role of a growing rights consciousness in China's population at large (Zweig 2000; Gallagher 2006; Goldman 2007). Some of these scholars ascertain that this trend could lead to something much larger in the future, eventually reaching a level of demand that would necessitate a fundamental shift in the CCP's regime and the rights it grants citizens. Other scholars are much more skeptical, emphasizing the fact that protestors in these situations are purposely "playing by the rules" and extolling their trust in the central government (Perry 2010), and that it has been very difficult to tie the amount of growing unrest to any instability or loss of legitimacy on the part of the regime (Wright 2018). Overall, the question—what will all this unrest mean for the Chinese government in the long run?—is too broad for any one study or scholar to fully answer, and the answer must be piecemealed together through many different projects. To provide a new piece to partially address this question is another goal of this work. The legitimacy of any regime is intrinsically tied to citizen attitudes and their faith in the abilities of the government, and by attempting to examine attitudes toward the government, I aim to contribute to a stronger understanding of how citizens actually feel about the government (and the legitimacy they grant toward it) as all parties navigate modern unrest.

The Government's Balancing Game

For the modern Chinese regime, "maintaining social stability" is something of a catch-all ideal. The phrase frequently appears in both legal frameworks and speeches by officials, including the highest-ranking ones like Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping. It is vague enough to be used as a broad justification for government actions, including repression, and studies suggest that it has been used in this way (Wang et al. 2016). However, the broader implications of the phrase may actually cause governments to lean away from repression rather than toward it.

Beginning particularly in the Hu-Wen era, China has taken painstaking care to respond to unrest with minimal force. For example, The Ministry of Public Security's *Regulations on Public Security Bureaus' Handling of Public Order Incidents* from April 2000 has three main principles for dealing with mass incidents: (1) "prevention of the intensification of the conflict", (2) "cautious use of police and coercive measures", and (3) "cautious use of police weapons and equipment". Despite spending on policing and security in China significantly increasing in recent years (Elfstrom 2019), police are trained and encouraged not to engage even when sent to a site of unrest (Cai 2008), and often employ specific strategic tactics, such as arresting only the leaders of strikes after the crowd has dispersed to be as discrete as possible (China Labor Bulletin 2012).

This is likely because, as discussed previously, the "political opportunity structure" of dissent in China shifts responsibility onto the local government, who therefore have the most to lose if something goes awry. Due to the risk of backlash that employing repression can cause, using it carries high risk for local officials, who can have their positions taken away by the central government if they become scapegoats for broader social problems. The call-and-response nature of strategic interaction between the citizens and the government plays a role here, too—if Chinese citizens are engaging in "rightful resistance" and purposefully not attempting to subvert the power of the state, the state has strong incentive to respect this commitment by creating a space where some protest is allowed. In this way, social stability is maintained and balanced through purposeful self-restraint on the part of the state[3].

Witnessing the seeming importance of avoiding force from the state's perspective, it is all the more mysterious when the state *does* choose to employ a repressive response. Literature in

[3] For more work on the Chinese state's tactical approach to repressive measures, see Qin et. al (2017) and King et al. (2014)'s work on internet censorship, or O'Brien and Deng (2017)'s work on covert repression.

this field has focused little on what precise factors may motivate the government's response and has even been hesitant in making broad conjectures about why the state may have used repression in specific incidents. Given the lack of official data and the disaggregated, context-specific approach to dissent in China, it is easy to be content with allowing response to be unique and context-specific as well. Still, some scholars have taken unique approaches to this issue—Manfred Elfstrom did a study comparing government response to labor strikes in Jiangsu and Guangdong—two provinces with high amounts of labor unrest, but who receive very different treatment from the state (2017)—and Yongshun Cai conducted a study on when select local government suppressed protest, finding that repression was more likely to be used when unrest directly threatened "social stability, policy implementation or local officials' images" (2008). In one of the only broad-spectrum studies of determining what factors may be affecting the government's choice to use repression, Wang et. al find that "scale, the targeting of the government, violence, improper law enforcement, a rural location or location in a directly controlled municipality, and the distance from Beijing" are the main factors that affect the likelihood of a repressive response by the government (2016). In this thesis, rather than focusing directly on government actors and what influences their choices, I look at expressed citizen attitudes and assess the consequences of employing repression. In doing so, I provide insight into the relationship between the state and everyday people—a complex relationship that may also provide additional insight into a government's decision to repress.

Overall, the literature on unrest in China reveals that the Chinese context is an apt place to test my theory, because the modern Chinese state seems to be highly aware of the potential negative consequences of repression and very tactful about when they use it. Given the sheer amount of small-scale protest in China, it is neither possible nor beneficial to the state to respond

to all or even most incidents with repression, and therefore each instance of harsh repression that does occur is potentially significant to study. Because there is little incentive for Chinese government actors to ever employ overt repression unless they think causing a fear response that can stifle the dissent will outweigh the risks they face, I make the theoretical assumption that after every instance of repression employed by the China, I should be able to observe the impacts of that fear response—namely, the dual change in public and private attitudes.

Under this assumption, I choose two instances of repressive response to use a treatment in my empirical analysis, the specific context of which is discussed as a part of my data and methods. After all appropriate context has been provided, I describe the survey datasets I am working with and present my statistical model.

V. Data and Methods

Case Context

The Fanya Nonferrous Metals Exchange (泛亚有色金属交易所) was a commodities exchange market for rare metals established in Yunnan in 2011. It is now best known for its status as a notorious and state-sponsored Ponzi scheme, as well as for the long series of nationwide protests that erupted after its collapse in 2015. At the time of the exchange's collapse, it is estimated that 43 billion yuan (6.7 billion USD) belonging to 220,000 creditors across China was lost (Liu and Jia 2015).

A primary reason for the public outrage that surrounded the exchange was its perceived proximity to the Chinese government. China's National Bureau of Statistics signed an official partnership with the exchange in November 2013, the exchange was featured on several state-sponsored news agencies, and state-owned banks promoted Fanya products to their customers

(Li 2016). Advertisements on state-controlled China Central Television guaranteed the exchange, promising zero risk to investors, an annual return of up to 13.7%, and the right to withdraw funds at any time with no penalties or limits (Stanway and Taplin 2015).

But the exchange grossly misestimated the global price and demand for rare metals, and soon began to act as a Ponzi scheme, financing the interest owed to old investors with the funds that came from new investors. In April of 2015, some investors in the Fanya exchange—many of whom were ordinary, middle-class Chinese citizens attracted to the supposed low risk of the exchange—noticed unexpected limits on their withdrawals. When pressed, the exchange cited "liquidity problems" that would be temporary (Jiao 2015). However, by July of 2015, all assets were frozen, and none of the investors could withdraw their money at all (Li 2016).

In early July 2015, protestors began to line up with signs and banners outside of the Yunnan government building in Kunming, the same city where the exchange was based and founded. They demanded answers for what happened to their money by the government, who they blamed for backing the exchange. Early demonstrations were small and nonviolent, taking place from July 6th to July 13th. On July 15th, the Fanya Exchange released a statement, again citing liquidity problems that were "due to multiple factors" and asking investors to be patient (Jiao 2015). No government official made any statements.

Dissatisfied, investors in Yunnan continued to organize. On July 20th, 2015, hundreds of investors protested outside of the gate of the Yunnan Provincial Government. They wore matching shirts inscribed with "信政府换危局施援手救百姓", meaning "*trust the government to rescue the common people".* While there is documented police presence at this protest, there is no documentation of these protestors being harshly repressed. By July 27, investors in other provinces had begun to organize, with a small protest occurring in Zhejiang. On August 3rd,

victims of the fraud planned a coordinated a simultaneous protest in Yunnan, Beijing, and Zhejiang. The protests in Beijing and Zhejiang were smaller and not given much attention. However, in Yunnan, a large special police force was sent out, and many protestors were beaten or arrested—with several protestors forcibly dragged onto a bus and taken away. This date, August 3rd, is the first known instance of repression about the Fanya scandal protests, and it is the treatment date for the Yunnan dataset in my analysis.

The next area for unrest to spread to was Shanghai, which first protested the metals exchange to the local Shanghai government on August 7th. Similar to Yunnan, protest in Shanghai started small, with protest tactics primarily being standing with banners or filing reports and petitions. Over the course of the month of August, these small-scale protests spread to five other provinces—Shandong, Jiangsu, Sichuan, Shanxi, and Shaanxi. Then, on August 22nd, 2015, protestors in Shanghai organized to take dramatic action.

On the morning of August 22nd, a large group of protestors intercepted the founder and head of the Fanya Metals Exchange, Shan Jiuliang, as he was checking out of his luxury hotel in Shanghai. Perhaps sick of being ignored, they manhandled Shan into a private car and delivered him into the custody of Shanghai Pudong Public Security Bureau themselves (Huang 2015). Afterward, upward of 400 investors waited outside the security bureau, intent on hearing the verdict from the police's questioning of Shan and wanting an official statement addressing the exchange from the government. In the late afternoon, Shan was released without charges, escorted and protected by a special police force. The protestors waiting outside the bureau clashed with the police, with many of them beaten or arrested even as Shan was set free. This was the second significant repressive incident involved in the Fanya scandal, and the date it occurred—August 22nd—marks the beginning of the treatment for the Shanghai dataset.

There are a number of advantages to using the Fanya Metals Exchange protests and these two specific repressive events in my analysis. First, the scandal that surrounded the Fanya Metals Exchange was massive, and the average citizen is therefore much more likely to be aware of it than they would be a smaller, more localized repressed protest. Because my theory states that overt repression is propaganda-like and can affect the attitudes of even the general population, using an incident with clear media coverage and relevance to the general population is better suited to test that theory, since it makes it more likely the repression was actually perceived by the general public. Secondly, the metals exchange rests in an interesting place for repression in the Chinese context—while the target of ire is not solely the government, the government is still directly implicated and being targeted. For the government, the decision of whether to repress the dissent as an anti-government movement, fully blame-shift the fraud onto the metals exchange or play the hero and try to restore investors' money is not a clear-cut choice. The fact that protests in both Yunnan and Shanghai were ignored for a significant period of time and repression only occurred when protestors upped the stakes—planning a simultaneous protest in two other cities and kidnapping a CEO, respectively—is significant. These incidents are a good representation of the delicate balance that Chinese leaders consider before employing repression, and that makes them a good fit to examine the effect that purposeful repression can have on citizen attitudes.

Additionally, these two incidents are useful because they occur at the beginning of the Fanya protests. Overall, protests over the Fanya Nonferrous Metals Exchange continued nationwide for the rest of 2015 and even into 2016[4]. However, the two incidents described here were the first documented repressive incidents that occurred after the exchange's collapse in July 2015, letting

[4] Shan and 15 other suspects were finally arrested in early 2016 and were charged and fined in November 2018. In the end, the government did end up placing most of the blame for the fraud solely on the operators of the metals exchange.

them serve as an effective "turning point". While other protests about the Fanya scandal were responded to with repression over the year-long period, the attitudes expressed after later incidents would be impacted by the presence of previous protests, making these incidents inefficient to serve as a "treatment" in a difference-in-differences study.

Data Sources

To find the detailed information about the Fanya Metals Exchange protests described above, I relied on the "Wickedonna" dataset—the name of a blog run by Chinese journalist Lu Yuyu and his girlfriend Li Tingyu from July 2013 to June 2016[5]. Lu manually searched for and verified protests incidents across China using various forms of Chinese social media, particularly Weibo posts, then published and achieved the information he found on the Wickedonna blog. The resulting dataset covers 74,452 incidents of protest in the three-year period, with each post containing a basic description of the incident, any available pictures, and compiled relevant posts made by either participants or observers. The year with the highest number of documented incidents (and coincidentally, the year of the Fanya collapse) is 2015, with 26,444 archived incidents across China.

There are a handful of advantages to using the Wickedonna dataset for my analysis. In order for a protest incident to affect public attitudes, the protest must be *perceived* by the public, and using data compiled from social media affirms that the incidents I am looking at have received a baseline of social media coverage. Second, a difference-in-difference study with an event as a treatment requires that I address the possibility of other events affecting the before-treatment group, and the Wickedonna dataset's detailed and day-by-day accounts allow me to do so. In the

[5] The blog stopped archiving posts in 2016 because Lu and Li were both arrested in 2016 on charges of "picking quarrels and provoking trouble". Li was released, but Lu was sentenced to four years in prison in August 2017.

blog's prime, Lu Yuyu sustained himself using donations and compiled protest data as a full-time job (Gobel 2018)—although there is still a possibility that a protest occurred that Lu did not capture, the likelihood of that being a significant event is low. There are dozens, if not hundreds of entries on the blog pertaining to the Fanya scandal in the Wickedonna dataset, and closely reading these allowed me to confidently determine the two incidents I am looking at were the first instances of repression.

To capture citizen attitudes, I use the China General Social Survey (CGSS), a country-wide annual survey currently conducted by the China Survey and Data Center at Renmin University of China. The CGSS started in 2003 as a collaboration between various Chinese academic institutions, making it one of the longest running social surveys in China. It also represents China in the International Social Survey Program and the East Asian Social Survey, and its data has been used in more than 700 published journal papers internationally[6].

Both the content of the CGSS and the way the survey is conducted make it a useful dataset for my analysis. Because it is a well-respected comprehensive social survey, it asks direct questions about the government, laws, and policing that other surveys may shy away from asking; it also asks enough broad questions that I can capture more subtle attitudes via indirect questions as well. Additionally, the survey is nationwide and conducted slowly via interviews in various provinces over the course of the year. This means that the exact date of the interview for each respondent is available in the dataset, which is ideal for me to be able to capture exact, day-by-day changes that may surround events such as protest incidents.

The CGSS dataset also poses some restrictions on my analysis. Because geographic data of respondents may be sensitive information, especially for rural respondents, geographic data is

[6] A complete bibliography of all works published using CGSS data can be found at the CGSS website: http://cgss.ruc.edu.cn/index.php?r=index/publication

only publicly released to the provincial level. This creates a problem for data from Yunnan, which is a sizable province with many rural areas. Although Yunnan is the most relevant province to study the Fanya Nonferrous Metals Exchange, as it is where the exchange was based and where protests started, the geographic vagueness for respondents there may affect my results. I have no way of knowing if respondents were in Kunming, the capital and where protests were taking place, or in rural areas where they may be less likely to hear of the repression. However, Shanghai is a large enough city to be considered provincial-level, and thus has some of the most specific geographic data available. I look at both Yunnan and Shanghai in my analysis primarily to make up for this weakness in the CGSS Yunnan data.

Additionally, because the interviewers travel over the course of the year, data from each province only covers a small window of time when the interviewers are present. Shanghai and Yunnan were also chosen because they both happen to have interviews conducted over the time period when the protests to the metals exchange were beginning—other provinces that experienced protest about the metals exchange during this time, such as Beijing, were not able to be examined because interviews were not conducted during the relevant dates.

Measuring Preference Falsification

Another interesting feature of the CGSS data is the fact that the questions change every year. While always having a "core module" that asks the same annual questions, significant portions of the survey contain unique questions that are infrequently, if ever, repeated in following years. Thus, even though Jiang and Yang (2016) use CGSS data to effectively measure preference falsification in China, I am unable to utilize the exact questions they employ to also measure preference falsification in my analysis, because they use CGSS data from 2006 and I am using

data from 2015. Additionally, because the context of my analysis is focused on protest and repression rather than the aftermath of a political purge, my analysis may be better suited for slightly different questions anyway. As a result, I have combed through the CGSS 2015 questionnaire and attempted to select similar questions that will still capture the idea of "expressed support" and "actual support" adequately, but particularly as they relate to government actions with regards to criticism and policing. I walk through my choices, translated into English, below. Where relevant, the name of the dependent variable used to represent this question in my results is included in parenthesis.

Direct Questions / "Expressed Support"

1. (*nointerfere)* Do you or disagree with the following statement? If someone criticizes the government in a public place, the government should not interfere. [Answer is scale 1 – 5, strongly agree through strongly disagree]

2. Are you satisfied with the performance of the government in the following aspects? [Scale 1 – 5 on satisfaction]
   a. (*fairenforce*) Fair enforcement of law
   b. (*govimpartial)* Government departments act impartially

3. To what extent does the following description match China's current reality? [Scale 1 – 5 on matching]
   a. (*criticprotected*) Public criticism of the government and officials is protected by law
   b. (*arrests*) Police arrests require strict procedures

These questions all address government criticism and/or law enforcement in a very direct way, where answering negatively is an open expression of dissatisfaction with the government. In the aftermath of a repressive incident, where the government may take drastic measures to

prove its own ability to maintain social stability, citizens experiencing a fear response would be strongly disincentivized from answering that they think the government does a poor job of handling criticism or fairly enforcing the law. In a similar way to how Havel (1990) and Weeden (1999) find that citizens who oppose leaders in authoritarian regimes extol them in public, when a citizen is fearful of the government's strength and law enforcement abilities due to a signal sent by repression, we could expect that the answers to these questions will reflect higher levels of approval and support. If repression is not employed, the answers to these questions should remain at their natural level of variation and not trend in any direction.

Indirect Questions / "Actual Support"

1. (*fairness*) Generally speaking, do you think that today's society is fair or unfair? [Scale 1 – 5, fair through unfair]

2. In comparison, which of the following types of people do you think has gained the most benefits in the past 20 years? [Scale 1 – 5 on degree of improvement]
   a. Worker
   b. Farmer
   c. *(officialimprove)* **State officials**
   d. *(managerimprove)* **Managers of state-owned and collective enterprises**
   e. Those with technical expertise and high education
   f. People with assets

3. Do you agree with the following statements regarding China's current petition work? [Scale 1 – 5, agree to disagree]
   a. (*petitionobstacles*) Letters and visits [China's current petition system] will not face obstacles
   b. (*petitionsolve*) Letters and visits can solve the problem

Due to their indirect nature, the unifying thread between the indirect questions is not as straightforward as it is for the direct questions. However, these questions were chosen because they all address attitudes that might be affected by perceiving repressive responses to protests, but the questions are not so specific that the answer to them involves directly commenting on the government. For example, a dissatisfied citizen after witnessing a repressive response may feel frustrated that the crackdown was unfair, but commenting on unfairness does not have to be necessarily related to the government.

For the second question, answering that state officials have gained more in comparison to everyone else indicates potential frustration with corruption or the power of government actors, including frustration with the ability of local officials to repress citizens and get away with it. In the context of the Fanya exchange scandal, which dealt with state-owned enterprises promoting a fraudulent operation, citizens may also feel dissent about corruption by the managers of these enterprises—feeling dissatisfied over the fact that these people have more information than the common citizen. However, the plethora of other options makes question the question vague, and there are alternate explanations that a citizen could provide for why they picked state officials or managers if they were ever pressed to do so. This means that this question is a good lens to view potential dissatisfaction and frustration with the government without the pressure of needing to provide open support.

The final two questions are the most direct of the indirect questions, addressing the adequacy of official channels for solving protest-able issues—the previously mentioned "letters and visits", or *xinfang*, system. The focus on the petition system specifically is able to separate these questions from more direct government support—complaining about one specific service that the government offers is much less bold than stating that the government is not impartial and

does not protect citizen's rights, for example. It is also vague; indicating that something sent through the *xinfang* system might face obstacles or might not be enough to solve the problem entirely does not necessarily implicate the respondent for thinking that the system of official channels does not work at all. Still, in the aftermath of a repressed protest incident, citizens may have these official channels on their mind, feeling frustrated that repression was used instead of the petition system. These questions address that sentiment in an ambiguous enough way that it is unlikely the respondent would falsify their true answer.

Dataset Overview

To do my analysis, I subset the full CGSS data from the year 2015 into two smaller datasets––one that includes all responses from the time period that the survey was conducted in Yunnan, and one that includes responses when the survey was conducted in Shanghai. So as not to unexpectedly skew my data, all respondents from provinces that protested the exchange—whether those protests were responded to with repression or not—were eliminated from the dataset. Since many of the protestors of the Fanya incident organized via social media, and I am relying on a social media-based dataset to provide details about the protest events that took place, I wanted to account for the possibility that Fanya investors protesting in one province might be in communication with protestors of the same issue in other provinces via social media. As a result, the only data in the datasets can be divided into two groups: responses from either Yunnan or Shanghai respectively, or responses from any province with no documented protest about the Fanya metals exchange during the relevant date period. Setting up the datasets in this way is able to clearer separate the treatment and control groups from each other. While it is possible that respondents in the control group had heard of the Fanya scandal more generally, it is unlikely that they would be aware of a specific repressive incident that occurred in another province,

especially if their province is not affected by protests and they are not attempting to follow the issue. On the flipside, it is much more likely that a general respondent in Shanghai would know about what happened in Shanghai on August 22nd than a respondent anywhere else would.

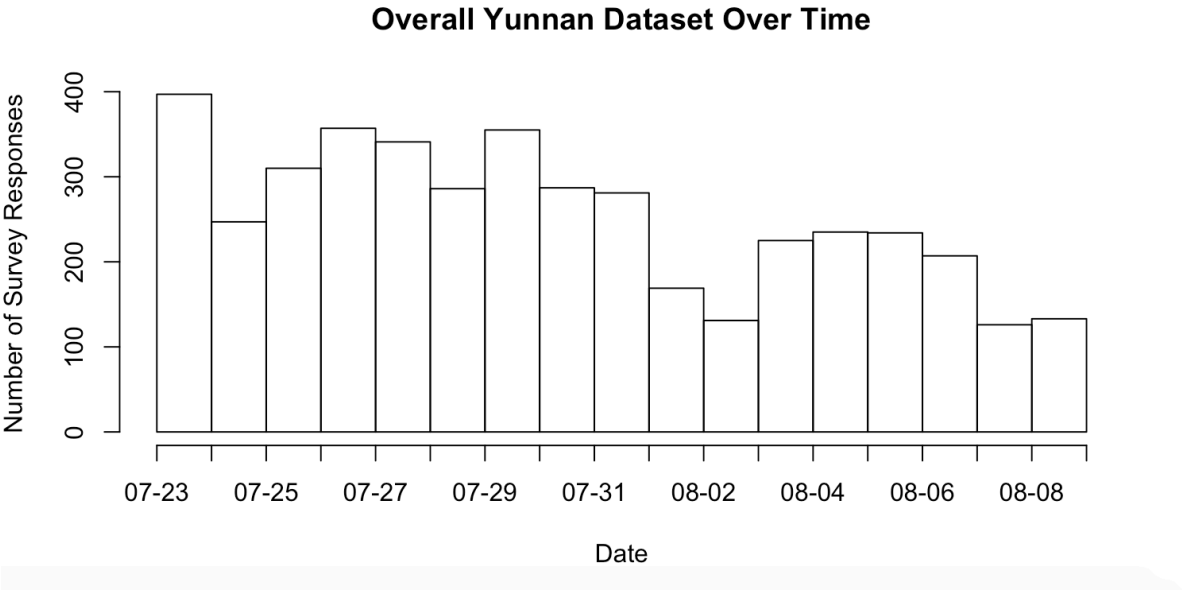
Yunnan Data: The Yunnan dataset contains data from 4321 respondents over the period of July 23rd, 2015 to August 9th, 2015. Of those 4321 respondents, only 384 are in Yunnan and 3937 are located in other provinces. The repressive incident occurs on August 3rd, about two-thirds of the way through the dataset. 3030 of the responses come before that date (the untreated group), and 1291 responses occur after it (the treated group).

The Yunnan dataset comes with both advantages and disadvantages. The strongest advantage of the Yunnan data is that Yunnan is where the Fanya Metals Exchange was headquartered, it is the province where the nationwide protests began, and it received the strongest impact by the scandal and subsequent protests. When conducting empirical work that looks at the impact of the Fanya Metals Exchange specifically, there is no more relevant province than Yunnan, and it is very serendipitous that the CGSS survey happened to be conducted in Yunnan during the time period that the protests first began. The strongest disadvantage of the Yunnan data is its lack of geographic specificity—Yunnan has many rural areas, and not knowing if each respondent is a disconnected rural resident or an urban resident in the capital of Kunming, where the protests took place, is a significant drawback.

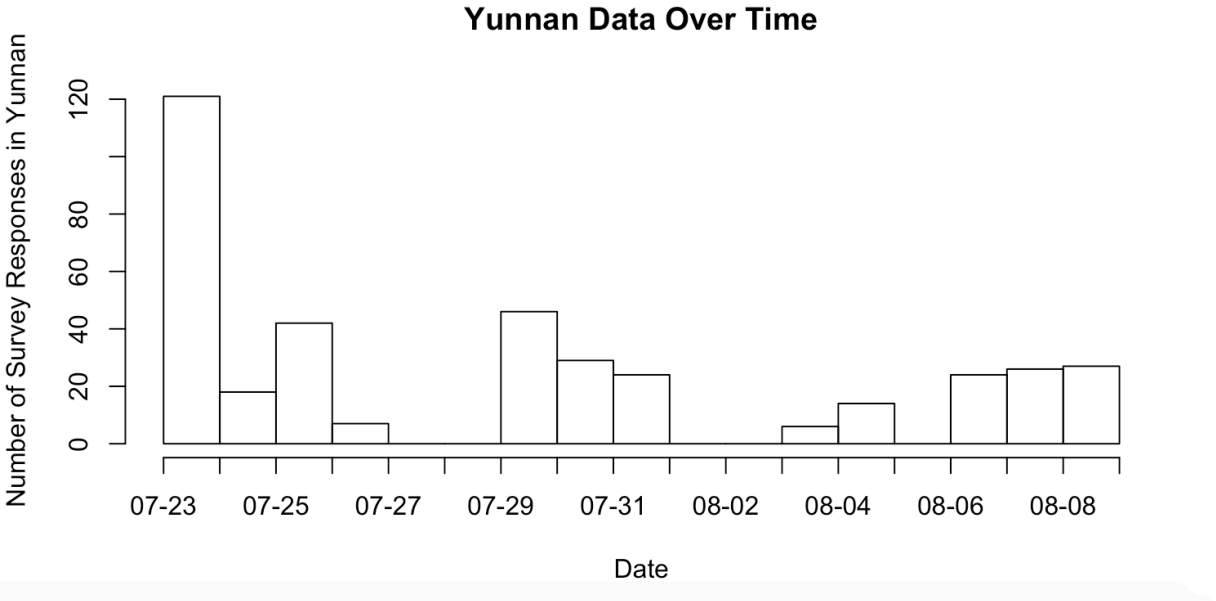
Overall, the Yunnan dataset has a better balance for the size of the treated and untreated groups than the Shanghai dataset does, but has a worse balance for the location split—there is a significantly higher number of respondents in the "control group", or those outside of Yunnan, then there are inside of it. The Shanghai data has the opposite problem, as the repressive incident

there occurs early in the dataset, but the location balance is more evenly split. In this way, the two datasets can make up for each other's weaknesses.

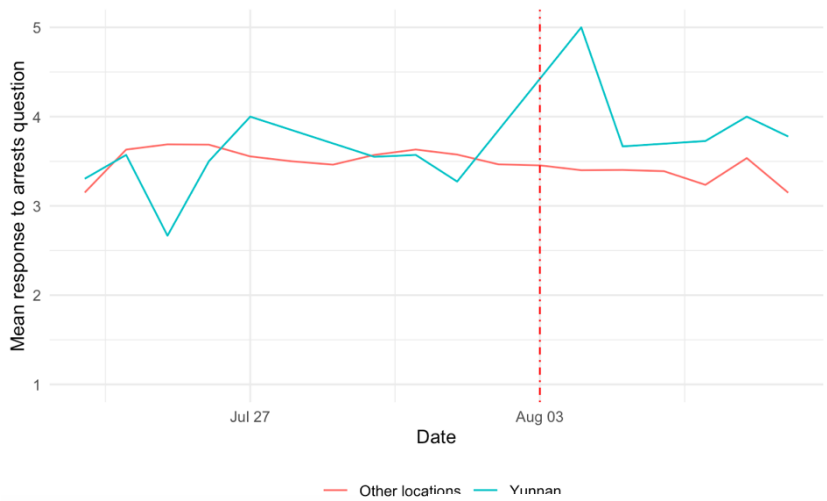
The distribution of responses over time in the Yunnan dataset as a whole is fairly even, illustrated below:

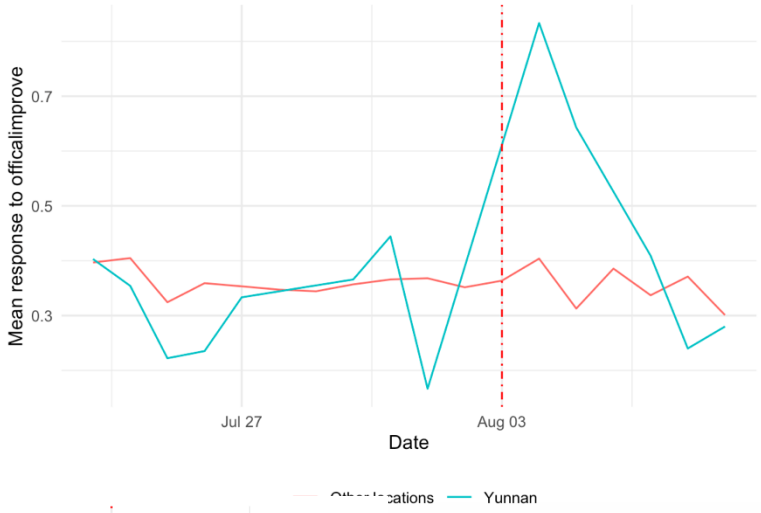


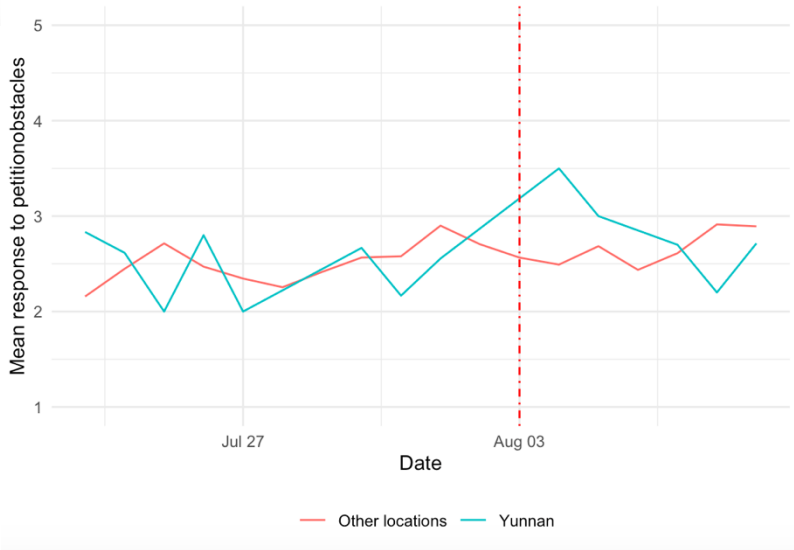
However, when only considering the 384 responses that are taken from Yunnan, there are notable gaps in the distribution, as seen below:



Unfortunately, this makes it more difficult to check the Yunnan dataset for parallel trends, as is required for a difference-in-differences study. The mean response for Yunnan compared to everywhere else is affected by the time periods where there are no responses, resulting in sharp spikes and a choppy line for mean Yunnan responses on parallel trends graph. However, even with the relative unevenness, checking for parallel trends reveals that the two groups mostly trend together, and there are several notable and promising spikes in Yunnan responses after the treatment. This can be seen in the following graphs depicting the trends for the survey questions on arrest procedures, government officials improving over others, and whether petitions will face obstacles, where the red line indicates the treatment date.





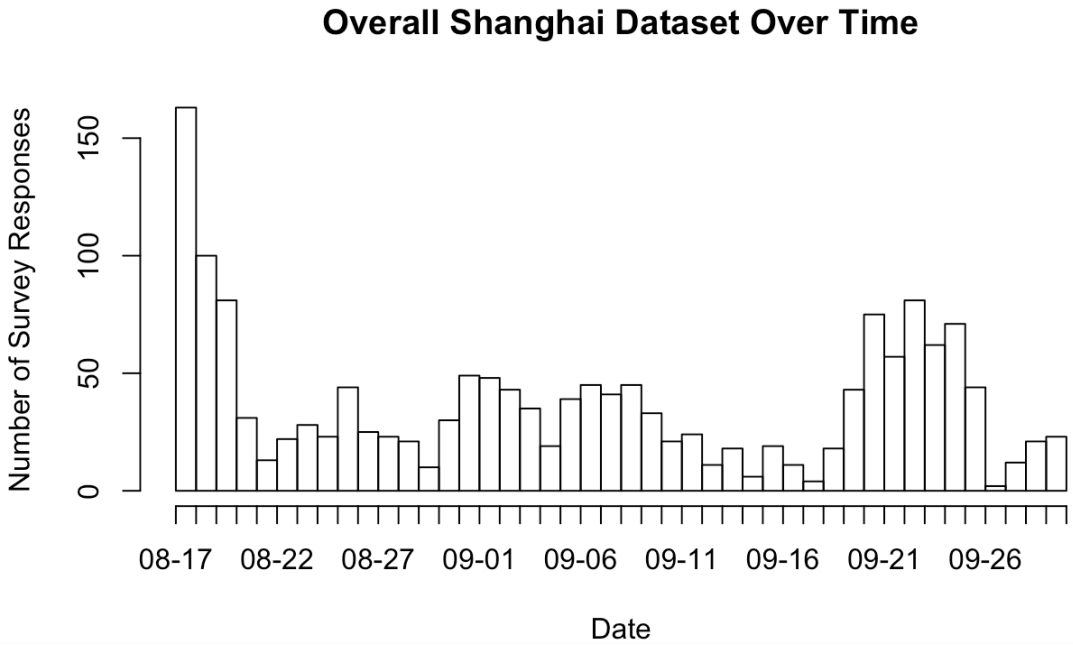


Shanghai Data: The Shanghai dataset contains data from 1634 respondents over the period of August 17th, 2015 to September 30th, 2015. Of those 1634 responses, 480 are in Shanghai and 1154 are located in other provinces. The repressive response to the Fanya Metals Exchange protests occurs on August 22nd, relatively early in the dataset. There are 375 responses before the incident (the "untreated" group) and 1259 responses in the treated group.

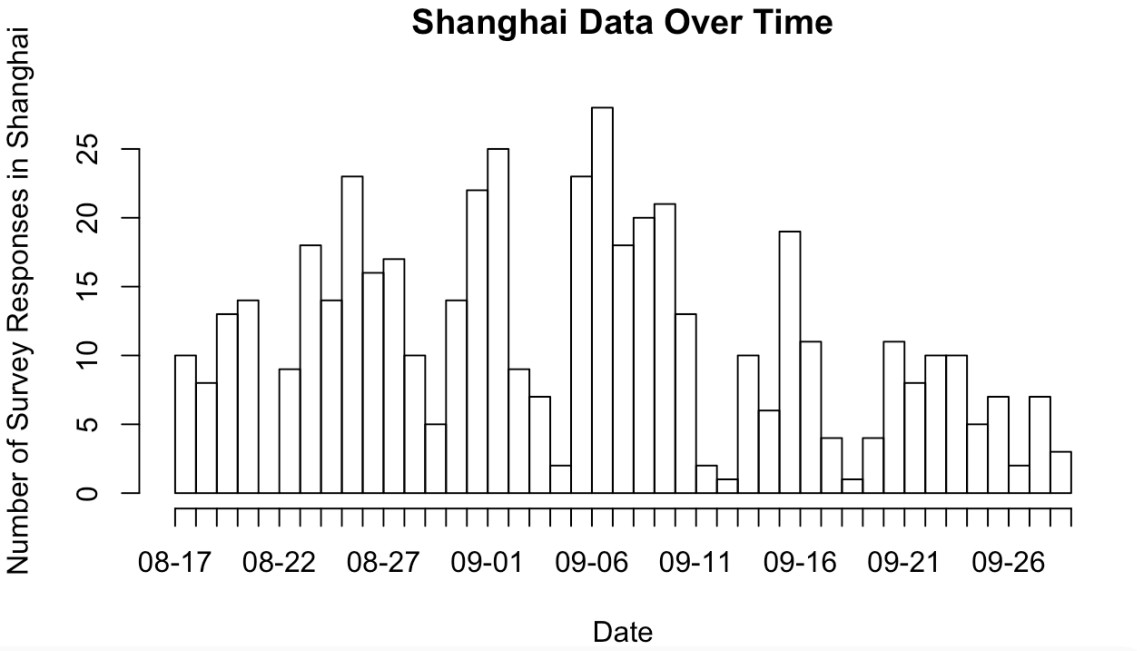
There are a handful of advantages to the Shanghai dataset. Firstly, due to the nature of the CGSS survey data and respondent privacy, location data is only publicly available to the provincial level. Because Shanghai is large enough to be a provincial-level city, I can be certain that all respondents are in the same city where the protests and repression actually took place. The Shanghai dataset also has a better balance for the "location" variable, whereas the Yunnan dataset has a much higher number of respondents outside of Yunnan than those in it. Finally, Shanghai is a relatively wealthy, educated, and cosmopolitan city. Given the nature of the Fanya Metal Exchange incident, which primarily affected middle-class investors, and the young, business-oriented and internet-active population of Shanghai, Shanghai is a particularly apt place to capture public attitude changes that a repressive response to an investment fraud scandal may have caused.

The Shanghai dataset also comes with disadvantages. While Shanghai's status as a cosmopolitan city grant it relevance to what I aim to capture, it also brings a question of its generalizability to the rest of China. Are Shanghai's globalized residents more willing to be openly critical of the government? If that is the case, the "fear response" that I wish to capture, resulting in citizens falsifying their preferences on direct questions of government support, may not be as capturable in Shanghai. Looking at data from both Shanghai and Yunnan can partially make up for this potential discrepancy.

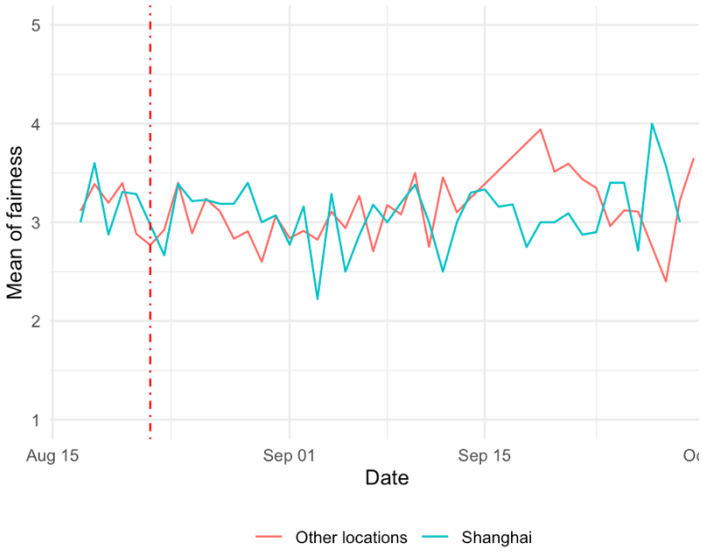
Although the treatment date occurs early in the dataset, this is somewhat offset by the fact that the distribution of responses for the Shanghai dataset overall is a little skewed to the right:

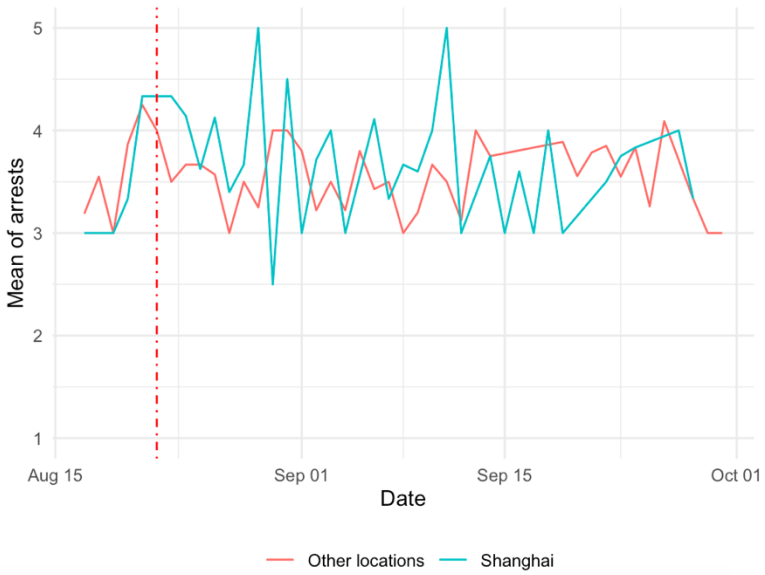


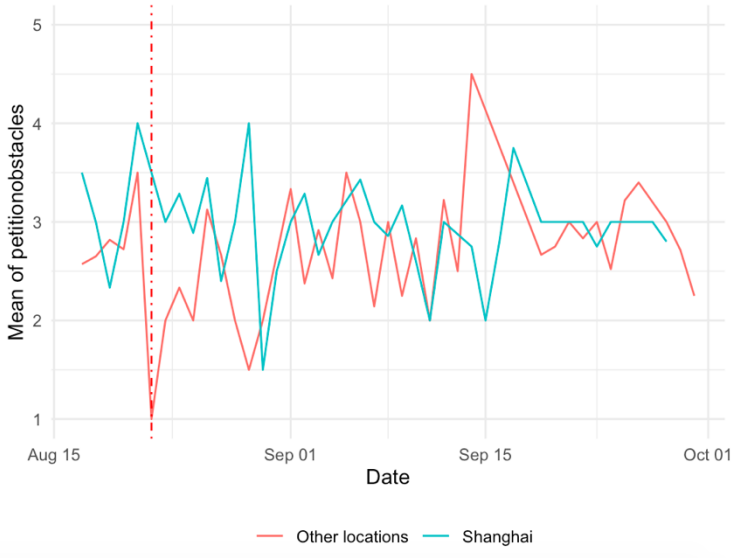
Additionally, the distribution of the 480 respondents from Shanghai is more evenly spread than that of Yunnan, with only one date having zero responses (interestingly, the date of the treatment, August 22nd).

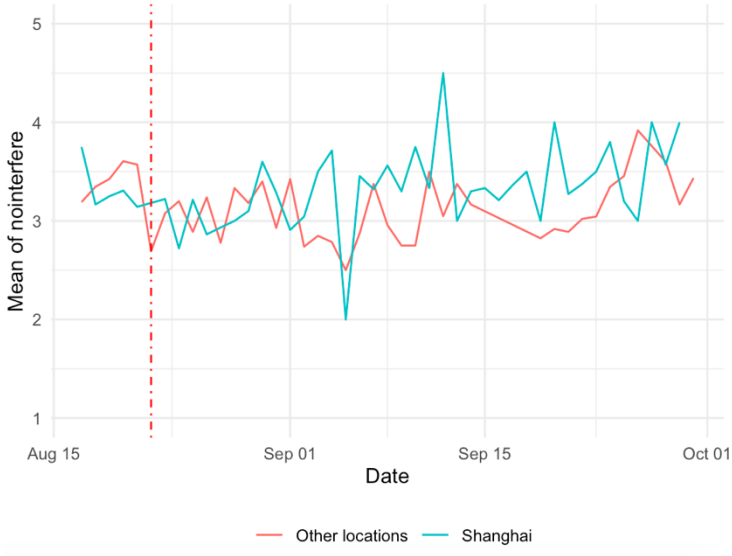


This generally more even distribution of responses makes the Shanghai data statistically favorable over the Yunnan dataset. However, the early cutoff again makes it difficult to check for parallel trends, as only a small portion of the before-treatment trends are observable.









As evident by the graphs, some dependent variables (arrests, fairness) appear to have a closer parallel trend before the treatment than others (petitionobstacles, nointerfere), although all are

generally favorable. This may suggest that the validity of my results for some dependent variables is stronger than others. I try to take this into consideration when examining my regression results, which are overall mixed.

Statistical Method

To assess the change in citizen attitudes and look for preference falsification after repression, I use a difference-in-differences approach that is captured in the following regression equation:

$$Attitude_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Treatment_i + \beta_2 Location_i + \beta_3 (Treatment\ x\ Location)_i + \boldsymbol{\beta X_i} + \varepsilon_i,$$

where *i* stands for an individual survey respondent.

The dependent variable, attitude, is operationalized by the ten survey questions outlined in the *Defining Preference Falsification* section, with five direct questions addressing expressed support and five indirect questions addressing actual support. Each of these survey questions is treated as its own dependent variable that can assess some facet of a citizen's attitude. I run separate models for each question—allowing each to independently serve as the dependent variable—resulting in ten models that capture citizen attitudes in one location. I repeat this process for both datasets (Shanghai and Yunnan) resulting in 20 regression models in total.

The treatment variable is a binary variable based off of the date of the respondent's interview. The date of the repressive incident is the beginning of the treatment—August 3rd in Yunnan, and August 22nd in Shanghai. In both datasets, all data from respondents before the incident are coded as a "0", while all respondents that were interviewed on or after the date of the repressive incident are coded as "1".

The location variable is another binary variable that codes all respondents in the relevant location (either Shanghai or Yunnan) as a "1", while all respondents from any other province are coded as a "0".

The interaction term between *treatment* and *location* captures the difference-in-difference I am ultimately interested in studying. It looks at the change in respondent attitude before and after the repressive incident occurred, then compares the difference in that change for those *in* the place where the repressive event occurred and those outside of it. My H1 hypothesis predicts after a repressive incident, there should be an increase in expressed support for the government due to the fear response created by repression. This would be able to be seen via a statistically significant and positive interaction term, as respondents who have both variables coded as "1" (meaning the respondent is both being interviewed after the repression and is in the relevant location) should be responding to direct survey questions with higher levels of support—reflected by higher-number answers in the survey[7].

On the other hand, my H2 hypothesis predicts that vaguer, more indirect questions of government support should have less incentive to be falsified and should therefore experience a decrease after repression. This would be reflected by a statistically significant and negative interaction term, since respondents who have both variables coded as "1" should be responding to indirect survey questions with lower levels of support, indicated by lower-number answers in the survey.

The βX_i term stands for a set of control variables that also comes from the broader data available in the CGSS survey. For basic controls, I include variables for respondents' sex, age, and highest education level (coded as *educ*). Since I have no way of knowing whether or not the

[7] Where necessary, the scale of the survey questions was reversed during analysis coding to keep "higher numbers" = "higher government support" consistent.

respondents were personally involved with or aware of the Fanya protests, I also incorporate the responses to two survey questions that capture media usage to indicate how likely they are to be aware of the incident. The first question, coded as *newsread,* asks respondents to rate on a scale from "never" to "very often" how often they read the news in the past year. The second question, coded as *socialmedia*, asks respondents to rate how often they engaged with internet media, including mobile social media. The final control question, coded as *individuality*, asks respondents to rate on a scale of 1-5 how consistent they feel their own views and opinions on important matters are with the views and opinions of the general public. Since I am relying on the respondents of the CGSS survey to serve as representatives of the general attitude of the public, I incorporate this variable to account for if a particular respondent would consider themselves to be a good representative of overall public attitudes or not.

VI. Results

Yunnan Expressed Support

	Dependent variable:				
	nointerfere	fairenforce	govimpartial	criticprotected	arrests
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
yntreatment	-0.068*	-0.007	0.005	0.040	-0.191***
	(0.037)	(0.031)	(0.032)	(0.056)	(0.054)
ynlocation	-0.022	0.142**	0.104*	-0.196*	-0.148
	(0.069)	(0.057)	(0.060)	(0.103)	(0.097)
gender	0.067**	0.028	0.033	0.047	-0.015
	(0.033)	(0.028)	(0.029)	(0.049)	(0.048)
age	0.006***	0.001	0.0001	0.003	0.002
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.002)
educ	0.0004	-0.018***	-0.015**	0.003	0.016
	(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.011)	(0.011)
newsread	-0.006	0.017	0.006	0.009	0.0004
	(0.017)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.026)	(0.025)
socialmedia	-0.019	-0.083***	-0.077***	-0.068***	-0.036
	(0.015)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.023)	(0.022)
individuality	0.025	0.144***	0.141***	0.037	0.065*
	(0.023)	(0.019)	(0.020)	(0.035)	(0.034)
yntreatment:ynlocation	0.036	0.073	0.143	0.366*	0.634***
	(0.134)	(0.118)	(0.123)	(0.212)	(0.196)
Constant	2.752***	2.916***	2.882***	2.917***	3.273***
	(0.135)	(0.113)	(0.118)	(0.197)	(0.190)
Observations	4,072	4,096	4,093	1,303	1,317
R^2	0.016	0.058	0.043	0.032	0.022
Adjusted R^2	0.014	0.056	0.041	0.025	0.015
Residual Std. Error	1.033 (df = 4062)	0.867 (df = 4086)	0.905 (df = 4083)	0.883 (df = 1293)	0.854 (df = 1307)
F Statistic	7.214*** (df = 9; 4062)	28.121*** (df = 9; 4086)	20.589*** (df = 9; 4083)	4.784*** (df = 9; 1293)	3.197*** (df = 9; 1307)
Note:					*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

My H1 hypothesis predicts a positive and significant relationship between the dependent variable symbolizing attitude and the treatment:location interaction term, which is reflected in the Yunnan data for expressed support. All five of dependent variables, which correspond to the five direct survey questions, have a positive interaction term. Of these, one is significant to the 10% level (*criticprotected*) and one is significant to the 1% level (*arrests*). Given what happened

on the treatment day in Yunnan—with many arrested, including some violently dragged onto a bus to be arrested—it is a very interesting finding that respondents in Yunnan express higher agreement with the statement "Police arrests require strict procedures". This is strongly indicative of a fear response that the repression caused; it provides significant support for the idea that respondents in Yunnan falsified their preferences after repression.

Yunnan Actual Support

	Dependent variable:				
	fairness	officialimprove	managerimprove	petitionobstacles	petitionsolve
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
yntreatment	-0.013	-0.003	0.028**	0.091	0.036
	(0.034)	(0.017)	(0.014)	(0.065)	(0.067)
ynlocation	0.110*	-0.054*	0.010	0.013	0.122
	(0.063)	(0.032)	(0.026)	(0.128)	(0.127)
gender	-0.086***	-0.019	0.010	0.065	0.014
	(0.030)	(0.015)	(0.012)	(0.057)	(0.059)
age	0.007***	0.001	-0.0004	-0.0001	-0.0001
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.002)
educ	0.014**	-0.011***	0.004	-0.027**	-0.018
	(0.007)	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.013)	(0.013)
newsread	-0.007	-0.011	0.014**	0.055*	0.033
	(0.016)	(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.030)	(0.031)
socialmedia	-0.047***	0.019***	-0.004	-0.047*	-0.056**
	(0.014)	(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.027)	(0.027)
individuality	0.128***	-0.006	0.024***	-0.106***	0.00000
	(0.021)	(0.011)	(0.009)	(0.040)	(0.041)
yntreatment:ynlocation	0.286**	0.093	0.102**	-0.012	-0.229
	(0.121)	(0.061)	(0.050)	(0.248)	(0.251)
Constant	2.621***	0.399***	0.060	2.926***	2.808***
	(0.124)	(0.063)	(0.051)	(0.226)	(0.232)
Observations	4,172	4,045	4,045	1,314	1,299
R^2	0.038	0.006	0.008	0.024	0.015
Adjusted R^2	0.036	0.004	0.006	0.017	0.008
Residual Std. Error	0.964 (df = 4162)	0.478 (df = 4035)	0.391 (df = 4035)	1.031 (df = 1304)	1.048 (df = 1289)
F Statistic	18.380*** (df = 9; 4162)	2.646*** (df = 9; 4035)	3.691*** (df = 9; 4035)	3.567*** (df = 9; 1304)	2.211** (df = 9; 1289)
Note:					*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Compared to the results for expressed support, my H2 hypothesis is not strongly supported in Yunnan. My H2 hypothesis predicts a negative and significant relationship between the

dependent variable symbolizing attitude and the treatment:location interaction term for indirect questions, which is not particularly reflected in the Yunnan data for actual support. Only two of the interaction terms have a negative sign, and neither of them are significant. There are two terms that are significant to the 5% level, but they are both positive—indicating less discontent expressed rather than more.

There are a handful of hypothetical reasons this might be the case. The first lies with the indirect questions themselves— although I tried to separate more direct questions from indirect ones, it is possible that the dependent variables I chose as indirect questions were still sensitive enough in the minds of the respondents to justify falsifying their response. It is also possible that the indirect questions were *too* vague—a question about "society being unfair", for example, could register in a respondent's mind as something that has nothing to do with the government or current events, causing their answer to not reflect the relationships I excepted.

The second reason these results might be mixed could be due to something that is unique about the population of Yunnan. Perhaps Yunnan residents are more positive compared to other provinces, in general—the fact that all dependent variables in expressed support and many of the dependent variables in the actual support results all have positive interaction terms could be related.

Additionally, the unique features of the Yunnan dataset could be causing unexpected results––primarily its issue with geographic vagueness. Because Yunnan has a high rural population and I cannot confirm if Yunnan respondents were in Kunming or not, it is a possibility that the particular respondents to the CGSS survey during this time were rural residents not aware of the protests, and thus could not receive the signal that was sent by the protests being repressed. If that were the case, my results would not be significant or necessarily reflect relationships in the

direction I predicted—although it would also call into question the validity of the significant data that matched my hypothesis for Yunnan in the expressed support section.

It is worth noting that the two dependent variables with a negative interaction term that does somewhat match my H2 hypothesis are the most direct of the indirect questions—the two questions that ask about the petition system. While other indirect questions are vague, these questions cannot be interpreted to be about anything else other than the government, even though I predicted there would be less pressure to falsify a response for these questions in particular. The fact that these two questions are the only two with a negative interaction term, even though that term is not significant, is still somewhat promising.

Shanghai Expressed Support

	Dependent variable:				
	nointerfere	fairenforce	govimpartial	criticprotected	arrests
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
shtreatment	-0.298***	0.086	0.111*	0.294**	0.166
	(0.074)	(0.062)	(0.062)	(0.123)	(0.122)
shlocation	-0.233	0.255*	0.262*	-0.233	0.300
	(0.187)	(0.154)	(0.157)	(0.341)	(0.331)
gender	-0.006	0.028	0.052	0.043	0.048
	(0.056)	(0.046)	(0.047)	(0.088)	(0.087)
age	0.004*	0.0002	0.0005	0.002	0.003
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.004)	(0.004)
educ	-0.020*	-0.008	-0.002	0.011	0.006
	(0.012)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.019)	(0.019)
newsread	0.094***	-0.020	-0.005	0.024	-0.046
	(0.026)	(0.022)	(0.022)	(0.043)	(0.043)
socialmedia	-0.008	-0.117***	-0.110***	-0.048	-0.006
	(0.025)	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.037)	(0.037)
individuality	0.030	0.074**	0.068**	0.050	0.097
	(0.037)	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.059)	(0.059)
shtreatment:shlocation	0.318*	-0.264*	-0.224	-0.049	-0.046
	(0.191)	(0.158)	(0.161)	(0.344)	(0.331)
Constant	3.073***	3.291***	3.090***	2.657***	2.855***
	(0.231)	(0.193)	(0.192)	(0.365)	(0.371)
Observations	1,523	1,506	1,509	450	463
R^2	0.028	0.065	0.050	0.038	0.029
Adjusted R^2	0.022	0.059	0.044	0.018	0.010
Residual Std. Error	1.073 (df = 1513)	0.886 (df = 1496)	0.893 (df = 1499)	0.916 (df = 440)	0.923 (df = 453)
F Statistic	4.818*** (df = 9; 1513)	11.475*** (df = 9; 1496)	8.695*** (df = 9; 1499)	1.928** (df = 9; 440)	1.493 (df = 9; 453)
Note:					*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Unlike Yunnan, my regression results for Shanghai's levels of expressed support do not strongly support my H1 hypothesis. As seen in the table, only one of Shanghai's dependent variables reflects a positive relationship with the interaction term, while all others actually indicate a slightly negative relationship. This may be due to something unique about Shanghai, such as a particular willingness of Shanghai's citizenry to express dissatisfaction with the government. It is an interesting finding that overall, Yunnan respondents seem to have been more likely to respond positively to direct questions about the government than Shanghai residents. Shanghai is a much more globalized and Westernized location than Yunnan is, and these findings could be indicative of difference in attitudes toward the government within China's urban-rural divide that may be worth exploring in the future.

Another potential reason for mixed results in Shanghai could be the nature of the "treatment" incident. While both treatment incidents were repressive responses that resulted in many people being arrested, it is important to note that what led up to them was substantively different—those in Yunnan were dutifully protesting, while those in Shanghai kidnapped someone in an act of vigilante justice. It is possible that to the general public in Shanghai, the repressive action did not create a fear response, because they may have felt that the protestors were bad people who deserved to be repressed. If there is no fear response, there is no motivation to falsify preferences, which could be why very little of the expressed support data models from Shanghai have notable levels of significance, the highest of which only goes to the 10% level.

Lastly, a potential explanation for the lack of significant results in Shanghai could be due to how early the treatment comes in the data. It is a possibility that there is simply not be enough respondent data before the date of repression to make adequate statistical comparisons in Shanghai.

Shanghai Actual Support

	Dependent variable:				
	fairness	officialimprove	managerimprove	petitionobstacles	petitionsolve
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
shtreatment	-0.037	-0.005	0.045*	0.104	0.145
	(0.068)	(0.034)	(0.026)	(0.143)	(0.136)
shlocation	0.104	0.275***	0.031	0.507	0.832**
	(0.176)	(0.089)	(0.067)	(0.372)	(0.358)
gender	0.014	0.006	-0.015	0.198*	0.060
	(0.052)	(0.026)	(0.019)	(0.104)	(0.099)
age	0.005**	0.001	0.0001	0.007	0.002
	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.005)	(0.004)
educ	-0.002	-0.020***	0.010**	-0.023	-0.064***
	(0.011)	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.022)	(0.022)
newsread	0.026	-0.025**	-0.008	0.008	0.013
	(0.025)	(0.012)	(0.009)	(0.052)	(0.049)
socialmedia	-0.038	0.002	0.005	-0.015	0.014
	(0.023)	(0.011)	(0.009)	(0.045)	(0.044)
individuality	0.186***	0.017	-0.009	0.132*	0.172**
	(0.034)	(0.017)	(0.013)	(0.071)	(0.068)
shtreatment:shlocation	-0.137	-0.116	-0.120*	-0.227	-0.378
	(0.180)	(0.091)	(0.068)	(0.375)	(0.361)
Constant	2.346***	0.456***	0.152*	1.695***	2.120***
	(0.214)	(0.107)	(0.080)	(0.430)	(0.413)
Observations	1,556	1,496	1,496	456	463
R^2	0.039	0.034	0.016	0.056	0.069
Adjusted R^2	0.033	0.028	0.010	0.037	0.050
Residual Std. Error	1.006 (df = 1546)	0.491 (df = 1486)	0.368 (df = 1486)	1.092 (df = 446)	1.053 (df = 453)
F Statistic	6.965*** (df = 9; 1546)	5.833*** (df = 9; 1486)	2.652*** (df = 9; 1486)	2.917*** (df = 9; 446)	3.706*** (df = 9; 453)
Note:					*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

In contrast with the Yunnan data, the signs of the dependent variables for indirect, "actual support" questions with the interaction term do match my H2 hypothesis. All actual support questions in Shanghai have a negative interaction term, which supports both my hypothesis and the previously proposed idea that citizens of Shanghai may feel particularly willing to criticize the government.

As with the expressed support models, most actual support models do not have a statistically significant interaction term, the highest of which only goes to the 10% level again. The reasons for this are likely the same reasons as to why this was the case for the explicit support models—

either a lack of a fear response due to not perceiving the repressive incident as "repressive" (or not perceiving the repressive incident at all), or a statistical problem that arises from too little data in the before treatment group. Overall, it is much harder to draw conclusions from the Shanghai data than it is the Yunnan data, but it still provides some interesting insights. Even though most results are not significant, the signs of the interaction term indicate a willingness to criticize the government in Shanghai that may be worth further exploring. Additionally, one of the only significant variables in the expressed data group is also the only variable with a positive sign, matching my H1 hypothesis—a small finding, but one that indicates some support for preference falsification nevertheless.

Additional Analysis

This primary analysis suggests interesting potential findings about a difference in the populations of Yunnan and Shanghai respectively, particularly as it relates to attitude changes across socioeconomic divides in China. The nature of the treatment incident could also be related to these attitudes; those affected by the fraud were largely middle-class investors, and the most passionate protestors were likely middle-class as well. To assess the potential impact of this, I perform a handful of robustness checks where I suspend my assumption that each survey respondent is equally representative of a "general citizen" attitude, taking into account that low-income respondents may be less sympathetic to the repressive plight of middle-income protests which may reduce the extent of their attitude change. To assess this, I subset the data into four groups (low income, middle income, urban, and rural) and run the previous regression models independently on each new group. To assess income level, I use the current definition put forth by China's National Bureau of Statistics, where "middle income" is defined as any individual who has a yearly income between 25,000 RMB and 250,000 RMB. Accordingly, my "low

income" group refers to any respondent who reported less than 25,000 RMB in yearly income on the CGSS survey. I did originally subset a "high income" group, but there were not enough respondents in this category in my datasets to conduct meaningful analysis.

The urban/rural distinction is based off of a CGSS question about China's household registration system (the *hukou* system). This registration is given to every individual at birth and defines them as an agricultural or non-agricultural resident. However, there are multiple subcategories of *hukou*, and it is not a perfect representation of where an individual actually resides[8], making it too complex of a variable to include in my primary analysis. Regardless, using only the basic distinction of an "agricultural" or "non-agricultural" *hukou* in respondents is still adequate enough to capture an urban/rural divide for additional analysis.

I run my models on these four subgroups for both expressed and actual support in both Yunnan and Shanghai, resulting in sixteen additional regression charts total, the full details of which can be seen in the appendix. The variables that changed compared to my original analysis have been highlighted.

Interestingly, most of my results are unchanged. The few changes that do occur are often sign changes on variables with no significance, which change in sign to either support or no longer support my hypothesis, but without gaining significance. Some previously significant variables go down a level or two of significance—changing from a 5% significance level to 10%, etc.—but very few change by going up in significance or in other remarkable ways. The most interesting result from this analysis occurs on the "urban" subset for expressed support in Yunnan (a subset that likely captures those in Kunming, the capital and where protest occurred).

[8] A *hukou* is often kept for life even as individuals move around. For example, all respondents from Shanghai should be considered "urban" for the purposes of this analysis, but there are still a number of respondents in Shanghai who respond with having an agricultural *hukou*, likely because they are originally from a rural area but live in Shanghai for work, etc.

Two previously insignificant variables gain significance to the 5% level in the positive direction, affirming my hypothesis—but the two previously-found significant variables from the original analysis, *criticprotected* and *arrests*, are no longer significant in this data, making for an overall net change of zero as far as hypothesis-support is concerned.

From this check for heterogeneous effects, we might infer that there are few differences in effects across subgroups of the population. Even when dividing the respondents into subcategories that could theoretically affect their attitudes toward the protest event and toward the government, the overall effect on the patterns present in the results is negligible. It is also possible that there are heterogenous effects, but there are too few observations in this data to detect them. However, because the results follow my original findings, including the more general positive attitudes from Yunnan and more general negative attitudes from Shanghai, the question about the fundamental difference in these two populations remains and could still be further explored in future research.

Additionally, there is one last factor not captured in my original regression analysis that might affect my results—the impact of respondents refusing to answer questions. When dealing with sensitive questions, it is quite possible that respondents will wish to simply not answer the question rather than explicitly falsify their response. However, a respondent refusing to answer a question is coded as an N/A response, making that respondent automatically drop out of the regression during statistical analysis.

It is difficult to do any actual regression work with N/A responses; however, we can check to determine to what extent non-responsiveness is a problem within the sample. In the chart below, I record the number of "refuse to answer" responses coded for each dataset overall for each dependent variable survey question.

Dependent Variable	Number of "Refuse to Answer" Responses	
	Yunnan	Shanghai
nointerfere	149	58
fairenforce	125	75
govimpartial	126	71
criticprotected	177	94
arrests	162	82
fairness	21	15
officialimprove	170	92
managerimprove	170	92
petitionobstacles	166	88
petitionsolve	181	81

The most interesting finding here is the answer to the first of the indirect questions, the "fairness" question, which asks if respondents consider current society to be unfair. This is the most indirect of all the questions, as it does not address the government in any meaningful way. It can therefore be used as a kind of control in this case—for a completely non-sensitive question, that range is the general amount of "refuse to respond" answers we would expect to find. As evident from the chart, the number of N/A responses for all other dependent variables is much higher than it is to the fairness question. This is evidence that all of the questions, even the indirect ones, are still somewhat sensitive, and notable numbers of respondents would rather opt out of the question rather than telling the truth *or* falsifying their preferences. Knowing that this phenomenon exists, it could be that the estimates that I have in my analysis are still quite conservative. Given the incentive to reply N/A on sensitive questions, the statistically significant responses that I still manage to find may hold greater weight.

VII. Discussion and Conclusion

Overall, findings from my empirical analysis are mixed. Some results, like Yunnan's expressed support results or Shanghai's actual support results, do provide support for my hypotheses. Other results do not move in the direction I was expecting or are not significant. These mixed results are likely due to limitations imposed by this data and analysis, which will be elaborated on below. However, despite the limitations, this study still provides interesting insights in a number of areas and opens a variety of doors for potential future research.

Limitations of the Data

The first limitation of this analysis is not specific to this work, but rather comes from the fundamental design—performing a difference-in-difference study with a real-world event as the treatment. Even carefully controlling for as much as possible—looking through Wickedonna to assess the overall protest landscape of this time, controlling for relevant factors in my regression, and checking for parallel trends—the real world is not a controlled environment, and there is always a possibility of an unaccounted-for external factor that could have affected attitudes.

The second, and perhaps more significant limitation of this work comes from the data itself. The CGSS, while useful, was not designed with this study in mind, and much of the data used is not ideal, such as the poor balance of in-Yunnan and outside-Yunnan responses in the Yunnan dataset, or how early the treatment date comes in the Shanghai dataset. In an ideal world, this study could have been conducted as an independent survey with a consistent number of daily responses over time[9] and more pointed questions purposefully designed to capture public and

[9] For this study, this would likely mean going to the city where a protest movement is taking place, such as going to Kunming when the Fanya protests first started, and surveying a small group of people in the area every day until the

private attitudes. Doing so would have likely produced results with much less ambiguity than what is reflected in my analysis, but it is also logistically challenging and highly unlikely—no authoritarian regime would be keen to approve or allow such a project.

The assumptions that must be made about the CGSS respondents also place limitations on the validity of my data. I rely on the assumption that respondents are more aware about actions taken by their local law enforcement and are more updated on events happening in their own backyard, making them more likely to know when a repressive event in their area occurs. However, I cannot fully eliminate the possibility that the CGSS respondents did not know about the repressive event in their area when it occurred. I chose to examine a highly publicized event (the Fanya incident) and controlled for news awareness and social media use to try address this limitation as best I could.

Despite all of these limitations, much of the results in my analysis do tentatively point to support for my hypotheses, and that provides a promising foundation to further explore how attitudes are affected by repression. Qualitative empirical work could potentially be taken to corroborate the findings implied here, such as interviews with protestors who experienced the repression of the Fanya protests firsthand. Combined with this research, that qualitative work could help the impact using repression has on citizens become much clearer.

Moving Forward

Outside of looking at my hypotheses, the research here provides many additional insights that reinforce previous research and could lead to future academic work.

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government employs repression, then continuing to survey for the same amount of days after it. There would be significant logistical challenges with this approach, but it would produce clean data.

Firstly, the protests that followed the collapse of the Fanya Nonferrous Metals Exchange are understudied and potentially very fruitful for other research. The incident was complex and the protests nationwide, but very little academic work has ever been done to examine it. Examining how and when the state chose to repress protestors during the long period it was protested, when the government changed its tune and began to pin the blame on the metals exchange only, and how the issue was eventually resolved are all interesting undertakings that can tell us much about the modern Chinese state and how it handles discontent. For those who study unrest in China, further examining and working with this significant incident is a potential avenue for deeper understanding.

Branching off from the context of the metals exchange, another interesting avenue for future research from this paper is to think about how its results would hold *outside* of the metals exchange. The context of this paper was chosen because it was useful for a variety of reasons—the government was implicated but not directly being protested, the protests were widely covered in media, and the protests had been ongoing for some time before repression actually occurred, allowing me to isolate the point and impact of the repression. Still, the metals exchange is a very specific context, and it would be useful to see how this analysis might play out in the aftermath of more politically contentious issues, outside of fraud. It is likely that during particularly contentious issues—protests relating to Hong Kong, for example—the government would respond quite swiftly, making it difficult to isolate the date of repression from the beginning of the protests and potentially muddling attitudes. If the opportunity arose, though, it may be the case that attitude changes and the incentive to falsify preferences is even stronger after protest relating to a more politically sensitive issue.

The process of doing this research also backs up findings from previous scholars on unrest in China, such as the "rightful resistance" idea discussed in the *Context* section. Working through the Wickedonna dataset, I was able to see pictures and read posts that displayed firsthand the tactics that everyday Chinese protestors use and the way they speak about protest. Doing so provided evidence that compliments the idea that protestors in China protest in a way that often respects the state and very rarely tries to challenge the regime. Even the T-shirts worn by the protestors of Yunnan in the Fanya incident are complimentary toward the government, saying they trust the government to "rescue" them from their financial ruin—a very different tone from what populations in other countries might take during a financial scandal. Because the research in this paper further validates findings of rightful resistance, I am confident that this work is complimentary to the current literature on Chinese protest and can provide new information about attitudes within that literature that have not been explored previously.

Additionally, one of the interesting implications of my findings is potential evidence of a difference in attitudes toward the government across China's urban-rural divide. Shanghai's results indicated a stronger willingness to be critical of the government, whereas results from Yunnan did not. This could be further explored: are rural residents more fearful of their local governments? What about the national government? When it comes to challenging government decisions, are urban residents more bold? Preliminary additional analysis conducted indicated that urban/rural divides captured via the *hukou* system did not dramatically affect attitudes, but these results were limited in scope and did not capture whatever is underlying the difference in the Shanghai and Yunnan populations. As China continues modernizing and more and more of its population migrates to urban areas, these population effects could become significant. The narrative of unrest in China indicates that protestors are unwilling to challenge the Chinese

regime and therefore the regime is largely stable. However, if urban residents are more willing to challenge the government, there is a chance that stability could change in future years. Determining whether this could be the case is an important undertaking for future China scholars.

Finally, outside of the Chinese context, the methods used in this paper provide new avenues for research in authoritarian regimes. While using survey data from authoritarian regimes is often written off as being unreliable, taking the approach used here and by Jiang and Yang is a unique way to utilize surveys while still accounting for preference falsification. This approach could be used to look at a plethora of attitude changes in any country where citizens have a known incentive to falsify their preferences; utilizing it could open new sets of data previously thought to be inefficient or unusable. There is still much unknown about how everyday citizens feel in authoritarian regimes, and while this study focuses on China, the implications of its findings and the structure of its approach have the potential to extend much further beyond that.

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IX. Appendix: Additional Regression Models

Yunnan Low-Income Expressed Support

	Dependent variable:				
	yrnointerfere	yrfairenforce	yrgovimpartial	ycriticprotected	yarrests
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
yntreatment	-0.139***	-0.010	0.020	0.055	-0.207***
	(0.045)	(0.038)	(0.040)	(0.068)	(0.065)
ynlocation	0.015	0.117*	0.053	-0.143	-0.110
	(0.075)	(0.063)	(0.066)	(0.114)	(0.106)
ygender	0.103**	0.008	0.008	0.063	-0.006
	(0.040)	(0.034)	(0.036)	(0.060)	(0.058)
yage	0.006***	0.001	-0.001	0.005**	0.002
	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.002)
yeduc	-0.005	-0.017*	-0.024***	0.013	0.010
	(0.010)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.015)	(0.015)
ynewsread	0.007	0.010	0.0001	0.042	0.024
	(0.023)	(0.020)	(0.021)	(0.036)	(0.034)
ysocialmedia	-0.00000	-0.071***	-0.066***	-0.074**	-0.011
	(0.020)	(0.017)	(0.018)	(0.029)	(0.028)
yindividuality	0.024	0.134***	0.139***	0.044	0.070*
	(0.027)	(0.023)	(0.024)	(0.041)	(0.040)
yntreatment:ynlocation	0.133	0.057	0.158	0.267	0.543***
	(0.143)	(0.127)	(0.133)	(0.227)	(0.207)
Constant	2.669***	3.008***	3.038***	2.705***	3.178***
	(0.167)	(0.140)	(0.148)	(0.241)	(0.230)
Observations	2,798	2,814	2,809	890	900
R^2	0.017	0.042	0.035	0.039	0.022
Adjusted R^2	0.014	0.039	0.032	0.030	0.012
Residual Std. Error	1.021 (df = 2788)	0.865 (df = 2804)	0.906 (df = 2799)	0.861 (df = 880)	0.829 (df = 890)
F Statistic	5.448*** (df = 9; 2788)	13.631*** (df = 9; 2804)	11.358*** (df = 9; 2799)	4.020*** (df = 9; 880)	2.213** (df = 9; 890)
Note:					*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Yunnan Low-Income Actual Support

	Dependent variable:				
	yfairness	yofficialimprove	ymanagerimprove	ypetitionobstacles	ypetitionsolve
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
yntreatment	-0.020	0.005	0.021	-0.024	0.070
	(0.042)	(0.020)	(0.017)	(0.080)	(0.083)
ynlocation	0.125*	-0.040	-0.004	-0.180	0.139
	(0.070)	(0.034)	(0.028)	(0.145)	(0.144)
ygender	-0.095**	-0.022	0.004	0.026	-0.021
	(0.037)	(0.018)	(0.015)	(0.071)	(0.074)
yage	0.007***	0.001*	-0.0005	-0.001	-0.002
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.003)	(0.003)
yeduc	0.010	-0.009*	0.004	-0.054***	-0.059***
	(0.010)	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.018)	(0.019)
ynewsread	-0.019	0.005	0.012	0.116***	0.101**
	(0.022)	(0.011)	(0.009)	(0.042)	(0.044)
ysocialmedia	-0.037**	0.022**	-0.003	-0.040	-0.049
	(0.019)	(0.009)	(0.007)	(0.035)	(0.036)
yindividuality	0.151***	-0.007	0.036***	-0.125***	0.005
	(0.025)	(0.012)	(0.010)	(0.048)	(0.050)
yntreatment:ynlocation	0.247*	0.049	0.115**	0.258	-0.261
	(0.131)	(0.064)	(0.052)	(0.268)	(0.271)
Constant	2.550***	0.317***	0.033	3.180***	2.974***
	(0.155)	(0.076)	(0.061)	(0.277)	(0.290)
Observations	2,878	2,889	2,889	889	879
R^2	0.044	0.005	0.010	0.035	0.031
Adjusted R^2	0.041	0.002	0.007	0.025	0.021
Residual Std. Error	0.964 (df = 2868)	0.473 (df = 2879)	0.383 (df = 2879)	1.013 (df = 879)	1.048 (df = 869)
F Statistic	14.647*** (df = 9; 2868)	1.519 (df = 9; 2879)	3.391*** (df = 9; 2879)	3.491*** (df = 9; 879)	3.111*** (df = 9; 869)
Note:					*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Yunnan Middle-Income Expressed Support

	Dependent variable:				
	yrnointerfere	yrfairenforce	yrgovimpartial	ycriticprotected	yarrests
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
yntreatment	0.077	0.020	-0.012	0.050	-0.149
	(0.065)	(0.054)	(0.056)	(0.102)	(0.099)
ynlocation	-0.211	0.193	0.291**	-0.384	-0.315
	(0.168)	(0.140)	(0.147)	(0.233)	(0.229)
ygender	-0.007	-0.012	-0.004	-0.013	-0.096
	(0.062)	(0.051)	(0.053)	(0.096)	(0.094)
yage	0.007***	0.002	0.003	-0.001	0.001
	(0.003)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.004)	(0.004)
yeduc	0.007	-0.011	0.001	0.011	0.035**
	(0.011)	(0.009)	(0.010)	(0.017)	(0.017)
ynewsread	-0.037	0.038	0.023	0.007	-0.002
	(0.028)	(0.023)	(0.024)	(0.042)	(0.042)
ysocialmedia	-0.039	-0.075***	-0.068***	-0.073*	-0.066*
	(0.025)	(0.021)	(0.022)	(0.039)	(0.038)
yindividuality	0.023	0.169***	0.141***	-0.014	0.034
	(0.044)	(0.037)	(0.038)	(0.068)	(0.066)
yntreatment:ynlocation	-0.418	0.170	-0.081	0.866	1.203**
	(0.392)	(0.359)	(0.337)	(0.585)	(0.574)
Constant	2.876***	2.636***	2.605***	3.310***	3.462***
	(0.243)	(0.201)	(0.207)	(0.370)	(0.365)
Observations	1,258	1,265	1,267	406	410
R^2	0.024	0.059	0.040	0.023	0.033
Adjusted R^2	0.017	0.052	0.033	0.0005	0.012
Residual Std. Error	1.051 (df = 1248)	0.867 (df = 1255)	0.899 (df = 1257)	0.916 (df = 396)	0.900 (df = 400)
F Statistic	3.371*** (df = 9; 1248)	8.765*** (df = 9; 1255)	5.763*** (df = 9; 1257)	1.021 (df = 9; 396)	1.540 (df = 9; 400)
Note:					*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Yunnan Middle-Income Actual Support

	Dependent variable:				
	yfairness	yofficialimprove	ymanagerimprove	ypetitionobstacles	ypetitionsolve
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
yntreatment	-0.008	-0.038	0.037	0.291**	-0.048
	(0.059)	(0.029)	(0.024)	(0.114)	(0.112)
ynlocation	0.003	-0.105	0.049	0.574**	-0.051
	(0.155)	(0.076)	(0.062)	(0.269)	(0.270)
ygender	-0.084	0.010	0.010	0.078	0.011
	(0.056)	(0.028)	(0.023)	(0.110)	(0.108)
yage	0.004*	-0.0002	-0.001	0.003	-0.003
	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.005)	(0.005)
yeduc	0.022**	-0.013**	0.006	0.003	0.037*
	(0.010)	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.020)	(0.020)
ynewsread	0.022	-0.030**	0.019*	-0.007	0.020
	(0.026)	(0.013)	(0.010)	(0.048)	(0.047)
ysocialmedia	-0.060***	0.007	-0.001	-0.043	-0.089**
	(0.023)	(0.011)	(0.009)	(0.045)	(0.044)
yindividuality	0.075*	-0.005	-0.001	-0.044	-0.013
	(0.040)	(0.020)	(0.016)	(0.076)	(0.074)
yntreatment:ynlocation	0.568	0.438**	-0.038	-0.932	-0.699
	(0.359)	(0.178)	(0.146)	(0.673)	(0.788)
Constant	2.837***	0.510***	0.116	2.401***	2.807***
	(0.221)	(0.110)	(0.090)	(0.421)	(0.414)
Observations	1,277	1,281	1,281	418	414
R^2	0.029	0.020	0.009	0.037	0.016
Adjusted R^2	0.022	0.013	0.002	0.016	-0.006
Residual Std. Error	0.960 (df = 1267)	0.477 (df = 1271)	0.391 (df = 1271)	1.055 (df = 408)	1.031 (df = 404)
F Statistic	4.165*** (df = 9; 1267)	2.853*** (df = 9; 1271)	1.324 (df = 9; 1271)	1.732* (df = 9; 408)	0.736 (df = 9; 404)
Note:					*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Yunnan Rural Expressed Support

	Dependent variable:				
	yrnointerfere	yrfairenforce	yrgovimpartial	ycriticprotected	yarrests
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
yntreatment	-0.050	-0.025	-0.017	0.019	-0.187***
	(0.047)	(0.040)	(0.042)	(0.074)	(0.071)
ynlocation	-0.019	0.108*	0.064	-0.202*	-0.079
	(0.075)	(0.064)	(0.067)	(0.116)	(0.110)
ygender	0.059	0.049	0.060	0.011	-0.003
	(0.042)	(0.036)	(0.037)	(0.063)	(0.061)
yage	0.006***	0.002	0.001	0.004	0.001
	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.003)	(0.002)
yeduc	0.010	-0.015	-0.011	0.006	0.024
	(0.012)	(0.010)	(0.011)	(0.018)	(0.018)
ynewsread	-0.025	0.036	0.026	0.042	0.030
	(0.027)	(0.023)	(0.025)	(0.041)	(0.040)
ysocialmedia	0.008	-0.082***	-0.077***	-0.085***	-0.066**
	(0.020)	(0.017)	(0.018)	(0.030)	(0.029)
yindividuality	0.017	0.146***	0.145***	0.070	0.112***
	(0.029)	(0.025)	(0.026)	(0.045)	(0.043)
yntreatment:ynlocation	0.067	0.060	0.129	0.445*	0.499**
	(0.146)	(0.133)	(0.139)	(0.230)	(0.216)
Constant	2.718***	2.822***	2.766***	2.838***	3.081***
	(0.180)	(0.154)	(0.163)	(0.268)	(0.261)
Observations	2,491	2,505	2,511	800	813
R^2	0.009	0.053	0.040	0.043	0.032
Adjusted R^2	0.005	0.049	0.036	0.032	0.022
Residual Std. Error	1.007 (df = 2481)	0.869 (df = 2495)	0.913 (df = 2501)	0.868 (df = 790)	0.850 (df = 803)
F Statistic	2.460*** (df = 9; 2481)	15.453*** (df = 9; 2495)	11.446*** (df = 9; 2501)	3.975*** (df = 9; 790)	2.987*** (df = 9; 803)
Note:					*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

	Dependent variable:				
	yfairness	yofficialimprove	ymanagerimprove	ypetitionobstacles	ypetitionsolve
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
yntreatment	0.019	-0.018	0.016	0.007	0.048
	(0.044)	(0.022)	(0.018)	(0.086)	(0.090)
ynlocation	0.161**	-0.052	0.002	-0.089	0.132
	(0.070)	(0.035)	(0.028)	(0.147)	(0.150)
ygender	-0.035	-0.026	0.012	0.064	-0.001
	(0.039)	(0.019)	(0.016)	(0.074)	(0.078)
yage	0.009***	0.0003	-0.0004	-0.002	0.0002
	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.003)	(0.003)
yeduc	0.016	-0.014**	0.004	-0.059***	-0.057***
	(0.011)	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.021)	(0.022)
ynewsread	0.010	0.001	0.024**	0.054	0.106**
	(0.025)	(0.013)	(0.010)	(0.049)	(0.051)
ysocialmedia	-0.019	0.019**	-0.006	-0.027	-0.035
	(0.019)	(0.009)	(0.007)	(0.035)	(0.037)
yindividuality	0.147***	0.011	0.026**	-0.157***	0.012
	(0.027)	(0.013)	(0.011)	(0.052)	(0.054)
yntreatment:ynlocation	0.244*	0.049	0.132**	0.091	-0.243
	(0.133)	(0.066)	(0.053)	(0.273)	(0.279)
Constant	2.277***	0.349***	0.041	3.311***	2.770***
	(0.168)	(0.083)	(0.067)	(0.313)	(0.328)
Observations	2,563	2,573	2,573	798	795
R^2	0.045	0.005	0.011	0.029	0.025
Adjusted R^2	0.041	0.002	0.007	0.018	0.014
Residual Std. Error	0.953 (df = 2553)	0.474 (df = 2563)	0.383 (df = 2563)	1.028 (df = 788)	1.071 (df = 785)
F Statistic	13.275*** (df = 9; 2553)	1.472 (df = 9; 2563)	3.026*** (df = 9; 2563)	2.616*** (df = 9; 788)	2.279** (df = 9; 785)
Note:					*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Yunnan Urban Expressed Support

	Dependent variable:				
	yrnointerfere	yrfairenforce	yrgovimpartial	ycriticprotected	yarrests
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
yntreatment	-0.178**	0.088	0.075	0.133	-0.150
	(0.083)	(0.066)	(0.068)	(0.132)	(0.124)
ynlocation	-0.173	-0.147	-0.126	-0.034	-0.224
	(0.282)	(0.225)	(0.247)	(0.427)	(0.404)
ygender	0.168**	0.016	-0.001	0.266**	0.031
	(0.072)	(0.057)	(0.059)	(0.112)	(0.105)
yage	0.007**	-0.0003	-0.001	0.003	-0.003
	(0.003)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.005)	(0.005)
yeduc	0.003	-0.016	-0.011	0.015	-0.011
	(0.014)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.022)	(0.021)
ynewsread	-0.001	0.020	0.031	-0.016	-0.008
	(0.033)	(0.026)	(0.027)	(0.049)	(0.045)
ysocialmedia	-0.081**	-0.080***	-0.072***	-0.043	-0.020
	(0.033)	(0.026)	(0.027)	(0.055)	(0.052)
yindividuality	0.054	0.144***	0.124***	-0.117	-0.069
	(0.051)	(0.041)	(0.042)	(0.078)	(0.074)
yntreatment:ynlocation	0.517	0.947**	1.020**	0.073	0.694
	(0.502)	(0.401)	(0.441)	(1.046)	(0.760)
Constant	2.565***	2.903***	2.847***	2.969***	4.086***
	(0.311)	(0.246)	(0.253)	(0.471)	(0.449)
Observations	929	937	930	294	296
R^2	0.057	0.057	0.041	0.040	0.014
Adjusted R^2	0.047	0.048	0.032	0.009	-0.017
Residual Std. Error	1.079 (df = 919)	0.862 (df = 927)	0.881 (df = 920)	0.941 (df = 284)	0.891 (df = 286)
F Statistic	6.117*** (df = 9; 919)	6.261*** (df = 9; 927)	4.367*** (df = 9; 920)	1.302 (df = 9; 284)	0.439 (df = 9; 286)
Note:					*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Yunnan Urban Actual Support

	Dependent variable:				
	yfairness	yofficialimprove	ymanagerimprove	ypetitionobstacles	ypetitionsolve
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
yntreatment	-0.031	0.020	0.016	0.309**	0.195
	(0.073)	(0.036)	(0.030)	(0.138)	(0.142)
ynlocation	-0.411	-0.014	0.017	-0.240	0.082
	(0.252)	(0.124)	(0.103)	(0.412)	(0.423)
ygender	-0.078	-0.019	0.024	0.031	-0.021
	(0.064)	(0.031)	(0.026)	(0.117)	(0.121)
yage	0.004	0.003**	-0.001	-0.006	0.002
	(0.003)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.005)	(0.005)
yeduc	0.011	-0.007	0.006	-0.014	0.040*
	(0.012)	(0.006)	(0.005)	(0.023)	(0.024)
ynewsread	0.031	-0.021	0.005	0.065	0.006
	(0.029)	(0.014)	(0.012)	(0.051)	(0.052)
ysocialmedia	-0.038	0.024*	-0.002	-0.140**	-0.110*
	(0.029)	(0.014)	(0.012)	(0.058)	(0.060)
yindividuality	0.089*	-0.011	0.025	-0.048	-0.078
	(0.045)	(0.022)	(0.018)	(0.083)	(0.086)
yntreatment:ynlocation	0.488	0.356	-0.060	-0.646	-0.819
	(0.450)	(0.222)	(0.183)	(1.091)	(1.118)
Constant	2.796***	0.302**	0.060	3.147***	2.819***
	(0.274)	(0.135)	(0.112)	(0.496)	(0.518)
Observations	947	947	947	299	294
R^2	0.022	0.014	0.009	0.058	0.034
Adjusted R^2	0.013	0.004	-0.0001	0.029	0.003
Residual Std. Error	0.966 (df = 937)	0.476 (df = 937)	0.393 (df = 937)	0.995 (df = 289)	1.019 (df = 284)
F Statistic	2.348** (df = 9; 937)	1.461 (df = 9; 937)	0.985 (df = 9; 937)	1.990** (df = 9; 289)	1.108 (df = 9; 284)
Note:					*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

	Dependent variable:				
	srnointerfere	srfairenforce	srgovimpartial	scriticprotected	sarrests
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
shtreatment	-0.343***	0.058	0.150**	0.382**	0.099
	(0.086)	(0.075)	(0.075)	(0.149)	(0.147)
shlocation	-0.847*	0.107	-0.087	2.039**	1.418
	(0.453)	(0.393)	(0.396)	(0.969)	(0.976)
sgender	-0.118	-0.017	0.023	0.044	0.097
	(0.076)	(0.066)	(0.067)	(0.120)	(0.120)
sage	0.006**	0.004	0.001	0.001	0.003
	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.005)	(0.005)
seduc	0.012	-0.021	-0.012	0.011	-0.014
	(0.018)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.032)	(0.031)
snewsread	0.037	-0.056	-0.027	0.029	-0.033
	(0.041)	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.066)	(0.066)
ssocialmedia	-0.009	-0.080***	-0.098***	-0.047	0.034
	(0.035)	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.052)	(0.053)
sindividuality	0.007	0.027	0.045	-0.065	0.088
	(0.048)	(0.042)	(0.042)	(0.078)	(0.078)
shtreatment:shlocation	0.879*	-0.127	0.131	-2.325**	-0.994
	(0.474)	(0.412)	(0.415)	(0.997)	(1.003)
Constant	3.203***	3.422***	3.269***	3.026***	2.886***
	(0.322)	(0.282)	(0.281)	(0.503)	(0.524)
Observations	847	836	841	259	268
R^2	0.031	0.062	0.044	0.051	0.034
Adjusted R^2	0.020	0.052	0.034	0.016	-0.00004
Residual Std. Error	1.083 (df = 837)	0.941 (df = 826)	0.949 (df = 831)	0.943 (df = 249)	0.951 (df = 258)
F Statistic	2.951*** (df = 9; 837)	6.078*** (df = 9; 826)	4.296*** (df = 9; 831)	1.477 (df = 9; 249)	0.999 (df = 9; 258)
Note:					*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Shanghai Low-Income Actual Support

	Dependent variable:				
	sfairness	sofficialimprove	smanagerimprove	spetitionobstacles	spetitionsolve
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
shtreatment	-0.049	0.010	0.038	0.075	-0.069
	(0.083)	(0.038)	(0.028)	(0.168)	(0.164)
shlocation	-0.154	-0.030	0.185	0.924	0.883
	(0.447)	(0.205)	(0.151)	(1.130)	(1.111)
sgender	-0.034	0.033	0.002	0.298**	0.030
	(0.074)	(0.034)	(0.025)	(0.142)	(0.137)
sage	0.007**	0.003**	-0.0003	0.008	0.005
	(0.003)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.006)	(0.006)
seduc	-0.030*	0.002	0.004	-0.002	-0.094***
	(0.018)	(0.008)	(0.006)	(0.037)	(0.035)
snewsread	0.009	-0.049***	0.002	0.021	0.108
	(0.040)	(0.018)	(0.013)	(0.080)	(0.076)
ssocialmedia	-0.037	0.020	0.003	0.013	0.116*
	(0.034)	(0.016)	(0.012)	(0.065)	(0.063)
sindividuality	0.131***	0.032	-0.015	0.092	0.189**
	(0.047)	(0.021)	(0.016)	(0.092)	(0.090)
shtreatment:shlocation	0.309	0.180	-0.244	-0.713	-0.503
	(0.467)	(0.214)	(0.158)	(1.162)	(1.141)
Constant	2.689***	0.097	0.170	1.451**	1.933***
	(0.313)	(0.143)	(0.105)	(0.588)	(0.569)
Observations	870	877	877	258	266
R^2	0.046	0.021	0.008	0.041	0.067
Adjusted R^2	0.036	0.011	-0.003	0.006	0.035
Residual Std. Error	1.070 (df = 860)	0.492 (df = 867)	0.363 (df = 867)	1.101 (df = 248)	1.084 (df = 256)
F Statistic	4.642*** (df = 9; 860)	2.035** (df = 9; 867)	0.755 (df = 9; 867)	1.169 (df = 9; 248)	2.054** (df = 9; 256)
Note:					*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Shanghai Middle-Income Expressed Support

	Dependent variable:				
	srnointerfere	srfairenforce	srgovimpartial	scriticprotected	sarrests
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
shtreatment	-0.114	0.185	-0.029	0.099	0.300
	(0.153)	(0.118)	(0.121)	(0.228)	(0.245)
shlocation	-0.059	0.508***	0.342*	-0.699*	0.364
	(0.234)	(0.180)	(0.184)	(0.401)	(0.412)
sgender	0.169**	0.025	0.034	0.051	-0.078
	(0.084)	(0.065)	(0.066)	(0.136)	(0.139)
sage	0.002	-0.005**	-0.0005	0.004	0.005
	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.006)	(0.006)
seduc	-0.053***	0.010	0.011	0.006	0.023
	(0.016)	(0.012)	(0.013)	(0.025)	(0.027)
snewsread	0.144***	0.038	0.042	0.021	-0.053
	(0.036)	(0.027)	(0.028)	(0.058)	(0.060)
ssocialmedia	0.014	-0.144***	-0.103***	-0.065	-0.029
	(0.036)	(0.027)	(0.028)	(0.055)	(0.056)
sindividuality	0.058	0.114**	0.073	0.182*	0.155
	(0.059)	(0.046)	(0.046)	(0.095)	(0.098)
shtreatment:shlocation	0.078	-0.419**	-0.176	0.370	-0.136
	(0.242)	(0.186)	(0.191)	(0.403)	(0.410)
Constant	2.708***	3.038***	2.889***	2.462***	2.564***
	(0.346)	(0.270)	(0.270)	(0.573)	(0.593)
Observations	660	654	652	183	188
R^2	0.055	0.068	0.056	0.099	0.057
Adjusted R^2	0.041	0.055	0.043	0.052	0.009
Residual Std. Error	1.040 (df = 650)	0.798 (df = 644)	0.810 (df = 642)	0.865 (df = 173)	0.899 (df = 178)
F Statistic	4.167*** (df = 9; 650)	5.211*** (df = 9; 644)	4.263*** (df = 9; 642)	2.112** (df = 9; 173)	1.190 (df = 9; 178)
Note:					*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Shanghai Middle-Income Actual Support

	Dependent variable:				
	sfairness	sofficialimprove	smanagerimprove	spetitionobstacles	spetitionsolve
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
shtreatment	-0.026	-0.015	0.067	0.331	0.586**
	(0.131)	(0.070)	(0.052)	(0.293)	(0.259)
shlocation	0.252	0.276**	-0.018	0.700	1.381***
	(0.204)	(0.109)	(0.081)	(0.465)	(0.423)
sgender	0.016	-0.009	-0.040	0.076	-0.053
	(0.073)	(0.039)	(0.029)	(0.166)	(0.152)
sage	0.002	-0.003*	0.001	0.006	-0.002
	(0.003)	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.007)	(0.006)
seduc	0.019	-0.035***	0.012**	-0.032	-0.033
	(0.014)	(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.031)	(0.029)
snewsread	0.075**	-0.002	-0.017	-0.007	-0.054
	(0.031)	(0.016)	(0.012)	(0.072)	(0.066)
ssocialmedia	-0.025	-0.014	0.009	-0.070	-0.087
	(0.030)	(0.016)	(0.012)	(0.068)	(0.063)
sindividuality	0.241***	0.020	0.009	0.158	0.124
	(0.051)	(0.027)	(0.020)	(0.116)	(0.108)
shtreatment:shlocation	-0.243	-0.125	-0.082	-0.438	-0.841*
	(0.211)	(0.112)	(0.083)	(0.472)	(0.428)
Constant	1.922***	0.755***	0.089	1.920***	2.414***
	(0.299)	(0.160)	(0.119)	(0.707)	(0.657)
Observations	670	673	673	190	190
R^2	0.056	0.065	0.037	0.099	0.141
Adjusted R^2	0.043	0.052	0.024	0.054	0.098
Residual Std. Error	0.905 (df = 660)	0.486 (df = 663)	0.360 (df = 663)	1.083 (df = 180)	0.994 (df = 180)
F Statistic	4.361*** (df = 9; 660)	5.096*** (df = 9; 663)	2.836*** (df = 9; 663)	2.196** (df = 9; 180)	3.293*** (df = 9; 180)
Note:					*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

	Dependent variable:				
	srnointerfere	srfairenforce	srgovimpartial	scriticprotected	sarrests
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
shtreatment	-0.218**	0.093	0.169**	0.344**	0.297*
	(0.094)	(0.080)	(0.083)	(0.164)	(0.160)
shlocation	-1.871**	0.421	0.080	-0.622	-0.085
	(0.811)	(0.684)	(0.713)	(0.478)	(0.469)
sgender	-0.028	-0.016	0.084	0.003	0.137
	(0.090)	(0.076)	(0.079)	(0.146)	(0.142)
sage	0.008**	0.006*	0.003	0.0003	0.008
	(0.004)	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.007)	(0.007)
seduc	0.023	-0.015	0.004	0.037	0.003
	(0.024)	(0.020)	(0.021)	(0.037)	(0.036)
snewsread	-0.058	-0.030	-0.004	0.070	0.037
	(0.058)	(0.049)	(0.051)	(0.091)	(0.091)
ssocialmedia	0.011	-0.102***	-0.116***	-0.059	0.013
	(0.042)	(0.036)	(0.037)	(0.063)	(0.062)
sindividuality	-0.015	0.035	0.019	0.037	0.141
	(0.054)	(0.046)	(0.047)	(0.096)	(0.094)
shtreatment:shlocation	2.066**	-0.400	-0.339		
	(0.871)	(0.734)	(0.766)		
Constant	3.076***	3.286***	3.104***	2.733***	2.129***
	(0.404)	(0.342)	(0.353)	(0.651)	(0.644)
Observations	678	669	672	215	218
R^2	0.024	0.068	0.049	0.041	0.040
Adjusted R^2	0.011	0.055	0.036	0.004	0.004
Residual Std. Error	1.124 (df = 668)	0.947 (df = 659)	0.989 (df = 662)	1.010 (df = 206)	0.992 (df = 209)
F Statistic	1.842* (df = 9; 668)	5.347*** (df = 9; 659)	3.758*** (df = 9; 662)	1.095 (df = 8; 206)	1.100 (df = 8; 209)
Note:					*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Note: There were not enough "rural" residents in Shanghai who also answered the last two questions (which were taken from a distinct survey module) to conduct analysis with, which is why the treatment:location interaction term is blank for these questions. This is true in both the expressed support and actual support questions for Shanghai in the "rural" subset.

Shanghai Rural Actual Support

	Dependent variable:				
	sfairness	sofficialimprove	smanagerimprove	spetitionobstacles	spetitionsolve
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
shtreatment	0.086	-0.037	0.047	0.207	0.163
	(0.089)	(0.040)	(0.030)	(0.170)	(0.174)
shlocation	-0.151	0.117	-0.219	-0.374	0.427
	(0.784)	(0.353)	(0.268)	(0.508)	(0.523)
sgender	-0.133	0.0005	0.005	0.171	-0.061
	(0.086)	(0.038)	(0.029)	(0.159)	(0.161)
sage	0.007*	0.003*	-0.001	0.018**	0.004
	(0.004)	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.007)	(0.008)
seduc	-0.046*	-0.003	0.011	0.052	-0.064
	(0.023)	(0.011)	(0.008)	(0.040)	(0.041)
snewsread	-0.005	-0.048*	0.011	-0.116	0.055
	(0.056)	(0.025)	(0.019)	(0.106)	(0.107)
ssocialmedia	-0.013	0.008	0.023*	0.102	0.047
	(0.041)	(0.018)	(0.014)	(0.071)	(0.074)
sindividuality	0.145***	0.012	0.006	-0.001	0.143
	(0.051)	(0.023)	(0.017)	(0.104)	(0.106)
shtreatment:shlocation	0.235	0.064	-0.036		
	(0.842)	(0.379)	(0.288)		
Constant	2.733***	0.288*	0.039	1.224*	2.177***
	(0.385)	(0.172)	(0.131)	(0.708)	(0.715)
Observations	694	697	697	204	209
R^2	0.048	0.019	0.034	0.050	0.035
Adjusted R^2	0.035	0.007	0.021	0.011	-0.004
Residual Std. Error	1.087 (df = 684)	0.490 (df = 687)	0.371 (df = 687)	1.064 (df = 195)	1.101 (df = 200)
F Statistic	3.832*** (df = 9; 684)	1.511 (df = 9; 687)	2.682*** (df = 9; 687)	1.276 (df = 8; 195)	0.905 (df = 8; 200)
Note:					*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Shanghai Urban Expressed Support

	Dependent variable:				
	srnointerfere	srfairenforce	srgovimpartial	scriticprotected	sarrests
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
shtreatment	-0.533***	0.075	0.038	0.254	0.003
	(0.135)	(0.109)	(0.105)	(0.209)	(0.211)
shlocation	-0.253	0.269	0.167	-0.492	-0.130
	(0.217)	(0.175)	(0.170)	(0.360)	(0.358)
sgender	-0.033	0.137**	0.066	0.162	0.064
	(0.080)	(0.065)	(0.062)	(0.123)	(0.123)
sage	0.004	-0.003	0.001	0.006	0.003
	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.005)	(0.005)
seduc	-0.047***	0.003	0.003	0.044*	0.004
	(0.016)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.026)	(0.026)
snewsread	0.163***	0.017	0.014	0.006	-0.003
	(0.034)	(0.028)	(0.027)	(0.054)	(0.055)
ssocialmedia	0.017	-0.107***	-0.069**	-0.054	-0.018
	(0.035)	(0.028)	(0.027)	(0.051)	(0.051)
sindividuality	0.101*	0.083*	0.072	0.141	0.095
	(0.060)	(0.050)	(0.047)	(0.089)	(0.090)
shtreatment:shlocation	0.528**	-0.236	-0.151	0.300	0.320
	(0.226)	(0.183)	(0.177)	(0.369)	(0.364)
Constant	2.831***	2.956***	2.822***	1.774***	3.031***
	(0.353)	(0.290)	(0.275)	(0.538)	(0.551)
Observations	664	661	662	181	191
R^2	0.086	0.043	0.032	0.093	0.029
Adjusted R^2	0.074	0.030	0.019	0.046	-0.020
Residual Std. Error	1.017 (df = 654)	0.827 (df = 651)	0.792 (df = 652)	0.813 (df = 171)	0.838 (df = 181)
F Statistic	6.849*** (df = 9; 654)	3.277*** (df = 9; 651)	2.413** (df = 9; 652)	1.955** (df = 9; 171)	0.594 (df = 9; 181)
Note:					*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Shanghai Urban Actual Support

	Dependent variable:				
	sfairness	sofficialimprove	smanagerimprove	spetitionobstacles	spetitionsolve
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
shtreatment	-0.245**	0.120*	0.045	-0.199	0.030
	(0.117)	(0.063)	(0.044)	(0.272)	(0.255)
shlocation	-0.152	0.250**	0.090	0.305	0.748*
	(0.195)	(0.104)	(0.073)	(0.442)	(0.420)
sgender	0.113	-0.003	-0.022	0.215	0.075
	(0.071)	(0.038)	(0.027)	(0.157)	(0.149)
sage	0.004	-0.002	0.001	0.006	0.005
	(0.003)	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.006)	(0.006)
seduc	0.021	-0.031***	0.014***	-0.049	-0.055*
	(0.014)	(0.008)	(0.005)	(0.033)	(0.031)
snewsread	0.067**	-0.024	-0.014	0.019	0.005
	(0.030)	(0.016)	(0.011)	(0.071)	(0.067)
ssocialmedia	-0.020	0.007	-0.011	-0.049	-0.001
	(0.031)	(0.017)	(0.012)	(0.065)	(0.063)
sindividuality	0.174***	0.036	-0.017	0.321***	0.259**
	(0.053)	(0.029)	(0.020)	(0.116)	(0.111)
shtreatment:shlocation	0.093	-0.170	-0.120	0.062	-0.302
	(0.203)	(0.108)	(0.076)	(0.455)	(0.431)
Constant	2.152***	0.584***	0.146	1.571**	1.744***
	(0.315)	(0.169)	(0.118)	(0.698)	(0.666)
Observations	680	686	686	202	203
R^2	0.044	0.039	0.017	0.117	0.096
Adjusted R^2	0.031	0.027	0.004	0.075	0.054
Residual Std. Error	0.914 (df = 670)	0.494 (df = 676)	0.345 (df = 676)	1.096 (df = 192)	1.045 (df = 193)
F Statistic	3.447*** (df = 9; 670)	3.086*** (df = 9; 676)	1.279 (df = 9; 676)	2.820*** (df = 9; 192)	2.281** (df = 9; 193)
Note:					*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01