

Who Protests and Why? The Impact of Socio-Economic Status on Protest Participation in Taiwan

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Abstract

In recent years, protest activities happened frequently in Taiwan. These protests have had profound consequences and changed the landscape of Taiwanese politics. Therefore, it is important to know who protests and why these people protest. This paper aims to answer two questions. First, what kind of people (according to their Socio-Economic Status, SES) is more likely to participate in protest? Second, how does SES influence protest participation? Our hypotheses are drawn from grievance theories, resources model and cultural change theory. We hypothesize that in Taiwan, people with higher SES tend to join in protest. The mechanisms are material condition, civic skills, and the value of post-materialism. Empirically, taking advantage of the World Values Survey 2010–2012, we use confirmatory factor analysis to construct an indicator of SES including education, income, and class. Then, we conduct structural equation modeling to test the mechanisms through which SES exerts influences. We find that in Taiwan, people with higher SES are more likely to protest. Moreover, civic skills are the most important mechanisms. Material condition also has a positive effect. Although the value of post-materialism can influence protest participation, whether people hold this value is unrelated to their SES.

Keywords: Protest, Socio-Economic Status, Civic Skills, Post-Materialism, Structural Equation Modeling

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Introduction

Political participation can be classified into two types: conventional political participation and unconventional political participation (Barnes, Kaase 1979). The former are mostly election-related activities such as voting, making donations, joining in rallies, or contacting representatives or government officials. In a democracy, it is common for citizens to engage in these activities, and some people may do it on a regular basis. Unconventional political participation refers to the actions that citizens take to express their disagreement with the authorities. Examples are signing petitions and joining in activities like boycotts, strikes, or demonstrations. Although protesting against the government in a peaceful way is civil right in a democracy, in early years, people seldom take part in this kind of activities.

However, the pattern of political participation has changed since 1970s. Scholars found that conventional political participation is no longer common. This can be illustrated by the decrease in voting turnout and party affiliation (Dalton, Wattenberg 2000; Putnam 2000; Wattenberg 2000). On the contrary, unconventional political participation takes place frequently (Dalton 1996; Jenkins, Klandermans 1995). This happens not only in advanced industrial countries, but also in developing countries (McAdam, Tarrow, Tilly 2001; Norris 2002). In other words, protest has become a general political phenomenon in the contemporary world.

This trend reveals that for ordinary people, political participation was originally confined to the activities related to election or campaign. But as time goes by, going to the street enters into the repertoire of political activities. Consequently, protest behavior becomes a 'conventional' political action. Klandermans (2003) terms this phenomenon as 'movementization of politics'. He thinks that the line between conventional and unconventional is getting blurred, and the distinction is probably not meaningful nowadays.

The development of Taiwanese politics also follows this trend. Protest events have mushroomed in this country starting from 2008. These events included, to name just a few, environment movement, labor movement, parades against nuclear power plant, demonstrations on residence justice, and movements opposing local development plans. Among these events, two have profound impacts on Taiwanese politics. The first is an assembly on August 3rd, 2013 to mourn Chung-chiu Hung, an army conscript who died three days before his scheduled discharge. It was widely believed that his death resulted from being ordered to perform excessive physical exercise as punishment. More than 100,000 people marched and gathered in front of

the Presidential Office Building demanding justice and improvement of human rights in the country's military. This event was significant because it was non-partisan. It was organized by civic groups and volunteers, and people attended simply to show their anger toward the government. Moreover, a lot of young people showed up in this event. It is unusual in that younger generations are typically unconcerned with politics, and thus are the least participatory. This event awakened young people's interest in and passion for politics. In the 2014 mayoral election and the 2016 presidential election, youth participation played a crucial role in bringing down the ruling party, the Kuomintang (KMT).

The second event is the Sunflower Student Movement happened in 2014. On March 18th, dozens of students broke into and occupied the Legislative Yuan after KMT lawmakers pushed the Cross-Strait Agreement on Trade in Services out of committee to the legislative floor. This agreement intended to enhance the cooperation in trade in services between Taiwan and China. But Taiwanese people were worried about that it may render the island open to the pressures from Beijing both economically and politically. After the breaking news was disseminated via the Internet, crowds of people, mostly young students, rapidly gathered inside and outside the Legislative Yuan, and started the Movement.

Five days later, a group of activists stormed the Executive Yuan. Riot police treated these unarmed protesters violently with batons and water cannons. As a result, more than one hundred people were injured. The brutal eviction further infuriated the general public. In order to put more pressure on the government, student leaders called for a rally to show popular support of the Movement. On March 30th, citizens flooded the square in front of the Presidential Office Building. It was estimated that the number of participants amounted to 500,000. This was the largest protest event in Taiwan history.

After the legislature was occupied for nearly three weeks, the speaker offered a concession to resolve the problem on April 6th. He promised to postpone the consideration of the current agreement until a bill allowing lawmakers to have closer oversight of all agreements with China is passed. Since a supervisory law was the key demand of the protesters, student leaders agreed to end their sit-in. Finally, students vacated and left the Legislative Yuan on April 10th.

In addition to protest, many Taiwanese people express their opinions by signing petitions in these two years. After the Sunflower Student Movement, a petition to reform referendum law was launched by a civic group. In 2015, more than 130,000 signatures were garnered across the country. At about the same time, a petition to recall one KMT legislator collected 49,949 signatures from his electoral district.

Neither the reform, nor the recall was successful eventually. But these two examples illustrated that signing petitions has become more and more common in Taiwan.

In recent years, Taiwan has experienced several waves of protest, petition, and even social conflict. These events have had profound consequences and changed the landscape of Taiwanese politics. Therefore, to know more about protest participation in Taiwan is imperative for political scientists. This paper aims to answer two questions. First, what kind of people is more likely to participate in protest? Simply put, do people with higher socio-economic status (SES) or lower SES tend to protest? Second, how does SES influence individual protest participation? In other words, what are the mechanisms through which SES exerts impacts? In short, this paper intends to investigate in Taiwan, who protests and why these people protest.

This paper proceeds as follows. In the next section, we briefly review the literature on the relationship between SES and protest participation. In the third section, several hypotheses are established. The fourth section describes data, variables, and statistical methods. Empirical results are shown in the fifth section, and the final section concludes.

1. Literature Review

Socio-economic status (SES) represents a person's position in the society. It is a multi-dimensional concept composed of education, income, and occupation. Traditionally, SES is a strong predictor of political activity (Milbrath, Goel 1977). SES may affect an individual's political participation directly and/or indirectly. Its impact can be mediated by various intervening variables or mechanisms (Verba, Nie 1972; Verba, Schlozman, Brady 1995). Due to the importance of SES, education, income, and occupation are usually included in statistical analysis as control variables.

A variety of theories on the relationship between SES and protest participation has been raised. Basically, this literature can be divided into two camps. One is negative relationship which claims that people with lower SES tend to join in protest. The other is positive relationship which contends that people with higher SES are more likely to go to the street. Both camps contain different theories and distinct mechanisms. This section succinctly reviews these theoretical arguments.

1.1. Negative Relationship

In the literature on revolution and social movement, an intuitive answer to the question of why people participate in protest or are opposed to the government is being poor. When people are not able to make a good living, they may want to make a change in politics. Their hope is that if a new government is in place, things might be different so that life could become better. If the current government cannot be replaced in a peaceful way, people may go to the street or even employ violence to achieve this goal. Along this line, Gurr (1968) proposes that poverty or difficult material condition can lead to civil strife. Huntington (1968) also points out that when peasants live in poverty, revolution is very likely to happen, if not inevitable. Studies on civil war have similar arguments. Sambanis (2002) claims that 'civil war is the problem of the poor'. Empirically, popular uprising tend to occur in impoverished countries. Gross domestic product (GDP) per capita has been found to be highly negatively associated with insurgency onset (Collier, Hoeffler 2004; Fearon, Laitin 2003)¹. The explanation of material condition sounds reasonable, and is widely accepted.

Some scholars contend that the key is the distribution of wealth instead of the amount of wealth itself. The reason is that if everyone is as poor as other people, being poor may not make people angry since no comparison can be made. What really matters is not poverty, but inequality. In one society, if some people barely maintain subsistence while others live in luxury, disparity in life quality and the suffering of the aggrieved can be the trigger of internal conflict. Modernization theory argues that although social and economic development brings about growth in wealth, it also leads to inequality. The existence of extreme inequality in the society is the cause of rebellion, be it with respect to income (Muller 1985), land tenure (Midlarsky 1982; Russett 1964; Seligson 1996), or both (Muller, Seligson 1987).

No matter it is poverty or inequality, both theories stress that unbearable material condition in life leads people to take actions against the government. Therefore, we can term them as grievance theories. In grievance theories, material condition is the central mechanism through which SES affects protest behavior. This is the first mechanism in the negative relationship.

¹ Note that scholars interpret GDP in different ways. Fearon, Laitin (2003) use it to represent a state's capacity to deter challengers. Collier, Hoeffler (2004) view it as the proxy variable of opportunity cost for rebels.

The other theory in the camp of negative relationship is relative deprivation. Relative deprivation is related to economic environment as well, but its focus is not material condition. Davies (1962) posits that rebellion takes place when there is a downturn after a period of economic growth². The J curve can create a gap between people's falling material achievement and rising expectation derived from previous development. This gap, the sense of relative deprivation, produces feelings of dissatisfaction and frustration which in turn lead to aggression. If these feelings are pervasive in a society, dissident collective action would emerge. Gurr (1970) elaborates on this theory. In addition to the J curve, he further identifies other development patterns as sources of relative deprivation. As long as there is a gap between the expectation and realization of economic welfare, relative deprivation ensues.

Relative deprivation draws upon psychological approach. The focus is on the emergence of feelings of dissatisfaction and frustration at the individual level. According to this theory, people who are less satisfied with their economic situation have higher probability to take to the street. Therefore, the intervening variable that mediates between SES and protest is the feelings of dissatisfaction and frustration. Note that these feelings may not necessarily result from absolute deprivation. But since feelings of dissatisfaction and frustration are more commonly to emerge among disadvantaged groups, this paper treats these feelings as the second mechanism in the negative relationship.

In short, the camp of negative relationship predicts that when an individual has lower SES, he or she is more likely to participate in protest. Two plausible mechanisms channeling SES to protest participation can be identified in relevant theories. One is miserable material condition derived from grievance theories. The other is feeling of dissatisfaction with economic situation derived from relative deprivation theory. This paper will examine in Taiwan, whether the negative relationship is correct, and whether these two mechanisms are effective.

1.2. Positive Relationship

Some scholars contend that the relationship between SES and protest participation should be positive. In this subsection, two theories will be introduced. The first is resources model. The second is cultural change theory. Although these two theories

² This pattern of economic development is termed as the J curve.

have similar predictions, the logic of and the mechanism behind each explanation are different.

Brady, Verba, Schlozman (1995) raise that one way to understand why people participate in politics is to reverse the question. Why do people not participate in politics? They think that there are three obvious answers: because they do not want to (lack of motivation), because they cannot do it (lack of resources or abilities), or because nobody asked (lack of mobilization). Brady, Verba, Schlozman (1995) concentrate on the role of resources including time, money and civil skills. They argue that participating in politics requires resources. For example, voting or going to the street takes time; making donations needs money; contacting representatives requires communications skills. When an individual is short of some kind of resources, he or she may not be able to perform certain kind of political activity.

The impact of SES on political participation lies in resources. Except for time³, money and civil skills are closely associated with SES. It goes without saying that money is related to income. Civil skills are largely determined by education and occupation. Brady, Verba, Schlozman (1995) posit that civil skills (i.e., the communications and organizational skills) are the key elements of resources. Communications skills refer to expressing one's opinion clearly by writing or speaking. Organizational skills mean being able to cooperate with other people, and being comfortable taking part in meetings. Citizens with these skills are more effective when they are involved in politics.

The acquisition of civil skills is associated with, but not limited to education. In general, higher educational attainment should result in stronger writing and speaking skills. After graduating from school, the training of civil skills still continues. Making presentations, joining in meetings, and coordinating with other people in work place, voluntary association, or church all help people improve their civil skills. This is how SES (education and occupation) affects civil skills.

Brady, Verba, Schlozman (1995) divide political participation into three categories: voting, those taking money, and those taking time. They find that different kind of political participation is associated with distinct resources. Making donations is related to income, but irrelevant to time or civil skills. Voting is related to time, but irrelevant to income or civil skills. As for protest which belongs to activities taking time, civil skills have significant effects on it. It may be because protest is collective action in which people usually take part with partners. Thus, it requires

³ Everybody has 24 hours a day and time cannot be saved. These features do not change by different SES.

some efforts in communicating with people and organizing things. In short, Brady, Verba, Schlozman (1995) show that SES is crucial to the development of a citizen's communications and organizational abilities. These abilities in turn affect this person's protest participation. Civil skills can be identified as the first mechanism in the camp of positive relationship.

The second theory in this camp is cultural change theory. Rather than focusing on resources or ability, the central idea of cultural change theory is motivation. In explaining cultural change, Inglehart (1977) raise a Scarcity Hypothesis that 'one's priorities reflect one's socio-economic environment so that one places greatest subjective value on those things that are in relatively short supply'. When life is poor and difficult, people would satisfy basic physical sustenance in the first place. This predisposition is materialism. But after a period of prolonged prosperity, when economic security is no longer a problem, people would put more emphasis on non-material needs such as life quality, environment protection, self-esteem, or aesthetic demands. This orientation is post-materialism.

Inglehart (1990) contends that economic development transforms people's value from materialism into post-materialism. In a destitute society, a higher proportion of people holds the value of materialism while in a wealthy society, a higher proportion of people holds the value of post-materialism. Inglehart (1997) furthers that a society proceeds into post-modernization after its economy is developed. In this era, an individual pursues subjective well-being and the meaning of life, and places priority on individual autonomy and self-expression. When the culture turns to post-materialism, traditional authorities like the government and institutions are losing people's trust and respect.

How does value affect political participation? Inglehart (1990) thinks that people with post-materialism are inclined to engage in unconventional political participation. First of all, post-materialists are relatively secure in economy. They have the luxury to devote their time to activities irrelevant to making profit. Participating in politics is one possibility. Second, post-materialists are relatively dissatisfied with established social order. Third, since post-materialists are more resourceful, the damages caused by unconventional political participation are less costly to them. Inglehart (1997) continues to mention that because post-materialists expect a responsive government and evaluate politicians with higher standard, they tend to be involved in elite-challenging behavior. Due to these reasons, Inglehart predicts that post-materialists are more likely to participate in protest than materialists. His three books on cultural change provide evidence for this hypothesis (Inglehart 1990, 1997; Inglehart, Welzel

2005). Dalton, Van Sickle, Weldon (2010) also find that post-materialism is one of the determinants of protest participation in a cross-national study.

In short, Inglehart's asserts that when a person has lower SES, he or she is prone to be a materialist. Instead, when a person has higher SES, he or she is prone to be a post-materialist. Moreover, he argues that people with post-materialism are inclined to engage in unconventional political participation. Therefore, in this theory, the relationship between SES and protest participation is positive, and post-materialism is the mechanism.

To sum up, two theories contend that the relationship between SES and protest participation is negative. They are grievance theories (poverty and inequality) and relative deprivation theory. The intervening variables connecting SES and protest participation are material condition and feeling of dissatisfaction with economic situation, respectively. There are also two theories arguing that the relationship between SES and protest participation is positive. They are resources model and cultural change theory. The corresponding mechanisms are civil skills (communications and organizational abilities) and post-materialism.

2. Hypotheses and Analytical Framework

From the brief literature review in the previous subsections, we can see that there are conflicting arguments with respect to the relationship between SES and protest participation. Which theory has better explanatory power in Taiwan? This paper challenges grievance theories, and hypothesizes that the relationship should be positive in Taiwan. There are two reasons.

First, although grievance theories are supported by empirical works (Midlarsky 1982, 1988; Muller 1985; Muller, Seligson 1987; Seligson 1996), they may not be able to apply to the topic of this paper. The dependent variable in these studies is political violence or revolution rather than protest. Political violence is essentially different from peaceful protest in that getting involved in revolutionary activities can be dangerous. Participants are exposed to the risk of being arrested, being injured, or even losing their lives. Therefore, the factors that lead to political violence may be different from the factors that cause protest. Even though miserable material condition is central to the onset of political violence, its influence on protest is questionable and needs to be verified.

Second, participating in protest is the kind of activity that takes time (Brady, Verba, Schlozman 1995). When people suffer from dire poverty, they are overwhelmed by the pressure of survival. All of their time and energy have to be devoted to maintaining subsistence. In this situation, they are simply too poor to afford the resources required for joining in political activities. Scott (1985) mentions that peasants in the Third World rarely confront the authorities. They do not have time and money to organize collective action. Instead, they commit 'everyday forms of peasant resistance' such as noncompliance, deception, desertion, or pilfering to seek relief. This example tells us that since there are opportunity costs in participation, certain level of material condition and spare time may be necessary for a motivated individual to take action. Following this logic, people with higher SES and better material condition are more likely to have the leisure for joining in political activities.

Due to these two reasons, we predict that material condition makes positive contribution to protest participation. For other mechanisms mentioned above, we basically agree with the original arguments. Satisfaction with economic situation has a negative effect. Both of civil skills (communications and organizational abilities) and post-materialism have positive effects. In other words, among these mechanisms, only one is detrimental to protest participation. Overall, we anticipate that in Taiwan, people with higher SES have a higher probability to join in protest. Specifically, the hypotheses in this paper are established down below. H1 is the overall relationship. H2a to H2e explicate the mechanisms and how they connect SES and protest participation. The analytical framework is illustrated in Figure 1.

H1: When an individual has higher SES, he is more likely to participate in protest.

H2a: When an individual has higher SES, his material condition is better. When an individual has better material condition, he is more likely to participate in protest.

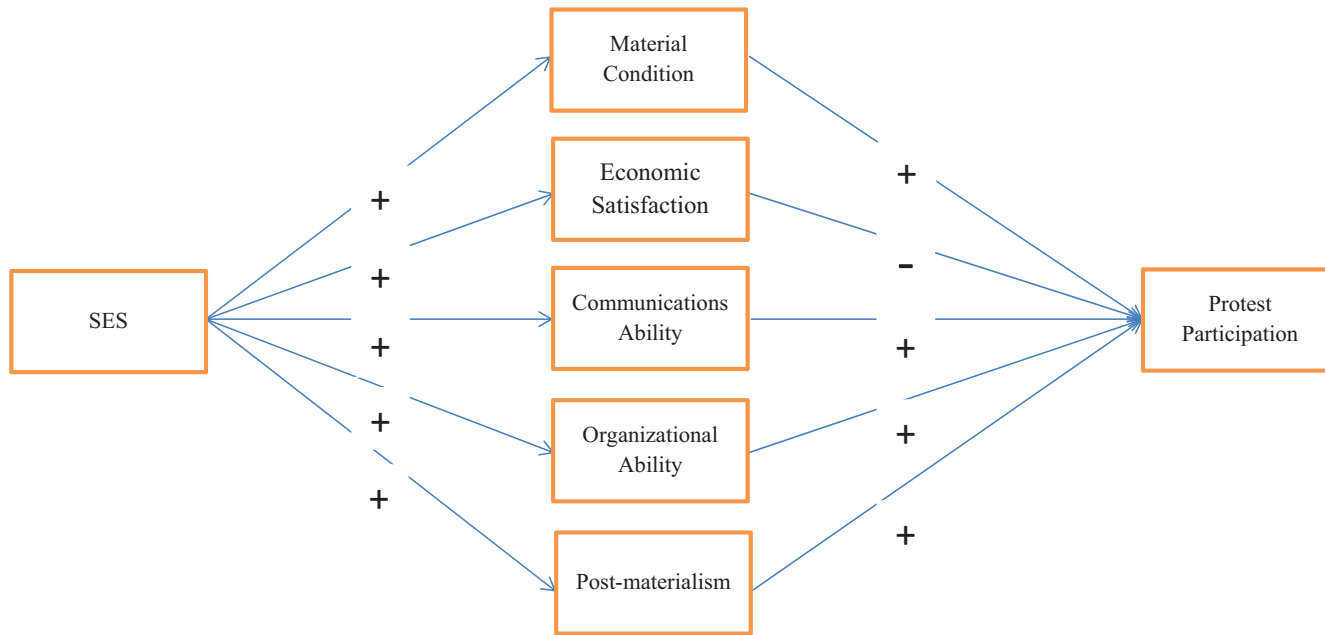
H2b: When an individual has higher SES, his economic satisfaction is higher. When an individual has higher economic satisfaction, he is less likely to participate in protest.

H2c: When an individual has higher SES, his communications ability is stronger. When an individual has stronger communications ability, he is more likely to participate in protest.

H2d: When an individual has higher SES, his organizational ability is stronger. When an individual has stronger organizational ability, he is more likely to participate in protest.

H2e: When an individual has higher SES, he tends to hold the value of post-materialism. When an individual holds post-materialism, he is more likely to participate in protest.

Figure 1. Analytical Framework



3. Data, Variables, and Methods

To test the hypotheses, we take advantage of the sixth wave of the World Values Survey (WVS). This wave includes 52 countries. Since this paper concentrates on the case of Taiwan, we only use the data on Taiwan. WVS was performed in Taiwan from March 2012 to June 2012. Sample size is 1,238. The reason why we employ this dataset is that it has the critical variables we need that we need such as material condition and post-materialism. The dependent variable is protest participation. For this variable, WVS lists four kinds of activities including signing petition, boycott, demonstration, and strike. WVS asks respondents if they have ever participated in any one of the above activities⁴. This paper regards all these four activities as protest behavior. As long as a respondent has joined in one of these activities, his protest participation is coded as 1. If a respondent has never joined in any of these activities, his protest participation is coded as 0⁵.

The independent variable in this study is SES. SES is composed of education, income, and occupation. Therefore, an ideal indicator of SES should involve all these three elements. In previous studies, they were mostly treated as control variables and discussed separately. This may result in two problems. The first is that if all three variables are included in a statistical model, there may be multi-collinearity since these variables are highly correlated. Second, if only one variable is used, it is not able to represent the broad concept of SES. To fix these problems, we decide to use confirmatory factor analysis to construct an indicator of SES involving education, income, and occupation. Unfortunately, WVS does not ask respondents about their occupation. Thus, we use class to replace occupation in constructing this indicator. It is not a perfect indicator of SES, but it is probably the best indicator with the constraint on data availability. In order to examine the internal consistency and how

⁴ All of the questions used in this paper are listed in Appendix.

⁵ Some people may question if it is appropriate to count signing petition as protest participation. We do so for several reasons. First, although signing petition is not a strong move as going to the street, it is still an action to articulate disagreement. Signing petition is traditionally regarded as unconventional political participation and can be seen as “soft” protest. Second, this is what many scholars do in the literature (Dalton, Van Sickle, Weldon 2010; Inglehart 1990, 1997; Inglehart, Welzel 2005; Norris 2002). Third, as mentioned earlier in this paper, signing petition is getting more popular in Taiwan. It has practical meanings to include this behavior. Fourth, we have tried not including this activity in the dependent variable. It does not make substantive difference in our results.

closely education, income, and class are related as a group, Cronbach's α is used to compute the inter-item correlations for all pairs of these variables. Cronbach's α for the SES construct is 0.70. This indicates that internal consistency is acceptable and our SES is a reasonable construct.

There are five intervening variables in our hypotheses. They are material condition, economic satisfaction, communications ability, organizational ability, and the value of post-materialism. For material condition, we use a set of questions asking respondents how often have the following situations happened in the last 12 months: gone without enough food, felt unsafe from crime in your home, gone without medicine or medical treatment that you needed, and gone without a cash income. In these questions, "Often" is coded as 1; "Sometimes" is coded as 2; "Rarely" is coded as 3; "Never" is coded as 4. We compute the average score of these four questions as the measure of material condition. Higher score represents better material condition. For economic satisfaction, we use the question of satisfaction with household financial situation. It is a scale ranging from 1 to 10 in which 10 indicates completely satisfied.

The next two mechanisms are communications ability and organizational ability. WVS does not have questions measuring these concepts directly. We take advantage of questions related to them as proxy variables. For communications ability, we use how often a person uses email, and talks with friends or colleagues to obtain information. Using email means a person is able to read and write. Talking with friends stands for oral expression. Doing these two things also means that an individual communicates with others. In these two questions, "Never" is coded as 1; "Less than monthly" is coded as 2; "Monthly" is coded as 3; "Weekly" is coded as 4; "Daily" is coded as 5. We calculate the average score as the measure of communications ability. Higher score represents stronger ability.

For organizational ability, this study uses if a respondent is an active member of different types of voluntary organization. We think that when a person joins in more voluntary groups, he or she should have stronger organizational ability. WVS on Taiwan lists nine types of organization, and we use five of them.⁶ In these

⁶ These five types of voluntary organization are church or religious organization, sport or recreational organization, art, music, or educational organization, professional organization, humanitarian or charitable organization. This study excludes labor union, political party, environmental organization, and consumer organization. We exclude these groups because these groups tend to organize protests and mobilize their members to participate. This means if a member of these groups joins in a protest, it may be because he or she is mobilized, rather than improvement in civic skills. Since this variable represents organizational ability, the influence of mobilization should be reduced as much as possible.

five items, “Active member” is coded as 2; “Inactive member” is coded as 1; “Don’t belong” is coded as 0. Again, we compute the average score to form the measure of organizational ability. Higher score represents stronger ability.

For the value of post-materialism, WVS devises a battery of questions. In each question, WVS asks respondent to identify the most important and second important goals of the country for the next ten years. WVS utilizes these questions to construct an indicator of post-materialism. We take advantage of this indicator provided by WVS directly. Higher score represents that a respondent is leaning more toward post-materialism.

Next, our control variables include political interest, trust in the government, gender, and age. In the literature on political participation, political interest is one of the most influential factors. People who have higher level of political interest are more likely to join in political activities. It is an indispensable control variable. Besides, we also add trust in the government to our statistical analysis. Generally speaking, when people distrust their government, they have higher probability to protest. For this variable, we use the level of confidence a respondent has for the following branches: the courts, the central government, parliament, and the civil service. “A great deal” is coded as 4; ‘Quite a lot’ is coded as 3; “Not very much” is coded as 2; “None at all” is coded as 1. Because trust in these sectors is highly correlated, just as SES, we also use confirmatory factor analysis to create an indicator for trust in the government including these four branches. Cronbach’s α for the political trust construct is 0.82, which indicates that internal consistency is good.

The last two control variables are gender and age. Conventionally, men are more active in political life than women, and older people participate in political activities more than younger people. We make the same predictions. For gender, male is coded as 1 while female is 0. For age, we simply use the number of years old a respondent answers. The descriptive statistics are provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

Variables	N	Mean	S.D.	Min	Max
Protest Participation	1196	0.190	0.392	0	1
SES	1238	-0.036	0.633	-1.643	1.719
Material Condition	1193	14.24	2.098	4	16
Economic Satisfaction	1209	6.368	2.293	1	10
Communications Ability	1216	1.975	1.356	0	4
Organizational Ability	1225	2.903	2.567	0	10

Post-materialism	1160	1.640	1.143	0	5
Political Interest	1221	2.002	0.844	1	4
Trust in the Government	1238	-0.003	0.477	-1.048	1.247
Gender (1 = male)	1238	0.479	0.500	0	1
Age	1230	45.48	17.29	18	85

Note: For gender, mean represents the proportion of male in the sample.

In this study, we want to test if the relationship between SES and protest participation is positive or negative. More importantly, we want to test which intervening variable is effective. For these two purposes, we conduct two statistical analyses. The first is regression analysis which includes all variables altogether. In this analysis, we want to observe the overall effect of SES on protest participation. In other words, we use this analysis to test if our first hypothesis is correct. Since the dependent variable is binary (0 or 1), we perform logit regression.

Next, we conduct structural equation modeling to examine hypotheses H2a to H2e. In this analysis, we distinguish between intervening variables (all mechanisms) and independent variable (SES) to see if the relationships delineated in Figure 1 exist. It should be noted that to be a valid mechanism, two things are required. One is that SES has a significant effect with correct sign on this mechanism. The other is that this mechanism has a significant effect with correct sign on protest participation. For example, H2a predicts that higher SES produces better material condition which in turn leads to stronger protest participation. For material condition to be a valid mechanism, it has to be that the effect of SES on material condition is positive and significant. Moreover, the effect of material condition on protest participation is also positive and significant. Both conditions need to be satisfied. If either effect is insignificant or wrong in sign, material condition is not a valid mechanism.

Another advantage of structural equation modeling is that we can examine if SES has a direct effect on protest participation, or only has indirect effects mediated by intervening variables. From the results, we can also calculate and compare the relative strength of each mechanism. Doing structural equation modeling allows us to obtain more information and to learn more about how SES affects protest participation.

4. Empirical Results

4.1. Logit Regression Analysis

The result of logit regression analysis is presented in Table 2. The entries are unstandardized coefficients, odds ratios, and their corresponding standard errors (S.E.). It can be seen that the effect of SES on protest participation is significant and positive. Other things being equal, one unit increase in SES raises the probability of protest participation by 52.8% (odds ratio = 1.528). This result provides evidence for hypothesis H1. Overall, it supports theories in the camp of positive relationship, and refutes theories in the camp of negative relationship.

Table 2. Logit Regression Analysis

	Coefficient (S.E.)		Odds Ratio (S.E.)	
Constant	-6.281 (0.792)	***	0.002 (0.001)	***
SES	0.424 (0.157)	***	1.528 (0.240)	***
Material Condition	0.095 (0.045)	*	1.100 (0.049)	*
Economic Satisfaction	-0.039 (0.042)		0.962 (0.040)	
Communication Ability	0.259 (0.078)	***	1.296 (0.101)	***
Organizational Ability	0.071 (0.032)	*	1.074 (0.035)	*
Post-materialism	0.155 (0.073)	*	1.167 (0.086)	*
Political Interest	0.817 (0.105)	***	2.263 (0.237)	***
Trust in the Government	-0.718 (0.176)	***	0.488 (0.086)	***
Gender (1 = male)	-0.203 (0.167)		0.816 (0.136)	
Age	0.020 (0.006)	***	1.021 (0.006)	***

N	1097		1097	
	155.38	***	155.38	***
<i>PseudoR</i> ²	0.143		0.143	

Note: *** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$

In this analysis, the mechanisms are treated as independent variables, not intervening variables. Among them, economic satisfaction is the only one that fails to attain statistical significance. This means that in Taiwan, whether people are satisfied with their household financial situation does not affect their protest participation. All of the remaining mechanisms have significant and positive effects. These factors contribute to an individual's protest participation. Specifically, when holding other variables constant, one unit increase in material condition raises the probability of protest participation by 10%. One unit increase in communications ability elevates the probability of protest participation by 29.6%. One unit increase in organizational ability boosts the probability of protest participation by 7.4%. One unit increase in post-materialism lifts the probability of protest participation by 16.7%.

Additionally, political interest exerts significant and positive influence. The effect of trust in the government is significant and negative. In other words, people who are more interested in politics tend to participate in protest. People with higher trust in the government are less likely to go to the street. These findings are in accord with the conventional wisdom. For demographic variables, age is significant and positive as expected, but gender is not significant. It seems that in Taiwan, there is no gender difference in protest participation.

This regression analysis helps us figure out the overall relationship between SES and protest participation and the factors that have impacts on protest participation. But it does not tell us whether the mechanisms channel the effect of SES to protest participation. To test our hypotheses H2a to H2e, we need to do the second statistical analysis.

4.2 Structural Equation Modeling

The second analysis is structural equation modeling. We use this technique to examine if SES exerts impacts on protest participation through different intervening variables as illustrated in Figure 1. This analysis includes two models. The first model

(basic model) tests if each mechanism is effective. In the second model (mediated model), a link from SES to protest participation is added to in order to test if SES has any direct impact on protest participation. The results of these two models are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Structural Equation Modeling

Standardized Coefficient	Basic Model		Mediated Model	
	Coefficient	Z-score	Coefficient	Z-score
SES → Material Condition	0.256	8.49***	0.256	8.49***
SES → Economic Satisfaction	0.370	12.70***	0.370	12.7***
SES → Communications Ability	0.361	14.25***	0.361	14.25***
SES → Organizational Ability	0.136	4.62***	0.136	4.62***
SES → Post-materialism	0.049	1.68	0.049	1.66
Material Condition → Protest Participation	0.062	2.31*	0.053	1.96*
Economic Satisfaction → Protest Participation	-0.006	-0.22	-0.025	-0.82
Communications Ability → Protest Participation	0.092	3.19**	0.072	2.33*
Organizational Ability → Protest Participation	0.089	2.82**	0.087	2.75**
Post-materialism → Protest Participation	0.093	3.03**	0.092	2.99**
SES → Protest Participation			0.062	1.78
Covariance Among Intervening Variables				
Material Condition ↔ Economic Satisfaction	0.216	7.01***	0.216	7.01***
Material Condition ↔ Communications Ability	0.013	0.43	0.013	0.43
Material Condition ↔ Organizational Ability	-0.014	-0.43	-0.014	-0.43
Material Condition ↔ Post-materialism	-0.079	-2.62**	-0.079	-2.62**
Economic Satisfaction ↔ Communications Ability	-0.062	-2.13*	-0.062	-2.13*
Economic Satisfaction ↔ Organizational Ability	0.102	3.18**	0.102	3.18**
Economic Satisfaction ↔ Post-materialism	-0.028	-0.92	-0.028	-0.92
Communications Ability ↔ Organizational Ability	0.125	4.17***	0.125	4.17***

Communications Ability ↔ Post-materialism	0.140	4.67***	0.140	4.67***
Organizational Ability ↔ Post-materialism	0.012	0.40	0.012	0.40
for Structural Equations	0.265		0.267	
	579.681		579.6	
N	1100		1100	

Note: *** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$

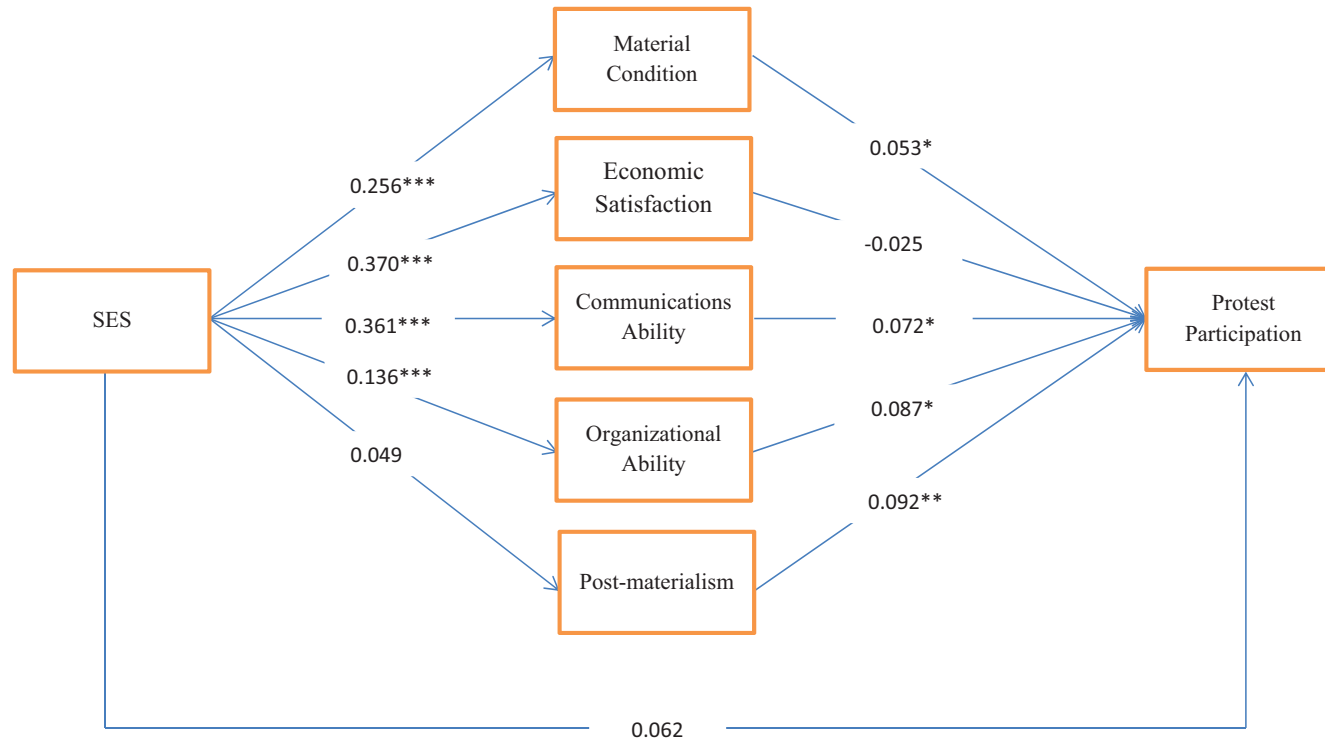
From the basic model, we find that SES has significant and positive influences on material condition, economic satisfaction, communications ability, and organizational ability, but not post-materialism. This means that people with higher SES have better material condition, higher satisfaction with household financial situation, better communications and organizational abilities. However, people who have higher SES are not inclined to hold the value of post-materialism. This is to say, SES does not produce post-materialism. This result contradicts our expectation.

Next, we find that all mechanisms except for economic satisfaction make contributions to protest participation. People with better material condition, with higher communications ability, with higher organizational ability, or with stronger belief in post-materialism are more likely to join in protest. Nevertheless, the effect of economic satisfaction is not statistically significant. Even though a person is dissatisfied with his household financial situation, his probability of participating in protest does not increase. This result is also contrary to our prediction.

Putting them together, this basic model tells us that SES exerts impacts on an individual's protest participation through three mechanisms. They are material condition, communications ability, and organizational ability. Post-materialism is not an effective mechanism because SES does not affect it. Economic satisfaction is not valid either in that it does not play a role in protest participation.

Now we turn to the mediated model. In this model, a direct link from SES to protest participation is included. It can be seen that this link has no real effect and does not change the pattern that we find in basic model. Therefore, it can be asserted that SES does not have direct influence on protest participation. SES's impacts on protest participation are indirect and mediated by material condition, communications ability, and organizational ability. The results of the mediated model are presented in an arrow diagram in Figure 2. This figure makes it easier for readers to track how the effects flow from SES to each intervening variable, and from each intervening variable to protest participation.

Figure 2. Arrow Diagram of the Mediated Model



Since the coefficients in the mediated model are standardized, we can calculate the substantive effects of SES on protest participation through each mechanism, and compare their relative strength. Through material condition, one standard deviation increase in SES produces 0.0136 standard deviation increase in protest participation. Through communications ability, one standard deviation increase in SES results in 0.0260 standard deviation increase in protest participation. Through organizational ability, one standard deviation increase in SES leads to 0.0118 standard deviation increase in protest participation. In total, one standard deviation increase in SES indirectly brings about 0.0514 standard deviation increase in protest participation.

From this calculation, we find that communications ability is the strongest mechanism. Organizational ability is number two, and material condition is the last. Combining communications ability with organizational ability, 77% of SES's substantive effects have been mediated by civil skills. Civil skills are undoubtedly the most important mechanism through which SES exerts impacts.

Conclusion

From the empirical results, we find that first, overall, SES has positive impacts on protest participation in Taiwan. People with higher SES are more likely to join in protest than aggrieved people. This finding means that theories in the camp of negative relationship including grievance theories and relative deprivation fail to explain who protests in Taiwan. Instead, theories in the camp of positive relationship such as resources model and cultural change theory have better explanatory power.

In terms of the mechanisms, material condition, communications ability, and organizational ability are the mechanisms through which SES exerts impacts. Economic satisfaction and post-materialism are not effective intervening variables. It would be worthwhile to discuss each mechanism in more detail since there are interesting implications. For material condition, our findings show that poverty does not make people go to the street. Rather, economic well-being is conducive to protest participation. This result refutes grievance theories but supports hypothesis H2a in this paper. We think the reason is that there are opportunity costs in participation. Certain level of material condition and leisure time are necessary for a person to engage in political life. Poor people in general cannot afford the time and energy required for participation.

For economic satisfaction, our results show that it is not a valid mechanism, and hypothesis H2b in this paper is rejected. Although SES does affect an individual's satisfaction with household financial situation, it does not have any impact on protest participation. In other words, in Taiwan, people do get dissatisfied with poverty, but this emotion does not motivate them to take part in protest. People go to the street because they are angry about something else. The motives driving Taiwanese people to protest need to be explored further.

For civil skills, both communications ability and organizational ability are of central importance in connecting SES and protest participation. Hypothesis H2c and H2d are confirmed. These results show that compared to other theories, resources model has the best explanatory power. In Taiwan, the determinant of protest participation is being able to join. Those with more abilities have higher chances to join in protest. Moreover, our analysis shows that these abilities come from a person's SES. Civil skills are thus the most effective mechanisms through which SES exert impacts on protest participation.

For post-materialism, we find something interesting in Taiwan. This predisposition does push a person to take action. However, the acquisition of this value has nothing to do with a person's economic environment. Post-materialism thereby cannot be counted as a mechanism functioning between SES and protest participation. This finding is opposed to our hypothesis H2e. Why does SES not produce post-materialism in Taiwan? We think that the answer lies in another hypothesis with respect to cultural change. In addition to Scarcity Hypothesis, Inglehart (1990, 68) also raises Socialization Hypothesis. This hypothesis says that there is a time lag between change in economic environment and change in value priorities. The latter does not happen immediately after the former. Most importantly, one's values reflect the economic situation during his or her adolescence, rather than his current economic situation. This is to say, if a person grows up in an abundant environment, he is more likely to hold post-materialism even though his current SES is low. In contrast, if a person's pre-adult years are short of supplies, even after he becomes affluent, he still has a high probability to be a materialist.

Taiwan's economy took off in 1960s, and continued to grow for more than 30 years. But after 2000, the economy has become sluggish. Therefore, Taiwanese people between thirty and sixty years old experienced prosperous life during their childhood. According to Inglehart's theory, a large proportion of adults in Taiwan should still hold the value of post-materialism even though their current economic condition may be deteriorated. Socialization Hypothesis reminds us that a person's

value priorities reflect his concerns in early years instead of his present economic environment. We think that this is one important reason why the value of post-materialism is not caused by SES in Taiwan.

Now we would like to discuss the possible contributions and shortcomings of this paper. First of all, we use confirmatory factor analysis to construct an indicator of SES including education, income, and class. This technique allows us to cover different aspects of SES in one variable and to avoid multi-collinearity problem in statistical analysis. We believe that it is better than conventional way which treats education, income, and occupation as three distinct control variables. Second, we employ structural equation modeling to examine the effects of SES on each intervening variable and the effects of each intervening variable on protest participation. Taking advantage of this method, we can distinguish which mechanism effectively mediates between SES and protest participation. We can also compare the relative strength of each mechanism. We think that this paper provides a critical test of existing theories which is rare in previous studies.

In terms of shortcomings, we admit that the measures of some variables are not flawless. We use class to replace occupation in constructing the indicator of SES. We also use proxy variables to measure communications ability and organizational ability. Undeniably, these measures may influence the results of our statistical analysis. However, under the constraint on data availability, these measures are our best try to fix the problems.

Finally, some policy implications are revealed in our findings. This paper shows that in Taiwan, people with higher SES are more likely to join in protest, and SES exerts impacts mainly through civil skills. To interpret this result the other way around, people with lower SES are less likely to join in protest, and lacking of communications and organizational abilities prevent them from participating. The situation in Taiwan today is similar to what Schatterschneider (1960) points out: elites are the only contenders in political arena. When people with lower SES are not involved in decision making process, policies are more friendly to upper class rather than to lower class. As a result, rich people get richer and poor people get poorer. In fact, inequality in Taiwan keeps rising in these two decades. It has become a serious problem that the government has to deal with. Withdrawal of lower class from political participation may be an important factor.

In a democracy, nobody should be excluded from political participation. What this paper finds is a warning sign that social scientists and policy makers in Taiwan must be aware of. Disadvantaged groups are those who need to articulate their voices

and strive for policies which are favorable to them. If people in lower class do not take action, their situation would become even worse. From this study, we learn that lacking of civil skills is the main obstacle inhibiting their participation. To reduce inequality and to enhance distribution justice in Taiwan, the government should take measures to improve communications ability and organizational ability of people with lower SES.

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Appendix

Dependent Variable: Protest Participation

Now I'd like you to look at this card. I'm going to read out some forms of political action that people can take, and I'd like you to tell me, for each one, whether you have done any of these things, whether you might do it or would never under any circumstances do it.

V85. Signing a petition 1. Have done 2. Might do 3. Would never do

V86. Joining in boycotts 1. Have done 2. Might do 3. Would never do

V87. Attending peaceful demonstrations 1. Have done 2. Might do 3. Would never do

V88. Joining strikes 1. Have done 2. Might do 3. Would never do

Independent Variable: SES

1. Education: V248. What is the highest educational level that you have attained? 1. No formal education 2. Incomplete primary school 3. Complete primary school 4. Incomplete secondary school: technical/vocational type 5. Complete secondary school: technical/vocational type 6. Incomplete secondary: university-preparatory type 7. Complete secondary: university-preparatory type 8. Some university-level education, without degree 9. University-level education, without degree.

2. Income: V239. On this card is an income scale on which 1 indicates the lowest income group and 10 the highest income group in your country. We would like to know in what group your household is. Please, specify the appropriate number, counting all wages, salaries, pensions and other incomes that come in.

3. Class: V238. People sometimes describe themselves as belonging to the working class, the middle class, or the upper or lower class. Would you describe yourself as belonging to the 1. upper class 2. upper middle class 3. lower middle class 4. working class 5. lower class.

Intervening Variables:

Material Condition: In the last 12 month, how often have you or your family

V188. Gone without enough food to eat 1. Often 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never

V189. Felt unsafe from crime in your home 1. Often 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never

V190. Gone without medicine or medical treatment that you needed 1. Often 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never

V191. Gone without a cash income 1. Often 2. Sometimes 3. Rarely 4. Never

Economic Satisfaction: V59. How satisfied are you with the financial situation of your household? 1 indicates Completely dissatisfied, 10 indicates completely satisfied.

Communications Ability: People learn what is going on in this country and the world from various sources. For each of the following sources, please indicate whether you use it to obtain information daily, weekly, monthly, less than monthly or never.

V222. Email 1. Daily 2. Weekly 3. Monthly 4. Less than monthly 5. Never

V224. Talk with friends or colleagues 1. Daily 2. Weekly 3. Monthly 4. Less than monthly 5. Never

Organizational Ability: Now I am going to read off a list of voluntary organizations. For each organization, could you tell me whether you are an active member, an inactive member or not a member of that type of organization?

V25. Church or religious organization 2. Active member 1. Inactive member 0. Don't belong

V26. Sport or recreational organization 2. Active member 1. Inactive member 0. Don't belong

V27. Art, music or educational organization 2. Active member 1. Inactive member 0. Don't belong

V31. Professional association 2. Active member 1. Inactive member 0. Don't belong

V25. Humanitarian or charitable organization 2. Active member 1. Inactive member 0. Don't belong

Post-materialism:

V60. People sometimes talk about what the aims of this country should be for the next ten years. On this card are listed some of the goals which different people would give top priority. Would you please say which one of these you, yourself, consider the most important?

V61. And which would be the next most important?

A high level of economic growth

Making sure this country has strong defense forces

Seeing that people have more say about how things are done at their jobs and in their communities

Trying to make our cities and countryside more beautiful

V62. If you had to choose, which one of the things on this card would you say is most important?

V63. And which would be the next most important?

Maintaining order in the nation

Giving people more say in important government decisions

Fighting rising prices

Protecting freedom of speech

V64. Here is another list. In your opinion, which one of these is most important?

V65. And what would be the next most important?

A stable economy

Progress toward a less impersonal and more humane society

Progress toward a society in which ideas count more than money

The fight against crime

Control Variables:

Political Interest: V84. How interested would you say you are in politics? Are you 1. Very interested 2. Somewhat interested 3. Not very interested 4. Not at all interested

Trust in the Government: I am going to name a number of organizations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?

V114. The courts 1. A great deal 2. Quite a lot 3. Not very much 4. None at all

V115. The government (in your nation's capital) 1. A great deal 2. Quite a lot 3. Not very much 4. None at all

V117. Parliament 1. A great deal 2. Quite a lot 3. Not very much 4. None at all

V118. The civil service 1. A great deal 2. Quite a lot 3. Not very much 4. None at all

Gender: V240. 1. Male 2. Female

Age: V242. This means you are years old