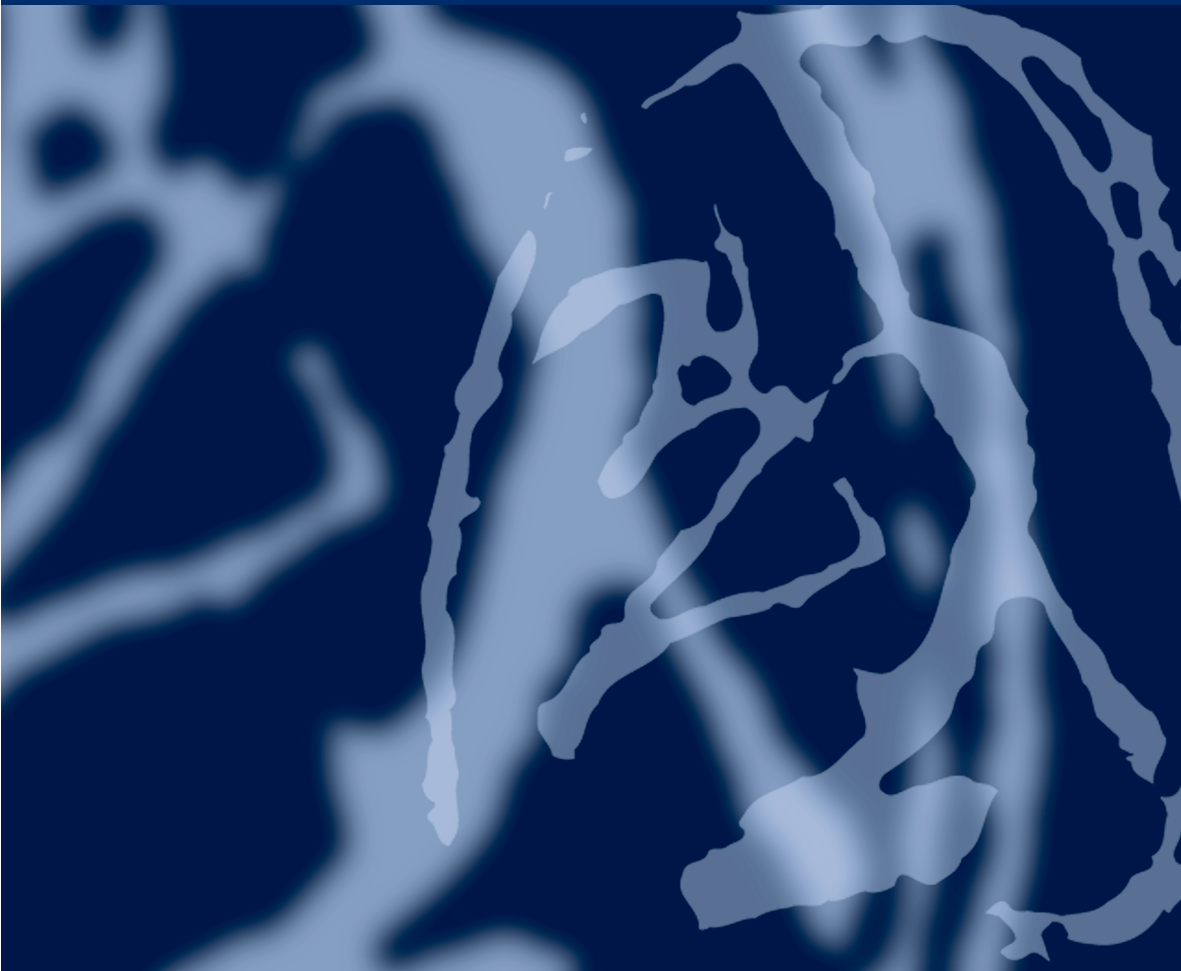


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Nationalism and Electoral Outcome in Taiwan: The Impact of Identity Fence-sitting on Voting Behaviour*

Tang Wenfang[†]

National identity is a central issue within Taiwan's flourishing electoral politics. Scholarly attention focuses on the changing pro-Chinese/pro-Taiwanese identity patterns and their impact on electoral outcome. My article contributes further to literature on the topic by examining the third dimension of voter encompassed in the Taiwan national identity issue—the fence-sitter—and how it makes electoral decisions. Given the closeness of outcome in recent elections, fence-sitters have been instrumental in tilting the balance. Existing studies systematically examine the voting behaviour of those clearly identifying with the pro-China (blue) camp and the pro-Taiwan (green) camp.¹ But the voting behaviour of those mid-way between blue and green is less definable.

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¹ Hsieh John Fu-sheng, 'Economic vs. Identity Voting: The Case of Taiwan', paper prepared for the Conference on the Taiwan Election and Democratization Studies Survey for the 2004 Legislative Yuan Election, November 12–13, 2005 The Election Study Center, National Chengchi University, Taipei, Taiwan; Tsai Chia-hung, 'Issue Position, Party Image, and Voting Choice', paper prepared for the Conference on the Taiwan Election and Democratization Studies Survey for the 2004 Legislative Yuan Election, November 12–13, 2005, The Election Study Center, National Chengchi University, Taipei, Taiwan; Shyu Huo-yan, 'Taiwan jie, Zhongguojie yu Taiwanxin, Zhongguo qing: Taiwan xuanju zhong de fuhaozhengzhi', ('Taiwan -China Complex and Taiwan-China Concern: Symbolic Politics in Taiwan's Elections', *Xuanju yanjiu (Journal of Electoral Studies)*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (2004), pp. 1–42; Sheng Shing-Yuan, 'Tongdu yiti yu xuanmin de toupiao xingwei', ('The Issue of Taiwan Independence vs. Unification with the Mainland and Voting Behavior in Taiwan: An Analysis in the 1990s'), *Xuanju yanjiu (Journal of Electoral Studies)*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (2002), pp. 41–80; Chen Wen-Chun, 'Tongdu yiti yu xuanmin de toupiao xingwei: minguo bashisan nian shengshizhang xuanju fenxi', ('Independence v.s. Reunification Issue and Voting Behavior in Taiwan: An Analysis of Gubernatorial and Mayoral Elections in 1994'), *Xuanju yanjiu (Journal of Electoral Studies)*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (1995), pp. 99–136.

[†]Corresponding author. Email: tang@pitt.edu

Certain researchers, using earlier survey data, indicate the significance of the identity fence-sitter within Taiwanese politics.² Other studies using more recent data focus on the voting behaviour of undecided voters,³ and of those unconvinced of the veracity of relevant candidates' purported reputation and ability.⁴ Others still focus on changes in concepts of national identity over time⁵ and the impact of identity fence-sitting on cross-straits economic relations.⁶ This research forms the background to my article. My study, being based on more recent survey data, broadens the existing definition of identity fence-sitting. It has three objectives: (1) to indicate the latest Taiwan national identity trends and pinpoint fence-sitters' social and economic characteristics; (2) to observe fence-sitter choices of blue or green in past elections; (3) to examine the internal and external factors affecting the fence-sitter vote. I hope these discussions contribute to more accurate predictions of the future campaign strategies of both camps and of electoral outcomes.

The discussion proceeds from data compiled in Taiwan from two public opinion surveys on national identity. That compiled by the Election Study Center at the National Chengchi University in Taipei is the fruit of 30 biannual surveys conducted from June, 1992 to December, 2006. The second main data source is 'Taiwan's Election and Democratization Studies, 2004: The President Election (TEDS2004P)' survey project led by professor Shioh-Duan Hawang of Soochow University after the 2004 presidential

² Chu Yun-han, 'Taiwan's National Identity Politics and the Prospect of Cross-Strait Relations', *Asian Survey*, Vol. XLIV, No. 4 (2004), pp. 484–512; Wu Nai-Teh, 'Guojia rentong yu zhengdang zhichi: Taiwan zhengdang jingzheng de shehui jichu', ('National Identity and Political Party Support: the Social Base of the Political Party Struggles in Taiwan') *Zhongnyang yanjiuyuan minzuxue yanjiusuo jikan (Bulletin of the Institute of Ethnology Academia Sinica)*, No. 74, (Autumn 1992), pp. 33–61; Shyu Huo-yan, 'Taiwan xuanmin de guojia rentong yu dangpai toupiao xingwei: 1991-1993 nianjian de shizheng yanjiu chengguo', ('National Identity and Partisan Vote Choices in Taiwan: Evidence from Survey Data between 1991 and 1993'), *Taiwan zhengzhi xuekan (Taiwanese Political Science Review)*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1996), pp. 85–127; Wang T. Y. and Liu I-chou, 'Contending Identities in Taiwan: Implications for Cross-Strait Relations', *Asian Survey*, Vol. 44, No. 4 (2004), pp. 568–590.

³ Liu Nien-Hsia, 'Yijiujiuliu nian zongtong daxuan xuanju yuce: minyi diaocha zhong wei biaotai xuanmin toupiao xingwei guize jiashe de tichu yu yanzheng', ('The 1996 Presidential Election Prediction: A Test of the Voting Behavior Model of No-Response Voters in the Poll'), *Xuanju yanjiu (Journal of Electoral Studies)*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (1996), pp. 131–156; Tu Su-Hao, 'Toupiao yixiang wenti butong leixing xiangmu wu fanying zhi fenxi: yi 2000 zongtong daxuan weil', ('The Examination of Different Types of Item Non-response in the 2000 Presidential Election Survey in Taiwan'), *Xuanju yanjiu (Journal of Electoral Studies)*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (2004), pp. 111–132.

⁴ Tseng Shun-Yao, 'Positioning the Voters with Ambiguity: Candidate Image, Capability Evaluation, and Voting Propensity', Prepared for The Fifth International Conference on Taiwan's Election and Democratization Study (TEDS) Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan, November 12–13, 2005.

⁵ Chu Yun-han, 'Taiwan's National Identity Politics and the Prospect of Cross-Strait Relations', pp. 484–512.

⁶ Lin Pei-Ting, 'Increasing or reducing cross-Strait Economic Ties: An Identity-interest Analysis', Prepared for The Fifth International Conference on Taiwan's Election and Democratization Study (TEDS) Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan, November 12–13, 2005.

election and referendum on strengthening Taiwan defense. Respondents represent a random 1823 demographic sample of Taiwan's 20 counties and cities. The weighting I apply further accentuates the representative nature of the sample.⁷

National Identity in Taiwan

The tacit assumption among political scientists that have been conducting public opinion surveys since 1992 is that all must include the following two questions:

- N1. In Taiwan, some people think they are Taiwanese. There are also some people who think that they are Chinese. Do you consider yourself as Taiwanese, Chinese or both? 1) Taiwanese 2) both 3) Chinese
- N2. Concerning the relationship between Taiwan and mainland China, with which of the following six positions do you agree: 1) immediate unification, 2) immediate independence, 3) maintain the status quo, move toward unification in the future, 4) maintain the status quo, move toward independence in the future, 5) maintain the status quo, decide either unification or independence in the future, 6) maintain the status quo forever

The Election Study Center at the NCCU tracked answers to the above two questions in 30 surveys made from 1992 to 2006, creating an invaluable record of Taiwan national identity trends. Responses to the first question—whether respondents considered themselves ethnically Chinese, Taiwanese or both—indicated a drop in those identifying as Chinese, from 26% in June 1992 to 6% in December, 2006. The percentage of residents identifying as ethnic Taiwanese, meanwhile, more than doubled, from 17% in June, 1992 to 44% in December, 2006. A large proportion (45%) of respondents, however, thought of themselves as both Chinese and Taiwanese, a phenomenon that has remained constant from 1992 to 2006 (Figure 1). These findings confirm similar trends in the 1990s.⁸

When asked whether Taiwan should reunify with China or be independent, 14% of respondents supported reunification—a 6% drop from the 1994 figure. Independence advocates accounted for 20% of respondents to the December, 2006 survey—an 8% increase on the December 1994 level. Supporters of the status quo—fence-sitters—comprised the largest group (48%) in December 1994, and had swollen to account for 58% of the electorate by 2006 (Figure 2). Fence-sitters' accounting for more than pro/anti reunification camp voters combined inhibits accurate predictions of electoral outcomes.

⁷ I wish to thank Professor Ching-Hsin Yu, Director of the Election Study Center at the National Chengchi University, for providing survey data, and Professor Shioh-duan Hawang of Soochow University for sharing with me the English translation of the questionnaire.

⁸ Ho Szu-yin and Liu I-chou, 'The Taiwanese/Chinese Identity of the Taiwan People in the 1990s', *American Asian Review*, Vol. XX, No. 2 (2002), pp. 29–74, Table 7.

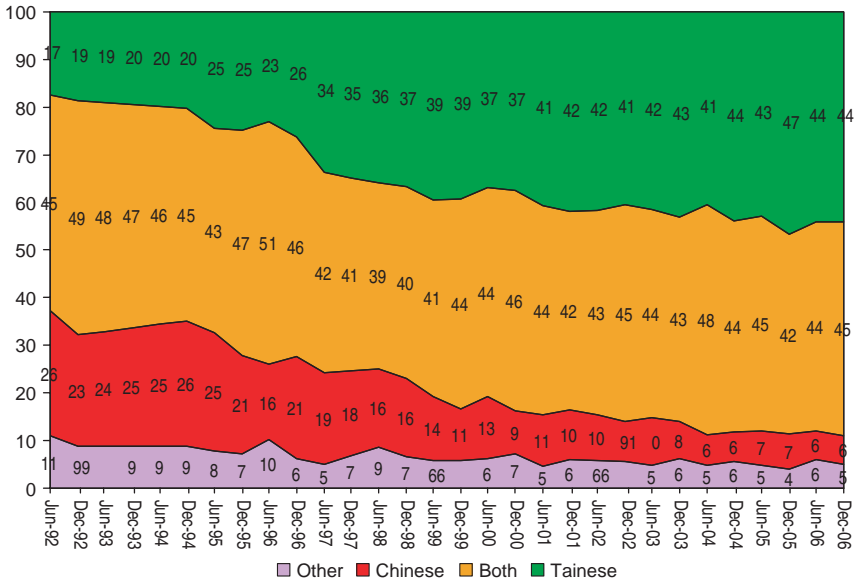


Fig. 1 Ethnic identity in Taiwan over time (1992–2006, %).
Source: Election Study Center, National Chengchi University.

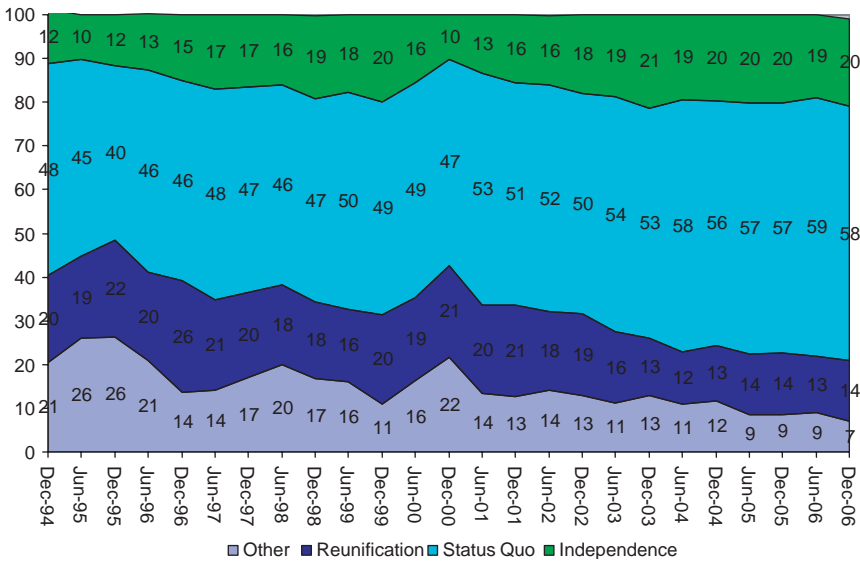


Fig. 2 Public support for reunification and independence over time in Taiwan (1994–2006, %).
Source: Election Study Center, National Chengchi University.

A discussion on the identity fence-sitter vote is necessarily preceded by a definition of who exactly the fence-sitter is. There are two main contending hypotheses: (1) fence-sitters belong to lower socio-economic classes. Limited education, finances and time restrict their inclination to pursue and access to political information. Scant knowledge prevents them from possessing an informed political opinion, and hesitance gives them the appearance of fence-sitting. (2) fence-sitters belong to privileged groups. Ample resources give them unlimited access to extensive political data, enabling the fence-sitter to see both sides of the political coin, and consequently be capable of an objective approach to political propaganda. That, therefore, to be established is: to which group—advantaged or otherwise—do fence-sitters belong?

The following analysis is based on 2004 Presidential Election Survey data. It constructs a new identity fence-sitting variable by combining the questions appearing in figures N1 and N2⁹ above. The impact that gender, age, geographic origin, residential location, monthly household income and education has on identity fence-sitting is also examined.

Education, among the many relevant factors, is the most obvious fence-sitter common denominator. Respondents with elementary, junior high and senior high education were respectively 10%, 17% and 19% more likely to be fence-sitters, and junior college- and college-educated respondents a full 25% more likely to be fence-sitters than illiterate respondents (Figure 3). It, therefore, appears to be education background, rather than lack of it, that takes the Taiwan fence-sitter mid-way between two polarized views. The fence-sitter is not confused or unsure about which way to vote, but rather disinclined to, owing to disenchantment with political machinations.

Taiwan scholars insightfully point out the political significance of identity fence-sitting. Their findings based on earlier survey data indicate that the

⁹ Specifically, identity fence-sitting equals 1 if the answer is 'both' to the questions regarding Chinese/Taiwanese ethnicity and independence/reunification; 0.5 if 'both' is the answer to only one; and 0 if 'both' is the answer to neither question. The resulting variable measures the extent of identity fence-sitting (0, 0.5 and 1). Certain scholars argue that ethnicity and reunification are different matters and should not be combined. In other words, self-identified ethnic Chinese do not necessarily support reunification. Wang T. Y. and Liu I-chou, 'Contending Identities in Taiwan: Implications for Cross-Strait Relations', pp. 568–590. Although ethnicity and reunification may not perfectly coincide, they are conceptually related and their correlation coefficient is 0.225 (high in survey data terms). Other scholars conducted more in-depth study of national identity, under the categories of Taiwan identity, China identity, realism and conservatism. Wu Nai-Teh, 'National Identity and Political Party Support', pp. 33–61; Wu Nai-Teh, 'Aiqing yu mianbao: chutan Taiwan minzhong minzu rentong de biandong', ('Romance and Bread: A Preliminary Study of the Identity Change in Taiwan', *Taiwan zhengzhi xuekan (Taiwanese Political Science Review)*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (2005), pp. 5–39; Shyu Huo-yan, 'National Identity and Partisan Vote Choices in Taiwan', pp. 85–127. In a sense, fence-sitting includes both realism and conservatism. The variable under discussion, however, measures the extent of identity fence-sitting, and has no other ideological orientation.

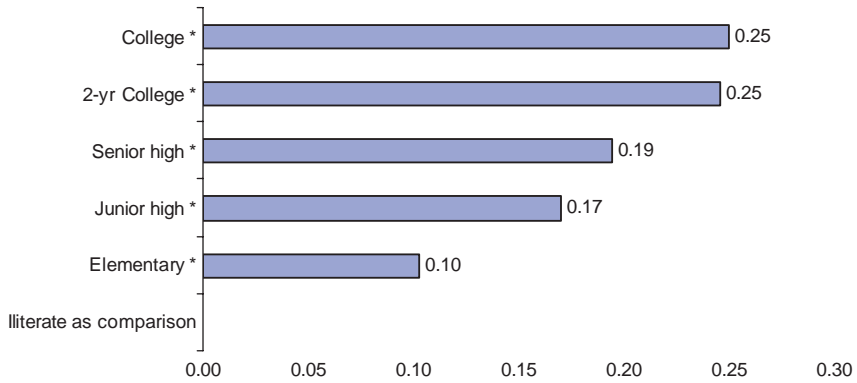


Fig. 3 Impact of Education on Identity Fence-Sitting (OLS coefficients).

Source: Taiwan's Election and Democratization Studies, 2004: The President Election (TEDS2004P), Shioh-Duan Hawang, Department of Political Science, Soochow University.

Notes: The OLS regression equations also included gender, family monthly income, geographic origin, location of residence and age. See Table A1 for further details.

Taiwan independence trend is by no means serious, and that development of the middle-ground merits greater attention.¹⁰

This section partially confirms earlier findings on Taiwan national identity, expanding on the single dimension of reunification/independence to the second dimension of ethnic identity. It indicates rapid growth in Taiwan identity. The precise impact that education background has on the rapidly growing identity fence-sitting component of the electorate is also established.

The Fence-sitter Sense of Political Efficacy and Level of Electoral Participation

It might be assumed, from one point of view, that the fence-sitter, having a better-than-average education background, feels more capable of affecting the political process and generally more politically effective than the average voter. Fence-sitters, as established in the previous section, are generally well educated and should, therefore, feel possessed of political efficacy. On the

¹⁰ Chu Yun-han, 'Taiwan's National Identity Politics and the Prospect of Cross-Strait Relations', pp. 484–512; Wu Nai-Teh, 'National Identity and Political Party Support', pp. 33–61; Wu Nai-Teh, 'Romance and Bread', pp. 5–39; Shyu Huo-yan, 'National Identity and Partisan Vote Choices in Taiwan', pp. 85–127; Wang T. Y. and Liu I-chou, 'Contending Identities in Taiwan', pp. 568–590.

other hand, the better-educated, having 'seen it all' may have become disillusioned with politics and their capacity to affect the political process. Their confidence in their personal political efficacy, therefore, is actually lower-than-average.

The next section proceeds from the following selection of fence-sitter self-estimations of their individual political efficacy, as included in the 2004 survey:

- C1. People like me can't possibly influence government policies.
- C2. Government officials don't care about what people like me think.
- C3. Politics and government are too complex and difficult for us average people to understand.
- C4. When it comes to understanding important national matters, I'm no worse than the average person.
- C5. It doesn't matter which political party governs Taiwan, the results will be the same.
- C6. Central government officials don't understand local needs.
- C7. Politics is a game played among a small number of politicians. Most of us have nothing to do with it, so it is not worthwhile being concerned about politics.
- C8. Nowadays politicians will do anything to gain power.

Agreement with the above statements, other than C4, indicates a sense of low efficacy; disagreement of high efficacy. As regards statement C4, the reverse applies; agreement indicates a belief in high, and disagreement in low, efficacy. Factorial analysis of the above 8 questions combines them into a single political efficacy variable, of a minimum zero and a maximum 1 value.

Campaign participation, in addition to the above survey data, also indicates a respondent's sense of political efficacy. The 2004 Presidential Election Survey data included nine questions assessing respondents' degree of involvement in campaign activities. I have combined the questions into a single variable that indicates the extent, if any, of campaign participation; minimum participation scores 0 and maximum scores 1.

- B8. During this year's presidential election, did you do any of the following?
[multiple responses permitted]
 01. read the official election notice
 02. read candidates' leaflets, newsletters, and newspaper ads
 03. watch candidate debates and campaign speeches on TV
 04. do volunteer campaign work for either a candidate or party
 05. attend an election related gathering or banquet
 06. join a candidate's support organization
 07. remind your friends to watch candidate debates or campaign speeches on TV
 08. discuss the pros and cons of various candidates with other people
 09. make any donations to a political party or candidate
 92. none of these

Finally, two more dimensions of efficacy are those indicated by an interest in politics and in the electoral outcome. The 2004 survey contains two questions in this regard; those interested scored 1; those completely disinterested scored zero:

- B1. Do you commonly talk with other people about politics or elections? Is it often, sometimes, seldom, or never?
- B2. Were you concerned with the outcome of this presidential election? Were you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not concerned at all?

Next, I examine variances among the three main identity groups (Taiwan, China and both) as regards respective senses of political efficacy, level of campaign participation, and interest in politics and electoral results. Regression analysis results indicate that the Taiwan identity group has the strongest sense of political efficacy, the highest level of campaign participation and the most interest in electoral outcome. China identity demonstrated less political efficacy than Taiwan identity. Fence-sitters showed the lowest efficacy, negligible campaign participation and the least interest in electoral outcome (Figure 4A). Alternative explanations for fence-sitters' political dissolution could be a world-weary feeling of having seen it all, disillusionment with the Chen Shui-bien government, or both.

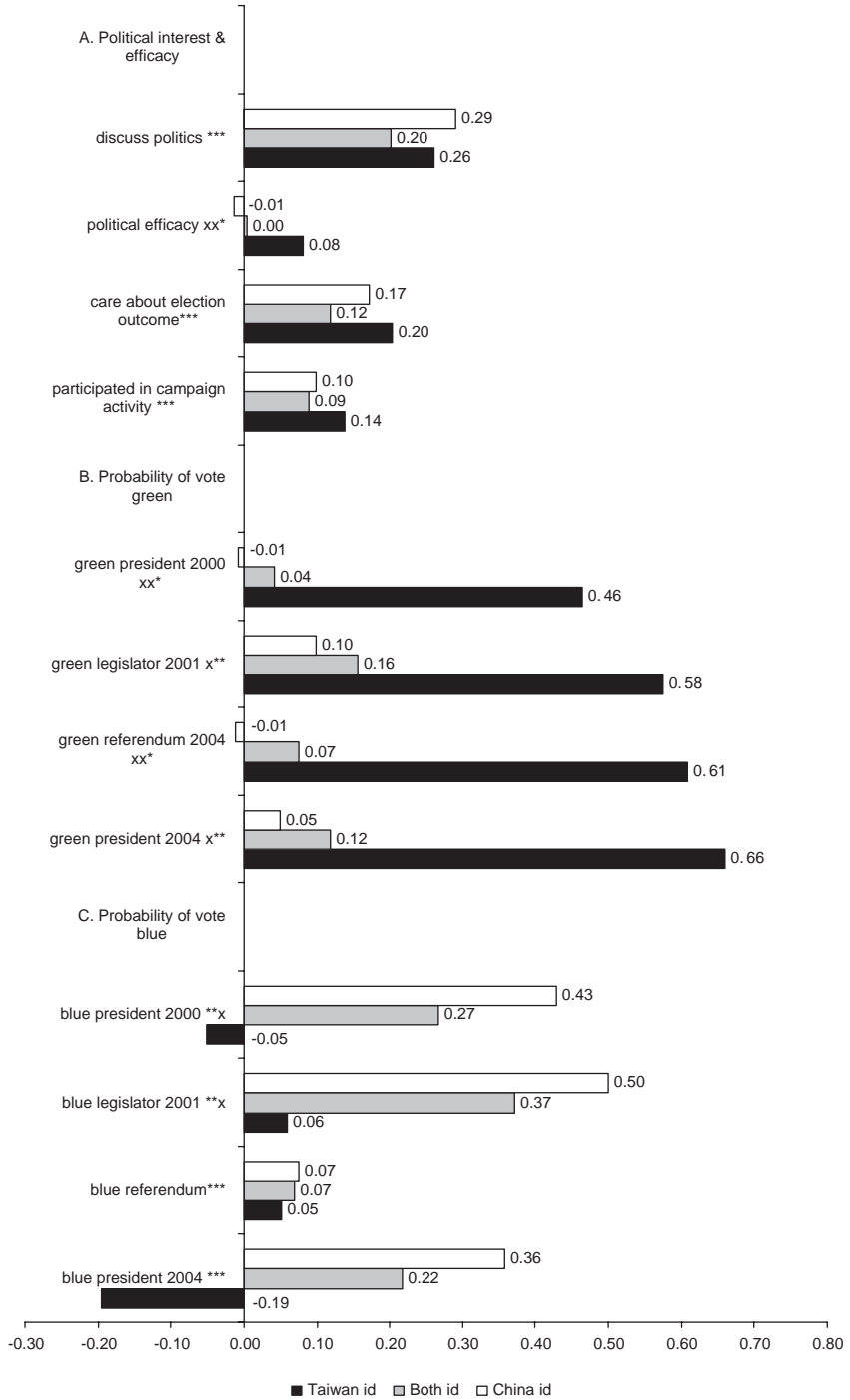
The 2004 survey included questions determining whether respondents identified with the 'pan-blue' or 'pan-green' camps, and which they voted for in the 1996, 2000 and 2004 presidential elections, the 2001 legislative elections and the 2004 referendum.

- P3. In this presidential election, some people thought it was a contest between two big camps, the pan-green camp and the pan-blue camp. Some people think they belong to the pan-green camp, while others think they belong to the pan-blue camp. Do you think of yourself as closer to the pan-green camp, the pan-blue camp, or neutral?
- H1. In this presidential election many people went to vote while others, for various reasons, did not. Did you vote?
- H1b. Which ticket did you vote for? Show card
- H3b. On the question of strengthening national defense, did you vote yes or no?
- H3c. On the question of pursuing peace negotiations with China, did you vote yes or no?

Fig. 4 National identity and voting behaviour (OLS coefficients).

Source: Taiwan's Election and Democratization Studies, 2004: The President Election (TEDS2004P), Shioh-Duan Hawang, Department of Political Science, Soochow University.

Notes: ***: $p \leq 0.01$ for all three groups, ** : $p \leq 0.05$ for 'both id' and 'Taiwan id', * : $p \leq 0.1$ for "China id". The OLS regression equations also used age, education, gender, family monthly income, geographic origin and location of residence as additional independent variables. See Table A1 for further details.



- H4. Did you vote in the previous (2000) presidential election?
 H4a. Which ticket did you vote for? Show card
 H5. Did you vote in the 1996 presidential election?
 H5a. Which ticket did you vote for? Show card
 H6. Do you remember which party's candidate you voted for in the last legislative election (2001)? Show card

My main point of interest is the fence-sitter sense of national identity's affect on its opinion of the respective blue and green camps and resultant voting behaviour. When asked which of the two camps they support, fence-sitters opted to stay neutral.¹¹ But when it came to making an electoral choice between blue and green, fence-sitters, as shown in Figure 4B, more commonly voted green than China supporters, especially in the 2001 legislative election and the 2004 presidential election. Fence-sitters voting green in the 2001 legislative election amounted to 15% more than China supporters, and 12% more than China supporters in the 2004 presidential election. Yet green-voting China supporters were far fewer than Taiwan supporters, who were 46%, 58%, 61% and 66% more likely to vote green in the respective 2000 presidential election, the 2001 legislative election, the 2004 presidential election and the 2004 referendum than they.

Interestingly, blue-voting fence-sitters outnumbered those that voted green. Fence-sitters were 27%, 37% and 41% more likely to vote blue than Taiwan supporters in the respective 2000 presidential election, the 2001 legislative election, and the 2004 presidential election. In the same three elections, China supporters were 43%, 50% and 55% more likely to vote blue than were Taiwan supporters (Figure 4C). Relatively speaking, therefore, the fence-sitter voting record indicates an affinity with the China identity rather than the Taiwan identity. Dissatisfaction with the Chen Shui-Bian regime could explain why fence-sitters were more likely to vote blue in 2004, but not their blue-orientation prior to the 2004 election.

In short, there seems to be a greater distance between fence-sitters and the green camp than the blue camp. Despite generally maintaining political neutrality, when forced to choose between the two camps, fence-sitters seemed more readily to opt for blue.

Conditions that Decide the Fence-sitter Blue/Green Vote

The last section discussed whether fence-sitters were more likely to vote blue or green. This section further examines factors influencing fence-sitter

¹¹ OLS regression results not shown.

voting decisions. Putting aside for the moment the China/Taiwan identity issue, the article now shifts its focus to the reasons why fence-sitters voted the way they did at the 2004 presidential election. The two main influences on voting decisions comprised individual and external factors. The former refer to respondents' geographic origin (Mainland, Minnan—the main source of the Taiwanese language, Hakka or aborigine), education background and family income. External factors included the effect on respondents of organized political rallies, their reaction to political scandals and unexpected political crises, the influence on their voting behaviour of local guilds, and the respondent's perception of current economic conditions. The 2004 Survey contained individual background information on respondents' geographic origin, education, age and family monthly income, also the following three questions relating to external factors:

- R1. Which of the following events has the most influence on your voting decision? (Show card) 1) First Lady's stocks trade, 2) sources of Lien Zhan's assets, 3) political contributions to the green camp, 4) Kuomintang's assets, 5) 319 shooting, 6) 228 pan-green rally, 7) 313 pan-blue rally, 92) none of above, 95) no answer, 98) don't know. What's the second most important factor? And the third most important factor?
- H2. When making your voting decision, did social groups and local guilds play the most important role?
- D1. Would you say that over the past year, the state of the economy of Taiwan has improved, stayed about the same, or deteriorated?

Among the 1823 respondents to the 2004 survey, 1237 exhibited fence-sitting tendencies (neither China nor Taiwan sense of national identity; neither reunification nor independence advocate). Yet when I focused my analysis on fence-sitter responses within the regression analysis, I found them to be the most susceptible to campaign rallies—organized by both the green and the blue camps. The February 28 'Holding Hands to Defend Taiwan' rally organized by the green camp, and the March 13 'Replace the President to Save Taiwan' campaign organized by the blue camp motivated fence-sitter responses that boosted the vote by 26% at both events, which demonstrates the undeniable effect of electioneering activities (Figure 5A).

The fence-sitter vote seemed also to be swayed by political scandal. When the green camp questioned the legality of the Kuomintang Party and Kuomintang presidential candidate, Lien Zhan's acquisition of certain assets, fence-sitters voted green. When the blue camp exposed President Chen Shui-Bian's acceptance of certain political contributions and his wife's questionable stock trade, fence-sitters accordingly voted blue.

Yet not all external events have had what might have been their foreseen effect. It might be expected that the March 19 shooting of green camp presidential candidate Chen Shui-Bien and his vice-presidential candidate Lu Hsiu-Lien (both of whom suffered superficial wounds) should generate support for the green candidates. Yet in the subsequent election the

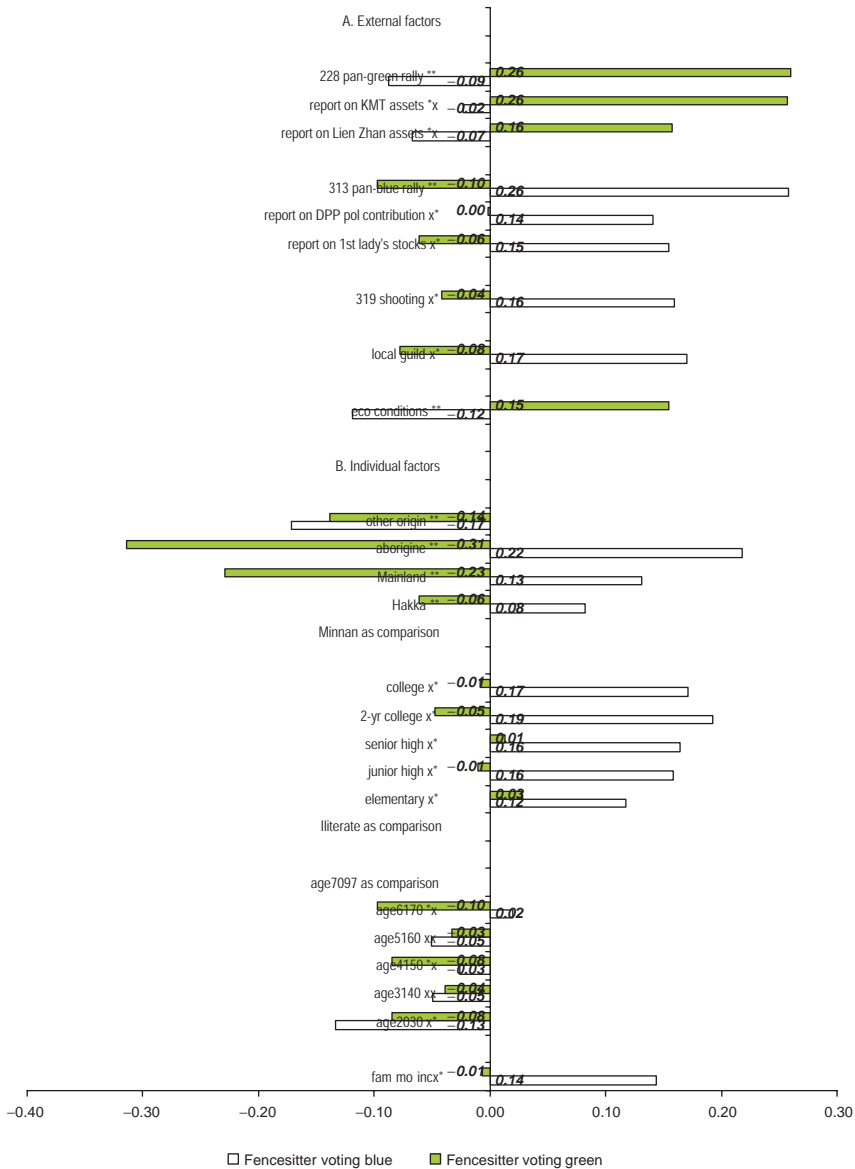


Fig. 5 Identity Fence-Sitters in the 2004 Presidential Election (OLS coefficients).
 Source: Taiwan's Election and Democratization Studies, 2004: The President Election (TEDS2004P), Shioh-Duan Hawang, Department of Political Science, Soochow University.

Notes: **: $p \leq 0.1$ for blue and green votes, x*: $p \leq 0.1$ for blue votes only, *x: $p \leq 0.1$ for green votes only. The OLS regression equations also included (not shown) gender, degree of identity fence-sitting, and the effects of social networking, family, media, political parties, and coworkers on one's voting decision. See Table A2 for further details.

fence-sitter vote boosted support for the blue candidate by 6%. One possible explanation for the shooting was that it was an expression of blue camp political enmity; another, that it was a last-minute attempt by the green camp to spur the green vote before the March 20 election. Regardless of what actually happened, fence-sitter voting behaviour indicated acceptance of the latter explanation.

Other external conditions, such as local guilds and the respondent's evaluation of Taiwan's economic conditions, also played significant roles in motivating the fence-sitter to enact its political duty. Local guilds and social organizations were capable of increasing the fence-sitter blue vote by 17%. From another perspective, favourable evaluations of current economic conditions increased the fence-sitter green vote by 15%, indicating its belief that Taiwan's thriving economy was attributable to the current green government (Figure 5A).

As regards individual factors, young Minnan fence-sitters lacking education and earning low income were more likely to vote green than blue. Other things being equal, fence-sitters in the highest income category were 14% more likely to vote blue than those in the lowest income group. Fence-sitters in the 20–30 age group were 13% less likely to vote blue than those in older age groups. Illiterate fence-sitters were 12, 19 and 17% less likely to vote blue than those with, respectively, elementary, junior college and college educations (Figure 5B). These findings suggest that social status played an important role in fence-sitter voting behaviour. Higher social status seemed to accompany fence-sitter blue support.

Summary

The above statistical findings yield several conclusions: (1) Identity fence-sitters are a political force of significance that often determines electoral outcomes in Taiwan's increasingly competitive elections. (2) Lack of political knowledge is not the cause of fence-sitting. Fence-sitters are well-educated and capable of making informed decisions. (3) Fence-sitters maintain a neutral political stance and are politically apathetic, but if forced to take sides they tend to vote blue. (4) The higher the fence-sitter's social and economic status, the more likely he/she is to vote blue. (5) Fence-sitters are opportunists. They leave their voting decision to the last moment, which makes them susceptible to bold campaign ploys. Yet they make reasoned, disciplined judgments, as demonstrated by the negative reaction to the 319 shooting incident. (6) Fence-sitter opportunism is also manifest in the influence of economic conditions on their voting decision. They vote for whoever seems capable of providing the most economic benefits. (7) Local social associations play a role in promoting fence-sitter support for the blue camp.

The above conclusions suggest possible campaign strategies. Continued mass rallies by both camps prior to elections would be certain to gain them votes. The blue camp could increase its electoral support by working with young, Minnan fence-sitters lacking in education background and on low income by means of social and professional associations. Sustaining the vote of these younger, less privileged Minnan fence-sitters constitutes the green camp's main challenge, along with avoiding repetition of political farces such as the 319 shooting.

In a nutshell, fence-sitters are a group of pragmatists of moderate ideological indoctrination. They enjoy observing electoral campaigns proceed, but wait to the last minute before picking the candidate they perceive as most capable of bringing them economic benefit. Fence-sitter pragmatism is aptly demonstrated in the following conversation Professor Tianjian Shi and I had with a graduate student in the department of political science at National Taiwan University in December, 2004:

Question: What political party do you support?

Answer: None of them.

Question: What would you do if the People's Liberation Army fought its way to Taiwan?

Answer: I'd hide in the mountains and fight a guerrilla war against them.

Question: Would you accept a job as an office director if the PLA occupied Taiwan?

Answer: Sure. Why not?

Appendix

Table A1 Variables in the OLS Regression Equations in Figures 3 and 4

Variable	Valid N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Minimum	Maximum
Identity fence-sitting	1823	.4838179	.3904546	0	
China identity	1823	.112452	.2428419	0	1
Taiwan identity	1823	.3507954	.3816714	0	1
Discussing politics	1818	.4096076	.3175313	0	1
Political efficacy	1823	.5234266	.1435436	0	1
Interest in election results	1763	.7188505	.2717163	0	1
Campaign participation	1823	.217712	.1795352	0	1
Blue-Green identity (blue=1)	1823	.4989029	.2437448	0	1
Voted green president 2000	1823	.3439386	.4751512	0	1
Voted green legislator 2001	1712	.2517523	.4341465	0	1
Referendum green 2004	1823	.3976961	.4727308	0	1
Voted green president 2004	1823	.4015359	.4903435	0	1
Voted blue president 2000	1823	.3148656	.4645898	0	1
Voted blue legislator 2001	1712	.3317757	.4709885	0	1

(continued)

Table A1 Continued

Variable	Valid N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Minimum	Maximum
Referendum blue 2004	1823	.0469007	.1825842	0	1
Voted blue president 2004	1823	.3340647	.4717919	0	1
Age 2030	1823	.2342293	.4236324	0	1
Age 3140	1823	.2051563	.4039266	0	1
Age 4150	1823	.243006	.4290164	0	1
Age 5160	1823	.1470104	.3542135	0	1
Age 6170	1823	.0866703	.2814285	0	1
Age 7197	1823	.0839276	.2773553	0	1
Illiterate	1817	.0649422	.2464917	0	1
Elementary	1817	.1882223	.3909972	0	1
Junior high	1817	.1265823	.332596	0	1
Senior high	1817	.2740782	.4461714	0	1
2-year college	1817	.156852	.3637612	0	1
College and above	1817	.1893231	.3918729	0	1
Female	1823	.496983	.5001281	0	1
Family monthly income (imputed)	1818	.4089066	.3058668	0	1
Minnan	1823	.6787347	.3497259	0	1
Hakka	1823	.1038581	.244344	0	1
Mainland	1823	.0910587	.2135715	0	1
Aborigine	1823	.0202962	.1250055	0	1
Other origin	1823	.1060523	.1820505	0	1
Taipei County	1823	.2013165	.401094	0	1
Yilan County	1823	.0164564	.1272575	0	1
Taoyuan County	1823	.0625343	.2421898	0	1
Miaoli County	1823	.0575974	.2330444	0	1
Taizhong County	1823	.0383982	.1922084	0	1
Zhanghua County	1823	.0460779	.2097113	0	1
Nantou County	1823	.0504663	.2189651	0	1
Yunhong County	1823	.0537575	.2256005	0	1
Jiayi County	1823	.029073	.1680572	0	1
Tainan County	1823	.0438837	.2048925	0	1
Gaoxiang County	1823	.0669227	.2499566	0	1
Pingdong County	1823	.035107	.1841007	0	1
Taidong County	1823	.0131651	.1140128	0	1
Hualian County	1823	.0142622	.1186023	0	1
Jilong City	1823	.0307186	.1726016	0	1
Tiazhong City	1823	.0603401	.2381812	0	1
Jiayi City	1823	.0153593	.1230109	0	1
Tainan City	1823	.0164564	.1272575	0	1
Taipei City	1823	.0932529	.2908663	0	1
Gaoxiang City	1823	.0669227	.2499566	0	1

Table A2 Variables in the OLS Regression Equations in Figure 5

Variable	Valid N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Minimum	Maximum
Fence-sitters voted blue	1156	.3210424	.3092548	0	1
Fence-sitters voted green	1156	.2666522	.3421879	0	1
External factors					
228 Pan-green rally	1237	.1708434	.347728	0	1
KMT assets	1237	.0859607	.2414924	0	1
Lien Zhan assets	1237	.0563191	.1909702	0	1
313 Pan-blue rally	1237	.1201832	.2858894	0	1
Chen's political contribution	1237	.1067098	.2570874	0	1
1st Lady's stocks trade	1237	.1204527	.2782853	0	1
319 shooting	1237	.2859068	.4200733	0	1
No external influence	1237	.4139046	.492731	0	1
Guild effect	1237	.0072757	.085021	0	1
Media effect	1237	.1665319	.3727081	0	1
Family effect	1237	.21827	.4132387	0	1
Coworker effect	1237	.0630558	.2431616	0	1
Party effect	1237	.0590137	.2357457	0	1
Taiwan economy effect	1196	.423913	.379469	0	1
Minnan	1237	.65481	.3504806	0	1
Hakka	1237	.1032067	.2391883	0	1
Mainland	1237	.1072487	.22833	0	1
Aborigine	1237	.0191323	.1187723	0	1
Other origin	1237	.1156023	.1882516	0	1
Illiterate	1234	.0340357	.1813943	0	1
Elementary	1234	.165316	.3716161	0	1
Junior high	1234	.1231767	.3287731	0	1
Senior high	1234	.2876823	.4528658	0	1
2-year college	1234	.1742301	.379461	0	1
College and above	1234	.2155592	.4113764	0	1
Age 2030	1237	.2554568	.436294	0	1
Age 3140	1237	.2271625	.4191679	0	1
Age 4150	1237	.2554568	.436294	0	1
Age 5160	1237	.1414713	.348648	0	1
Age 6170	1237	.0719483	.2585067	0	1
Age 2030	1237	.2554568	.436294	0	1
Female	1237	.4971706	.5001942	0	1
Family monthly income	1234	.4378371	.2977924	0	1
Degree of fence-sitting	1237	1.426031	.4946983	1	2