Preferences for Government Concessions Amid Protests and Repression: Experimental Evidence from Hong Kong’s Anti-ELAB Movement and National Security Law

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Outline

1. Theories

2. Experiment Design

3. Results
   - Main
   - NSL
     - Causal Heterogeneities

4. Conclusions
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   - NSL
     - Causal Heterogeneities

4. Conclusions
Motivation

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  - National Security Law (NSL) as a shock
The Acemoglu-Robinson Thesis

Commitment Hypothesis (H1): Policy concessions accompanied by a franchise extension are more likely to be accepted than those that are not.

Additional Causal Heterogeneities: Protest Expectations and Repression Perceptions.
The Acemoglu-Robinson Thesis

- Dictators are unable to commit to their redistributive offers
Theories

- The Acemoglu-Robinson Thesis
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  - The only credible solution: Democratization and a change in the identity of the median voter
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Additional Causal Heterogeneities: Protest Expectations and Repression Perceptions.
Conjoint Analysis

- Multi-Dimensionality of Concessions
Conjoint Analysis

- Multi-Dimensionality of Concessions
- We are interested in the **marginal effect of an attribute** on support for the concession. (i.e, Average Marginal Component Effect, AMCE (Hainmueller, Hopkins, and Yamamoto 2014))

\[
\psi_A(a_\ell, a_0) \equiv \mathbb{E} \left[ \int \{ Y_i(a_\ell, B_i) - Y_i(a_0, B_i) \} dF(B_i) \right]
\]  

(1)

where \( a_\ell, a_0 \in \mathcal{A} \) and \( B_i \) is another factor whose distribution function is \( F(B_i) \).
Conjoint Analysis

- Causal Interactions: The Acemoglu-Robinson thesis however needs some understanding of the interactive effect between political reforms and other types of concessions.
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- We adopt two approaches:
Causal Interactions: The Acemoglu-Robinson thesis however needs some understanding of the interactive effect between political reforms and other types of concessions.

We adopt two approaches:

1. **Average Combination Effect (ACE):**

   \[
   \tau_{AB}(a, b; a_0, b_0) \equiv \mathbb{E}\{Y_i(a, b) - Y_i(a_0, b_0)\},
   \]

   (2)
Conjoint Analysis

Causal Interactions: The Acemoglu-Robinson thesis however needs some understanding of the interactive effect between political reforms and other types of concessions.

We adopt two approaches:

1. Average Combination Effect (ACE):

   \[ \tau_{AB}(a_\ell, b_m; a_0, b_0) \equiv \mathbb{E}\{Y_i(a_\ell, b_m) - Y_i(a_0, b_0)\}, \]  

   (2)

2. Average Component Interactive Effect (ACIE)

   \[ \varphi_A(a_\ell, a_0) \equiv \mathbb{E}\left[\int \{Y_i(a_\ell, b_m, C_i) - Y_i(a_0, b_m, C_i)\} dF(C_i)\right] \]  

   (3)
Causal Interactions: The Acemoglu-Robinson thesis however needs some understanding of the interactive effect between political reforms and other types of concessions.

We adopt two approaches:

1. **Average Combination Effect (ACE):**

   \[ \tau_{AB}(a_\ell, b_m; a_0, b_0) \equiv \mathbb{E}\{Y_i(a_\ell, b_m) - Y_i(a_0, b_0)\}, \quad (2) \]

2. **Average Component Interactive Effect (ACIE)**

   \[ \varphi_A(a_\ell, a_0) \equiv \mathbb{E}\left[\int \{Y_i(a_\ell, b_m, C_i) - Y_i(a_0, b_m, C_i)\} dF(C_i)\right] \tag{3} \]

A way to avoid the social desirability bias (self-censorship). (Caruso et al., 2009; Horiuchi et al., 2020)
Subject Recruitment

- Rakuten Insight’s Online Panel
- Quota Sampling: Gender, Education, and Age.
- Sample Sizes: 1400 for both before (May, 2020) and after (June, 2020) the NSL
A Conjoint Experiment

- **Five Attributes**
  1. Political Reforms
  2. Economic Reforms
  3. Social Assimilation
  4. Reforms in Law Enforcement
  5. Government Restructuring

- **Each Attributes has 4-8 levels:** This makes our experiment a $8 \times 6 \times 4 \times 5 \times 5$ factorial design.

- **We also included various questions such as subjects’ socio-economic background, political attitudes towards democracy and redistribution, and their political stances**
Political Reforms

1. Popular votes for the Chief Executive and LegCo by all adults above 18 years old
2. Popular votes for the Chief Executive by all adults above 18 years old
3. Popular votes for the LegCo by all adults above 18 years old
4. Expansion of the Election Committee for the Chief Executive
5. Seat Increase for LegCo’s geographical constituencies
6. Cancellation of the functional constituency
7. Extension for the One-Country-Two-System beyond 2047
8. Status Quo
Government Personnel

1. Resignation of the Chief Executive
2. Resignation of the Police Chief
3. Resignation of the Chief Secretary for Administration
4. Resignation of the Attorney-General
5. Status Quo
Law Enforcement

1. Independent Investigations (including foreign experts) into police brutality
2. Amnesty for arrested protesters
3. Drop the riot characterization of protests
4. Disband the Police Force
5. Status Quo
Social Assimilation

1. Suspend the Patriotic Education
2. Reduce the Immigration from the Mainland
3. Reduce the Ratio of Mandarin Classes to Cantonese ones
4. Status Quo
Economic Reforms

1. Suspend the Greater Bay Area Project
2. Housing market and Land Reform
3. More financial assistance to start-ups
4. More social services (medical, educational, etc...)
5. Status Quo
Experiment Design

An Example

Please carefully review the options detailed below, and then answer the following question. Which one of the two proposals do you prefer?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Reforms</th>
<th>Proposal A</th>
<th>Proposal B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Status Quo</td>
<td>Increase Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (cash handout, Caring and Sharing Scheme, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Reforms</td>
<td>Extend the One-Country-Two-Systems Policy beyond 2047</td>
<td>Status Quo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Assimilation</td>
<td>Suspend the National Education Curricula</td>
<td>Suspend the National Education Curricula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law Enforcement Reforms</td>
<td>Retract the Characterization of Protests as Riots</td>
<td>Status Quo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Restructuring</td>
<td>The Resignation of the Secretary for Justice</td>
<td>The Resignation of the Secretary for Justice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Proposal A
- Proposal B
3. Results
   Main
   NSL
   Causal Heterogeneities
AMCEs before the NSL

Estimated AMCE

Feature

-0.10 -0.05 0.00 0.05 0.10

Selection Committee Expansion
Only LegCo
Only Chief Executive
No Functional
LegCo Seat Increase
Both Chief Executive and the LegCo
Beyond 2047
Base-Status Quo
Youth Support
Social Security
No Dawn
Minimum Wage Raise
Land Reform
Base-No Reform
Reduce Mainlanders
Reduce Chinese
National Education Pause
Base-No Change
SAadmin Resigns
Police Resigns
Judicial Resigns
Chief Resigns
Base-Stay
Revoke Riot
Release Protesters
Independent Investigation
Disband Police
Base-Intact

(PolR)
(EconR)
(SocA)
(GovR)
(LawE)
Acemoglu-Robinson Thesis: ACEs Before the NSL (EconR X PolR)
Acemoglu-Robinson Thesis: ACEs Before the NSL (EconR_X SocA)
Causal Interactions: ACIEs Before the NSL

Results

Main
Causal Interactions: ACIEs Before the NSL

Results

Main

Causal Interactions: ACIEs Before the NSL

- Base-Status Quo
- Beyond 2047
- Both Chief Executive and the LegCo

(EconR)
Youth Support
Social Security
No Dawan
Minimum Wage Raise
Land Reform
Base-No Reform

LegCo Seat Increase

No Functional

Only Chief Executive

Only LegCo

Selection Committee Expansion

Estimated AMCE

Feature  EconR
Causal Interactions: ACIEs Before the NSL

- Base-No Change
- National Education Pause
- Reduce Chinese

(EconR)
Youth Support
Social Security
No Dawan
Minimum Wage Raise
Land Reform
Base-No Reform

Estimated AMCE
Feature EconR
3. Results

Main
NSL
Causal Heterogeneities
AMCEs after the NSL

![Graph showing estimated AMCEs for various features after the National Security Law (NSL). Features include Base-Intact, Disband Police, Independent Investigation, Release Protesters, Revoke Riot, Base-Stay, Chief Resigns, Judicial Resigns, Police Resigns, SAdmin Resigns, National Education Pause, Reduce Chinese, Minimum Wage Raise, No Dawan, Land Reform, Base-No Reform, Selection Committee Expansion, Only LegCo, Only Chief Executive, No Functional, LegCo Seat Increase, Beyond 2047, Base-Status Quo, (EconR), Youth Support, Social Security, No Dawan, Minimum Wage Raise, Land Reform, Base-No Reform, (SocA), Reduce Mainlanders, Reduce Chinese, National Education Pause, Base-No Change, (GovR), SAadmin Resigns, Police Resigns, Judicial Resigns, Chief Resigns, Base-Stay, (LawE), Revoke Riot, Release Protesters, Independent Investigation, Disband Police, Base-Intact. The graph displays the estimated AMCEs ranging from -0.1 to 0.1 for each feature. The features are color-coded and include PolR, EconR, SocA, GovR, and LawE.]
Differences in AMCEs before and after the NSL

![Graph showing estimated differences in AMCEs before and after the NSL. The x-axis represents the estimated difference, ranging from -0.10 to 0.10. The y-axis lists various features, including Disband Police, Independent Investigation, Release Protesters, Revoke Riot (LawE), Chief Resigns, Judicial Resigns, Police Resigns, Only LegCo, Only Chief Executive, No Functional, LegCo Seat Increase, Both Chief Executive and the LegCo, Beyond 2047 (EconR), Youth Support, Social Security, No Dawan, Minimum Wage Raise, Land Reform (SocA), Reduce Mainlanders, Reduce Chinese, National Education Pause (GovR), SAdmin Resigns, Police Resigns, Judicial Resigns, Chief Resigns (LawE), Revoke Riot, Release Protesters, Independent Investigation, and Disband Police. Each feature is represented by a different colored dot on the graph, indicating the estimated difference before and after the NSL.](image-url)
Acemoglu-Robinson Thesis: ACEs After the NSL (EconR X PolR)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>EconR_PolR</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth Support_Only_LegCo</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Security_Only_Executive</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>No Dawan_Only_Executive</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Wage Raise_Only_Chief Executive</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Reform_Only_Chief Executive</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base-No Reform_Only_No_Functional</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Support_No_Functional</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Security_No_Functional</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth Support_Only_Ceo Seat Increase</td>
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<td>Base-No Reform_Only_Ceo Seat Increase</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth Support_Beyond 2047</td>
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<td>Land Reform_Beyond 2047</td>
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<tr>
<td>Base-No Reform_Beyond 2047</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Estimated AMCE

-0.2 -0.1 0.0 0.1 0.2

Feature - EconR_PolR
Acemoglu-Robinson Thesis: ACEs After the NSL (EconR X SocA)
Causal Interactions: ACIEs After the NSL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>PolR</th>
<th>SocA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Base-No Reform</td>
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<tr>
<td>Land Reform</td>
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<td>Social Security</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth Support</td>
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</table>

Estimated AMCE
Causal Interactions: ACIEs After the NSL

Results

(EconR)
Youth Support
Social Security
No Dawan
Minimum Wage Raise
Land Reform
Base-No Reform

Base-Status Quo

Estimated AMCE

Beyond 2047

Both Chief Executive and the LegCo

LegCo Seat Increase

No Functional

Selection Committee Expansion

Only Chief Executive

(EconR)
Youth Support
Social Security
No Dawan
Minimum Wage Raise
Land Reform
Base-No Reform

Base-No Reform

Land Reform

Minimum Wage Raise

Social Security

No Dawan

Youth Support
Causal Interactions: ACIEs After the NSL

Estimated AMCE

Feature - EconR
3. Results

Main
NSL
Causal Heterogeneities
Exit Options and Post-NSL Preferences

The diagram shows the estimated AMCE (Average Marginal Causal Effect) for various features across three conditions: No, Yes, and Yes - No. The features include:

- PolR: Political Reform
- EconR: Economic Reform
- SocA: Social Affairs
- GovR: Government
- LawE: Legal and Educational

Each feature is represented by different colored dots, with the x-axis indicating the estimated AMCE values ranging from -0.2 to 0.2.
Internet Censorship and Post-NSL Preferences

The graph shows the estimated AMCE (Average Marginal Change in Effects) for various features across different categories of policy responses. The x-axis represents the estimated AMCE values, ranging from -0.2 to 0.2. The y-axis lists the features, which include:

- Selection Committee Expansion
- Only LegCo Resigns
- Only Chief Executive Resigns
- No Functional
- LegCo Seat Increase
- Both Chief Executive and the LegCo
- Beyond 2047
- Base-Status Quo
- (ECONR)
- Youth Support
- Social Security
- No Dawan
- Minimum Wage Raise
- Land Reform
- Base-No Reform
- (SOCA)
- Reduce Mainlanders
- Reduce Chinese
- National Education Pause
- Base-No Change
- (GOVR)
- SAdmin Resigns
- Police Resigns
- Judicial Resigns
- Chief Resigns
- Base-Stay
- (LAWE)
- Revoke Riot
- Release Protesters
- Independent Investigation
- Disband Police
- Base-Intact

The graph categorizes the features into three groups:

- **high**: Features with high estimated AMCE values.
- **low**: Features with low estimated AMCE values.
- **low - high**: Features with a low-high estimated AMCE range.

The features are color-coded and categorized under different policy domains:

- **POLR**: Political Leverage
- **ECONR**: Economic
- **SOCA**: Social
- **GOVR**: Government
- **LAWE**: Law Enforcement
News Media Censorship and Post-NSL Preferences

(POLR)
Selection Committee Expansion
Only LegCo
Only Chief Executive
No Functional
LegCo Seat Increase
Both Chief Executive and the LegCo
Beyond 2047
Base-Status Quo
(ECONR)
Youth Support
Social Security
No Dawn
Minimum Wage Raise
Land Reform
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(GOVR)
SAdmin Resigns
Police Resigns
Judicial Resigns
Chief Resigns
Base-Stay
(LAWE)
Revoke Riot
Release Protesters
Independent Investigation
Disband Police
Base-Intact
Protest Expectations and Post-NSL Preferences

Results
Causal Heterogeneities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>POLR</th>
<th>GOVR</th>
<th>LAWE</th>
<th>SOCA</th>
<th>ECONR</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Base-No Reform</td>
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<td>Independent Investigation</td>
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<td>Disband Police</td>
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<td>No Dawan</td>
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<td>Minimum Wage Raise</td>
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<td>Land Reform</td>
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<td>Base-No Reform</td>
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Estimated AMCE

-0.1 0.0 0.1
-0.1 0.0 0.1
-0.1 0.0 0.1

Feature: POLR, GOVR, LAWE, SOCA, ECONR
Concluding Remarks

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- Crafting a dictatorship: The effects of the NSL: Opening more space for concessions (and the erosion of HK’s British legacies)