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Why do Policy Frames Change? Rhetorical Construction and
Contestation of Gay Rights in a Contested Regime

A Dissertation Presented

by

SHIH-CHAN DAI

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of

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Contestation of Gay Rights in a Contested Regime

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DEDICATION

To my dear and loving family, professors, and friends.

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ABSTRACT

WHY DO POLICY FRAMES CHANGE? RHETORICAL CONSTRUCTION AND CONTESTATION OF GAY RIGHTS IN A CONTESTED REGIME

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The dissertation project, “Why do Policy Frames Change? Rhetorical Construction and Contestation of Gay Rights in a Contested Regime,” examines the impacts of both digitalization and local political contexts on the dynamics of policy framing and issue advocacy. By exploring the patterns of online framing across different types of social actors (pro- and anti-gay rights activists and influencers), it contributes to the fields of LGBT politics, political communication, and social movements. The findings of the second chapter show that similar to Western societies where same-sex marriage has been legalized, pro- and anti-gay rights groups in Taiwan rely on certain types of policy frames respectively (anti-discrimination, equality, and liberty vs. morality, well-being, and democracy). However, some localized features are uniquely found in the case of Taiwan when discussing gay rights issues. For example, frames of civil rights and religion are far less salient in policy messages of gay rights. Furthermore, there are some localized framing elements such as those discussing social order (appellation, ancestor veneration, and blood tie), national identity (Taiwan-China comparison), and minority protection (rainbow crosser, indigenous people, and memory politics). The framing patterns of pro- and anti-gay rights groups have changed in response to policy outcomes and elite behavior. The third chapter adopts both Bayesian binomial models and lowess curve fitting to demonstrate that audience responses play an important role in shaping activists’ frame choices. With the response metrics available for posts on social media, frame resonance becomes a reflection of the target audience’s preference. It implies that the audience is no longer merely a passive receiver of policy frames but has an agency to affect the framing processes. The fourth chapter broadens the existing definition of frame producers by compares the framing patterns and styles between pro- and anti-gay rights activists and influencers. The results conclude that pro-gay rights influencers convey their policy appeals by performing their LGBTQ+ identities and have a softer and assimilationist tone in their messages. In contrast, anti-gay rights influencers act similarly to activists for their online framing behaviors and serve as anonymous hubs of information. The findings of this dissertation project help us to understand the contestation of gay rights in the unique case of Taiwan which is the first Asian country to legalize same-sex spousal rights. It also sheds light on how the creation of online spaces has changed the way activism works.

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Table 2.1 Proportions of Policy Frames in the Whole Corpus.....	158
2. Table 2.2 Proportions of Master Frames in the Whole Corpus.....	159
3. Table 3.1 Effects of Audience Responses (Pro-Gay Rights, Phase 1).....	162
4. Table 3.2 Effects of Audience Responses (Pro-Gay Rights, Phase 2).....	162
5. Table 3.3 Effects of Audience Responses (Pro-Gay Rights, Phase 3).....	163
6. Table 3.4 Effects of Audience Responses (Anti-Gay Rights, Phase 1).....	163
7. Table 3.5 Effects of Audience Responses(Anti-Gay Rights, Phase 2).....	164
8. Table 3.6 Effects of Audience Responses (Anti-Gay Rights, Phase 3).....	164
9. Table 4.1 Comparing Frame Diversity Across Actors.....	167
10. Table 4.2 Comparing Monthly Proportions of Policy Messages Across Actors.....	167
11. Table 4.3 Comparing Message Popularity Across.....	167
12. Table 4.4 Most Frequently-Used Policy Frames by Actors.....	167
13. Table 4.5 Dimensional Reduction of Frame Clustering Across Actors	168
14. Table 4.6 Names of the Latent Dimensions of Policy Frames Across Actors	168

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Figure 2.1 Three Main Types of Localized Frames.....	49
2. Figures 2.2-2.5 Frequencies of Messages and Proportions of Master Frames.....	160
3. Figures 2.6-2.9 Proportions of Master Frames.....	161
4. Figure 3.1 Traditional versus Revised Understanding of Frame Resonance.....	88
5. Figures 3.2-3.5 Frequency of Messages and Proportions of Master Frames.....	165
6. Figures 3.6-3.9 Proportions of Master Frames.....	166

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	v
ABSTRACT.....	vi
LIST OF TABLES.....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	viii
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION.....	5
A. Struggle over Meanings.....	5
B. The Global Politicization of Gay Rights.....	7
C. Cultural Factors in Social Movements.....	13
D. Reflections and Critiques.....	17
E. Case Selection: Taiwan as a Unique Case of Gay Rights Politics.....	22
F. Chapter Outline.....	25
II. <u>DESCRIBING LGBT AND GAY RIGHTS: A LONGITUDINAL ANALYSIS OF PRO- AND ANTI-GAY RIGHTS GROUPS' ONLINE MESSAGES IN TAIWAN.....</u>	<u>28</u>
A. Abstract	28
B. Background.....	29
C. Rhetorical Contestation and Framing.....	30
D. Types of Pro- and Anti-Gay Rights Frames in Western Societies.....	33
E. Reflections on Earlier Studies of Framing and Gay Rights Frames.....	35
F. Methods.....	38
G. Case Selection.....	40

H. Data Types, Scope, and Collection.....	41
I. Frame Types of Master Frames of Gay Rights in Taiwan.....	43
J. Policy Frames Taken by Pro- and Anti-Gay Rights Groups.....	45
K. Three Classes of Localized Frames.....	48
L. Localized Frames - National Identity.....	50
M. Localized Frames - Social Order.....	51
N. Localized Frames - Minority Protection.....	54
O. Framing as a Dynamic Process - Time Trend Analysis.....	60
P. Dynamic Interactions Between Activists and Events - “Democracy”.....	63
Q. Dynamic Interactions Between Activists and Events - “Diversity”.....	68
R. Discussion and Conclusions.....	75
 <u>III. RESONANCE OF FRAMES: HOW AUDIENCE RESPONSES AFFECT FRAME</u>	
<u>CHOICES</u>	79
A. Abstract.....	79
B. Background.....	80
C. Research Questions - Agency vs. Structure.....	81
D. Literature Review - Frame Resonance.....	83
E. Hypotheses.....	88
F. Methods.....	91
G. Case Selection.....	93
H. Data Types, Scope, and Collection.....	95
I. Results - Unequal Audience Preferences of Policy Frames.....	97
J. Results - Structural Disjuncture for the Pro-Gay Rights Groups.....	100

K. Results - Structural Disjuncture for the Anti-Gay Rights Groups.....	102
L. Results - In(de)creasing Reliance.....	104
M. Implications and Conclusions.....	109
<u>IV. TALKING POLITICS: DIFFERENCES OF FRAMING PATTERNS BETWEEN</u>	
<u>ACTIVISTS AND INFLUENCERS.....</u>	<u>113</u>
A. Abstract.....	113
B. Background.....	114
C. Research Questions	116
D. Literature Review - Networked Framing and Connective Action.....	117
E. Hypotheses.....	122
F. Methods.....	124
G. Case Selection.....	126
H. Data Types, Scope, and Collection.....	129
I. Comparing Framing Behaviors Between Activists and Influencers.....	130
J. Content Analysis of Argumentative Styles Across Actors.....	133
K. Discussion and Implications.....	140
L. Conclusions.....	144
<u>V. CONCLUSIONS.....</u>	<u>148</u>
A. Significance and Contributions.....	148
B. Findings and Implications.....	150
C. Future Work.....	154
<u>APPENDICES</u>	
A. Codebook of Policy Frames and Master Frames.....	169

B. Keywords and Phrases of Policy Frames.....	174
C. Reflections on the Coding Process.....	180
D. The IQV and Entropy Scores as Measures of Frame Diversity.....	197
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	213

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

“The appearance in nineteenth-century psychiatry, jurisprudence, and literature of a whole series of discourses on the species and subspecies of homosexuality, made possible a strong advance of social controls into this area of ‘perversity’; but it also made possible the formation of a ‘reverse’ discourse: homosexuality began to speak in its own behalf, to demand that its legitimacy or ‘naturalness’ be acknowledged, often in the same vocabulary, using the same categories by which it was medically disqualified.”

Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, Volume 1, 1978, pp.101-02

A. Struggle over Meanings

In his well-known book “The History of Sexuality,” Michel Foucault argues that “power is everywhere” and is exercised by actions taken in our daily social interactions (1978: 95-96, 121-122). Building upon this alternative way to conceptualize power, social movement studies have started to discuss how the struggle over symbols, discourses, meanings, and ideas shapes the way politics works (Baumgarten and Ullrich 2016; Nash 2001).¹ From a Foucauldian perspective, the formation of collective group identities is a dialectical process (Foucault 1978: 101). On the one hand, the invisibility of a specific group of people is itself a manifestation of

¹ The literature of social movements has long described “power” in a Marxist sense. Those who are subordinated in a social and economic system share common grievances and would eventually become mobilized to fight against structural inequalities and those who are in power (Andrew 1983). However, it has been argued that the Marxist approach tends to focus too much on the economic side of inequalities, class relations, and materialism while there are other forms of inequalities that may be cultural or identity-based (Cooper 1994). Therefore, those who study cultural factors in social movements turn to Foucault since he stresses how discourses could be treated as an expression of power relations (Pickett 1996). Nevertheless, it does not mean that Marxist and Foucauldian interpretations of power are contradictory to each other. As Olssen (2004) points out, there are parallels between Foucault’s approach and Marxism. Foucault and Marx both agree that all systems and structures are relative in history and that knowledge, as well as intellectual formations, are linked to social relations and power.

the repressive ideology which rejects the recognition of such a group as a legitimate member of society. On the other hand, the silencing of the marginalized at the same time plants the seed of potential future contention to challenge the appropriateness of the structural inequalities. The two-sided feature of a marginalized identity, homosexuality in the earlier quote from Foucault for instance, signals a need to pay close attention to how policy issues and collective identities of minority groups are framed and described.

Among the studies of social movements in which this research project is situated, the idea of framing is widely applied but it only serves as a residual category to account for what cannot be explained by structural factors (Crossley 2002; Kurzman 2008).² Master frames are defined as a “generic type of collective action frame” and they have both a wider scope of coverage and a higher level of influence (Snow and Benford 1992; Benford 2003). The variation of master frame types in policy messages has not been carefully explained since we do not have a systematic comparative framework to evaluate how frame choices might change in response to temporal, spatial, and agential factors (Benford 1997). Resource mobilization theory pays attention only to material resources that are required to sustain the existence and functioning of social movement organizations (McCarthy and Zald 1977).³ Therefore, the idea of framing has not been carefully addressed in this approach. In political process theory, three major factors contribute to a transition away from subordination for marginalized groups. These factors include changes in political opportunities, the establishment of mobilizing structures, and deliberate policy frames proposed

² In this research, I would adopt Goffman’s definition of policy frames. Frames are referred to as “the schemas of interpretations that enable individuals to locate, perceive, identify, and label occurrences within their life space and the world at large (Goffman 1974: 21).”

³ Resource mobilization theory argues that participants of social movements strategically acquire resources and mobilize followers. The success of social movements is highly dependent on these abilities to secure organizational resources such as time and money (Jenkins 1983; McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1988).

by activists (McAdam 1982; McAdam et al. 1996). However, these theoretical accounts do not explicitly explain how political issues and social groups have become legitimate in a constantly changing process of negotiation and contestation.

In their critiques of the political process theory, theorists of new social movements adopt an identity-based understanding of collective action (Melucci 1980; Larana 2009). They argue that the formation of new collective identities is a prerequisite for the emergence of social movements (Taylor and Whittier 1992; Buechler 1995; Polletta and Jasper 2001). The major goal of activism is to create alternative ways to culturally conceptualize the world where we live (Williams 2004; Merin 2010). However, the identity-based approach fails to adequately address the issue of how previously unwelcome policy choices, like same-sex marriage, have now become acceptable to the majority in a society.⁴ The majority could hardly share or internalize the same collective identity with those who are marginalized. Therefore, in addition to the internal solidarity built around a collective identity among the marginalized, what matters more for policy changes is the way issues are framed and presented to a wider public audience. In studies that take the identity-based approach, it is not clear how meanings attached to policy issues have changed over time and what factors lead to such changes. This lack of clarity on the change of meanings requires us to examine and analyze how policy frames vary in response to both circumstantial and agential factors.

B. The Global Politicization of Gay Rights

The institutionalization of gay rights has been taking place in different parts of the world and there are different phases of gay rights development in history. Homosexuality has long been

⁴ For policy changes to happen, one of the implicit assumptions made by both theorists of the political process and new social movements is that structural factors and actions taken by activists can strategically shape the way people perceive certain issues.

considered a social taboo and an act of immorality in most societies around the globe before the twenty-first century (Tebble 2011). At the beginning of LGBT activism in world history, the primary goal is to challenge the stereotypes and legal punishments LGBT people are subject to (Currier 2010; Seidman 2013). After achieving normalization and decriminalization of same-sex relationships, the next phase is marked with policy appeals that pursue legal protections to prevent LGBT individuals from being discriminated against in different domains of life (Waaldijk 2000). The third phase stresses a more active form of protection to recognize the legal benefits LGBT individuals should enjoy as couples (Merin 2010). In these different stages of gay rights development, backlashes against gay rights have been initiated by religious and social conservatives to counteract policy changes of gay rights (Rosenberg 2008; Keck 2009). If we take a closer look at individual cases, at around the turn of the twenty-first century, the Netherlands became the first country in the world to adopt same-sex marriage. As of May 2021, there are twenty-nine countries that legally recognize same-sex unions nationwide.⁵ In contrast, there are ten countries in Africa and the Middle East where homosexuality is treated as a crime that is subject to the death penalty (Whitaker 2011; Cheney 2012). What explains such a huge difference in the legal treatment of LGBT individuals across the globe? I would argue that the institutionalization and legitimization of gay rights are highly related to how minority groups such as LGBT individuals are represented in a country. The main question to be addressed in this research is how such representation of minority groups is affected by both macro- and micro-level factors like political opportunities and audience responses.

⁵ These countries include Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Taiwan, United States, and Uruguay. In Mexico and the United Kingdom, some jurisdictions still do not recognize same-sex marriage (ILGA 2021).

In the literature which discusses factors that lead to the global politicization of gay rights, one of the commonly recognized factors is the roles played by pro- and anti-gay rights activists (Croucher 2002; Anderson 2006; Encarnación 2013; Diez 2015; Fejes 2016; Leachman 2016; Chua 2018). LGBT social movements take a variety of tactical actions to pursue their policy goals, even in authoritarian regimes (Chua 2014). Similar to activism in other issue areas, LGBT movements adopt confrontational and non-conflictual repertoires to raise the public's awareness of social problems and marginalization. In addition to protests and demonstrations, one of the unique repertoires that belong to LGBT movements is pride parades. These parades have become a political space for those who may not feel comfortable about their LGBT identity to gain a sense of belonging (Britt and Heise 2000; Chua 2014; Ammaturo 2016). Litigation has been one of the important strategies for LGBT activism since it prevents policy debates from being dominated by the tyranny of the majority (Andersen 2006; Pinello 2006; Keck 2009; Encarnación 2011; Leachman 2016; Gerstmann 2017). LGBT movements also provide services to their constituents and aim to form a collective identity as sexual minorities (Chua 2018). Movements build up organizations and networks to sustain themselves (Hildebrandt 2013). Furthermore, activists generate policy frames to target not only their supporters but also bystanders and opponents (Hull 2001; Miceli 2005; Taylor and Haider-Markel 2014; Leachman 2016).⁶

Social movements are considered by some scholars of LGBT politics as the most important factor to explain the incorporation of gay rights into a legal and political system. However, activists' actions are constrained by their interactions with other social actors (political elites, liberal movements, conservative countermovements, mass media, the masses, transnational factors). Activists challenge the state authority and they need to figure out a way to open

⁶ Framing and campaigning require LGBT movements to portray policies in a way that makes people understand and interpret such issues more favorably per movements' appeals.

up political opportunities by finding allies among political elites (Diez 2015). Movements of other socially liberal policy appeals like women's rights provide the resources and strategies LGBT movements can use (Croucher 2002). However, countermovements that advocate traditional family values, children's rights, and religious morality have risen in response to the growth of LGBT movements and challenged the legitimacy of gay rights (Fejes 2016). The mass media serve as information providers and journalists can describe policy issues and frame them to shape the audiences' policy stances (Leachman 2016). Among the masses, movements aim to recruit supporters, garner support from bystanders, and demobilize opponents (Snow and Benford 1988; Lannutti 2005). In addition to these domestic actors, it has been found that pro-gay rights policies in other countries, transnational policy networks, and international organizations also affect the likelihood for gay rights policies to be legalized (Encarnacion 2011; Ayoub 2016; Kollman 2016).

Institutional and contextual factors also play a role when it comes to determining the likelihood of movement success. Social norms on family, sexuality, and morality affect the way people interpret issues of gay rights and choose their policy stances on such issues (Ayoub 2014). Technological innovations such as the Internet and social media platforms change how people are connected and networked (Shapiro 2004; Cao and Lu 2014; Chua 2014).⁷ Institutional designs of a government are influential in determining whether gay rights can be legally recognized (Encarnación 2014). Constitutionalism and judicial activism provide LGBT movements a channel to voice out their policy demands and to counteract threats of majority tyranny (Andersen 2006; Encarnación 2011; Gerstmann 2017). Other institutional features such as federalism, par-

⁷ These innovations allow the LGBT population to become mobilized more easily because of anonymity and faster transmission of information.

liamentarism, and direct democracy have been cited to explain the difference in gay rights protection between the United States and Canada (Smith 2008). Demographically, in societies where there is a lower degree of religious influence in politics or higher levels of education, there is a higher likelihood for gay rights to be incorporated into the legal system (Encarnación 2011; Kollman 2016). Lastly, in cases where active political leaders show empathy to LGBT policy demands and where there is a stronger leftist party, these political conditions are favorable for gay rights policies to be proposed and implemented (Diez 2015; Paternotte 2016).

Several studies have paid attention to the question of what factors contribute to the emergence of LGBT movements in a political system. Some have argued that the socio-economic transformation of society lays the foundation for LGBT individuals to gain personal autonomy. With the spread of capitalism and higher degrees of urbanization, people who migrate to cities are free from familial and communitarian constraints (Rofel 1999; Duyvendak and Krouwel 2009; Sullivan and Jackson 2013). The establishment of gathering spots such as gay bars in cities makes it possible for LGBT people to meet with “people like us” and to form collective identities based on their sexual orientation and gender identities (d’Emilio 1983; Higgs 2002). The historical process of democratization allows dissenting opinions that challenge dominant social norms to be heard (Croucher 2002). Higher levels of consciousness to women’s rights and other social inequalities lead to mobilization to fight for these issues, and these movements, in turn, encourage LGBT movements to emerge (Paternotte 2016). At the international level, international organizations are found to disseminate human rights discourses that have been adopted by domestic LGBT movements to legitimate their policy claims (Kollman 2016; Chua 2018). The trend of globalization helps to speed up this process of norm diffusion across countries, mainly from the Global North to the Global South (Snow and Benford 1999; Tarrow 2001; Sullivan and Jackson

2013). Regionally, organizations such as the European Union promote human rights and other “common values” by setting up requirements of accession and funding (Ayoub 2016). Additionally, several contextual factors have been observed in different case studies to affect the likelihood of LGBT movement mobilization.⁸ Politically, the incorporation of gay rights into the party platforms of leftist parties has been shown as an important factor (Encarnación 2011; Paternotte 2016). Socially, social norms of same-sex desires and relationships place constraints on what is perceived to be appropriate and favorable as a legitimate policy outcome (Laurent 2005; Wilkinson and Langlois 2014).

Most of the findings discussed above are situated in the context of Western democratic regimes. Some scholars provide a more localized and alternative understanding of gay rights development in other parts of the world. They have argued that the seemingly universal categorization of “LGBT” may not be able to find good corresponding terms in local cultures since local performances of sexuality are much more diverse (Rofel 1999; Massad 2002; Leap and Boellstorff 2004; Seckinelgin 2009; Epstein 2007; Sullivan and Jackson 2013; Wieringa and Sivori 2013). In authoritarian regimes like China and Singapore, gay rights movements need to be “pragmatic” and follow the rules of the game to work with the government without being contentious (Hildebrandt 2013; Chua 2014).⁹ Furthermore, countries of the Global South have their distinct path to the legalization of gay rights because of their unique historical development.¹⁰ Therefore, to account for the local contingencies in the Global South, this research presents an

⁸ Crises such as the outbreak of the HIV/AIDS epidemic make it necessary for the government to intervene and support programs that serve the LGBT community and the input of the resources enables LGBT movements to grow (Paternotte 2016).

⁹ LGBT groups in these authoritarian regimes have to provide services that increase the legitimacy of the state authority and build interpersonal networks with local officials to increase their chances of survival (Hildebrandt 2013).

¹⁰ For example, in cases of South Africa and Latin American countries such as Argentina, the process of democratization and party politics have been argued to be closely associated with the legal recognition of gay rights and same-sex marriage (Croucher 2002; Encarnación 2011; Díez 2015; Chua 2018).

analysis to describe and explain the temporal variation of pro- and anti-gay rights policy frames in Taiwan by looking at how frames are affected by political contexts and agents.

C. Cultural Factors in Social Movements

There have been various theoretical attempts to identify the factors that lead to the emergence of social movements, and cultural factors do not always receive adequate attention. Before the 1960s, social movements have been depicted as irrational actions that broke out periodically because of the common grievances shared among people.¹¹ In the 1960s, with the growth of the Civil Rights Movement in the United States, the theory of resource mobilization has been proposed to point out that resources and organizational structures are vital to the functioning of movements (McCarthy and Zald 1977). Activists need to act strategically and rationally to maximize their chances of acquiring material resources, mobilizing constituents, and building up professional organizations (McCarthy and Zald 1977; Oliver and Marwell 1993; Chong 1991; Lang 2013; Diani 2013). In the 1980s, the idea of resource mobilization has been challenged. The assumption of instrumental rationality may not be realistic in all cases since actors may sometimes be motivated instead by habitual, affective, or expressive incentives (Scott 1990).¹² The culturalist turn in social movement studies suggests that the building of common symbols and collective identities is constitutive of new social movements such as women's rights and gay rights (Alvarez and Escobar 1992; Epstein 1993; Melucci 1996; Taylor 2000; McAdam et al. 2001; Stahler-Sholk et al. 2008; Broadbent and Brockman 2010; Della Porta 2015). Therefore, the culturalist approach requires a more intensive and deeper analysis of how meanings act as vehicles of

¹¹ Examples that showcase the irrationality of crowds include the rise of fascism and communism in the early twentieth century (Goodwin and Jasper 2006; Polletta 2008).

¹² The idea of rationality in resource mobilization theory was under-specified without reference to social context and it also lacked serious considerations of cultural factors (Piven and Cloward 1995; Downing 2008).

power in our daily lives and shape the beliefs and values individuals hold (Alvarez and Escobar 1992; Crossley 2002; Kurzman 2008).

In the 1990s, McAdams and his colleagues (1996) tried to incorporate both structural and cultural factors into the analysis of social movements and developed the political process theory. According to this theory, three major elements affect the likelihood of movement success and they are political opportunities, mobilizing structures, and framing processes (Kitschelt 1986; McAdam et al. 1996; Armstrong and Bernstein 2008; Broadbent and Brockman 2010; Tarrow 2011; Della Porta 2013).¹³ Political opportunities are defined as the current political system's vulnerabilities or instabilities that movements can take advantage of to voice out their policy demands (McAdam 1982; Meyer and Minkoff 2004).¹⁴ Mobilizing structures are those organizations that provide the necessary human resources for movements to maintain themselves such as membership, leadership, social networks, and channels of communication (McAdam et al. 1996). Finally, framing refers to the process by which activists and movement leaders present a descriptive scheme to strategically construct a shared understanding of the policy issue and legitimate collective action (McAdam et al. 1996). Although this theory is intended to be as comprehensive as possible, it has nevertheless been criticized for the following reasons. First, concepts like political opportunities and framing are vaguely defined and nearly any empirical observation may fit into this analytical framework without the possibility of falsification (Goodwin and Jasper 1999). Second, although the theory includes framing to show the cultural dimension of social

¹³ The political process theory also highlights the temporal feature of movements by introducing the concept of protest cycles in which movements experience cyclical rise and fall in response to openings and closures of political opportunities (Tarrow 1994).

¹⁴ These moments of opportunities include but are not limited to divisions among elites, enfranchising those groups which were previously excluded, and lower levels of state repression.

movements, it treats culture as a residual category to explain what cannot be adequately addressed by the first two structural factors.¹⁵ Lastly, culture is narrowly defined as “framing” in the political process theory while there are other relevant cultural factors that are left out of this theoretical framework such as emotions, symbols, and social norms (Goodwin and Jasper 2004).

Since the culturalist turn of social movement studies in the 1970s, different ideas have been proposed to tease out what counts as “culture” or “meaning-making.”¹⁶ Frames are one of the most common types of cultural elements found in social movement studies is frames (Benford and Snow 2000; Kurzman 2008; Lehrner and Allen 2008; Davis 2012; Juris 2012; Rowen 2012). Snow and Benford (2000: 614) define *frames* as “action-oriented sets of beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate the activities and campaigns of a social movement organization.” A related cultural concept is an *ideology*, a belief system that consists of coherent ideas and fundamental values serving as a guide to action (Swidler 1986: 279). Other lingual elements of culture include *narratives* and *discourses*, with the former consisting of acts of storytelling aimed at rhetorically reconstructing reality (Polletta 1998; Polletta and Jasper 2001; Lehrner and Allen 2008; Davis 2012), and the latter as textual production to represent communicative repertoire (Fine 1995; Johnston 2013; Eriksson 2016). In addition to these textual representations of culture, there are also non-textual or non-verbal cultural elements such as identity (Polletta and Jasper 2001; Melucci 1996), performance (Armstrong and Cragg 2006), organizational culture (Johnston and Klandermans 1995), space (Brown et al. 2017), emotions (Piven and Cloward 1977;

¹⁵ Culture is wrongly treated as merely one type of resources activists use strategically to further their policy goals (Crossley 2002; Kurzman 2008).

¹⁶ A number of different conceptions of “meaning-making” appear in social movement studies. According to Kurzman (2008), on the one hand, methodological individualists argue that meaning-making involves human perception and response and it is referred to as the process in which we make sense out of the senses. On the other hand, culturalists treat meaning-making as a collective contest over interpretation. In a society, there is a finite set of ready-made interpretations that allow individuals to associate information with a certain way of understanding. This research adopts the culturalist meaning of meaning-making.

Snow et al. 2004; Castells 2012; Taylor 2013; Simmons 2014; Simmons 2016; Brown et al. 2017), norms (Fine 1995; Johnston and Klandermans 1995), institutions (Swidler 2000), and memories of events (Armstrong and Crag 2006). By considering these various cultural elements, analyses of social movements move beyond a simple cost-benefit calculation of rational interests. These cultural studies explore how subjective feelings, experiences, and understandings shape the way social movements and their participants interact with each other (Taylor and Whittier 1995; Goodwin and Jasper 2006).

I have specified some common traits among the various types of cultural factors in the last paragraph. Cultural factors are binding and powerful since they effectively place constraints on what is imaginable in regards to legal rights and policy issues (William 1995; Eyerman and Jamison 1995). The existence and effects of cultural factors are long-lasting but malleable as shown in cases where historical memories like the Stonewall riots have been adopted as a common symbol to construct a collective LGBT identity (Swidler 2000; Armstrong and Crag 2006). These cultural elements are interactive, social, and relational. They attain and shape meanings as a result of interpersonal communications and they also interact with actors of social movements (Hart 1996; Melucci 1980).¹⁷ Lastly, representations of culture are contextual and the meanings they carry may vary across space, time, and audiences (Eder 1993; Williams 2004). Given these characteristics of cultural factors, the analysis of how culture shapes social movements requires researchers to show how meanings of policies and collective identities vary across spatial and temporal boundaries. Researchers of social movements also need to pay attention to how subjective understandings come into play in social movement mobilization.

¹⁷ Cultural factors are experiential and they will become even more powerful if individuals who receive the messages of cultural elements have similar life experiences or can empathize with those who produce these cultural representations (Gamson 1995).

Culture may have various sorts of effects on mobilization and may fulfill a number of different goals for activists. Elements of culture may be deliberately adopted and devised by activists to mobilize supporters and overcome collective action problems. They can encourage movement participants to take things like a sense of belonging into consideration rather than making decisions simply based on self-interests and cost-benefit rationality (Mueller 1992). Additionally, cultural representations like the rainbow flag can foster associative ties among members and strengthen group solidarity (Della Porta and Diani 1999). Based on the idea of cognitive liberation, culture shapes the way we understand the outside world and makes us conscious of the inequality and injustice around us (McAdam 1982). Cultural factors are considered constitutive of interests and ideas and they can place constraints on the terms of strategic actions (Polletta 2008). However, it should be noted that the relationship between culture and movements is not a uni-directional one since movements can also actively seek to change the culture and engage themselves in cultural innovations by creating new meanings (Armstrong and Berstein 2008).

D. Reflections and Critiques

This research project highlights the special case of Taiwan as the first Asian country to legally recognize same-sex relationships. It examines the content and temporal shifts of meaning-making with regards to issues of gay rights. Previous literature on LGBT politics and social movement theories cannot adequately give us a thorough explanation of the change of frames and meanings across time, space, and agents.¹⁸ Benford (1997) proposes critiques on how framing has been studied in the literature of social movements. He states that the shortcomings in-

¹⁸ Although some of the previous studies clarify how frame messages would change along one dimension of time, space or agents, they tend to treat the other two dimensions as constant without taking into serious consideration how these three dimensions might work together interactively to shape the scope of frames that can be observed.

clude static tendencies, an elite bias, and reductionism. Framing analysis mostly adopts a snapshot view of the framing process and focuses only on the final stage of frame output. This static perspective treats framing as something that simply exists rather than as a dynamic process through which social construction, negotiation, contention, and transformation take place (Gamson et al. 1992; Entman 1993; Scheufele 1999; Bail 2014). A critique of such reductionism bemoans the fact that frames have largely come to be regarded as merely cognitive devices, while scholars fail to pay attention to how frames form out of human interaction and the social construction of reality (Hunt et al. 1994). Furthermore, the framing literature tends to be elite-centric and neglects the agency of other social actors (Benford 1997). Taking such criticism to heart, this project aims to offer a comprehensive analysis of how frames in policy messages of gay rights in Taiwan have evolved, across agents and in comparison to those found in other places such as the United States and countries in the Global North. Each of the three substantive chapters (Chapter II to IV) in this project is devoted to articulating the variation of pro- and anti-gay rights frames from different analytical perspectives. In the concluding chapter of the dissertation, I provide a synthesized analysis to tease out the complex picture of how the content and discursive structures of frames have changed in response to the three contextual factors of time, space, and positions of social actors.

As argued by Benford (1997), previous studies of framing analysis have a descriptive bias and tend to provide a long list of specific frames. The descriptive bias can be partially accounted for by the fact that framing has in most cases been treated as an independent variable to explain movement success.¹⁹ Other than the strategic role played by activists, it is not clear about the other factors that might contribute to frame variation. It is important to explain the variation

¹⁹ The variation of frames is used to describe how frames are deployed strategically by activists as a tool to affect the way people think of certain policy issues and social groups.

of frames because the relative prevalence of policy frames reflects not only the strategic considerations of activists but also their understanding of how issues of gay rights are perceived. Therefore, in this project, I treat policy frames regarding gay rights as a dependent variable – an outcome of interest in their own right. Political opportunities, responses from target audiences, and interactions between social actors like influencers are used to explain why some pro- or anti-gay rights policy frames have become prevalent across different historical periods in Taiwan between the end of 2013 and March 2020.

Previous findings on framing are also insufficient to provide us a more detailed picture of how framing would happen across actors of different social positions since most of them have an elite bias. Earlier findings in social movement studies tend to suggest that framing is a social practice controlled by activists who deliberately design, produce, and disseminate policy messages to the target audiences (Epstein 2000; Fadaee 2015). Although there are also studies that examine frames produced by non-elite actors (i.e., the mass public), they tend to be descriptive and mainly show how frames delivered by non-elite actors may differ from those by elites, without discussing the factors and considerations which lead to such differences (Hull 2001; Pettinicchio 2010). Therefore, we still do not have a sound understanding of how non-elites may also act strategically when producing policy frames or what other non-strategic considerations they might hold in the framing process. It becomes even more important to look at the behaviors of non-elite frame producers in the Information Age when connective action has started to become prevalent.²⁰ With the growing importance of the Internet and social media as part of our life, researchers must take a closer look at how framing takes place in not only offline but also online

²⁰ In collective action, formal movement organizations are supported by committed members who participate in mobilization because of collective identities (Melucci 1996; McAdam et al. 2001; Tarrow 2011). In contrast, connective action is built upon large-scale, networked, fluid, and weak-tied connections (Bennett and Segerberg 2012).

spaces.²¹ Given the different logic of collective and connective action, this research highlights the framing behavior of Taiwanese influencers in social media who have explicitly express pro- or anti-gay rights messages. Additionally, I also contrast the framing patterns of influencers with those of activists to understand how the Internet as a political space enables or constrains their framing behavior.

Lastly, a majority of previous findings of LGBT politics have been derived from the historical experiences of Western developed democratic countries. Multiple scholars have argued that a Westernized understanding of the incorporation of gay rights cannot fully be applied to account for the much more diverse development of gay rights in other parts of the world (Rofel 1999; Massad 2002; Leap and Boellstorff 2004; Seckinelgin 2009; Epstein 2007; Sullivan and Jackson 2013; Wieringa and Sivori 2013). Although there are important pieces of literature that discuss how movements of gay rights have emerged and sustained themselves in non-Western countries, some of them look at cases where gay rights cannot be publicly advocated and have not yet been legalized such as China or Singapore (Hildebrandt 2013; Chua 2014). In other findings where gay rights have been institutionalized in countries of the Global South like South Africa or Argentina, they have shown the important effects of unique contextual variables, political development and culture for instance, on the legalization of gay rights policies (Croucher 2002; Encarnación 2011; Encarnación 2013; Diez 2015). Therefore, it becomes necessary to unpack factors that contribute to the legal recognition of same-sex spousal rights in Taiwan which is the first Asian country to adopt such a policy. The political struggle over national identities and cross-Strait relations also reflects a need to take a closer look at Taiwan as a unique case. Furthermore, a framing-centered analysis makes it more likely for us to see how cultural elements

²¹ Technological innovations of communication open up more and more opportunities for non-elite actors such as influencers to spread messages regarding policies on a large scale (Bennett and Segerberg 2012; Castells 2012).

may contribute to different perceptions and interpretations of the same policy issues in different societies.

Building on previous literature of social movement theories and LGBT politics, I would argue that we need to pay attention to the variation of meanings attached to policy issues to achieve a better understanding of why policies would change over time. Previous findings tend to be policy-oriented and try to use “framing” as one of the major independent variables to explain why a policy outcome is achieved or prevented. However, this narrow focus on policy outputs simplifies our understanding of what social movements can achieve. Changing the way people think of certain policies and social groups is also vital to the success of social movements. The incorporation of rights for minority groups cannot be fully captured by looking only at policy outputs because these policies may face backlash.²² Furthermore, the analysis of framing in social movement studies tends to center on the role of activists.²³

The major goal of this project is to provide a framework to study the different aspects of frame variation by considering factors at both macro- and micro-levels. The research also calls for a more thorough examination of the role of meanings in social movement studies.²⁴ To present a complex picture of the dynamic process of framing in social movements, I mainly focus on the policy messages disseminated by activists but conduct comparative analyses by taking into account historical, structural, and agential factors respectively in different chapters.

²² Policy outputs may not change the way members of a minority group are treated because people outside of the group may still hold negative perceptions and attitudes toward the minorities even after favorable policies are institutionalized (Dovidio et al. 2002).

²³ I would build my research on previous findings of the social movement literature but expand the scope of who counts as frame producers by having a closer look at the change of “meanings” over time and how policy frames are shaped by other social actors such as the audiences and the influencers.

²⁴ This project treats the dynamics of frame production, interpretation, and reproduction as a contested process where various values, norms, and political ideologies work or compete with one another to legitimate certain policy stances of gay rights over time.

E. Case Selection: Taiwan as a Unique Case of Gay Rights Politics

On the topic of the politicization of gay rights in the globe, Taiwan is a special case because what we have learned from the historical experience of the Global North or Latin American countries cannot fully explain the incorporation of gay rights in Taiwan. In most countries where same-sex marriage is legalized, the major policy shift toward gay rights is driven by political elites who are members of the leftist parties (Diez 2015; Paternotte 2016). Unlike countries in the West or Latin America where left-right party politics is prominent, major political parties in Taiwan do not differ much in their party manifestos except their stances on cross-Strait relations (Fell 2007).²⁵ The uniqueness of Taiwan as a case can also be shown in its characteristics as a contested regime where political issues of regime survival and sovereignty are salient (Hughes 2013).²⁶ Taking into account the divides and contestation over national identities and cross-Strait relations is essential to understanding how people in Taiwan may hold different attitudes toward gay rights. Furthermore, Taiwan has been an ally to the United States to contain the spread of communism during the Cold War. Even after the end of the Cold War, because of its important geopolitical position, the United States keeps its connection with Taiwan by allowing official visits and military sales regardless of warning from China. This factor of geopolitics also makes the development of gay rights in Taiwan contextually unique. Lastly, the Confucian culture heavily influences Taiwan. Confucianism values paternalism, family, kinship, traditionalism, and social hierarchy. These cultural traits are not particularly conducive to the development of political tolerance and diversity.²⁷ Religiously, a majority of people believe in Buddhism or Taoism

²⁵ Furthermore, unlike other cases, major political parties in Taiwan do not explicitly take a unified and clear stance on issues of gay rights, especially on the issue of legally recognizing same-sex spousal rights.

²⁶ People living in the islands of Taiwan hold different opinions on not only the policy issue of unification versus independence but also their understandings of who they are in terms of national identity.

²⁷ In addition to the Confucian culture, as an Asian country, people in Taiwan also tend to prioritize the interests of the community over those of individuals (De Bary and De Bary 1998).

and about one-fifth of the population consider themselves as non-religious. Unlike Western countries and those in Latin America, only four percent of the population believe in Christianity or Catholicism. Additionally, Taiwan is subject to Western influence since it is highly dependent on international trade and it has a close connection with the United States. Therefore, we observe a unique case in which traditional cultures meet with Western influence in Taiwan.

When compared to other Asian countries, Taiwan is an outlier since it is the first Asian country to legalize same-sex spousal rights and at the same time also has extensive legal protections for LGBT individuals such as anti-discrimination laws. Regardless of these policy outcomes, Taiwan deserves an in-depth analysis of its gay rights development because several factors make gay rights issues highly contested in society.²⁸ Unlike other countries where same-sex spousal rights have been legally recognized, issues related to same-sex marriage and gay rights are still controversial in Taiwanese society.²⁹ The controversial nature of gay rights allows us to observe a large number of messages which carry policy frames of pro- or anti-gay rights stances. Taiwan is also a country where freedom of speech is guaranteed by law (Rawnsley and Rawnsley 2012). People holding different opinions can express their thoughts without the interference and censorship of the state authority or the oppression of the majority group. Given the aforementioned reasons, Taiwan is a most-likely case to observe a rich diversity of rhetorical contention over the framing of gay rights issues and there are more data points available for analysis. Previous literature that studies policy frames of gay rights makes their contribution by showing

²⁸ Taiwan is a newly democratized country that held its first presidential election in the year 1996 (Yu 2005). There is also a long-lasting social stigma attached to sexual minorities as is shown in the overwhelming victory of the three anti-gay rights referendums in the 2018 local elections. Demographically, Taiwan has an aging population, and studies of public opinion have shown that elder people are less likely to embrace ideas that challenge the existing social order such as same-sex marriage (Wood and Bartkowski 2004).

²⁹ Several surveys conducted between 2012 and 2015 show that there is only a slight majority of people who support the legalization of same-sex spousal rights (Rich et al. 2019). As shown in the referendum results of the 2018 local elections, despite the ruling of the Constitutional Court in May 2017, the anti-gay rights votes overwhelming outweighed those pro-gay rights votes in number. Therefore, gay rights issues are still controversial and debated.

us the local dynamics in countries where same-sex marriage has been legalized. This research builds on what has been found in earlier studies and adds a closer examination to elucidate the framing processes in Taiwan.

This dissertation project mainly focuses on the unfolding events in Taiwanese pro- and anti-gay rights movements since November 2013 because the conflicts between pro- and anti-gay rights groups have then begun to come to the fore. We can trace the starting point of same-sex marriage activism back to the year 1986 when the activist, Chi Chia-Wei, appealed to the Legislative Yuan after he and his partner were rejected for a marriage license. After this instance, there were sporadic attempts made to advocate the institutionalization of same-sex unions before the late 2000s. In 2007 and 2009, the first two pro-gay rights groups which specifically dealt with the policy issue of same-sex marriage were formally registered and established.³⁰ The anti-gay rights groups have not become effectively mobilized until the end of 2013 when the proposal of same-sex marriage was introduced in the Legislative Yuan and referred to the Judiciary and Organic Laws Committee. Therefore, not until November 2013 do we start to see more organized confrontation which took place between the pro- and anti-gay rights groups regarding issues of same-sex marriage and LGBTQ-inclusive curriculum.

Last but not least, from the perspective of practicality, the rationale for choosing Taiwan for a case study is that I am a native speaker of both Mandarin Chinese and Taiwanese. I grew up in Taiwan and have been immersed in the cultural, political, and social environment for most of my life. Therefore, I have both the language ability and the cultural familiarity to conduct research that stresses the “meaning-making” process surrounding issues of gay rights in Taiwan.

³⁰ They are the Taiwan LGBT Family Rights Advocacy (TLFRA) and the Taiwan Alliance to Promote Civil Partnership Rights (TAPCPR).

F. Chapter Outline

The first chapter, “Introduction,” lays out the background and goals of this research project. It articulates the importance of placing “meanings” and “meaning-making” at the core of social movement analysis. This chapter provides an overview of the two broad bodies of literature to which this project is related: the global politicization of gay rights; cultural factors in social movements. I argue that we should treat framing as a dependent variable to carefully examine how policy frames vary in response to factors like historical moments, space, and actors. This project also contributes to the literature of gay rights politics by looking at the case of Taiwan which deserves its own analysis. Taiwan is a special case since it is not only the first country in Asia to legalize same-sex spousal rights but a contested regime where different national and cultural identities compete with one another. Therefore, a case study on how policy frames of gay rights have changed in Taiwan helps us to understand the unique cultural and social values of gay rights in Asia as well as the contextual factors that shape the way people in Taiwan perceive gay rights issues.

The second chapter, “Describing LGBT and Gay Rights: A Longitudinal Analysis of Pro- and Anti-Gay Rights Groups’ Online Messages in Taiwan,” offers a detailed analysis of the types of policy frames observed in Taiwan. I analyze how policy messages of gay rights and family values have evolved in response to structural factors such as policy outcomes and elite behavior. I adopt the thematic content analysis to code the policy/master frames found in the messages posted by the two most prominent pro- and anti-gay rights groups in Taiwan. The findings show that Taiwanese pro- and anti-gay rights activists incorporate elements of localized frames in their policy messages. These localized frames include social order, national identity, and mi-

nority protection. By focusing on the two important keywords in the debate of gay rights (democracy and diversity), the results of the qualitative content analysis suggest that framing is a dynamic process where activists interact with both rival activists and political events.

The third chapter, “Resonance of Frames: How Audience Responses Affect Frame Choices,” empirically examines the phenomenon of “frame resonance.” Frame resonance means the ability for a frame to resonate or appeal to target audiences. Therefore, activists make adjustments to the way policy issues are framed in reaction to the target audiences’ responses until the chosen policy frames resonate with the audiences. Although this idea of frame resonance has been proposed and tested with experimental data, there is a lack of empirical support for it based on observational data. Furthermore, given the definitional ambiguity of frame resonance, I propose three specific hypotheses to test if certain features of frame resonance can be observed based on the evidence of quantitative data. The three hypotheses are (1) unequal audience preferences, (2) in(de)creasing reliance on (un)popular frames, and (3) structural disjuncture of the use of master frames.³¹ The results of the negative binomial models and the lowess curves show that audience responses shape activists’ frame choices. This revised view of frame resonance suggests that the autonomous framing capacity of activists becomes reduced on social media since they need to tailor their messages according to their audiences’ frame preferences.

The fourth chapter, “Talking Politics: Differences of Framing Patterns between Activists and Influencers,” compares the patterns of framing behavior between activists and influencers. It

³¹ The second feature “increasing reliance on popular frames” appears to be a tautology since some master frames are popular because they are relied upon and they are relied upon so they are popular. This critique of frame resonance has been mentioned by earlier scholars of framing (Benford and Snow 2000: 626; Ferree 2003). However, previous findings by Schuster and Campos-Castillo (2017) show that frame dissonance, instead of resonance, is more effective in mobilizing the target audiences. Frame dissonance happens when frames describe events or social groups that “cut against ideological expectations for how events should unfold (Schuster and Campos-Castillo 2017: 21).” Therefore, activists may not always propose what the intended audiences want to hear but rather express ideas they do not want to know to make them more emotionally motivated.

broadens the scope of who counts as frame producers and articulates in what way activists and influencers differ when presenting policy messages on social media. The findings suggest that the pro-gay rights influencers convey their policy appeals by performing their LGBTQ+ identities while the anti-gay rights influencers are anonymous hubs of information. The implication of this work shows that social media represents an imperfect public sphere since different types of actors need to strategically adapt to its filtering effect on their content.

The fifth chapter, “Conclusions,” summarizes the major research findings in the previous three substantive chapters. In addition to emphasizing the unique context and dynamics of framing activities by treating Taiwan as a case study, this research aims to offer a more thorough examination of framing in the studies of social movements. The idea of framing should be broadened to incorporate a much more diverse body of texts and discourses that are not limited to those disseminated and proposed by activists, political elites, or journalists. In other words, this project tries to stress that framing is an interactive process in which various social actors work with or against one another to influence how people could conceptualize a policy issue. Furthermore, framing is not merely a tool used by activists as described by previous literature, but also a product that is shaped by historical, spatial, and agential factors. Therefore, the findings of previous chapters show that it would be beneficial for social movement studies to take a closer look at the meaning-making process. By doing so, we can gain a more nuanced understanding of how the perception of a collective identity or a policy issue is in a constant state of contestation and construction even after the institutionalization of policy outputs.

Chapter II

DESCRIBING LGBT AND GAY RIGHTS: A LONGITUDINAL ANALYSIS OF PRO- AND ANTI-GAY RIGHTS GROUPS' ONLINE MESSAGES IN TAIWAN

A. Abstract

Taiwan has become the first Asian country to legalize same-sex spousal rights with the passage of a special law in May 2019. The legalization of same-sex relationships in Taiwan is a highly-contested process, with pro- and anti-gay rights groups competing with one another to win legitimacy over how even the idea of gay rights should be interpreted. To better understand the different discursive tools deployed by pro- and anti-gay rights activists between November 2013 and March 2020, this chapter adopts a thematic content analysis approach to generate a codebook and apply it to a corpus that includes Facebook public posts of the pro-gay rights group and anti-gay right group with the largest numbers of followers, respectively. The findings suggest that the pro-gay rights group is more likely to mention frames of anti-discrimination, equality, liberty, and identity-building while their anti-gay rights counterpart relies heavily on frames of morality, public interests, democracy, and anti-elitism. Furthermore, the pro- and anti-gay rights activists have adopted specific localized framing elements to construct their policy messages, including “Taiwan-China comparison,” “indigenous people,” and “ancestor veneration.” By treating framing as a dynamic process that changes over time, it becomes possible to observe that activists’ framing patterns have changed in response to policy outcomes, elite behavior, and interaction with rival activists.

Keywords: framing, gay rights, same-sex marriage, master frame, social movements

B. Background

On 24th May 2019, the special law entitled “the Act for Implementation of Judicial Yuan Interpretation No. 748” took effect in Taiwan. It means that same-sex couples can now legally be granted spousal rights as their heterosexual counterparts, with some limitations on parental rights and couples of different nationalities. In comparison to other Asian countries, Taiwan appears to be relatively liberal in terms of its legal protection of gay rights. Same-sex relationships have never been criminalized throughout Taiwanese history (Zhou and Hu 2020). Activism for LGBT rights began in earnest in the late 1990s, with the first officially registered gay rights organization, the Taiwan Tongzhi Hotline Association, established in the year 1998. In the 2000s, with the help of organizations advocating women’s rights, the collective legal identity of “sexual orientation” has been incorporated into legislation against discrimination of various aspects such as employment and education. Since October 2003, LGBT individuals and straight allies have participated in pride parades at the end of October every year.³² Regarding military service, LGBT individuals are not prohibited by law from joining and serving in the military. Furthermore, topics like sexual orientation and gender identities are taught in elementary and junior high schools although they are quite limited in their scope because of controversies over the LGBTQ-inclusive curriculum. Therefore, Taiwan offers relatively comprehensive legal protections for LGBT individuals, from anti-discrimination protection to legal spousal rights and individual freedoms to express their sexual identities.

Regardless of these seemingly favorable developments and conditions for gay rights in Taiwan, the country has experienced a backlash against gay rights activism since the battle over

³² Pride parades used to only take place in the capital city, Taipei City, but now seven cities or counties are holding annual pride parades.

same-sex spousal rights intensified in 2013. Sexual minorities have long been targets of stigmatization, and thus pro-gay rights groups have devoted themselves to offering alternative ways to represent and interpret the LGBT identity in order to combat social stigma and prejudice. However, conservative forces have prevailed in certain instances. For example, in March 2018, the Ministry of Health and Welfare in Taiwan announced a revision of the blood donation rules to allow men who do not have same-sex sexual activities within five years to donate blood in replace of a lifetime ban. However, the new rules of blood donation were halted in response to a backlash and faux concern of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Furthermore, in cases like the passage of three anti-gay rights referendums at the end of the year 2018, we observe a large population of social conservatives who disapprove of gay rights. Given the increasingly polarizing views regarding gay rights, Taiwan serves as a suitable case to study how stigmatization of sexual minorities has been expressed or challenged in messages delivered by pro- and anti-gay rights groups. With social media playing an important role in political communication, pro- and anti-gay rights groups have relied on posting online messages to articulate and frame their policy stances and to respond to opponents' perspectives. This chapter analyzes how policy frames related to sexual minorities and gay rights have changed over time by examining two prominent pro- and anti-gay rights groups' Facebook pages in Taiwan.

C. Rhetorical Contestation and Framing

Framing is a widely studied concept across different fields of social science and its definition varies in response to the research questions of the literature. Snow and Benford (1988) define framing as “assign(ing) meaning to and interpret(ing), relevant events and conditions in ways that are intended to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support, and to demobilize antagonists (p.198).” Similarly, McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald (1996)

argue that framing consists of “conscious strategic efforts by groups of people to fashion shared understandings of the world and of themselves that legitimate and motivate collective action (p.6).” Therefore, framing is a strategic act that uses rhetorical or discursive tools to win other people’s support for a preferred policy stance (Snow and Benford 1988; McCammon et al. 2007). Framing and frames are two related but different concepts. Simply put, “frames” are the final product of the “framing” process in which different interpretive schemas contest with one another. To be more specific, Goffman (1974) states the definition of frames as “the schemas of interpretations that enable individuals to locate, perceive, identify, and label occurrences within their life space and the world at large (p.21).” Framing is a meaning-making process where frame producers interact with historical moments, targets of mobilization, and their social locations to construct the way we perceive reality (Jenness 1995; Bail 2008). Some scholars would argue that we need to be careful to make distinctions between frames and ideologies since the two concepts have been treated as synonyms in some literature (Oliver and Johnston 2000; Snow and Benford 2000).³³ In comparison to ideology, frames are malleable and negotiated in interpersonal communicative dynamics (Oliver and Johnston 2000).

In the social movement framing literature, a large body of previous studies has been devoted to describing the various types of frames that can be found in different social movements. These works tend to be descriptive without providing many explanatory accounts on the way frames are produced or the effects that frames have on their targeted audience. However, the findings of these works are still important since they offer us insights to understand the possible combinations of rhetorical elements and structures which are used to justify a political purpose.

³³ Ideology is a coherent set of fundamental values and core ideas that have normative power to shape individuals worldviews.

The “rights” frames have been the most common type of policy and legal master frames in a variety of movements (Oliver and Johnston 2000; Leachman 2013).³⁴ Three related subgroups of the rights frames are those which highlight human rights, collective rights, and civil rights. The frame of *human rights* is more frequently and widely used in international politics. The idea of human rights has been adopted to claim that all human beings should have the right to life, work, and education, and freedom from slavery and discrimination (Goodhart 2013).³⁵ *Collective rights* frames are group-based and mainly point out a need to preserve cultural identities and organizations of ethnic minorities (Hsieh 2013).³⁶ The last subgroup of rights frames is the *civil rights* frame. The frame of civil rights is mainly derived from the historical experience of the Civil Rights Movements in the United States. This frame makes appeals to ensure that individuals should be entitled to take part in civil and political life without being discriminated against and repressed (Snow and Benford 1992).³⁷ Furthermore, in movements of social conservatives or right-wing groups, it is common to observe frames appealing to morality, traditions, and the supremacy of direct democracy to allow citizens to have their voices heard in the policy-making process (Miceli 2005; Mucciaroni 2011).

The study of framing is not limited to only descriptive analysis which treats frames as a static product produced by either activists or journalists. Some research has considered framing as a dynamic process that involves interactions among various social actors in different cycles of

³⁴ Based on the constitutional principles of equality, liberty, and freedom, it is assumed that all people, regardless of their demographic traits and social status, should enjoy individual fundamental rights like freedom of speech, dignity, and privacy (Baer 2009).

³⁵ However, it has also been argued that appeals of human rights are not universal but highly partisan and may be used to legitimate forms of domination as shown in the case of the neoliberal version of human rights (Goodhart 2013).

³⁶ These frames stress the potential dangers to a collectivity of people whose land, livelihood, environment, and cultural heritage should be recognized and protected.

³⁷ In addition to these rights frames, two alternative frames highlight social inequality that may be directly (nationalist legal framing) or indirectly (political economy account of injustice) caused by government transgression and structure (Carroll and Ratner 1996; Taylor 2000; Leachman 2013).

movements (Benford and Snow 2000; Reese et al. 2001; Mucciaroni 2011; Van Hulst and Yanow 2016). Activists work or compete with allies and opponents over which frames can best describe the nature of a controversial issue (Jenness 1995).³⁸ In addition to activists, there are other players who are directly or indirectly involved in the contested framing process. In a specific context, activists need to interact with the state authority, political elites, supporters, bystanders, opponents, journalists, and transnational or international actors (Newton 2008; Baumgartner et al. 2008).³⁹ Furthermore, the temporal dynamic of framing as a process is also shown in how frames change in response to events or discursive, legal, and political opportunities (Zald 1996; Goodwin and Jasper 1999; Benford and Snow 2000).

D. Types of Pro- and Anti-Gay Rights Frames in Western Societies

Framing is one of the strategies activists can take to shape how citizens and elites think of a specific policy and persuade them to adopt certain stances. Earlier literature of pro- and anti-gay rights movements have found that the two competing sides in the debate over same-sex marriage have distinct preferences regarding the way issues of gay rights should be described. Pro-gay rights activists rely heavily on the rights frames in their legal and political discourse (Hull 2001; Smith 2007). In addition to the various kinds of “rights” being mentioned by pro-gay rights activists to bolster their policy stance, previous studies also find that different constitutional principles have been incorporated in pro-gay rights arguments (Brewer 2003). Equality is one of the prominent values used by pro-gay rights activists since the exclusion of LGBT individuals from the right to marriage constitutes an unequal legal status (Bernstein and Taylor

³⁸ Activists adopt a variety of techniques such as sense-making, selecting, naming, and storytelling to construct discursive tools to gain a better chance to persuade the targeted audience in this process of rhetorical contestation (Van Hulst and Yanow 2016).

³⁹ Although it has been argued that the outcome of framing is mediated and negotiated by these different social actors and forces, it is still unclear how these agents work together and take part in the framing process.

2013). Individual freedom is another constitutional principle to legitimize claims which support same-sex marriage. This line of argument shows that marriage is one of the core areas where individuals should have the autonomy to choose with whom to live intimately without state interference and it also belongs to the right to private life (Bribosia, Rorive, and Van den Eynde 2014). Additionally, as shown in the case of *Baehr v. Lewin* (1993), the idea of anti-discrimination has been adopted by activists and judges to justify why it is unconstitutional to deny an individual's right to marry merely because of her or his partner's biological sex (Hunter 2000).

Anti-gay rights activists explicitly argue that the rights frame should not be applicable in the case of same-sex marriage and that we should instead pay attention to morality and democracy (Hull 2001, Smith 2007). The morality claim argues that same-sex sexual behavior and relationships are in conflict with religious teaching and heteronormative social norms (Herman 1996; Mucciaroni 2011). The anti-gay rights arguments framed in terms of democracy highlight that the definition of marriage should only be changed via direct democracy since traditional marriage is vital for the functioning of a society (Donovan and Bowler 1998). In the eyes of anti-gay rights activists, claims supporting same-sex marriage are not about equality but rather about "special rights" (Stone and Ward 2011). These claims of special rights argue that sexual minorities are illegitimate minorities and hence distinct from racial and religious minorities. Therefore, the rights of sexual minorities should not be comparable to those claims found in the U.S. civil rights movements of the 1950s and 1960s. Furthermore, reminiscent of the idea of a culture war in the United States, Brewer argues that there is a value war being waged over same-sex marriage (Brewer 2007). The right-wing politicians form a political alliance with religious conservatives and use the same values adopted by pro-gay rights groups to justify their political claims.

For example, after Kim Davis was sent to jail for contempt of court, prominent Republican politicians like Ted Cruz and Michael Huckabee both describe this incident as judicial tyranny which sacrifices religious “freedom” in exchange for “freedom” to marry (Williams 2018).⁴⁰

The construction of pro- and anti-gay rights frames is highly dependent upon the local context of a society which is characterized by its unique political culture, institutions, and values. Even for seemingly identical frames, their dominant interpretations may differ across societies or communities. For example, although LGBT rights advocates in both the United States and Canada use “equality” in their policy messages, the way people understand this policy frame differs. The frame of equality did not resonate well with audiences in the U.S. because of its political history of race and morality while its applicability was not seriously challenged in Canada given the multiculturalist tradition (Smith 2007). Furthermore, the discourses of gay rights are much more diverse than those commonly found in elites’ messages and some studies have shown that alternative discourses exist if researchers incorporate cases other than activists.⁴¹

F. Reflections on Earlier Studies of Framing and Gay Rights Frames

In the literature of social movements, policy framing has long been treated as a strategic tool used by activists to make appeals to both political elites and the masses in order to garner support for favorable policy stances (Zald 1996). However, in addition to this instrumentalist understanding of frames, I would argue that policy frames are also a reflection of the constructed

⁴⁰ Kim Davis was a local clerk who refused to file paperwork for a same-sex couple despite the Supreme Court decision protecting their right to marry under the law. She claimed this act of civil disobedience as protected by her freedom of religion, which she claimed precluded her from carrying out this civic duty. In this example, we can observe that political actors of both sides deploy the same ideological values (freedom in this case) while assigning the term different meanings. Therefore, in my subsequent analysis, I pay attention to how the same policy frames are adopted and co-opted by opposing parties and whether we can also see a similar weight placed on ideas of religion when constructing anti-gay rights discourse in Taiwan.

⁴¹ For example, in debates over same-sex marriage in Hawaii, Hull (2001) finds that although pro-gay rights activists focus on the civil rights frame, non-elite actors consider the issue of same-sex marriage as one related to tolerance and acceptance.

reality which is perceived by various social actors who generate frame messages. Social actors like activists and journalists constantly perceive and interact with the changing conditions of the political, legal, and social circumstances (Kitts 2000; Powers 2015). These actors keep updating their knowledge about the external structural factors before choosing the right type of frames that might maximize the effectiveness of their policy messages. Therefore, by conceptualizing frames as a reflection of how social actors perceive the structural factors that facilitate or constrain their impacts on policy change, the analysis of frame variation requires researchers to look closely at the changing structural conditions. Furthermore, we also need to pay attention to how structural factors as those represented by policy outcomes and elite behavior shape the frame choices that are available to activists.

Currently, the vast majority of literature on the topic of gay rights has focused on cases outside Asia such as Western industrialized countries or those in Latin America. However, observations and inferences gleaned from these cases cannot adequately represent some of the important political, legal, and social dynamics in Asian countries (Chua 2018). With the passage of the special law, Taiwan has become the first Asian country to legalize same-sex marriage in May 2019. In addition to being a forerunner of legalizing same-sex spousal rights in Asia, Taiwan is a unique case with localized features that are starkly different from cases examined in previous literature on LGBTQ politics. Politically, Taiwan is a newly-democratized country with its first direct presidential election held in 1995. Furthermore, one of the most prominent political issues in Taiwanese politics is national identity. Considerations of the China factor and cross-Strait relations are pervasive in Taiwanese political discourses (Chu 2004). On the one hand, regarding the unification-independence issue, a majority of Taiwanese people would prefer to keep the status

quo and prioritize stability (Tsai, Wang, and Weng 2019). On the other hand, the continuing democratization development in Taiwan has resulted in gaps of social and political life experiences between people on the two sides of the Taiwan Strait, with such experiences serving as the foundation for identity formation (Li and Zhang 2017). Therefore, the combination of geopolitics and identity politics further complicates the process of discourse construction regarding gay rights issues in Taiwan. Religiously, the Christian population is a minority (about 5%), while the major religious and cultural traditions include Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism.⁴² However, although Christians represent only a small religious minority in Taiwan, since the early 2010s, they have acted as the major mobilizing force to initiate countermovements against gay rights activism, as seen in the voter mobilization of the 2018 election (Huang 2017; Ho 2020). Culturally speaking, ideas that originate from Confucianism greatly influence the social norms in Taiwanese society (Zhang et al. 2005). Nevertheless, there is a generation gap of the Confucian orientation across cohorts, with individuals in the younger cohorts more influenced by modernity (Huang and Chang 2017). A mixture of these unique contextual factors suggests Taiwan as a political regime where different social groups representing the political, religious, and cultural cleavages compete and contest with one another over the “meanings” of gay rights issues. The case of Taiwan deserves its own analysis to tease out how the shift of political, legal, and social conditions affect the way gay rights issues are framed by activists. Therefore, this chapter aims to answer the following questions:

⁴² Although same-sex relationships are not explicitly condemned or considered as a sin in these religious beliefs and practices, these cultural traits stress traditional social norms and heteronormative family values that run counter to ideas of gay rights (Lee 2016).

- What are the types of policy frames found in messages distributed by the two most prominent pro- and anti-gay rights groups in Taiwan?⁴³
- What are some unique frames that can be observed in the local context of Taiwan in comparison to Western countries where same-sex marriage has been legalized?
- How does the usage of frames change over time, especially in response to policy outcomes?

G. Methods

This chapter focuses on the case of Taiwan given its uniqueness as a contested regime in the Global South of Asia, where a majority of countries lack any substantive legal protections for the LGBT people. It is a case study of the two most prominent pro- and anti-gay rights groups in Taiwan.

The two dependent variables, *Policy Frames* and *Master Frames*, are analyzed with a codebook by looking for key terms related to different types of policy frames. Policy frames are defined as “the schemas of interpretations that enable individuals to locate, perceive, identify, and label occurrences within their life space and the world at large” (Goffman 1977: 21) and master frames are the broader family of frame types that share similar characteristics (Snow and Benford 1992).⁴⁴ The appendix includes the codebook of master frames and policy frames, as well as the examples of and keywords for each policy frame. The seven master frames include the *rights* frame, the *constitutional* frame, the *reactionary* frame, the *rationalist* frame, the *mobilizing* frame, the *populist* frame, and the *critical* frame.⁴⁵ I adopt thematic content analysis, which

⁴³ The major point of contention between pro- and anti-gay rights groups concerns their different interpretations and definitions of ideas such as family, marriage, sexual orientation, and identity.

⁴⁴ For example, we might have one master frame called “constitutional frames” that encompass various policy frames such as “equality”, “liberty”, and “anti-discrimination.”

⁴⁵ The policy frames are decided by both inductive and deductive approaches. First, the coders inductively start with an initial codebook with categories of possible policy frames found in previous literature on framing gay rights in Western societies. During the process of the first-stage coding, the coders record the new policy frames found in the target text data and inductively add these newer types to the revised codebook.

deals with the construction of the categories under a broader topic, pro- and anti-gay rights discourses in this case (Anderson 2007; Kuckartz 2014). The first stage of coding is for the three coders to carefully read a manageable portion of the text data (fifty randomly selected messages per group) and highlight important passages and keywords which inductively showcase some broad categories. The inductive results of the initial work are combined with the deductively-generated categories found in previous theories or literature (Hull 2001; Brewer 2003, 2007; Miceli 2005; Andersen 2006; Mucciaroni 2009, 2011; Leachman 2013; Moscovitz 2013). Once the codebook is completed, in the second-stage coding process, the three coders code all the text data from the two prominent activist groups by using the elaborate category system.⁴⁶ Inter-coder reliability is found by dividing the number of instances where coders are in agreement by the total number of possibilities out of the thirty randomly selected pieces of messages. The lowest inter-coder reliability between a pair of coders is about 83% in the second coding stage; any values above 75% are considered acceptable following previous research (Stemler 2004; Hays and Revicki 2005). The final coding output is decided based on a majority rule amongst the coders if any disagreement occurs throughout the coding process. I count the frequency of a master frame/policy frame as the total times a specific type of master frame/policy frame has been observed in the messages during a time interval (Krippendorff 2012).⁴⁷ The proportion of a master frame/policy frame is calculated by dividing the frequency of a specific master frame/policy frame by the total number of messages in a quarter (three months), the time interval in this.

⁴⁶ In addition to the author, the other two coders are Taiwanese graduate students who study at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and whose majors are physical science and communication respectively. The different backgrounds of the coders ensure that the understanding of the coding rules does not require too much expert knowledge in political science.

⁴⁷ I follow the approach adopted by Entman (1993: 53) by using keywords associated with certain policy frames and their underlying conceptual characteristics to identify the existence of a policy frame in messages (Koenig 2006).

H. Case Selection

This chapter examines the available types of policy frames regarding gay rights in Taiwan and discusses how the prevalent master frames of gay rights have changed over time in response to external conditions like policy outputs. To conduct an in-depth thematic content analysis, I narrow down the scope of cases to the two Taiwanese pro- and anti-gay rights groups with the most followers on Facebook.⁴⁸ In this section, I briefly introduce these groups and discuss the important roles they have played in the Taiwanese movements of same-sex marriage and of traditional family values.

Taiwan Alliance to Promote Civil Partnership Rights (TAPCPR, @tapcpr, 87,061 followers) was founded in 2009 and has become one of the few advocacy groups working specifically on the issue of same-sex marriage. In 2012, TAPCPR proposed three draft amendments to the Civil Code (same-sex marriage, civil partnership, and multiple-person families). These proposals aimed to broaden the legal protection of familial and intimate relationships that were non-heteronormative. With group leaders like Victoria Hsu, who is an attorney-at-law, TAPCPR has adopted various strategies like lobbying and filing a judicial review to achieve the policy goal of same-sex marriage. Even after the legalization of same-sex spousal rights in May 2019, TAPCPR remains active in making sure there is full equality between heterosexual and same-sex couples.

Coalition for the Happiness of Our Next Generation (Hope.Family.TW, @Hope.family.tw, 85,035 followers) is one of the most active groups which advocate the preservation of traditional family values in Taiwan. It was established on November 30, 2013, after the proposal to

⁴⁸ The higher degrees of popularity these groups enjoy mean that they are more active in posting messages and their larger number of messages also suggests a greater likelihood to see a more diverse body of policy frames in the messages.

amend the Civil Code to include same-sex couples was proposed in the Legislative Yuan by Legislator Yu Mei-nu. Hope.Family.TW focuses on both issues of same-sex marriage and the appropriateness to teach an LGBT-inclusive curriculum in elementary and middle schools. In 2018, it successfully placed three anti-gay rights ballot measures in the end-of-year local elections. It is also the most important activist group which calls for heteronormative family values and used different channels of communication like Facebook and Line to mobilize voters to turn out to vote against gay rights in 2018.

I. Data Type, Scope, and Collection

To understand how the prevalence of master frames has varied in response to macro-level conditions like policy outcomes, I collect publicly accessible and shared messages from the two most prominent pro- and anti-gay rights groups' Facebook pages in Taiwan. The starting date of data collection is November 1, 2013, as the anti-gay rights groups have become much more organized since the end of 2013. The end date is March 31, 2020, after which no further data were collected. The total number of messages posted by the two groups within this period is around 1,196. The average number of words in a message is 135 characters in traditional Chinese, with the total number of words being around 179,400. The analysis in this chapter focuses on texts and does not examine other non-textual elements found in or attached to messages such as emojis, images, and videos.

The unit of analysis is a message posted by one of the two major pro- and anti-gay rights groups. Each data point of the Facebook text data includes the following components: group names, timestamp (time/day/month/year), message text, the number of reactions received by messages (likes, haha, love, wow, sigh, grrr), the number of comments, post id, and the uniform

resource locator (URL) of the message.⁴⁹ The temporal unit for the content analysis is a quarter (i.e. three month period). The coders code the messages based on what type(s) of policy/master frames have been observed in each message and I count the frequencies of each master frame that appears in the messages within a quarter. The dependent variable is the prevalence of each master frame in a quarter and it is operationalized as the percentage of a specific master frame relative to all frames found in the messages. The type of a master frame is measured as a series of binary variables whose value is one if a message contains a keyword that is related to a specific master frame and is zero otherwise. A message can contain two or more policy/master frames. To code the binary variables of master-frame types, I developed an initial codebook based on the findings of the previous literature on gay rights in countries where same-sex marriage has been institutionalized before the case of Taiwan. The codebook includes three elements: frame types (the category of policy frame a message contains), master frames,⁵⁰ and keywords (for instance, words like “religion”, “the Bible”, “God” are signifiers of the religion frame).⁵¹ In the first stage of coding, for better coding results, I randomly selected fifty messages in each group with a random number generator. Along with two other coders, we applied the initial codebook on the randomly selected messages from the two activist groups. We revised and expanded the codebook based on the new frame types found in the selected messages. The revised codebook was then used to code all of the messages collected from the two groups’ public Facebook fan pages in the second stage of coding.

⁴⁹ The official emojis can be used to express various responses to a post and they are described as follows: likes (favorable attitudes or agreement), haha (laughing at the messages in either a positive or a sarcastic way), love (adoration, admiration or an extreme support), wow (astonishment, excitement, or a good or bad surprise), sigh (sadness, weariness, or feelings of dissatisfaction), grrr (anger or annoyance).

⁵⁰ Master frames are referred to as the broader family of frame types that share similar characteristics (Snow and Benford 1992). For example, both “human rights” and “fundamental rights” frames belong to the same master frame as the “rights frame.”

⁵¹ For a complete list of the twenty-three policy frames in the codebook, please refer to Appendices I and II.

J. Frame Types and Master Frames of Gay Rights in Taiwan

Based on previous findings on gay rights frames and the results of the two-stage thematic coding process, I identify twenty-three distinctive types of policy frames found in Taiwanese activist groups' Facebook posts. These various frame types can be categorized into seven kinds of master frames. The first master frame is referred to as the "rights frame" and it includes policy frames such as fundamental rights (Frame 1.1), human rights (Frame 1.2), affection (Frame 1.3), and sexuality (Frame 1.4). The frame of fundamental rights points out that there are certain basic rights which citizens of a political regime should enjoy without the intervention of the authority unless there is a compelling state interest to do so. The human rights frame implies that there are kinds of rights which people are born with and these rights are necessary for the survival and well-being of a human being. Therefore, it is inhumane for citizens to be deprived of such human rights by the state authority. Affection and sexuality pay attention to the concepts of love, sex, and sexual behavior and argue that love and sex are basic needs. Frames of affection and sexuality also discuss the role of love, sexual behavior, and desire in human society.

The second kind of master frame is the "rationalist frame" which analyzes the costs and benefits of and the rationale behind different policy options. This master frame includes functional roles (Frame 2.1), slippery slope (Frame 2.2), well-being (Frame 2.3), difference (Frame 2.4), and professionalism (Frame 2.5). The frame of functional roles discusses the functions of different social associations like family and parenthood and what roles individuals play in these associations.⁵² The frame of well-being articulates the potential and not-yet-realized costs or benefits which result from an act or a policy. The frame of a slippery slope shows the undesirability

⁵² For example, from an anti-gay rights perspective, it is argued that the major function of a family is procreation and only the union of a man and a woman who take up the roles as a father and a mother can best fulfill the developmental needs of children.

of a policy that, once passed, would trigger a chain of related impacts that are harmful to the whole society or members of a specific social group.⁵³ The difference frame features the differences and diversity between social groups and some of them may further claim that these differences are the reason why we need to have special laws regulating the rights of a certain subpopulation. The frame of professionalism justifies the choice of certain policy outcomes by bringing up scientific or factual evidence in public health, psychology, and education.

The third master frame is the “reactionary frame” and it consists of religion (Frame 3.1), morality (Frame 3.2), and tolerance (Frame 3.3). Most of these frames share the same trait of an implicit preference for the status quo and the preservation of traditionally dominant social order. The religion frame builds up arguments based on religious teaching and symbols while the morality frame presents thoughts and ideas related to moral standards and values of a society. The frame of tolerance is used by activists to claim that excessive protection has been granted to a social group so that challenging opinions to such a group becomes unacceptable and “harmonized.”

The fourth master frame, “the constitutional frame,” includes frame types of anti-discrimination (Frame 4.1), equality (Frame 4.2), liberty (Frame 4.3), and civil rights (Frame 4.4). Civil rights frames are mainly originated from the U.S. Civil Rights movements in the 1950s and 1960s. It calls for attention to the protection of individuals from being treated differently regardless of their identities in the fields of education, employment, and public accommodation.

The fifth master frame, known as the mobilizing frames, is constituted by the three following policy frames: mobilizing (Frame 5.1), identity (Frame 5.2), and counterarguments

⁵³ Take same-sex marriage as an example, anti-gay rights activists would argue that same-sex marriage would lead to the legalization of polygamy based on the logic of slippery slope. However, this frame is not exclusively used by anti-gay rights groups, since pro-gay rights groups would also claim that if the LGBT curriculum is removed from elementary and junior high schools, it would cause a silencing effect on the LGBT youth.

(Frame 5.3). The mobilizing frame calls for people's participation in collective action or donations hosted by activist groups. The identity frame mentions the collective identity or symbol of a specific group such as LGBT, Taiwanese, home-loving comrades, or Christians. The frame of counterargument is referred to as messages which raise supporters' awareness of the "false" assertion or statements made by their opponents.

The sixth master frame centers on the concept of "populism" and the policy frames under this umbrella place a great emphasis on the voices of the people. These frames describe a lack of trust in special interest groups and political elites since they do not care about ordinary people's policy demands. Three types of policy frames fall under this category: democracy (Frame 6.1), special rights (Frame 6.2), and anti-elitism (Frame 6.3). The last type of master frame is the critical frame (Frame 7) which calls for greater awareness of the structural inequality such as women's rights and liberation as shown in critical theories of feminism.

Policy Frames Taken by Pro- and Anti-Gay Rights Groups

To examine the likelihood for pro- and anti-gay rights groups to adopt a certain policy/master frame in their policy messages on social media, I count the total number of a specific policy frame or a master frame between November 2013 and March 2020. [Table 2.1](#) summarizes the proportions of each policy frame while [Table 2.2](#) shows those proportions for different master frames. In [Table 2.1](#), we observe that both pro- and anti-gay rights groups use all twenty-three types of policy frames, since there are no zeros in any of the cells. Therefore, although pro- and anti-gay rights activists differ in their likelihood of choosing certain frame types over others, they do not completely reject or neglect frames that are more likely to be used by their opponents. This result also suggests that the framing process is not only interactive but also contested. Activists of different policy stances keep an eye on the political discourses of their opponents.

They would intentionally respond to these discourses to challenge the justification and rationale of competing frames. Furthermore, another reason why all policy frames are found in pro- and anti-gay rights groups' messages is that the same frames may be interpreted differently to each group's advantage. For example, in the case of "freedom," pro-gay rights activists treated it to be associated with "autonomy" and "the right to privacy" while anti-gay rights activists understand it as "religious freedom."

Among the twenty-three policy frames, sixteen of them show a statistically significant difference in the likelihood of frame adoption between Hope.Family.TW and TAPCPR.⁵⁴ The pro- and anti-gay rights groups do not differ significantly in their likelihood to use the following seven frames: fundamental rights (Frame 1.1), religion (Frame 3.1), civil rights (Frame 4.4), critical voices (Frame 7), difference (Frame 2.4), professionalism (Frame 2.5), and affection (Frame 1.3).⁵⁵ However, the ways they tend to use these frames are different. For example, when mentioning fundamental rights, anti-gay rights activists focus on the fundamental rights of children who are born or adopted in a family headed by same-sex couples to secure their interests to be raised with "proper" role models of both sexes. However, the pro-gay rights group portrays the "fundamental right" as the right to marry regardless of the partner's sex.⁵⁶ Additionally, in the case of the difference frame, the pro-gay rights group prioritizes the idea of diversity while the

⁵⁴ Hope.Family.TW and TAPCP are the account names of the two selected activist groups and they stand for "Coalition for the Happiness of Our Next Generation" and "Taiwan Alliance to Promote Civil Partnership Rights" respectively.

⁵⁵ Default significance tests are designed for individual variables. It would be better to use a multiple testing correction in order to make more sweeping claims. Since I have not used Bonferroni or Benjamini-Hochberg correction, any individual testing result could well be a false positive.

⁵⁶ This contrast can be found in the statements posted by the two groups respectively. On the one hand, the pro-gay rights group argued that "For politicians of the DPP and the KMT, they might consider same-sex marriage as 'an issue that is controversial and needs social consensus to reach a final decision'; however, for LGBT individuals, same-sex marriage is 'an issue grounded on their personal dignity and all sorts of fundamental rights related to life and death.'" On the other hand, the anti-gay rights group mentioned "if we allow same-sex couples to adopt children or have access to artificial fertilization, it would violate the fundamental rights of those children who live in a same-sex partner households since having a mother and a father is essential for the development of a child."

anti-gay rights group clarifies how same-sex couples differ from their heterosexual counterparts in their ability to bear children so that a special law should be institutionalized to regulate same-sex relationships.⁵⁷ Both the pro- and anti-gay rights groups in Taiwan are less likely to mention religion or civil rights in their posts than those in the United States since the dominant religions in Taiwan, Buddhism, and Taoism, do not explicitly prohibit homosexual behavior and there is also a lack of political history for civil rights.

Five types of frames are more commonly observed in the messages posted by the pro-gay rights group and they are anti-discrimination (Frame 4.1), human rights (Frame 1.2), equality (Frame 4.2), liberty (Frame 4.3), and identity (Frame 5.2). As evident in the results summarized in [Table 2.2](#), pro-gay rights activists are much more likely to adopt the constitutional master frame. Furthermore, although it is more frequent for the anti-gay rights group to incorporate the mobilizing and counterargument frames to mobilize their supporters, the pro-gay rights group pays more attention to craft a sense of togetherness within the LGBT community. The focus on identity-building for the pro-gay rights group explains why after the passage of the special law in May 2019, the anti-gay rights group almost ceases to function while their pro-gay rights counterpart remains active.

Eleven out of the twenty-three policy frames are found to be more frequently used by anti-gay rights activists. In addition to the frames that are commonly found in Western anti-gay

⁵⁷ For the interpretation of “difference,” one of the common example is the idea of diversified family formation proposed by the pro-gay rights activists. Diversified family formation includes three different bills that offer alternatives to heterosexual marriage (same-sex marriage, civil partnership, multiple-person family system). Individuals could choose the legal arrangement that best suits their interest. However, for the anti-gay rights activists, in their messages discussing “difference,” they would highlight that “similar to the case that employers are protected by labor insurance and farmers are protected by farmer health insurance, since males and females are biologically different, same-sex couples are also different from their heterosexual counterparts in their ability to procreate and bear children. Therefore, given this difference, it does not constitute discrimination to use an alternative law to regulate same-sex relationships.”

rights arguments such as morality, special rights, and democracy, Taiwanese advocates of traditional family values also highlight frames of functional roles, well-being, sexuality, tolerance, and anti-elitism. [Table 2.2](#) shows that the anti-gay rights group uses the rationalist, reactionary, and populist frames far more frequently. Similar to previous findings in the studies of framing effect, negative frames are more effective in changing how people perceive a political issue (Kahneman and Tversky 1979). The usage of negative frames is one potential reason why the Taiwanese anti-gay rights group could successfully secure a majority of support in the 2018 referendums. The discourse of the anti-gay rights group demonstrates characteristics of the negative frames by showing the tremendous costs of a policy change (the rationalist frame), imposing the fear of the uncertainty (the reactionary frame), and making the issue relevant to everyone who has the agency to block the undesirable policy change (the populist frame).⁵⁸

K. Three Classes of Localized Frames

Given the unique dynamics and historical trajectory of Taiwanese politics, when framing gay rights issues, pro- and anti-gay rights activists have deliberately incorporate some local elements into their policy messages.⁵⁹ Taiwan is a contested regime since there is continuing competition over the “discourse and language” among various groups.⁶⁰

Ethnically, it is composed of a variety of different ethnic groups that have their own cultures and traditions. In addition to the four major ethnic groups (the Minnan, the Hakka, the Mainlanders, and the indigenous people), there have been a growing number of new immigrants

⁵⁸ For the comprehensive list of master frames and policy frames and their keywords and examples, please refer to Appendices I and II.

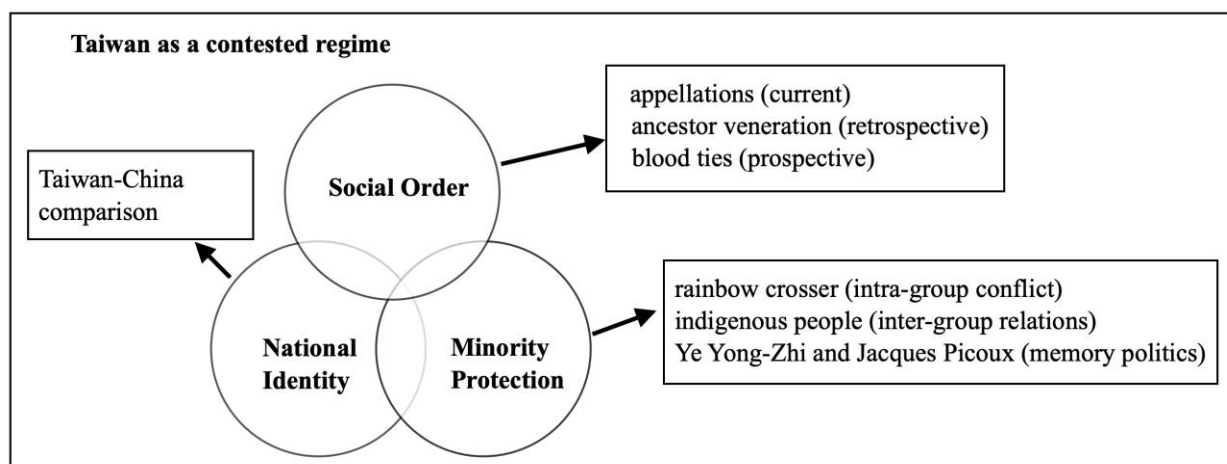
⁵⁹ The term “localized” means that these framing elements are uniquely found in the specific context of Taiwan while not observed in earlier studies of framing gay rights in Western societies.

⁶⁰ The words “discourse and language” are interpreted in a Foucauldian perspective. The term “huànyǔquán” in Mandarin Chinese suggests that discourse and language are laden with the power to shape how people understand certain ideas and social identities. Furthermore, the competition for deciding whose discourse prevails is mainly driven by the division between social groups.

who are foreign spouses coming from mainland China and Southeast Asian countries like Vietnam and Indonesia.⁶¹ Furthermore, the contestation over political discourse also reflects on people's national identities. The topics of cross-Strait relations and the unification-independence question have long been the most salient political issues in Taiwan and serve as the main distinction between the two major parties (the Kuomintang and the Democratic Progressive Party; namely the KMT and the DPP). Lastly, by treating age as a form of social identity, one observes a generation gap in opinions and attitudes toward the preservation of Confucian tradition (Rozman 2002; Yeh et al. 2013).

Given the pluralist nature of Taiwanese politics, political debates take on the form of between-group competition. Through the lens of social division and group-based politics, I find that there are three distinct classes of localized policy frames based on the results of thematic coding and discursive content analysis. Each of these classes speaks to the broader ideas of inter-group competition over the discursive power and they are national identity, social order, and minority protection.

Figure 2.1 Three Main Types of Localized Frames



⁶¹ There are also other salient social identities formed along the lines of gender identities, sexual orientation, and social classes, etc.

L. Localized Frames - National Identity

The first class of localized frames discusses the feelings of nationalism and the Taiwanese identity by which citizens use to make a distinction between Taiwan and China. For the pro-gay rights activists, when mentioning cross-Strait relations, the messages indicate that Taiwan and China are two countries with their respective territories. The pro-gay rights activists would argue that gay rights are part of human rights whose advocacy should not be limited by national borders. They would cooperate with Chinese LGBTQ rights activists to push for same-sex marriage in China. Their perception of Taiwan as a sovereign state also reflects on the discussion of transnational same-sex couples. Since Chinese people are not considered legal citizens in Taiwan, Chinese same-sex partners would face difficulties in marrying their Taiwanese partners.⁶² In addition to the rhetoric which treats Taiwan as an independent political entity, the pro-gay rights activists also stress the fundamental differences of regime types between Taiwan and China. In their discussion on the 2019-20 Hong Kong protests, the pro-gay rights activists argue that the anti-mask law severely violates people's privacy and freedom of expression, especially for some LGBTQ individuals who face the pressure of coming out publicly in pride parades.

Similarly, the anti-gay rights activists also highlight that the major difference between Taiwan and China is their regime types, with the former as a democracy and the latter an authoritarian regime. Therefore, in couple with their arguments of using referendums to decide the definition of marriage, the anti-gay rights activists criticize both President Tsai Ing-wen and the DPP legislators. The political elites of the DPP allegedly went against people's will and pushed for a

⁶² The special law of same-sex spousal rights places a limit on its applicability to transnational same-sex couples. For foreigners of the same sex to marry a Taiwanese citizen, he or she must be a citizen from a country where same-sex marriage has already been legalized. However, since China currently does not legally recognize same-sex unions, Chinese partners are not able to get married to their Taiwanese partners under the current special law.

special law that has almost the same kinds of rights included in a heterosexual marriage.⁶³ The anti-gay rights activists claim that since Taiwan is a democratic sovereign state, any changes of the law should be based on popular sovereignty instead of elites' manipulation. For this localized frame of national identity, we find that activists of both sides mention that democracy is not only an essential element of Taiwanese political culture but also a major feature that distinguishes Taiwan from China. However, their description of national identity and democracy differs. The pro-gay rights activists highlight the concept of human rights as a defining feature for Taiwan to be a democratic country while their anti-gay rights counterparts focus on the idea of a government ruled by the people.⁶⁴

M. Localized Frames - Social Order

The second class of the localized frames includes three framing elements that discuss social order and interpersonal relations in the Taiwanese Confucian society. Since the family serves as the fundamental and most important unit in Confucianism, policy messages of gay rights have to address the potential impacts of same-sex marriage on the social norms regarding family structure. These three elements specify the retrospective (ancestor veneration), current (appellations), and prospective (blood ties) interpersonal relations in families respectively. The three elements show the underlying social norms of “renlun”(relationship-defined obligations) based on which

⁶³ The Coalition for the Happiness of Our Next Generation proposed a “same-sex life partnership law” and argued that the special law drafted by the executive branch resembled full marriage with almost the same rights and benefits as those enjoyed by heterosexual couples. Therefore, the special law conflicted with the referendum outcome which showed that there was overwhelming popular support to define marriage in the Civil Code to be the union between one man and one woman. Although the same-sex life partnership law included protections of property, inheritance, and making medical decisions, it addressed same-sex couples as family members (not partners) and excluded any kinds of adoption rights for them.

⁶⁴ As the pro-gay rights activists put it, “the Central Election Commission’s decision to allow the three anti-gay rights ballot measures is a clear violation of democratic principles such as human rights.” In contrast, their anti-gay rights activists emphasized the differences between Taiwan and China by saying “same-sex marriage is a highly controversial issue and should be democratically debated; since the justices are not elected directly by the people, they should leave the issue open and let the people decide.”

individuals have different sets of duties, roles, and responsibilities in regards to other people (Rošker 2016). The first element takes a retrospective understanding of interpersonal relations by paying attention to practices of ancestor worship. The anti-gay rights activists claim that once same-sex marriage passes, it would tremendously negatively impact the ancestor worship guilds.⁶⁵ Since the social rules and legal regulations of ancestor worship guilds are built on the assumption of heteronormativity, it becomes confusing even for things like how to refer to past ancestors who are same-sex couples on a spirit tablet.⁶⁶ It should be noted that the pro-gay rights activists did not mention any ideas related to ancestor veneration in their messages on social media since the keyword search returns null-results.⁶⁷

The second element, appellations, discusses how people should be addressed in social and family life. Based on the messages posted by the anti-gay rights activists, the amendment of the Civil Code regarding marriage would change the kinship terminology in law and bring chaos to the existing order of family ethics and seniority.⁶⁸ For example, since the kinship terms in Taiwan make a distinction between maternal and paternal lineages, in the case of same-sex parents,

⁶⁵ An ancestor worship guild is “a group of people aiming at providing services for ancestor worship or other worships based on the properties donated by the initiators.” The guild is responsible for managing the land and properties left by ancestors to continue the heritage of family traditions. Male offspring of the family should be given priority to become successors of the guilds. For the details of relevant legal regulations, please refer to the *Act for Ancestor Worship Guild* (<https://law.moj.gov.tw/ENG/LawClass/LawAll.aspx?pcode=D0020063>, last accessed, 5/31/21).

⁶⁶ A spirit tablet is a wooden placard that records the information of a past ancestor (names, time/date of birth, and time/date of death). Spirit tablets are placed on household altars or in ancestral halls and serve as the major traditional ritual objects for ancestor veneration.

⁶⁷ Although the pro-gay rights groups did not mention such issues related to ancestor veneration in their posts on social media, they refuted such claims raised by former Minister of Justice Chiu Tai-san and other anti-gay rights activists. The pro-gay rights activists argued that although same-sex marriage would affect these cultural practices of ancestor worship, such impacts should not be justified as compelling governmental or public interests to deprive same-sex couples of their right to marry.

⁶⁸ Comparatively, the Chinese kinship system used in Taiwan is one of the most complicated systems in the world. The family titles of relatives differ according to their generation, relative age, lineage (maternal and paternal), and gender (Chen 2019).

it becomes unclear about which side of the relatives should be considered as those in the maternal/paternal lineage. The anti-gay rights activists point out that these kinds of confusion about appellations would have real-world consequences. With the passage of same-sex marriage, the government would change both the content of the textbook and the identification card by removing any words that are gender-specific such as father/mother and husband/wife. Gender-free terminology such as parent1/parent2 would replace terms that symbolize heterosexuality. Therefore, the anti-gay rights group argues against such potential changes and doubt whether it is necessary to satisfy a few people's (same-sex couples, in this case) desires by sacrificing the majority's interests of maintaining the status quo. In their discussion of appellations, the pro-gay rights activists challenge the gender binary by discussing transgender people's rights and by comparing the different versions of the same-sex marriage draft bills proposed by the New Power Party (NPP) and the DPP. The pro-gay rights activists emphasize the difficulties transgender people face in their daily lives. Gender nonconforming individuals are subject to not only people's questioning of their gender identity when misgendering them but also discrimination at work and in healthcare. Therefore, the pro-gay rights activists assert that we should embrace gender-neutral language to recognize the alternative forms of sexualities other than heterosexuality. Furthermore, these discussions on appellations have policy implications. For example, it explains why the DPP government eventually uses an approach of "addition" instead of "revision" to legally recognize same-sex spousal rights in their proposed bill. To keep the titles and family appellations for heterosexual marriage intact, the DPP's special law refers to same-sex partners as "family members" or "parties."

The third element of social order speaks to relationships with coming generations and centers on the idea of "blood ties." Referring to the movie, *Suk Suk* (the English title: *Twilight's*

Kiss, 2019), the pro-gay rights activists rethink what counts as family. Regardless of the Taiwanese traditional norm to have offspring to carry on the family name (*chuan zong jie dai*), the pro-gay rights activists argue that emotional bondage should matter more than mere blood ties when defining what family means to us. When discussing the idea of blood ties, the anti-gay rights activists pay attention to the role of parents. They assert that same-sex couples differ from their heterosexual counterparts in the ability to naturally bear children. According to their arguments, a blood tie is an essential factor to define a parent-child relationship and it would be in the best interests of the children to be raised by their biological parents. Furthermore, they also express objections for same-sex couples to have the right to joint adoption. It would place the child at risk of being abused since there is no blood tie between the adopted child and the same-sex couple.

To conclude, when discussing ideas related to the local cultural elements of “*renlun*”, the anti-gay rights activists treat keeping the current social order as a compelling interest for the society as a whole. In contrast, the pro-gay rights activists would argue that we need to re-imagine these traditional cultural practices of *renlun* rooted in ideas of heteronormativity and patriarchy. Therefore, they ask people to think of newer possibilities to accommodate individuals’ diverse sexual identities.

N. Localized Frames - Minority Protection

The last class of localized frames investigates concepts concerning the protection of minority groups. There are three framing elements under this umbrella of minority protection and they are intra-group conflict (rainbow crossers), inter-group conflict (indigenous people), and memory politics (Ye Yong-Zhi and Jacques Picoux).

Rainbow crossers are those who used to identify themselves as LGBT individuals, yet later manage to find “a way out” of homosexuality, bisexuality, and/or transgenderism. This idea indicates an intra-group conflict within the LGBTQ community since some groups like rainbow crossers are even more marginalized with the dominance of the LGBTQ political agenda. The rainbow crosser global movement started in California in 2018 as a church-backed response to California's AB2943 Bill which treated sexual orientation change efforts as unlawful business practices. In the same year, along with local Taiwanese activists, the Global Rainbow Crossers Alliance (GRCA) held its first annual meeting to sign the Global Rainbow Crosser Human Rights Declaration in Taipei.⁶⁹ The major slogan of the rainbow crosser movement is “Dare to be True, Dare to Love, and Dare to Change.” Rainbow Crosser activists would like to raise people’s awareness about the complexity of human sexuality. They argue that we should not treat homosexuality and heterosexuality as mutually exclusive and it would be totally fine for those with same-sex desire to change their sexual identity. In the messages of the anti-gay rights activists, they use rainbow crossers as examples to show that people with same-sex attraction could have other choices to live their lives other than being gay or trans. The life stories of rainbow crossers show that LGBTQ individuals can restore their gender identity according to biological sex given that there are a lot of life struggles such as depression, suicide attempts, and sexual trauma associated with being gay. They also voice out concerns over the Taiwanese government’s regulations that have banned conversion therapy since February 2018. They consider such a regulation as a restriction on individual liberties since it deprives people like rainbow crossers of their opportunities to seek professional assistance in changing their sexual identities.

⁶⁹ Taiwan Rainbow Crosser Rights Association” (TRCRA) was officially registered in September 2020.

In response to the claims of rainbow crossers from the anti-gay rights group, the pro-gay rights group fights back and claims that advocacy for the perspective that sexual orientation can be changed fundamentally denies human rights. The pro-gay rights activists mention examples such as the well-known advocate of conversion therapy, David Matheson, to show that same-sex attraction is an essential sexual identity that cannot be changed by outside efforts.⁷⁰ Furthermore, professional organizations like the American Medical Association have made statements asserting that conversion therapy is built on an unfounded misconception of sexual identity and these forms of intervention are not effective while can be harmful. The contention over the idea of rainbow crossers signifies an internal tension within the LGBTQ community. The anti-gay rights activists see rainbow crossers as those who are even more marginalized given the normalization of the LGBTQ ideology. However, the pro-gay rights activists focus on the malpractice of conversion therapy as violating not only the ethics of health care but also human rights more generally.

The second localized framing element of minority protection shows inter-group relations by discussing the indigenous people of the island (yuanzhumin). Although there are preferential policies that ensure the political representation and social mobility of the indigenous people, they are still economically and socially disadvantaged regardless of such measures.⁷¹ There has been a continuing debate about how to protect this marginalized ethnic group. When mentioning ethnic

⁷⁰ David Matheson used to be an advocate of conversion therapy. However, in 2019, he publicly announced that he left and divorced his wife and decided to live as a gay man.

⁷¹ For political representation, there are six seats in total reserved to the indigenous people and it accounts for about 5.5% of the total seats in the Legislative Yuan (113 seats). The indigenous legislators are elected by the single non-transferable vote. Demographically, the indigenous people account for about 2.37% of the total population in Taiwan in 2017 according to a report released by the Ministry of the Interior. For social mobility, relevant affirmative measures include granting indigenous students extra examination points on the college entrance exam, offering waivers of tuition for undergraduate and graduate studies, and reserving certain administrative positions of civil servants to indigenous peoples.

relations in messages which discuss gay rights politics, activists of the two sides highlight different aspects of inter-group relations. The anti-gay rights group pays attention to the difficulties and challenges the indigenous communities experience. They argue that social problems related to families, such as unmarried pregnancy and single-parent families, are much more common among indigenous people. Therefore, if we allow the trend of sexual liberation to continue (encouraged via civil partnership systems and LGBT curriculum in elementary and junior high schools for example), the already-fragile indigenous families would be heavily struck by the negative consequences of sexual liberation. Furthermore, the anti-gay rights activists also argue that similar to the indigenous people, LGBT people should be considered as a marginalized group that needs a special law to regulate their rights. Therefore, instead of amending the Civil Code, the government should enact a separate law to protect same-sex couples.

On the side of pro-gay rights activists, in a public hearing regarding same-sex marriage in November 2016, Chien Tsu-Chieh, secretary-general of the TAPCPR, made a statement that the support for same-sex marriage came from a diverse body of constituents, including not only the majority Han Taiwanese but also the indigenous people. Chien also challenged the argument that same-sex couples, similar to the indigenous people or those with rare diseases, should be treated differently with a special law given their unique needs and circumstances. She argued that a special law that legalized same-sex marriage should be considered discriminatory since, unlike the case of indigenous people, that special law would not provide same-sex couples additional legal protection but only treat them differently from heterosexual couples. In their discussions of ethnic relations, the pro-gay rights activists stress equal protection of the law while their anti-gay rights counterparts describe a conflictual relationship between the indigenous people and gay rights activism. In a land where many ethnic groups coexist, the arguments of the pro- and anti-

gay rights groups represent the two major lines of political discourses regarding majority-minority relations. On the one hand, there is an appeal to call for a harmonious relationship among different social groups that should be treated equally under the law. On the other hand, to fully account for the essential differences between different social groups, separate institutions and laws would be required.

Memory politics is the last framing element that falls under the class of minority protection. Memory politics is referred to as the process in which political agents create collective memory by highlighting certain events and figures of the past to remember/forget in an attempt to fulfill their political purposes (McGrattan 2013; Verovšek 2016). In the case of the Taiwanese gay rights movements, two figures have appeared frequently in the political discourses regarding the LGBT-inclusive curriculum and same-sex marriage: “Ye Yong-Zhi” and “Jacques Picoux.”

On April 20th, 2000, Ye Yong-Zhi, then a 14-year-old junior high school student, was found dead on the bathroom floor at his school. He had been constantly subject to bullying because of his allegedly effeminate behavior. Although Ye’s mother had repeatedly reported the bullying, the school officials did not respond to her. In fear of being seized and harassed in the school bathroom, Ye usually went to the bathroom five minutes before or after a break and it indirectly led to his death since he could have been properly and urgently treated medically if he had been found earlier. Given the lack of witnesses, there was no clear conclusion regarding what caused his death. However, his death has had a big impact on the enactment and implementation of gender equity education in Taiwan.⁷² The other symbolic figure of memory politics is Jacques Picoux, who was a lecturer in the Department of Foreign Language at National Taiwan

⁷² The draft of the bill was initially named as “The Act for Education Equality of Two Sexes” and did not include protections on sexual orientation and gender identity in 2001. However, after the death of Ye Yong-Zhi, the expert committee renamed the bill as “Gender Equity Education Act” and incorporated legal protections to prevent sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination at school into the bill.

University. He committed suicide on October 16th, 2016, one year after his Taiwanese partner, Tseng Ching-chao, died of cancer. As a partner who had been together with Tseng for nearly forty years, their lack of spousal recognition under the law meant that Picoux could not make medical decisions on behalf of his partner and had no legal rights to inherit either Tseng's assets or even those they shared together. One year after his suicide, the activist group, Equal Love Taiwan, held a memorial for Jacques Picoux and asked the Tsai administration to propose a bill establishing same-sex marriage as soon as possible.

The pro-gay rights activists mention these symbolic figures of collective mournful memory within gay rights politics to legitimate an urgent need for legal reform on gender equity education and same-sex marriage. The anti-gay rights activists agree with their pro-gay rights counterparts that certain policy changes are needed to stop such tragedies from repeating themselves. However, they argue that we should prioritize life education and character education in anti-bullying efforts rather than gender equity or LGBTQ rights education.⁷³ The major reason for focusing on life education is that it is not only those who are gender-nonconforming that become targets of bullying. Therefore, the anti-gay rights activists claim that we should teach students how to respect those who are different from them, with gender being only one possible reason.⁷⁴ Furthermore, another reason to place less emphasis on gender equity education is that such education includes inappropriate content such as sexual diversity and LGBTQ.

⁷³ According to Taiwan Life Education Association, life education is defined as “the education designed to make students understand the meanings and purposes of life in order to create a living environment where the interpersonal relationships are harmonious, respectful and tolerant (http://www.tlea.org.tw/index.php/campus/school_4, last accessed: 8/3/2021).”

⁷⁴ This is reminiscent of arguments made against hate crime laws in the U.S. Opponents of such laws often say that the underlying crimes (e.g. assault, homicide, harassment) are already illegal and subject to prosecution, so designating certain targets as “special” amounts to redundancy at best and unfair “special rights” for certain groups deemed more worthy of protection at worst.

As argued by the theory of discursive opportunity structures, cultural and political elements as well as symbols in the broader environment shape the way social movements frame certain policy issues (Koopmans and Olzak 2004). The findings in this section show that some discursive elements of policy frames are not commonly found in earlier studies of policy frames of gay rights in Western societies based on the initial codebook we adopt in the thematic content analysis. The unique dynamics of Taiwanese politics can be shown in the following aspects: cross-Strait relations, the Confucian culture, the influence of transnational activism, and the diverse composition of social groups. In response to these features of the cultural and political environment, I observe three main classes of localized frames that Taiwanese pro-and anti-gay rights activists cultivate to justify their policy appeals. Although activists of both sides discuss these localized framing elements in their messages, their emphasis, tone, reasoning as well as arguments derived from these terms differ significantly. Therefore, the results of this section show that the contention and construction of policy frames is an interactive process in which activists need to take into account the cultural and political conditions of the society and creatively draw these elements into their message framing.

O. Framing as a Dynamic Process – Time Trend Analysis

Activists' framing strategies may change in response to the changing conditions of the political system and policy outcomes. In [Figure 2.2 - Figure 2.9](#), I plot the posting frequencies and the proportions of each master frame in a quarter.⁷⁵ Based on the results of the line charts, it allows me to compare the changing framing patterns across time. I divide the whole period into five phases based on the changes in framing patterns and the external political conditions. The

⁷⁵ The proportion of a master frame is computed by dividing the number of a specific master frame by the total number of messages in a quarter. Therefore, its value is between 0 and 1, with higher values indicating a greater likelihood for that specific master frame to be used in messages.

first phase (2013/11-2016/5) starts with the end of the year 2013 when the anti-gay rights groups have become more mobilized in response to Legislator Yu Mei-Nu's proposal to amend the Civil Code in December 2012. During the first phase, the government is ruled under former President Ma Ying-jeou, with the KMT also having a majority of seats in the Legislative Yuan. This phase ends with the inauguration of President Tsai in May 2016 and is characterized by a higher level of elite support for same-sex marriage, with President Tsai expressing her support for same-sex spousal rights in her election campaign.

In the first phase, I observe two peaks in the posting frequencies of the two groups in [Figure 2.2](#). The first peak is around October 2014 when the three bills of diversified family formation are proposed to the Legislative Yuan by the TAPCPR in late 2013.⁷⁶ The other peak falls around May 2015 when Kaohsiung City first launches the sunny registration project to allow same-sex couples to register as partners, although the registration does not have any legal effect or benefits. During this phase, the pro-gay rights group pay more attention to the mobilizing frames, the rights frames, and the constitutional frames when proposing the bills of diversified family formation. Furthermore, the proportion of the critical frame is higher in this phase than others since there is closer cooperation between the TAPCPR and women's rights groups. The anti-gay rights group deploy the rationalist frames more frequently in discussing the negative impacts of same-sex marriage. During this period, the anti-gay rights group also shows a much higher likelihood of adopting the reactionary frames.

⁷⁶ The three bills include marriage equality, the civil partnership system, and the multi-person family system. Only the bill for marriage equality had successfully passed the first reading in the Legislative Yuan in 2013 yet it failed in the legislative process because of objections from anti-gay rights forces.

The second phase (2016/6-2017/5) starts with the beginning of President Tsai's first term of office and ends with the announcement of Interpretation No. 748 released by the Constitutional Court. One observes two peaks of posting frequencies in this phase. The first peak arrives around November 2016 at the initiation of a third wave of attempts to propose the two draft amendments to Taiwan's Civil Code. The second peak falls in May 2017 upon the announcement of the decision of Interpretation No. 748. In comparison to the first phase, the posting frequencies on average increased for both the pro- and anti-gay rights groups in the second phase. The pro-gay rights group employs both the rights frames and the constitutional frames more frequently while the anti-gay rights group gradually increases the usage of the populist frames.

The third phase (2017/6-2018/11) starts after the announcement of Interpretation No. 748 and ends with the 2018 local elections and referendums. The anti-gay rights group has been more active in their Facebook posts in preparation for the battle over the referendums since January 2018. However, their pro-gay rights counterpart has taken a defensive stance and has only started to catch up beginning in April 2018. In November 2018, the number of posts reaches another peak for the anti-gay rights group, with no corresponding increase for the pro-gay rights group. The major master frames used by the anti-gay rights group include the populist, mobilizing, and rationalist frames, calling for people's participation in the referendums. As in the second phase, the mobilizing frames remained to be less frequently invoked by the pro-gay rights group, as judicial approach seems to be the major strategy for achieving same-sex marriage during these two phases.

The fourth phase (2018/12-2019/5) starts after the 2018 local elections and ends with the passage of the Act for Implementation of Judicial Yuan Interpretation No. 748, which is the special law that governs the legal status of same-sex couples. The average posting frequency of the

pro-gay rights group was lower than the anti-gay rights group. The anti-gay rights group gained legitimacy and confidence after winning overwhelming public support for the three anti-gay rights referendums in the 2018 elections. The pro-gay rights group use the rights frames more frequently in this phase, especially around May 2019 when the special law is passed. In addition to the continued reliance on the populist frames, the frequency for the anti-gay rights group to use the rationalist frames increases in the fourth phase as found in Figure 2.4, especially in discussions of what alternative legal arrangement can serve the interests of same-sex couples without changing the traditional definition of marriage.⁷⁷

The fifth phase (2019/6-2020/3) starts after the passage of the special law for same-sex relationships and ends with the latest time point of data collection. The pro-gay rights group has kept posting at least twenty messages per month while their anti-gay rights counterpart has reduced their posting frequency and stopped posting after the presidential election in January 2020. The topics in the pro-gay rights group's messages have changed from same-sex marriage to transgender rights and the marriage right for transnational couples. The policy messages on these topics mainly draw on the constitutional frames such as liberty and equality.⁷⁸

P. Dynamic Interactions Between Activists and Events - "Democracy"

The following two sections provide two case studies of qualitative content analysis to explain framing as a dynamic process in greater depth. The analysis describes how certain key concepts of a specific policy frame have changed their meanings over time because of political events and interactions between competing activists. I focus on two key terms in the analysis:

⁷⁷ According to Figure 2.3, the proportion of the rights frames for the pro-gay rights group is about 2.5 times more than that of the anti-gay rights group during most of the fourth phase.

⁷⁸ These trends of switching their policy focus from same-sex marriage to transgender rights and the rights for transnational couples can be observed in several posts where activists of TAPCPR said "in 2020, the TAPCPR has continuously deploy lobbying, litigation, petitions, and social dialogues to pursue the legalization of same-sex transnational marriage and rights for transgender people."

“democracy” in the democracy frame and “diversity” in the difference frame.⁷⁹ I have read all of the posts with these keywords and recorded the various ways these two keywords are interpreted by the pro- and anti-gay rights activists over time. The total number of posts that contain the keyword “democracy” is 39 for the pro-gay rights group and 84 for the anti-gay rights group. For the keyword “diversity”, the total number of posts written by the pro-gay rights group is 237 while it is 103 for the anti-gay rights group.

The idea of “democracy” first appears in the anti-gay rights activists’ message arguing against Legislator Yu Mei-nui’s proposal of same-sex marriage bill at the end of 2013 (2014/10).⁸⁰ The anti-gay rights activists claim that approximately 300,000 people took to the streets to protest against such a legislative move. Democracy, according to them, is an idea involving popular sovereignty, since important policy decisions can only be made with popular support. In addition to popular sovereignty, the anti-gay rights activists also interpret democracy as freedom of speech (2015/4) and a specific kind of regime type (2015/6; 2015/7) in the first phase. The anti-gay rights activists claim that gay rights activists have falsely accused them of illegitimate donations to churches and repeatedly targeted Christians by gathering in front of churches to promote same-sex marriage. Such actions, they claim, were taken to silence opposing views against gay rights. The anti-gay rights activists argue that such oppression of speech is

⁷⁹ The major reasons for choosing these two keywords are as follows. First, with the political history of martial rule and subsequent development of democratization in the late 1980s, “democracy” has been constantly used by Taiwanese political elites to justify their political claims. However, because of the multi-faceted nature of democracy, it leaves open the possibility for activists of opposing views to interpret this idea differently to better fit their political agenda. Furthermore, since political issues of LGBTQ rights can be characterized as a topic that deals with majority-minority relations, the idea of “diversity” becomes a major point of contention. For example, who should be counted as “the minority?” Also, should the protection of minority rights sacrifice the rights of the majority? Given the controversial and politically salient nature of these two terms in Taiwanese politics, I decide to use them as examples to show how the meanings of policy frames would vary over time in response to the political events and interactions with rival groups.

⁸⁰ To help clarify the temporal order of posts included in the analysis, I put the date of each specific post in the parenthesis in the format of (year/month). Messages posted in the same period are not listed multiple times for the sake of conciseness.

undemocratic since people should not be threatened for their expression of ideas that might not be politically correct. They also refer to “democracy” as those countries whose political regimes are considered democratic, such as the United States and the United Kingdom. Yet, they note, even for countries like the U.S. or the U.K. have indicated a number of reservations concerning the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).⁸¹ Therefore, the anti-gay rights activists contend that it makes no sense for Taiwan to advance gay rights given that gay rights do not fall within the scope of universal human rights and that not all democratic countries legally recognize same-sex marriage. In this first phase, the pro-gay rights activists mention the idea of democracy to assert that electoral competition has been unfair, given the growing importance of money in Taiwanese politics. Therefore, in response to the 2016 Taiwan legislative and presidential election, they ask supporters to vote for third-party candidates so that politics will not be controlled by the two major parties that have been far less responsive to the policy needs of marginalized groups such as LGBTQ individuals.

In the second phase, after the DPP government has taken power through Tsai’s presidency, the pro-gay rights activists begin to equate democracy with equality. Equality, in their interpretation a fundamental value of a democratic society, means that individuals should have the same rights and opportunities to access certain benefits and protections (such as spousal rights and anti-discrimination laws) regardless of their differences in social identities (2016/11). Restating their argument of treating democracy as “freedom of speech”, the anti-gay rights activists in-

⁸¹ Therefore, it is questionable to argue that democracy is the equivalent of human rights given that Western democratic countries also raise objections based on considerations of domestic culture and traditions. Oftentimes, as argued by the anti-gay rights activists, certain legal protections of human rights are achieved by “undemocratic measures.” For example, same-sex marriage was legalized in the United States by judicial review in 2015 regardless of the ballot measures which placed a ban on same-sex marriage in thirty-one states.

sist that gay rights activists and mainstream mass media have created an echo chamber where politically “incorrect” opinions such as those that challenge gay rights have been silenced. Things would become even worse if laws that regulated hate speech were to be passed. Alternatively, the anti-gay rights activists also focus on the popular sovereignty aspect of democracy by asking President Tsai to resort to direct democracy to decide the fate of same-sex marriage (2016/12). Similarly, they argue that the judiciary should not intervene but leave that issue to the legislative branch for deliberation on whether to legalize same-sex marriage or not because the decision-making process of the judiciary lack both transparency and input from the public (2017/3).

After the ruling of Interpretation No.748 (Phase 3), the contestation over the meaning of democracy shifts to one that centers on referendums. The anti-gay rights activists state that the government should give power back to the people and the definition of marriage should be decided based on the will of the majority (2018/1). They argue that measures of direct democracy are not only a form of mass resistance but also a basic political right to allow people to decide the future of their country (2018/4). Furthermore, the anti-gay rights activists claim that ballot measures will encourage more deliberation and debates over the controversial issue of same-sex marriage and such debates are needed in a mature democracy (2018/9). However, the pro-gay rights activists argue against the above claims and insist that ballot measures have been manipulated by the anti-gay rights activists to trample on democracy (2018/10).

After the referendums of the 2018 elections (Phase 4), the anti-gay rights activists stress that the spirit of democracy has been shown through overwhelming popular support for the three ballot measures seeking to protect traditional family values (2018/12). Although the anti-gay rights groups propose their version of “same-sex life partnership law,” it is not adopted by the executive and legislative branches. The anti-gay rights activists assert that the bill proposed by

the Executive Yuan deviates from the referendum results symbolizing “Taiwanese values (2019/2).” They placed the blame on the ruling party and claimed that the DPP only pushed for same-sex marriage in pursuit of electoral gains, sacrificing democracy through such moves (2019/3). The pro-gay rights activists instead described the ballot measures as a product of populism (2019/1). Democracy, in their opinion, is not just about majority rule but must be paired with constitutionalism and civil liberty (2019/4).

Only the anti-gay rights activists mention the keyword “democracy” in the final phase under consideration, after the enactment of the special law regulating same-sex spousal rights. Following the line of argument that treats democracy as the equivalent of referendums, the anti-gay rights activists argue that democracy in Taiwan is dead, given that political parties such as the DPP have forcibly passed same-sex marriage by overriding opposition from the masses (2019/5; 2019/6). Therefore, from this perspective, Taiwan now looks just like China, with both unresponsive to the majority’s will when making policies (2019/5).

The above analysis demonstrates that both political events and interactions between activists may affect the meanings of “democracy” as they develop over time in activists’ messages. The anti-gay rights activists are the primary agenda-setter for relevant discussion on how democracy should be interpreted. They take the initiative of defining democracy as more or less equivalent to popular sovereignty, which resonates with their subsequent claims about the importance of referendums. Furthermore, after the ruling of Interpretation No.748, which is a severe setback for the anti-gay rights activism, the anti-gay rights activists reverse course by actively narrowing the meaning of democracy by creating an elite-mass binary. Given that elites might not fully represent the majority’s policy preferences because of pressures from influential interest groups, the best way to have a government by and for the people will be through direct democracy. After

winning about seven million votes (accounting for 61.12% to 72.48% across the three ballot measures) on the three anti-gay rights ballot measures in the 2018 elections, the anti-gay rights activists assert that this result represent fundamental Taiwanese values. Therefore, they argue that public policies related to the LGBT curriculum and same-sex marriage should follow the referendum results whose legal effect should be prioritized over outcomes of constitutional interpretation. Given the dominance of the anti-gay rights activists in political discourse invoking “democracy,” the pro-gay rights activists play a relatively reactive role by refuting the simplistic picture of democracy proposed by their opponents. The pro-gay rights activists highlight the importance of equality in democratic societies to ensure citizens have the same rights regardless of their differences. They further assert that the referendums had largely been manipulated by populist propaganda disseminated by the anti-gay rights activists. However, it should be noted that some limited common ground between the two sides exist in their shared emphasis on democracy as a basis of Taiwanese identity in contrast to China’s identity as an authoritarian regime.

Q. Dynamic Interactions Between Activists and Events - “Diversity”

In contrast to the idea of “democracy,” the keyword “diversity” is first found in the pro-gay rights group’s policy messages. The idea of diversity becomes prominent in the policy debate of same-sex marriage when the pro-gay rights activists drafted the three bills of “diversified” family formation in 2012, namely same-sex marriage, civil partnership, and the multiple-person family system (2013/11; 2015/10). The pro-gay rights activists translate “LGBT individuals” in English into “individuals of gender/sexual diversity” (duoyuan xingbie zhe) in Mandarin Chinese (2014/3). They cite the announcement made by the World Medical Association and asserted that the diversity of gender and sexuality was a result of natural mutation rather than a dis-

order that required therapy (2014/4). They argue that LGBT rights are *human* rights and governmental intervention is needed to protect such rights (2014/03). Therefore, individuals of gender/sexual diversity should enjoy the freedom to choose whom to love and to establish diverse forms of families challenging heteronormativity (2014/2; 2014/3). They claim that individuals of gender/sexual diversity have long been subject to discrimination because of their identities and the religious conservatives have made their situations even worse (2014/3; 2015/3). The pro-gay rights activists insist that these alternative forms of diverse families have already existed in the Taiwanese society and the government should no longer turn a blind eye to their needs (2014/10; 2015/5).

The anti-gay rights activists, on the other hand, transform the idea of “gender and sexual diversity” into concepts such as “diverse sexual desires,” “diverse values and lifestyles,” as well as “relationship diversity” (2014/10; 2014/12; 2015/5). They question whether it would be appropriate to introduce these concepts of “diversity” to children (2014/10). On the issue of gender equality education, the anti-gay rights activists argue that such education is not about teaching students tolerance or respect for diversity since gay rights activism has controlled what the very meaning of gender equity (2015/5). Furthermore, such education introduces concepts like “homophobia” and “heteronormativity,” potentially making students feel confused about their sexuality (2015/12). When discussing the issue of “diversified family formation”, the anti-gay rights activists challenge the legitimacy of the three alternative forms of diverse families in the following three ways. First, there were already certain existing minimal legal protections for same-sex couples, such as the right to sign surgery consent forms for their partners in cases of an emergency (2014/10).⁸² Second, diversified family formation meant sexual liberation since it could

⁸² Given these protections, the anti-gay rights activists would argue that their pro-gay rights opponents are making overstatements when saying same-sex couples’ rights are not protected “at all.”

involve multiple parties in a relationship that did not require sexual fidelity, and one party could opt out of such a legal relationship without the consent of others (2015/11). Therefore, marriage as an institution had its unique role in society and should be treated as a right to those who fulfill certain qualifications such as sexual exclusivity and the ability to procreate (2015/5). Third, the idea of diverse families lacked support from the people, as indicated by the fact that about fifty thousand people protested on the Ketagalan Boulevard to voice out their opposition in December 2013 (2015/7). To conclude, in the first phase, the overarching theme in the anti-gay rights activists' messages of "diversity" center on a rising danger posed by the sexual revolution that has taken place around the world (2014/12; 2016/4). The participants of the sexual revolution raise the banner of "diversity", "freedom", "equality", and "justice" to mask their true intentions of "destroying the family and discarding marriage (huijia feihun)." The anti-gay rights activists argue that the overemphasis on "diversity" will only make people feel disoriented when finding the right direction in life (2014/12).

In the second phase, the pro-gay rights activists continue their call for the government to take an active role to protect LGBT individuals and their families after President Tsai wins the election in 2016 (2016/8; 2016/12). They also emphasize that relying upon a special law to regulate same-sex spousal rights constitutes a form of discrimination against individuals of gender/sexual diversity since it is against the constitutional principle of equality. Similarly, the anti-gay rights activists continue posting messages related to the idea of "diversity" to challenge their opponents' arguments. On the one hand, they claim that partners in relations of diverse families only want to enjoy the legal benefits while not taking up corresponding responsibilities such as taking care of their partners or being loyal to each other (2016/6). The formation of such "diverse families" would severely and negatively impact traditional and heterosexual family values

(2016/11). On the other hand, they claim, sexual and gender diversity has been used as a discursive tool to promote gay culture whose hyper-sexualized content would be introduced to students that are not mature enough to make their judgments (2016/10; 2016/12; 2017/1).

The third phase starts with the ruling outcome of Interpretation No. 748. In response to the anti-gay rights mobilization for the referendums, the pro-gay rights activists highlight the threats these ballot measures would pose to members of the LGBT community, especially vulnerable children who identify as LGBT persons (2018/7). They argue that these anti-gay rights referendums run counter to the essential characteristics of Taiwanese society such as equality, diversity, and friendliness. In this phase, when mentioning the idea of “diversity,” the anti-gay rights activists have narrowed down their policy focus on only the LGBT curriculum, without discussing same-sex marriage. Consistent with their interpretation of “diversity” in the previous two phases, diversity of gender and sexuality is claimed as a false political ideology that is morally wrong (2018/3). The education exemplifying gender and sexual diversity is inappropriate for students too young to think independently (2017/8; 2018/1). Gender equality education should be replaced by life education or character education (2018/9). Therefore, by associating the idea of “diversity” with sexuality/gender fluidity and instability, they try to mobilize the voters to get out to vote in the 2018 referendums to abolish the LGBT curriculum in the gender equality education (2018/9).

After the local elections at the end of 2018 (Phase 4), the pro-gay rights activists warn of the increasing danger of populism following the referendums (2019/1). According to them, the anti-gay rights activists use such populist appeals to deny diversity and call for a legal separation between same-sex couples and their heterosexual counterparts. The pro-gay rights activists claim that it is discriminatory to institutionalize a special law to regulate same-sex relations (2019/1).

The anti-gay rights activists remain highly attentive to the issue of the LGBT curriculum when discussing the idea of “diversity” (2019/3; 2019/4; 2019/5). They argue that the Ministry of Education has disregarded the referendum outcomes by rebranding the curriculum that teaches sexual and gender diversity as “gender-identity education” and “sexual-orientation education” without removing the content about LGBTQ (2019/4). On Mother’s Day, the anti-gay rights activists expressed some mothers’ concerns about the negative effects of the sexualized LGBT curriculum on children. They assert that we should pursue a policy of family mainstreaming to deal with issues of gender equality (2019/5).⁸³ Additionally, the anti-gay rights activists also mention that although gay rights activists have long said that they embrace values such as “diversity” and “tolerance,” it is these very gay rights activists that have acted in a hateful and authoritarian way to silence opposing voices by distributing misinformation (2019/3).

The pro-gay rights activists dominate the political discourse on “diversity” in the fifth phase which was after the enactment of the special law. While the anti-gay rights activists do not mention the idea of “diversity” in this phase, their pro-gay rights counterparts interpreted “diversity” as three specific kinds of meanings. First, similar to previous phases, the idea of “diversity” means the different possible forms of sexual orientation and gender identity (2019/8; 2019/9; 2019/12; 2020/3). After the passage of the special law, the pro-gay rights activists have shifted their policy focus to the rights of those who are even more marginalized within the LGBTQ community such as transgender people or LGBT elders (2019/8; 2019/10). Second, the pro-gay rights activists deliberately connect the word “diversity” with the meaning of “professional expertise.”

⁸³ The idea of “family mainstreaming” is a political appeal that asks the government to take the needs of “family” seriously into consideration when making policies. This policy stance places families at the center of society and highlights that the well-being of families is an integral part of a country’s future development. Although this idea is not limited to a specific type of family, when mentioning this concept, the anti-gay rights groups in Taiwan focus narrowly on the needs of “heterosexual families.” They advocate policies such as (1) promoting premarital education to reduce the divorce rate; (2) increasing parents’ roles in curriculum design; and (3) subsidizing primary caregivers of the dependent elderly.

They state that with the special law, newer legal training would be required for lawyers to deal with issues related to same-sex spousal rights (2019/9). Furthermore, LGBT cultural competence is urgently needed to promote inclusivity in both the workplace and school (2019/10; 2019/11; 2019/12). For example, journalists should receive training on LGBT cultural competence to avoid stigmatizing LGBT individuals in their news reports (2019/11). Third, the word “diversity” has also been used to push for the passage of the Equality Act (2019/8; 2020/3).⁸⁴ The purpose of the Equality Act was to ban the following discriminatory behaviors: (1) refusal to provide goods or services by businesses because of the customer’s identity; (2) housing discrimination; and (3) hate speech (2020/3). The pro-gay rights activists assert that the passage of the Equality Act will provide comprehensive legal protections against discrimination for individuals of different social groups.

Based on the above findings of the qualitative content analysis, I conclude that the way activists interpret the meanings of a specific policy frame – “diversity” in this case – has changed in response to interactions with their opponents. Although the pro-gay rights activists were first to define what “diversity” meant in this context, their interpretation did not become the dominant discourse. Their anti-gay rights counterparts found ways to assign alternative meanings to this idea. The pro-gay rights activists took the lead in proposing the idea of “diversified” family formation to encourage people to imagine other possible family types beyond heterosexual nuclear families. Correspondingly, the anti-gay rights activists soon reacted to such claims by arguing that alternative forms of families were the antithesis of the traditional family. With the pro-gay

⁸⁴ This proposed law included a variety of social identities: ethnicity, religion, disability, biological sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, marital status, appearances/body features, criminal records, political beliefs, and health conditions.

rights activists referring to “diversity” as “sexual or gender diversity,” their anti-gay rights counterparts focused on the sexualized and ideological aspects of such diversity. They argued that the idea of “diversity” has been used as a tool to justify the appeals of the sexual revolution. Therefore, even in their discussion about the meanings of “diversity” shown in a rainbow flag, the two sides had a starkly different understanding of what each color stood for. For example, for the pro-gay rights activists, the color “red” represented “life” and the color blue meant “peace” while these two colors were interpreted as “sex” and “liberation” respectively by the anti-gay rights activists.

In addition to the effect of group interactions, the meanings of “diversity” have constantly changed in response to political events. The ruling of Interpretation No.748 affected how activists of both sides deployed the framing element, “diversity,” in their policy messages. After Interpretation No.748, when discussing “diversified family formation,” the pro-gay rights activists shifted away from their three legislative proposals to one single policy goal, namely same-sex marriage. The rhetorical shift originated mainly from a desire to reduce unnecessary disputes surrounding the other two proposals, that were much more radical and flexible.⁸⁵ The anti-gay rights activists responded to Interpretation No. 748 by focusing on the issue of the LGBT curriculum to mobilize social conservatives and parents. They emphasized that the sexualized content taught in the LGBT curriculum was inappropriate for young students and argued that people should go out to vote to put an end to it. To fight against the claims, the pro-gay rights groups argued that the ballot measures supported by a populist sentiment would place the democratic value of “diversity” at risk. Following the passage of the special law, the idea of “diversity” has been by used

⁸⁵ Unlike same-sex marriage whose legal rights and obligations are strictly defined by law, civil partnership and multiple-person families are contract-based relations whose obligations and benefits are established based on all parties’ choice and agreement. Furthermore, a single party can choose to end the legal relationship without the other party(ies)’s consent.

the pro-gay rights activists to justify their proposal of the Equality Act. Furthermore, they have also turned “diversity” into a professional competence that would be required in both the workplace and school in the post-marriage era. These two ways of interpretation recognized LGBT individuals as a vulnerable social group that required not only governmental intervention to protect them but also greater awareness of their special needs.

R. Discussion and Conclusions

Taiwan has become the first Asian country to legalize same-sex spousal rights and this policy change opens up new fields to explore in the studies of the international politicization of gay rights. This chapter examines the different framing strategies adopted by the pro- and anti-gay rights groups in Taiwan and compares how these strategies are shaped by the localized political culture and events.

In comparison to cases of Western countries studied in the previous literature, some similar framing patterns have been found in Taiwan. The Taiwanese pro-gay rights activists are more likely to use the rights frames and the constitutional frames while their anti-gay rights counterparts incorporate the reactionary frames and the populist frames more frequently. Therefore, we observe the diffusion of policy frames in this case since both the pro- and anti-gay rights groups have been cooperating with their allies in Western countries.⁸⁶

In the battle of policy framing between the two sides, stigmatization plays a role. On the one hand, the anti-gay rights group has associated LGBT rights activism with sexual liberation

⁸⁶ Although the pro- and anti-gay rights activists have indicated that they have worked with activist groups in the Western countries such as “Marriage Equality USA” or “Them Before Us”, they rarely directly quoted or cited political messages from their Western counterparts. Furthermore, when the Taiwanese activists mentioned Western countries in their messages, they focused more on the policy changes of gay rights rather than the development of pro- and anti-gay rights activism in the West.

which would negatively influence the younger generation.⁸⁷ On the other hand, the pro-gay rights group has often described the anti-gay rights activists as the spreader of misinformation or the obstacle to social progress. Given this confrontational situation, both sides have chosen the policy strategy that best suited their interests and goals (the judicial approach vs. the referendum) without any further attempt to find a middle ground. Therefore, even one year after the legal recognition of same-sex spousal rights, Taiwanese society is still divided on whether same-sex couples should enjoy the right to marry.⁸⁸

The findings of this chapter suggest the presence of certain localized framing patterns such as the infrequent usage of the policy frames related to religion and civil rights. Furthermore, the Taiwanese activists of both sides incorporate three classes of localized framing elements into their policy messages. Influenced by Confucianism, both pro- and anti-gay rights activists specify how gay rights issues would complicate our traditional understandings related to ideas of “renlun” and familial relations. The Taiwanese activists also mention cross-Strait relations and treat “democracy” as the major difference between Taiwan and China. However, each side highlights this difference in distinct ways, with the anti-gay rights group focusing on the people’s will while their pro-gay rights counterparts stressing political equality. In addition, the pro- and anti-gay rights activists deploy symbols of memory politics such as “Ye Yong-Zhi” and interpret these ideas differently to justify their policy demands.

⁸⁷ The idea of treating children as a vulnerable population resonates with the “Save Our Children” Movement in the United States. This movement was supported by the celebrity Anita Bryant in 1977. The main policy appeal of the movement was to overturn local ordinances that banned discrimination in housing, employment, and public accommodation based on sexual orientation. One of the common discourses by the “Save Our Children” activists associated homosexuality with child recruitment and abuse (Frank 2013).

⁸⁸ According to a survey released by the Executive Yuan in early May 2020, the percentage of respondents who support same-sex spousal rights is around 52.5% while 46% of them expressed disagreement on this issue. For more details, please refer to the link: <https://gec.ey.gov.tw/Page/5950AEA34211CEE3/4b4240d5-6ac5-4bf5-b0e2-286abb9abbcc> (in traditional Chinese, 109 年性別平等觀念電話民意調查, latest accessed: 5/31/21)

The outcome of the longitudinal study shows that the activists adjust their framing strategies in response to structural political opportunities (political events and policy outcomes) as well as interactions with their opponents. The passage of policies creates new framing opportunities while closes some existing ones. Therefore, after Interpretation No. 748 was published, the anti-gay rights activists called for using referendums to decide how same-sex spousal rights should be institutionalized and to remove the LGBT curriculum from elementary and junior high schools. The pro-gay rights activists passively responded to this demand by arguing that such ballot measures were populist and anti-democratic in nature. In the subsequent framing contestation and voter mobilization before the 2018 referendums, the anti-gay rights group successfully amplified the sexualized features of gay rights activism. They also transformed the pro-gay rights activists' idea of "gender/sexual diversity" into "diverse sexual desire and ethics." These interactions of framing competition show that the anti-gay rights activists enjoy an advantage in their agency to create new meanings that in turn shape people's perceptions of gay rights issues. Unlike the anti-gay rights activists, the pro-gay rights activists had a difficult time communicating concepts that were foreign to the masses such as "gender and sexual diversity." This gap of agency in political communication provides a potential explanation for the overwhelming support of the three anti-gay rights ballot measures in the 2018 elections, even after the success the pro-gay rights activists had earlier in the courtroom in May 2017.

This chapter adopts the theoretical frameworks of political and discursive opportunity structures and examines how the pro- and anti-gay rights activists in Taiwan have adjusted their framing strategies to accommodate the changing political and cultural conditions. The results give nuances to our theoretical understanding of how frame construction is a dynamic process shaped by both structural and agential factors. However, this research has its limitations. First,

given the uniqueness of Taiwan as a case of LGBTQ politics in the Global South, it is not clear whether the findings of this research can be generalized to the development of gay rights politics in other Asian countries. In addition, the findings through text data have not yet been supported by analysis of other forms of data such as interviews, which would increase this research's validity and credibility. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, I did not manage to conduct my fieldwork and interviews with local activists in person. The mode of online interviews makes it more challenging for researchers to reach out to potential interviewees since the rate of nonresponse is even higher. Therefore, I plan to continue collecting more interview data and use them to triangulate with what I have found in the analysis of the text data. Future work will examine framing effects more closely and try to compare how the effects of specific policy frames on political attitudes may differ across societies. Furthermore, how may the frames found in the context of Taiwan influence or simply compare with framing strategies of the pro- and anti-gay rights groups in other Asian countries? Lastly, focusing on the case of Taiwan, we may explore how the framing patterns would evolve in pro- and anti-gay rights policy messages in the long run during the post-marriage era.

CHAPTER III
RESONANCE OF FRAMES:
HOW AUDIENCE RESPONSES AFFECT FRAME CHOICES⁸⁹

A. Abstract

Scholars of social movements have long treated activists as agents with high levels of both influence and autonomy in making decisions related to organizational mobilization and policy framing. With the increasing reliance for activists to use online platforms of social media to reach out to bystanders and potential supporters, I argue that activists need to pay closer attention to audience preference when deciding which policy frames to incorporate in their posts. Using the theoretical framework of *frame resonance*, this chapter contributes to the literature of framing studies by showing that audience responses shape the scope of “feasible” frames that become more and more salient over time. The results also suggest that audience preferences of frames are not static but rather have changed in response to policy outcomes. The findings imply that while online spaces offer newer opportunities for activists to deliver their policy messages to a wider technologically networked public, the autonomous framing capacity of activists becomes reduced. With the interactive interface of social media, activists are under constant watch by the audience and need to tailor their messages according to audiences’ policy preferences and understandings.

Keywords: frame resonance, audience response, frame choice, social media, gay rights, Taiwan

⁸⁹ Among the various measures of audience responses, this chapter focuses on the popularity of a message. A message’s popularity on social media is defined as an expression of support or agreement for a specific piece of online content (Szabo and Huberman 2010). In previous studies of behavioral patterns of users in social media, the idea of popularity has been measured differently such as the number of re-tweets or comments of a message (Wu and Shen 2015; Ksiazek, Peer, and Lessard 2016). However, one of the commonly adopted measurements is the number of likes a message receives (Yu, Chen, and Kwok 2011; Hong, Dan, and Davison 2011; Pancer and Poole 2016). I decide to use this measure of popularity in this chapter since it is a more reliable and straightforward indicator of message popularity.

B. Background

Ever since the Arab Spring protests broke out in the year of 2012, there has been a growing literature that examines the role of the Internet and online spaces in social movements (Eltantawy and Wiest 2011; Wolfsfeld, Segev, and Sheaffer 2013). These studies look at how the Internet as a communication channel helps to spread the messages instantly to a large audience and facilitate mobilization horizontally even without a rigid organizational form or leadership (Castells 2015; Carney 2016). In addition to the central role of the Internet in these instances of media activism, it should be noted that traditional social movement organizations have also become more and more dependent on the platforms of social media and other online spaces (Tufekci 2014). It could hardly be imagined that any social movement organizations in the Information Age could function without building up a presence in platforms of social media to facilitate different practices and goals of activism. Online spaces allow activists to reach out to a wider pool of potential supporters, swiftly respond to crises or changing circumstances, and network with other like-minded organizations and individuals. Furthermore, social movement organizations can use online spaces to interact with the audience or bystanders, countermovements, political elites, the mass media, and sympathetic allies (Terkildsen et al. 1998; Tufekci 2014; Kavada 2015). However, regardless of activists' increasing reliance on and presence in online spaces, there is a paucity of literature on online activism to unpack the strategic choices activists face when making decisions about actions of advocating policy issues and generating policy frames in these online spaces (Bennett 2003).

The routinization of online activism opens up newer possibilities for researchers to explore and observe the relationship between activists and the masses. The literature of social movements has long stressed the agency of activists and social movement organizations (Hobson

2003; Jasper 2004). Activists are assumed to take the leading role in shaping how issues are understood, coordinating mobilization, and managing organizational resources in the pursuit of certain policy outcomes. Under this assumption, which grants activists a prevailing position, the mass public is portrayed as passively receiving whatever messages activists disseminate. Activists deliberately craft framing messages to shape people's expectations and perceptions of certain policy issues (Zald 1996; Kwan 2009). However, this partial depiction of the framing process largely neglects the agency of the mass public whose responses could serve as one of the determining factors which influence activists' preference of certain policy frames over others. To gain a more comprehensive understanding of how policy frames change over time, we should consider the selection of policy frames as a path-dependent process in which activists experiment with various available types of frames and gradually stick with those frames that are attractive to the target audiences while ruling out those which lack popularity. This trial-and-error method of frame production is similar to what Snow and Benford (1988) have argued as "frame resonance." What matters in framing is not just how detailed or persuasive a policy frame has been constructed but also to what extent target audiences can feel that there is a linkage between them and the appeals made by social movement organizations. The linkage of message popularity and frame types shows the important role of agency. Therefore, in the following sections of this chapter, I review the literature of "agency", "strategies" and the debate between structure and agency in social sciences. I show how the concept of frame resonance has been applied in previous literature and then discuss some of the common problems in these analyses.

C. Research Questions - Agency vs. Structure

The literature of social movements has long been dominated by structural models as claimed by Jasper (2004). He argues that resource mobilization and political process theories use

metaphors such as *cleavages* among elites, *windows of opportunity*, and *mobilizing structures* to explain the rise and fall of social movement organizations. Structural models tend to be static and are unable to account for the choices and strategies involved in the actions taken by activists (Jasper 2004). Therefore, Jasper insists that we need to clarify how players can use their creativity and knowledge of the external conditions to make surprising choices and move beyond structural constraints. It should be noted that Jasper is not alone in calling for greater attention to the role of agency and this debate of structure versus agency has been discussed in various fields of social sciences.

The earlier controversies in the debate of structure versus agency center on two competing ontological perspectives to understand the patterns of human behaviors. On the one side of this debate is a structuralist perspective arguing that individuals' actions and decisions are shaped by some common structural constraints of the social and political environment (Hay 2002: 89, 94).⁹⁰ The structures in most cases are exogenous to the players since the structures are not created by a single player but rather by a collectivity. Individuals are assumed to follow the rigid rules of the game that have been set by the structural factors (Meyer and Minkoff 2004). On the other end of this debate, we see a perspective that prioritizes agency. This perspective is exemplified by rational-choice theory, which argues that human behaviors are mainly instrumental actions that maximize self-interest and gains (Satz and Ferejohn 1994). Individuals are rational, self-conscious, and able to define a hierarchical set of ordered preferences and choose among various strategies to realizing the preferences based on their observation and expectation of other players' actions (Hechter and Kanazawa 1997). Regardless of the seeming incompatibility of

⁹⁰ These constraints include laws, rules, institutions, specific ways to distribute resources, regularized coalitions or networks among players, or the location of players in a social and political system.

these two perspectives, there have been some efforts to bridge agency and structure in the analysis of social phenomenon (Bourdieu 1977; Giddens 1984; Sewell 1992). In these integrative approaches, scholars state that there is a dialectical relationship between structure and agency. Therefore, the explanation of political behaviors needs to take into account not only both aspects but also their interactions. In line with the integrative approaches to account for both factors of structure and agency, this chapter establishes an analytical framework of policy frame variation and tries to answer the following questions. First, do different types of frames enjoy different degrees of popularity among the target audiences due to resonance? Furthermore, do activists become more and more dependent on those popular frame types in formulating their messages over time? Or do they alternately face pressure to innovate? Lastly, do structural factors exemplified by policy changes affect this pattern of resonance on policy frames favored by the audience?

D. Literature Review - Frame Resonance

The idea of frame resonance is introduced by Snow and Benford (1988: 198) to explain why some frames can successfully garner policy support from some constituents while others cannot. The call for attention to the idea of frame resonance urges scholars to explore more carefully the role of agency and culture in the study of collective action (Benford and Snow 2000). The varying degrees of resonance of policy messages imply that the cultural environment of society has not only bounds but also internal coherence (Williams 2004). Individuals who live in a society hold largely coherent understandings about what counts as legitimate. Within the boundaries of the legitimate, different symbolic elements and resources represented by policy frames have different degrees of salience and applicability across issue areas, time, and subgroups of the population (Williams and Demerath 1991).

The major conditions that influence the likelihood for policy frames to resonate with target audiences include compatibility between frames and the broader cultural environment (Snow and Benford 1988; Gamson 1992), credibility, and experiential commensurability (Babb 1996; Valocchi 1996; Jasper 1997). Credibility can further be broken down into three factors: the congruence between social movement organizations' claims and actions (Zuo and Benford 1995; Johnson 1997; Benford and Snow 2000), empirical credibility (Snow and Benford 1988; Gamson 1992; Jasper and Poulsen 1995), and credibility of the frame articulators themselves (Benford 1987; Coy and Woehrle 1996). To put it simply, frame resonance means that activists strategically align political issues with certain salient and favorable ideological values. However, once a master frame has gained popularity, it does not mean that social movement organizations would stick with the frame without any possibility of changing it.⁹¹ In an earlier study by Snow et al. (1986), they argue that large-scale societal and political changes that affect social movements would lead to the process of frame alignment in which activists would strategically keep experimenting with newer types of master frames in response to the new circumstances. Framing is theoretically conceptualized as a dynamic process that involves frame development, generation, elaboration, and diffusion. This process is constrained as well as facilitated by contextual factors such as political and discursive opportunities (Benford and Snow 2000).

Frame resonance is a multi-faceted concept. There are different ways to operationalize this concept. Earlier literature on frame resonance adopts a historical approach to retroactively trace how activists and opponents generate different frames at different time points (Capek 1993; Zuo and Benford 1995). Some scholars who adopt survey methods have measure resonance as

⁹¹ A master frame is "a generic type of collective action frame that is wider in scope and influence than run-of-the-mill social movement frames (Snow and Benford 1992)." For example, both "human rights" and "fundamental rights" frames belong to the same master frame as the "rights frame."

the matches and mismatches between activists' framing and respondents' responses (Allen 2000; Van Troost and Olcese 2013; Ketelaars 2016). For example, by interviewing street protesters, Van Troost and Olcese (2013) ask respondents why they take part in the protest and what or who is to blame. Based on the same coding schema, if there are similar elements found between respondents' responses and the key texts found in activists' webpages, frame resonance is observed (Ketelaars 2016).

The effect of framing is hypothesized to be conditioned on the degree of frame resonance. Previous literature argues that frame resonance and characteristics of frames lead to cultural change (Snow, Tan, and Owens 2013), policy and legal outcomes (McCammon, Muse, and Newman 2007), and mobilization processes (Mika 2006; Chakravarty and Chaudhuri 2012). Higher levels of frame resonance would result in higher levels of mobilization since individuals and social movement organizations come to hold common beliefs regarding policy issues (Snow et al. 1986: 467-468).⁹² Activists can deliberately use frames to revitalize some historical memories or fabricate a novel idea to change what can be considered meaningful and legitimate.⁹³ The effect of frame resonance has mostly been tested and presented in experimental settings. Bloemmraad, Silva, and Voss (2016) use survey experiments to show how different frames resonate differently with various political subgroups. For example, they conclude that the traditionally dominant rights frames fail to change Californian respondents' views on immigration reforms while the frame of family unity has a greater impact on conservatives. Therefore, the effects of frame resonance differ across different subgroups within the public. Additionally, policy

⁹² However, scholars of social psychology have shown that activists may deliberately use the rhetorical strategy of frame dissonance to achieve even better outcomes of mobilization (Shuster and Campos-Castillo 2017).

⁹³ From this point of view, there is a mutual causality between frames and culture, with the latter as shapeable rather than fixed (Snow, Tan, and Owens 2013).

frames of higher levels of resonance appear to be more convincing to policymakers and make it more likely for political elites to follow activists' policy suggestions (McCammon 2009).

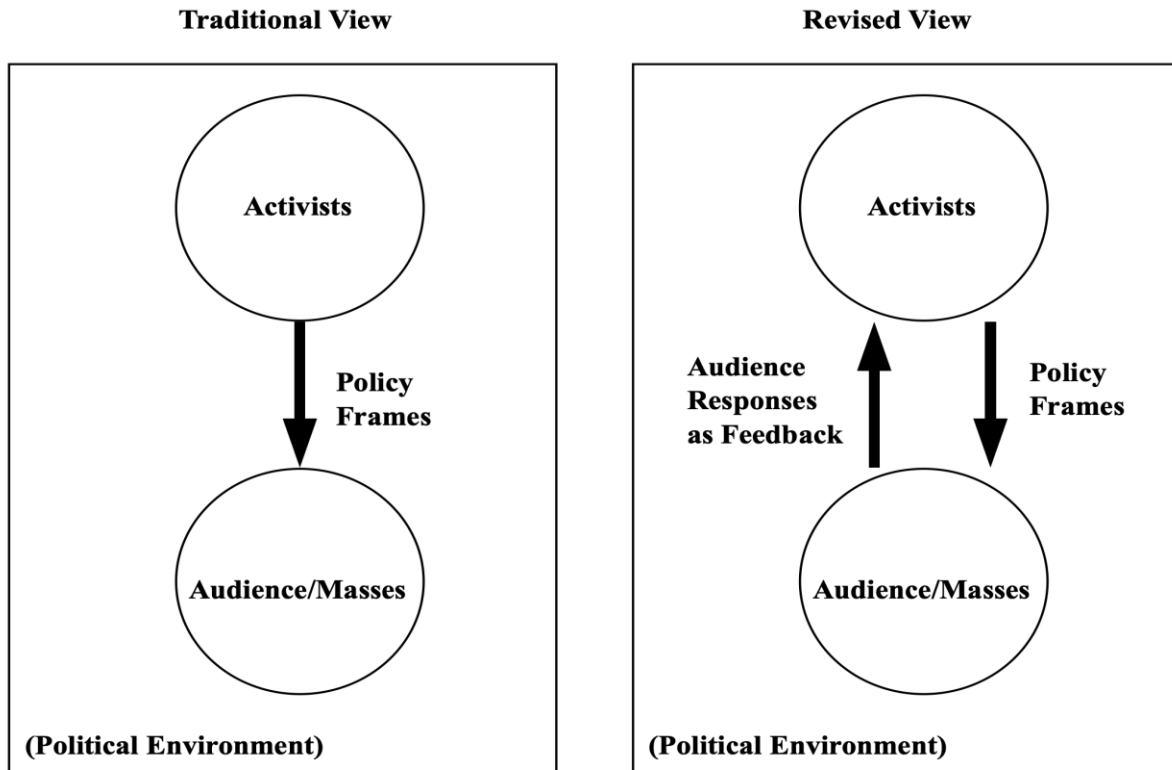
Several scholars have pointed out that previous literature has not systematically studied the strategic considerations based on which activists choose to incorporate certain ideational elements into their policy messages (Snow and Benford 1988; McAdam et al. 1996). Some earlier studies have used experimental methods to determine whether framing effects differ across different types of master frames. However, the differences in frame resonance in these experimental settings are artificial and may not reflect the real-world dynamics of how policy messages are generated by activists. One of the major problems with the experimental approach is that only a very limited number of selected frames – two or three at most – can be shown to the respondents as treatments. Therefore, these studies do not exhaust the possible master frames found in activists' messages. Furthermore, each type of policy frame is used as a treatment and a respondent would only receive one pure type of master frame. But doing so is unrealistic, as activists often-times incorporate elements of several master frames in one single policy message. Therefore, without using observational data from the real world, we can hardly learn how target audiences might respond differently to various master frames simultaneously and how framing should be understood as an interactive process between activists and the target audiences.

One of the main puzzles that remain in the literature of frame resonance is how to depict the dynamic process of frame alignment and frame resonance, namely taking into account the factor of time.⁹⁴ Online spaces such as social media offer an opportunity for us to test if the dynamic process of frame alignment and resonance actually happens since we can observe not only

⁹⁴ When studying the phenomena of frame resonance, previous literature does not discuss the contextual factors in detail. Therefore, this research builds on previous findings and presents a case study of Taiwan to showcase how the unique political and cultural contexts shape the degrees to which the target audiences respond to different types of master frames.

the types of master frames in a message but also the target audiences' responses to a message at a specific time point. Furthermore, the text data of online activism also allows us to examine all available frames that may either resonate positively or negatively with the mass public. As noted by Ferree (2003), the idea of frame resonance has mostly been applied in successful cases where researchers argue that the framing outcomes are chosen by activists because of their associations with some popular ideas in the political culture. However, fewer efforts have been taken to figure out the varying degrees of popularity between different master frames. Therefore, borrowing the concept of "spiral of opportunities" introduced by Miller and Riechert (2001), I would argue that stakeholders such as activists propose policy frames and monitor how the public reacts to the articulations of policies. In cases where policy articulation is viewed positively by the audience, activists would keep relying on the same master frame. In contrast, in cases where policy articulation fails to gain support from the public, activists would either withdraw from the policy debate or change the master frame in their discourses. As shown in Figure 3.1 below, I propose a revised view of frame resonance. Unlike the traditional view which gives agency only to activists, the revised view argues that the construction and application of policy frames is a dynamic process in which activists experiment with a variety of possible master frames and adjust the usage of frames based on not only the political environment (such as policy outcomes) but also audience responses.

Figure 3.1 Traditional versus Revised Understanding of Frame Resonance



E. Hypotheses

Activists generate policy frames through an interactive process in which they adopt the goal of making target audiences feel that the policy claims make sense and should be supported. Frame resonance occurs when activists deliberately revise the content of policy messages to make sure that the selected master frames are recognized as legitimate, relevant, and valid by the target audiences. Therefore, to examine if the idea of frame resonance can be applied in cases of online activism and if audience responses matter for framing, I lay out the following hypotheses to test the existence and the extent of frame resonance.

One of the important characteristics of frame resonance is the focus on the agency of the target audiences. The target audiences react differently to different master frames because of the

general political culture, social norms, and the history of political development (Snow and Benford 1988; Gamson 1992). For example, social norms on gender roles affect people's perceptions of the valid categorization of gender and the appropriate ways in which males and females should behave. In societies where the dominant social norm regarding gender roles heavily stresses a strict binary between males and females, we would expect individuals to react more favorably to master frames that prioritize traditional and reactionary values but less so on frames that emphasize "equality" between males and females. Therefore, we would expect different frames to have different levels of popularity in policy messages posted by activists regarding gay rights in Taiwan. The first condition required for frame resonance to happen is unequal audience preferences across different policy frames. The audiences on social media react differently to each master frame. Some master frames enjoy support while others are perceived negatively by the target audiences. I use a series of two-sided hypothesis testing between all pairs of the seven coefficients of master frames to examine the validity of the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis I (unequal audience preferences): *The degrees of popularity among master frames differ significantly across frames. The null hypothesis is stated as follows while the alternative hypothesis is that "one of the coefficients differs significantly from others."*⁹⁵

$$H_0 : \beta_{1(i,t)} = \beta_{2(i,t)} = \beta_{3(i,t)} = \beta_{4(i,t)} = \beta_{5(i,t)} = \beta_{6(i,t)} = \beta_{7(i,t)},$$

where i indexes group stances and t indexes phases

Another trait of frame resonance is the process of frame elimination through selection. The framing process involves activists who constantly monitor the popularity of different master frames. Based on the responses from the target audiences, activists would select the master frames which receive more positive feedback while forsaking those that are unpopular among the audiences.

⁹⁵ Please see the full model and the corresponding variables for the coefficients in the following section "Methods."

Therefore, as a result of deliberate selection and elimination of frames by activists, we would expect certain master frames to be used more and more frequently than others over time.

Hypothesis II (in/decreasing reliance): *The proportions of popular master frames should gradually increase over time, suggesting an increasing reliance by activists on these popular master frames.⁹⁶ However, for those unpopular master frames, we would expect their proportion to decrease.*

The idea of frame resonance suggests that activists pay attention to the responses of target audiences when formulating the content of their policy messages. However, it would be naive to take into consideration only the agency of activists while neglecting the influence of structural factors on decisions about which master frames to be presented in policy messages. The way activists, along with target audiences, perceive the outside world and policy issues may differ sharply in reaction to the happening of political events. Therefore, to control and account for the potential impacts of the structural changes in the political system, it is expected that whenever a policy change takes place, there would be a change in the degrees of popularity for and the levels of reliance on each master frame.

Hypothesis III (structural disjuncture): *Whenever a major policy change of gay rights happens, the popularity and the proportion of using a master frame would change significantly after the event in comparison to before.⁹⁷*

⁹⁶ The proportion of a master frame is computed by dividing the number of a specific master frame by the total number of messages in a quarter. Therefore, its value is between 0 and 1, with higher values indicating a greater likelihood for that specific master frame to be used in messages.

⁹⁷ Political events are narrowly defined as those policy outputs or political decisions that are influential in shaping the status of gay rights in Taiwan. There are two events identified in this research: the announcement of Interpretation No. 748 in May 2017 and the passage of the Act for Implementation of J.Y. Interpretation No. 748 in May 2019.

F. Methods

This chapter discusses the idea of frame resonance and looks at how pro- and anti-gay rights activists deliberately craft policy messages to make their policy demands more appealing to their target audiences. To identify and code the activists' messages into one or more types of master frames, I adopt a thematic content analysis approach (Kuckartz 2014). Thematic content analysis involves a multi-stage process to develop the codebook. The initial codebook is constructed based on what has been found theoretically in the previous literature and it includes both the types of master frames and the keywords associated with each master frame (Hull 2001; Brewer 2003, 2007; Miceli 2005; Andersen 2006; Mucciaroni 2009, 2011; Leachman 2013; Moscovitz 2013).⁹⁸ In the first stage, the coders randomly select a manageable portion of messages (fifty messages) from each of the four groups and apply the initial codebook to code the master frames embedded in these messages. The initial codebook is revised and expanded based on the results of the first-stage coding. In the second stage, the coders use the revised codebook to code all of the messages in the corpus and compute the inter-coder reliability to ensure that the coding result is consistent largely across the three coders (Anderson 2007; Kuckartz 2014).⁹⁹

To test the effect of frame resonance, I first identify if some master frames are perceived favorably by target audiences while others unfavorably (the first hypothesis). I construct Bayes-

⁹⁸ The literature of policy frames regarding gay rights in countries where same-sex marriage has been legalized suggests that there are four major types of master frames. They are the rights frames, the reactionary frames, the constitutional frames, and the populist frames. The coders added another three types after the completion of the first-stage coding and these master frames are the mobilizing frames, the critical frames, and the rationalist frames.

⁹⁹ The inter-coder reliability (i.e. joint-probability of agreement) is found by dividing the number of instances where coders have an agreement by the total number of possibilities out of the thirty randomly selected pieces of messages. The lowest inter-coder reliability between a pair of coders is around 81% in the second coding stage and any values above 75% are considered acceptable in previous research (Stemler 2004; Hays and Revicki 2005). In addition to the author, the other two coders are Taiwanese graduate students who study in the United States and their majors are physical science and communication respectively. The different academic backgrounds of the coders ensure that the understanding of the coding rules does not require too much expert knowledge in political science.

ian negative binomial models to examine if some master frames can effectively increase or decrease the popularity of messages (Saxton and Waters 2014). The dependent variable of these count models is *Message Popularity*, measured as the number of “likes” a message receives. This measure helps us to evaluate how popular and favorable a message is for its target audiences (Swani et al. 2013; Scissors et al. 2016). The value range of message popularity must be greater than zero with no upper limit. The first seven independent variables of the model are a set of binary variables that represent the existence of a specific master frame.¹⁰⁰ Since the master frames are not mutually exclusive, all of them are incorporated into the model, without leaving one as the reference group. The data is split into two parts and each part includes only the two groups that are similar in their policy stances on gay rights (pro- or anti-gay rights). The negative binomial model is a generalized version of the Poisson regression model, utilized to loosen the Poisson model’s restrictive assumption that the variance is equal to the mean (Gardner et al. 1995).¹⁰¹ Based on previous findings of user behaviors on social media, I also include three control variables (*URLs*, *Videos*, and *Hashtags*) that may affect the popularity of messages (Suh et al. 2010).¹⁰² Let i index the group’s policy stance (pro- or anti-gay rights) and t be the time phase (Phase1-Phase3); the models can be written as follows:¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ The seven identified master frames are the rights frames, the rationalist frames, the reactionary frames, the constitutional frames, the populist frames, the mobilizing frames, and the critical frames.

¹⁰¹ The negative binomial model can address the under- or over-dispersion problem by incorporating a dispersion parameter when specifying the variance as a function of the distribution’s mean.

¹⁰² For the three control variables (*URLs*, *Videos*, and *Hashtags*), they are coded as one if certain keywords exist in the message to indicate the existence of URL links, videos, and hashtags; otherwise as zero. The keywords for *Videos* include terms such as “livestream”, “watch(verb)”, “video”, and “subtitles”; for *URLs*, they are “http(s)”, “www”, “url”, “link”; for *Hashtags*, it is “#.”

¹⁰³ Although I use seven dummy variables to describe whether a master frame exists in a post or not, I include all of these dummy variables in the model, without leaving one of them out of the model as the reference group. The major reason why there is no reference group in my models is that we do not assume master frames are mutually exclusive. A post can have two or even more frames at a time and the existence of a specific frame does not rule out the possibility for another master frame to be used. Therefore, given the non-exclusive nature of frame choices, it would be more reasonable to include all of the seven dummy variables to understand the effects of each master frame on message popularity.

$$\ln(\mu_{(MessagePopularity(i,t))}) = \alpha_{(i,t)} + \beta_{1(i,t)} * RightsFrame_{(i,t)} + \beta_{2(i,t)} * RationalistFrame_{(i,t)} + \beta_{3(i,t)} * ReactionaryFrame_{(i,t)} + \beta_{4(i,t)} * ConstitutionalFrame_{(i,t)} + \beta_{5(i,t)} * PopulistFrame_{(i,t)} + \beta_{6(i,t)} * MobilizingFrame_{(i,t)} + \beta_{7(i,t)} * CriticalFrame_{(i,t)} + \beta_{8(i,t)} * Videos_{(i,t)} + \beta_{9(i,t)} * URLs_{(i,t)} + \beta_{10(i,t)} * Hashtags_{(i,t)}$$

To test the second and third hypotheses, I count the frequencies of master frames that appear in messages in each quarter and compute the proportions of each master frame within one quarter for pro- and anti-gay rights groups respectively. For each master frame, I draw line charts with the x-axis as time (year/quarter) and the y-axis as proportions (%). Each line in the chart shows the proportions of a specific master frame used in a specific quarter between November 2013 and May 2020, with the denominator of the proportions being the total number of master frames. The line chart demonstrates the change over time of the proportional distribution for each master frame. By looking at the line chart, it helps us to identify if the likelihood for activists to use certain frames has increased or decreased over time (the second hypothesis, over-time reliance; if proportions of a master frame have increased over time if it is a preferred frame). Furthermore, the chart can also show if there is a discontinuity of reliance on certain frames once a policy outcome of gay rights has happened (the third hypothesis, structural disjuncture; if there is a sharp turn of a master frame's proportions after a policy outcome happens).

G. Case Selection

This chapter examines the effect of frame resonance on subsequent choices of master frames. To maximize the chances of seeing more diverse policy frames in messages, I select pro- and anti-gay rights activist groups that have the most followers and are active in posting messages on their public fan pages. The computational methods of categorizing messages into different types of master frames are not sufficiently mature and may lead to analytical results that are biased since they do not fully account for some vital discursive features embedded in messages

(Bunea and Ibenskas 2015). Therefore, I adopt thematic content analysis to carefully read through each message and manually code the types of master frames which are present in these messages. The downside of thematic content analysis is that it is time-consuming and cannot be used to analyze a large corpus. To balance complexity and representativeness, I decide to only select the four most popular pro- and anti-gay rights groups in Taiwan when examining the relationship between types of master frames and message popularity.

The two most popular pro-gay rights groups are the Taiwan Alliance to Promote Civil Partnership Rights (TAPCPR, @tapcpr, 85,232 followers) and the Marriage Equality Coalition in Taiwan (MECT, @equallovetw, 94,881 followers). The TAPCPR was established in 2009 and was one of the earliest activist groups devoted to the advocacy of same-sex spousal rights in Taiwan. It has built connections with like-minded elites such as Legislator Yu Mei-nui and worked with them to propose amendments to the Civil Code to change the definition of marriage. However, the legislative path to the legalization of same-sex spousal rights failed since most legislators across party lines did not respond to the proposals favorably given the controversial nature of same-sex marriage. Therefore, in 2015, representatives from the TAPCPR helped Chi Chia-wei, a long-time Taiwanese gay rights activist, to file a request for constitutional interpretation regarding the issue of same-sex marriage. In comparison to the TAPCPR, the MECT was formed quite late at the end of 2016 by a collectivity of pro-gay rights groups to pool resources, respond promptly to messages distributed by opposing groups, and mobilize offline activities such as street canvassing.

Among the activist groups which advocate traditional family values in Taiwan, the two most popular groups are the Coalition for the Happiness of our Next Generation (CHONG, @Hope.family.tw, 85,035 followers) and the Stability of Power (Stabilizing Force Party, SFP,

@StabilityOfPower, 78,669 followers). The CHONG was formed in late 2013 when the political battle over same-sex marriage has intensified after the amendment to the Civil Code was proposed by Legislator Yu Mei-nui in the Legislative Yuan at the end of 2012. Three years later, the SFP was formed and it was more politically active since one of its goals was to mobilize voters to recall legislators who have shown support for same-sex marriage. In line with other groups that advocated for heteronormative and traditional family values, the two most popular anti-gay rights groups called for voters' support for the three anti-gay rights ballot measures in the 2018 local elections.

H. Data Type, Scope, and Collection

The dataset of messages posted by the four most popular Taiwanese pro- and anti-gay rights groups includes the following three components: text data, reaction data, and time data. All of the data are collected from the four activist groups' public fan pages on Facebook and the content can be publicly viewed and accessed by anyone who has a Facebook account. The period of data collection is between November 2013 and March 2020. The starting point is set as November 1, 2013, since anti-gay rights groups become increasingly organized in late 2013.¹⁰⁴ The fight between pro- and anti-gay rights groups has continued even after Taiwan's Constitutional Court has ruled that it was unconstitutional to not grant same-sex couples their spousal rights on May 24, 2017. The backlash against gay rights has emerged after May 2017 and can be exemplified by the passage of the three anti-gay rights ballot measures in the 2018 local elections. On May 17, 2019, the Act for Implementation of J.Y. Interpretation No. 748 was passed. I set the endpoint of data collection as of March 31, 2020, which is about ten months after the passage of

¹⁰⁴ On November 30, 2013, the anti-gay rights protest "All People Stand up for the Happiness of the Next Generation" was organized by the Coalition for the Happiness of Our Next Generation.

the Act and the gap allows me to observe how policy messages regarding gay rights might have changed after the legalization of same-sex spousal rights.

The text data of the messages from the four activist groups' Facebook fan pages are written in Mandarin Chinese. Between November 2013 and March 2020, the average number of messages is around 500 per group. The total number of messages in the analysis is 2,031 throughout the six-and-half-year period. The average number of words contained in a message is about 135 characters. The text data is turned into a series of binary variables that indicate whether a master frame is found in a specific message. The seven binary variables indicating presence or absence of master frames are labeled *Rights Frames*, *Rationalist Frames*, *Reactionary Frames*, *Constitutional Frames*, *Mobilizing Frames*, *Populist Frames*, and *Critical Frames*.

The reaction data records the number of reactions received by a post. The reactions include “likes”, “haha”, “love”, “wow”, “sigh”, and “grrr”, and comments.¹⁰⁵ Although each of these reactions shows that the target audiences pay attention to a specific message, the meanings of most of them can be ambiguous and open for interpretation. For example, when a Facebook user sends a “sigh” reaction to an anti-gay rights message, he or she may feel sympathetic to the anti-gay rights activist's grief to unfavorable policies such as same-sex marriage. However, it may also be the case that he or she feels sad and uncomfortable to see the anti-gay rights sentiment expressed in the message with the “sigh.” To avoid the possibility of misinterpreting users' emotions and intentions, I choose to use the number of “likes” to measure the popularity of a message because, unlike other reactions, “likes” is the most straightforward reaction to show support for a message.

¹⁰⁵ These emotional responses are a finite number of buttons rather than being created by users.

The time meta-data of the messages include the timestamp (time/day/month/year) of a message and the timestamp allows me to keep track of the over-time change of reliance on a specific master frame. The timestamp also helps me to split the whole dataset into three phases which are divided by the two timepoints when gay-rights policy outcomes happen. These two policy outcomes include the release of Interpretation #748 (May 24, 2017), and the passage of the special law which legalizes same-sex spousal rights (May 17, 2019).

I. Results - Unequal Audience Preferences of Policy Frames

To test the first hypothesis of frame resonance which states that different master frames have significantly different degrees of popularity because of their levels of cultural resonance, I construct a series of Bayesian negative binomial models. Each model is estimated based on different samples divided by group stance (pro- or anti-gay rights) and periods (Phase 1, Phase 2, and Phase 3) and there are six models in total. [Tables 3.1-3.6](#) summarize the model results. The minimum sample size across all of the models is 219. There are no signs of estimation error since the values of estimated standard deviation and confidence interval are reasonable rather than being extremely large or small.¹⁰⁶ To show if we would reject the null hypothesis of *Hypothesis 1*, after running the *brm()* function in R to estimate the Bayesian negative binomial models, I use the *hypothesis()* function in the *brms* package. The *hypothesis()* function performs a series of two-sided hypothesis testing between all pairs of the seven coefficients of master frames in the

¹⁰⁶ For all of the count models, I set the prior of the intercept and the coefficients as a normal distribution, with a mean value of zero and a standard deviation of ten. The prior distribution of the shape is assumed to follow a Gamma distribution with a shape parameter of 10 and a scale parameter of 10. The number of iteration is 4,000, the number of warmups is 1,000, and the number of cores is set to be 2. The value of the target acceptance rate (*adapt_delta* parameter) is set as 0.99 to avoid divergences. The number of chains is set to be 2 as default. The model setting is constructed based on McElreath (2020).

six models. The results support the alternative hypothesis of *Hypothesis 1* since at least one of the hypothesis tests shows that there is a significant gap between a pair of coefficients.¹⁰⁷

The results in [Tables 3.1-3.3](#) suggest that the audience of pro-gay rights groups are more likely to favor the rights frames, the reactionary frames, the constitutional frames, and the mobilizing frames while feeling unsympathetic about the rationalist and critical frames in Phase 1 (November 2013-May 2017). In Phase 2 (June 2017-May 2019), none of these frames can successfully secure a distinguishable degree of popularity while the critical frame remains unpopular and this reduction in propensity to “like” a post employing the critical frame is statistically significant. Similar to Phase 1, the audiences of the pro-gay rights fan pages have responded more favorably to posts with the reactionary frames and the mobilizing frames while unfavorably to those with the rationalist and critical frames in Phase 3 (June 2019-March 2020). However, the major difference between the two phases is that the audiences are also more likely to favor messages with the populist frame while the constitutional frame has lost popularity in Phase 3.

The coefficients in the models represent multiplicative effects. Therefore, the interpretation of effect magnitude for each master frame becomes that messages with a specific master frame on average have $\exp(\beta)$ times more/less number of likes than those without it when holding the other variables in the models constant. The magnitude of the effects shows that the inclusion of certain master frames makes a big impact on message popularity.¹⁰⁸ Throughout the three phases, the critical frame continues to be unappealing to the audiences of pro-gay rights

¹⁰⁷ The following numbers show the number of tests that are statistically significant out of the total twenty-one tests in each model: pro-gay rights groups, phase 1 (11 out of 21); pro-gay rights groups, phase 2 (6 out of 21); pro-gay rights groups, phase 3 (10 out of 21); anti-gay rights groups, phase 1 (10 out of 21); anti-gay rights groups, phase 2 (12 out of 21); anti-gay rights groups, phase 3 (8 out of 21).

¹⁰⁸ For example, for the pro-gay rights groups in Phase 1 (Table 1), the value of the $\exp(\beta)$ for the intercept indicates the average number of likes a post would receive and it is 395. In comparison to posts without a rights frame, a post that has such a frame would on average receive 114 more units of likes ($395 - 395 * 1.29$), and the gap of increase is roughly one-third of the average number of likes ($114/395$).

groups, with its effect being the strongest in the second phase since posts with the critical frame have about only one-fourth of “likes” than those without it. In addition to the critical frame, the rationalist frames are found to be unpopular among those who follow posts of the pro-gay rights groups and the negative effect makes posts with a rationalist frame have twenty to thirty percent fewer likes. For the two master frames that increase message popularity, the mobilizing frames have a milder effect (about 18-34% more) while the reactionary frames are even more effective in boosting popularity (about 45% more). The only master frame that changes its coefficient signs is the constitutional frames. While the constitutional frames increase the number of likes a post receives by 63% in the first phase, the incorporation of them in Phase 3 decreases the number of likes by about 25%.

[Tables 3.4-3.6](#) summarize the effects of audience responses on message popularity for anti-gay rights groups across different phases. In Phase 1, posts with the populist or the mobilizing frames are more likely to receive higher numbers of likes than other types of master frames. The coefficients of these two types of master frames continue to be positive and statistically significant in the subsequent two phases. The confidence interval around the estimated coefficient is between 0.64 and 1.25 for the populist frames and is between 0.14 and 0.75 for the mobilizing frames. Therefore, by taking exponential values of the confidence intervals, the plausible range of multipliers is between 1.89 and 3.49 for the populist frames and is between 1.15 and 2.11 for the mobilizing frames. In the second phase, the rights frames and the rationalist frames are found to be effective in securing popularity among the audiences while the reactionary frames are more likely to turn the audiences away and lead to lower numbers of likes. In the last phase, messages with the reactionary and constitutional frames are more likely to make the audience agree with the anti-gay rights groups’ posts, along with the populist and mobilizing frames. The magnitude

of the effects varies across phases, with the populist frames being most influential in the first phase (2.56 times more number of likes than posts without such a frame), the mobilizing frames in the second phase (2.48 times more), and the constitutional frames in the third phase (1.99 times more). The reactionary frames in the second phase are the only case where the existence of a master frame would discourage people from expressing favorable feelings to a post among the anti-gay rights audiences (2.2 times less; i.e. rate multiplied by 0.455).

J. Results - Structural Disjuncture for the Pro-Gay Rights Groups

The results of the previous section suggest that the audiences of the pro- and anti-gay rights groups respond differently to the inclusion and exclusion of the seven master frames. The preferences of the audiences show over-time variation in response to the changing conditions of policy outcomes. In the first phase which was before the ruling of Interpretation No. 748, the audiences of the pro-gay rights groups were more likely to respond favorably to posts with the rights frames, the constitutional frames, and the mobilizing frames. The pro-gay rights groups in this phase had gradually switched their strategy from a legislative approach to a judicial one in their pursuit of legalizing same-sex marriage. They adopted the rights frames to highlight the reasons why there was a need to provide same-sex couples with equal legal access to spousal rights. The pro-gay rights groups supported these rights claims with constitutional principles such as individual freedom, along with the mobilizing frames to keep their audience attentive to the political development of such an issue. In addition to these three master frames, the reactionary frames were also found to be effective in garnering support from the audiences of the pro-gay rights groups in the first phase. The pro-gay rights activists mentioned ideas associated with reactionary frames such as morality, ethics, and religion in a way to challenge these existing forms of social norms which had long rendered the LGBT individuals marginalized in the society.

In the second phase, we observe that none of the effects of the master frames reaches statistical significance. One possible explanation for this null result is that, unlike in the first phase, pro-gay rights activists are now playing defense to try to keep the basic line of legalizing same-sex spousal rights as promised in the ruling of Interpretation No. 748. With anti-gay rights groups becoming even more mobilized and successfully placing gay rights issues on ballot measures in the first place, the pro-gay rights groups mainly serve a reactive role rather than themselves generating a dominant line of arguments.

In the last phase when the special law is enacted, the audiences of the pro-gay rights groups become more likely to show favorable attitudes toward the mobilizing frames, the populist frames, and the reactionary frames. Similar to what has been observed in previous phases, the mobilizing frames continue to invite the audiences to participate in the events hosted by the pro-gay rights groups. The populist frames and the reactionary frames, on the other hand, are mainly used by the pro-gay rights groups to showcase Taiwan's distinct subjectivity after legalizing same-sex spousal rights. The populist frames in the third phase highlight the compatibility between ideas of democracy and same-sex marriage and raised discussions over the 2019-20 Hong Kong Protests which call for democratic development. Furthermore, the populist frames also describe the legalization of same-sex spousal rights in Taiwan as a bottom-up process in which the political engagement of citizens and non-governmental organizations was the key to policy change. The reactionary frames show a reconciliatory tone by pointing out not all religious groups were against gay rights such as the Tong-Kwang Light House Presbyterian Church. The reactionary frames also mention a need for the Taiwanese society to break away from traditional Chinese and Confucian culture and embrace progressive values. The audiences of the pro-gay rights groups have consistently been unsympathetic to the claims of critical frames even though

the topics of such a master frame have kept changing over time. In the first and second phases, to legitimate the policy claims of same-sex marriage, the pro-gay rights groups worked closely with women's rights groups and used critical concepts such as heterosexual hegemony and diversified family formation.¹⁰⁹ The arguments stated that access to marriage should not be exclusively enjoyed by heterosexual couples and should not be the only form to legally secure the rights of individuals and their loved ones. In the last phase, the arguments of the critical frame have switched to the advocacy of transgender rights and non-binary gender. Regardless of the critical voices that called for an awareness of the patriarchal nature of the marriage system, the audiences of the pro-gay rights groups have consistently shown an assimilationist tendency by responding less favorably to messages with a critical frame.

K. Results - Structural Disjuncture for the Anti-Gay Rights Groups

The audiences of the anti-gay rights groups manifest starkly different patterns in their responses to activists' posts. One of the major differences was that the audiences were less likely to show disagreement toward the different types of master frames, with only the reactionary frames in the second phase having a statistically significant negative coefficient. In the second phase, the reactionary frames mainly described the potential dangers and negative impacts on society once same-sex marriage would be passed. These discourses of a change to the existing world order aimed to stir fear and anger among the audience and made posts with such a warning message receive fewer numbers of likes.

¹⁰⁹ In addition to same-sex marriage, the TAPCPR also proposed two other legal forms of family formation in the 2012 draft bills to incorporate same-sex couples into the legal system. One of them is the civil partnership system which allows two adults of any sex, gender, and sexual orientation to negotiate and build up an agreement to settle issues of assets, inheritance, domiciles, etc, and register themselves as civil partners. The other one is the multiple-person family system. This system allows people who live together and take care of each other to register and have their relationship protected regardless of their sex and there is no limit on the number of people involved or the items of legal obligations included in the agreement. For these two systems, the legal relationship can be canceled by a single party, requiring no consent from others. However, these two draft bills were considered controversial and radical and received little discussion in later periods of issue advocacy among the pro-gay rights groups.

Another difference found in the audiences of the anti-gay rights groups is that the populist frames and the mobilizing frames consistently enjoy higher degrees of popularity across the three phases. The usage of the populist frames by the anti-gay rights groups is heavily imbued with an anti-elite sentiment, in addition to appeals of using direct democracy to decide if same-sex marriage should be legalized. In the second phase, the audiences are also far more responsive to the rights frames and the rationalist frames. The posts of the anti-gay rights groups emphasize the “rights” of the silenced majority such as parents and children. Gay rights issues are not merely about the legal protection of same-sex couples but the determination of fundamental values of the Taiwanese society. Furthermore, the legalization of same-sex marriage has affected not only same-sex couples but society as a whole, especially those who lack power such as children. Therefore, the anti-gay rights activists argue that people should enjoy the essential right to using direct democracy to define marriage. The discourse of the rationalist frames in the second phase offers reasons why the policy proposals of the pro-gay rights groups would lead to inferior and undesirable outcomes. For example, anti-gay rights activists claim that the LGBT curriculum of gender equality education is inappropriate for students in elementary and junior high schools. The anti-gay rights activists argue that an LGBT curriculum taught too early in students’ childhood might lead to confusion in their sexual and gender identities. In the third phase, the reactionary frames and the constitutional frames have successfully attracted the audiences’ attention. The anti-gay rights activists now use the reactionary frames to describe the important role correct social values and norms played in society. Adhering to traditional Confucian norms such as civility, justice, integrity, and humility (*li yi lian chi*) is vital for the development and stability of a country. The constitutional frames focus less on discussions of constitutional principles but stress

how the rise of gay rights movements poses potential dangers of bullying and reverse discrimination against those who have a dissenting opinion that challenges gay rights. Pro-gay rights politicians and activists, in this view, have used issues of gay rights to divide society and label social conservatives as haters in a hostile way. Therefore, the anti-gay rights activists claim that they “were not against gay rights but only fought with a love for family.”

L. Results - In(de)creasing Reliance

The revised model of frame resonance proposes that the sociality of social media platforms allows audiences to provide timely responses to activists’ policy messages. The responses serve as informational feedback for activists to monitor and assess the degree to which certain master frames resonate with the audience. Therefore, unlike the traditional view of frame resonance which states that activists play an exclusively dominant role in determining the ways to describe and frame policy goals, I would argue that when framing policy issues, activists need to cater to not only the cultural and political background but also audience responses. The previous sections discuss the first and third hypotheses. In fact, we have found audiences of the pro- and anti-gay rights groups respond differently to different master frames and the preferences of master frames have changed in response to policy outcomes. Next, I whether there is any evidence to support the second hypothesis.

The second hypothesis of in(de)creasing reliance states that there is a positive relationship between message popularity and the likelihood to use a specific master frame. Therefore, for master frames whose coefficient is statistically significant and positive, the proportion of such a master frame is expected to increase over time in a specific phase, and vice versa. To depict the over-time variation of the master frames’ proportions, I use the *geom_smooth()* function of the

ggplot2 package in R to compute and graph smoothed conditional means. The smoothing is necessary since it can minimize the impacts of idiosyncratic noises of each data point and capture a more general trend of change. I apply lowess (locally weighted scatter-plot smoother) to locally fit a trend line and the fit is made by including points in a neighborhood of point x , and weighting the points by their distance from point x (Jacoby 2000). The span is set at default as 0.75 and the default fitting method is weighted least squares. In addition to paying attention to the over-time trends of proportions for each master frame, I also adopt the following rule to decide if in(de)creasing reliance happens. The decision rule is that if the starting point's proportion is lower (higher) than the ending point's in a phase, increasing(decreasing) reliance happens. On the one hand, in cases when we observe a general upward trend for the proportions and the starting point is higher than the endpoint, I would argue that it is a case of increasing reliance on using a specific master frame. On the other hand, if we observe a downward trend in the lowess curve and the proportion of the starting point is lower than the endpoint, it is a case of decreasing reliance. However, if we see a relatively flat line with no stark difference between the values of the starting point and the endpoint, I would argue that no evidence of in(de)creasing reliance is existent in this case.

[Figures 3.2-3.9](#) summarize the over-time trends of the number of posts and the proportions of each master frames, with the two vertical lines indicating the time points of policy change (Interpretation No. 748 in the second quarter of 2017 and the passage of the special law in the second quarter of 2019). Figure 3.2 shows the total number of posts per quarter between the pro- and anti-gay rights groups. The four groups of the two sides have similar quarterly posting frequencies, with a gradual increase over time in the first two phases. However, in Phase 3, the pro-gay rights groups had a much higher level of posting frequency (between 150 to 200

posts per quarter) than their anti-gay rights counterparts (between 25 and 130). It suggests that after the enactment of the special law, since same-sex spousal rights have become law and no longer remained a policy issue to be decided, the anti-gay rights groups had greater difficulty in finding their next policy goals to maintain their survival.

[Figures 3.3-3.9](#) depict the over-time proportional changes of the seven master frames. Proportions are computed by dividing the number of times a master frame is used by the total number of posts in a quarter. The proportions indicate not only the likelihood to observe a specific master frame but also the level at which activists rely on a master frame to construct their policy messages on social media. The results of the lowess curves suggest that the mobilizing frames have commonly been the main topic in the pro- and anti-gay rights groups' messages. Activists use the mobilizing frames to express calls to action such as participating in events and protests, making donations, spreading the words to friends and family, and contacting legislators to influence their policy stances. For both the pro- and anti-gay rights groups, we can observe an overtime upward trend in using the mobilizing frames across the three phases. The pro-gay rights groups are more likely to use the rights frames and the constitutional frames, while their anti-gay rights counterparts rely more heavily on the rationalist frames and the populist frames.

The results of the graphs suggest that although the idea of “in(de)creasing reliance” is not always true in all cases where the coefficient of a master frame is statistically significant, it is still applicable in nearly seventy percent of instances. Out of the twenty-four cases where the coefficients of master frames reach statistical significance in [Tables 3.1-3.6](#), we observe seventeen cases of agreement between the actual and expected results while seven cases of inconsistencies. The rate of correct prediction is about seventy-one percent and it is higher than the prediction rate of a random guess (fifty percent). The result provides some evidence to show the validity of

the revised view of frame resonance which stresses the effect of audience responses on activists' frame choices. Furthermore, the trends shown by the lowess curves also support the idea of structural disjuncture which argues that the happening of policy outcomes would lead to the change of political conditions which in turn change audiences' frame preferences and activists' reliance on policy frames.

The above findings suggest that online spaces such as social media open up new channels for the audience to gain agency in the production process of policy frames. Audiences can express their favorable or negative feelings toward messages which are composed of multiple master frames. The responses subsequently become the basis for activists to decide what master frames to be incorporated in their posts to make appeals to their audiences and keep them attentive to the policy issues.

Regardless of the above findings, we still observe a few cases where the hypothesis of in(de)creasing reliance does not hold.¹¹⁰ The inconsistency between our theoretical expectations and the actual outcome is worthy of further discussion. In seven out of the twenty-four cases, we do not see a trend of in(de)creasing reliance on a (un)popular master frame. These cases of inconsistent results suggest that in addition to audience responses, there are other factors that activists would take into consideration while framing public policies. First, other than agential factors like audience responses, structural factors such as policy change also matter. For example, the

¹¹⁰ Out of the twenty-four cases where the coefficient of a master frame is statistically significant, there are seven cases where we do not observe the effect of in(de)creasing reliance of that specific master frame in the lowess curves. These seven cases are listed as follows: (1) pro-gay rights groups, the third phase, the critical frame, negative yet increasing; (2) pro-gay rights groups, the third phase, the reactionary frames, positive yet decreasing; (3) pro-gay rights groups, the third phase, the populist frames, positive yet decreasing; (4) anti-gay rights groups; the second phase, the rationalist frames, positive yet no change; (5) anti-gay rights groups, the third phase, the reactionary frames, positive yet decreasing; (6) anti-gay rights groups, the third phase, the constitutional frames, positive yet decreasing; (7) anti-gay rights groups, the third phase, the populist frames, positive yet decreasing.

passage of the special law which legalizes same-sex marriage in Taiwan in May 2019 fundamentally alters the dynamics of issue advocacy for the pro- and anti-gay rights groups. The special law means the closure of political and legal battles over same-sex marriage and the loss of a strong focal point for both the pro- and anti-gay rights groups. Second, following a policy change, activist groups need to accommodate their messages to the changing political conditions. Activists must generate newer policy goals or revise their old ones. For example, the main political issues of the pro-gay rights group, the TAPCPR, have become the protection of transnational same-sex couples and transgender rights since the special law was passed. The change of policy also means a possible change of audience composition since the audiences may no longer follow closely activists' posts given the fact that there is little chance to reverse or change the status quo for a specific policy they care about. Furthermore, within the seven cases of inconsistent results, six of them happen in the third phase. In comparison to the former two phases, the time length of the third phase is relatively short. There are only ten months in Phase 3, but three and a half years and two years respectively in Phase 1 and Phase 2. Since it takes time for activists to learn the frame preferences of their target audiences and make adjustments of frames accordingly, the relatively short time in Phase 3 contributes to higher levels of uncertainty in this phase and it can help to explain why we see more inconsistent cases in the last phase. Therefore, although audience responses are found to be effective in shaping frame choices as suggested by the revised view of frame resonance, frame choices are at the same time affected by a variety of potential factors such as the change of policy goals, the change of audiences, and the length of time following a policy change.

M. Implications and Conclusions

Technology has transformed the way people interact with others as well as the way activism works. As Bennett and Segerberg (2012) argue in their theory of connective action, one of the major features of connective action is the “sharing of ideas and actions in trusted relationships (756).” Although Bennett and Segerberg (2013) acknowledge that organizational resources are no longer a prerequisite for social movements in the networked society, it is still unclear to what extent the masses of the Information Age gain agency in the traditional realm of activism such as framing. Therefore, to explore the extent to which the masses are influential in online framing activities, this chapter moves us one step further and examines the relationship between frame choices and audience responses through the lens of a revised view of frame resonance. This chapter contributes to the literature of contentious politics and framing studies and suggests that social media platforms may indeed allow audiences to indirectly influence the construction of policy frames by responding to activists’ messages.

The revised view of frame resonance argues that online spaces open up opportunities for the masses (the audiences) to provide feedback to policy frames constructed by activists and these informational inputs of feedback become the basis based on which activists make their subsequent framing decisions. I have proposed three related hypotheses to test the validity of the revised view (unequal preferences, in[de]creasing reliance, and structural disjuncture). The results of the Bayesian models suggest that the audiences of the pro- and anti-gay rights groups respond differently to different master frames across different phases. The audiences of pro-gay rights groups respond more favorably to the mobilizing frames and the reactionary frames while unfavorably to the critical frame and the rationalist frames. For the anti-gay rights groups, their target audiences prefer the populist frames and the mobilizing frames but do not disfavor any of the

seven master frames consistently across the three phases. The lowess curves show that for those frames that are favored by the target audiences, the activists become more and more likely to use such frames while lowering the likelihood of using those frames that have a statistically significant negative coefficient. By applying the decision rule which compares the proportions between the starting point and the endpoint in each phase, the result shows that the revised view has a decent prediction rate since it can correctly predict the temporal change of activists' frame usage in seventeen out of twenty-four cases (71%). The analytical outcomes of the three hypotheses demonstrate that the framing process is an interactive and dynamic one in which activists respond to both the feedback of their target audiences and the changing political conditions brought about by policy outputs.

The implication of this chapter speaks to the ongoing debate of agency versus structure in social sciences and provides a newer understanding of how frame resonance works. The traditional view of frame resonance argues that activists are the major actors who decide the ways to frame a policy. Although activists would use some general ideas learned from the cultural background to construct their policy frames in order to make frames relevant and appealing to their target audiences, the traditional view does not specify any role played by the masses (the audience) in this framing process. Unlike the traditional view, the revised view proposed in this chapter contends that the audiences can effectively place at least a probabilistic or loose constraint on what policy frames shall be included in activists' messages by showing their preferences of different frames. Therefore, the revised view of frame resonance supports an integrative approach to the agency-structure debate and states that agential and structural factors are both influential in the process of frame construction and selection. Structural factors such as cultural background,

the creation of online spaces, and the change of policy outcomes set the boundaries of the universe of possible policy frames while agential factors like audience responses determine the subset of frames to be used in messages. Therefore, based on the findings of this chapter, online spaces have become a two-edged sword for activist groups. On the one hand, these online spaces allow activists to reach out to a much larger group of audiences and potential bystanders. With the increased availability of information about target audiences' frame preferences, activists can now make informed decisions when crafting their policy messages and it makes the framing process more effective. On the other hand, the feedback mechanism of online spaces also reduces activists' autonomy when deciding what can be said and what should be said in their messages. The reduction of autonomy is not only reflected in the anti-gay rights groups' greater tendency to adopt the populist frames but also the pro-gay rights groups' lack of discussion on more radical forms of family structures such as civil partnership and multiple-person family system.

Two major directions for the future work emerge from this research. First, although the existing literature of frame resonance is rich in their theoretical discussion of what factors make resonance more likely, the conditions they point out cannot be easily measured. For example, the previous discussion has listed the following conditions that should affect the likelihood of resonance: compatibility between frames and the broader cultural environment, empirical credibility, congruence between social movement organizations' claims and actions, and experiential commensurability. However, there has been little research dedicated to a deeper discussion on how these different conditions can be operationalized and measured. Therefore, future research should aim to construct measurements for these conditions and explore how the inclusion of such factors would complicate the relationship between frame choices and audience responses. Second, although this research refines our understanding of frame resonance by highlighting the

agency of the target audiences in online framing, it is still unclear what factors would lead to the change of audiences' frame preferences in the first place. It can be inferred from the results of the second hypothesis (structural disjuncture) that policy outcomes would reshape the audiences' attention to a public policy and their preferences of policy frames. Nevertheless, an in-depth analysis would be required to tease out the complex web of factors that would shape how the audiences perceive and support the legitimacy of a policy frame and the claims associated with such a frame.

CHAPTER IV
TALKING POLITICS: DIFFERENCES OF FRAMING PATTERNS
BETWEEN ACTIVISTS AND INFLUENCERS

A. Abstract

The digital age has reshaped our way of life tremendously in a variety of aspects and political activism is no exception. In their 2013 work, Bennett and Segerberg propose an alternative logic of contentious politics, namely connective action, and highlight the growing importance of personalized content sharing relative to organizational structure. Building on previous literature on connective action and networked framing, this chapter aims to broaden the scope of actors who have the agency to influence people's perceptions of public policies. In addition to activists, I argue that influencers who are active in creating and sharing content on social media play an important role in the meaning-making process of policy issues. This chapter looks at the policy messages disseminated by pro- and anti-gay rights activists and influencers in Taiwan. The findings suggest that the pro-gay rights influencers convey their policy appeals by performing their LGBTQ+ identities while the anti-gay rights influencers are anonymous hubs of information. The implication of this work shows that social media represents an imperfect public sphere since different types of actors need to strategically adapt to its filtering effect on their content.

Keywords: framing, activists, influencers, social media, gay rights, public sphere

B. Background

Online spaces have now transformed individuals' daily lives in various ways, including the way we do our shopping, the forms of interpersonal connections, and the sources we turn to for information and entertainment. In both fields of marketing and economics, the term "attention economy" has been crafted to highlight how attention has now become a scarce resource in our current age when information and content have grown explosively (Davenport and Beck 2001). The trend of the Information Age in which online sources of information have become more and more important is no longer reversible and would be further accelerated by future technological advances like the 5G network (Soldani and Manzalini 2015).

The characteristics of the attention economy signal both an opportunity and a challenge for the advocacy of policy issues. On the one hand, the ever-increasing sources of information would make it even harder for activists to make people pay close attention to their policy appeals. Activists need to think more creatively to find ways to catch people's attention and continuously raise the audience's awareness of certain policy issues. On the other hand, the Information Age helps issue advocacy since online spaces allow more and more players to become influential and activists no longer have the nearly monopolistic capacity to frame policy issues. Newer actors like Internet influencers can upload a video with content that advocates certain political issues to the vast number of followers on different social media platforms. Online spaces have now become a public sphere in which people with different levels of influence can come together to discuss policy issues. However, we need more research to understand how the uneven capacity of attracting the target audience in the attention economy would favor some players over others in a biased manner (Dahlberg 2001; Poor 2005).

In addition to the characteristics of the attention economy, the increasing dependency on online spaces changes the way people interact with one another. We now live in a society where interpersonal networks have flattened and decentralized the political power structure (Etling et al. 2010). In the network society, interpersonal connections have become the major mechanism for not only the spread of information but also political mobilization. Online spaces allow both the deepening and widening of interpersonal networks. The deepening effect can be shown in situations where online spaces resemble echo chambers while the widening effect helps individuals to interact with those who may be spatially distant or belong to other social groups (Guille et al. 2013; Colleoni et al. 2014).¹¹¹ Therefore, structural changes such as the emergence of the attention economy and the network society shape not only the scope of political actors who may qualify as frame producers but also the framing strategies in online activism. To understand the way various political actors interact with one another when generating policy frames in online spaces, this chapter compares the framing patterns between activists and influencers.¹¹² Specifically, I examine how the content and the frame types found in messages of issue advocacy differ between activists and influencers on social media.

¹¹¹ The deepening effect describes how social media contributes to the increasing levels of polarization on politically salient topics (Barbera et al. 2015). Since users of social media can filter out information that is incongruent to their existing beliefs, the use of social media resembles echo chambers in which beliefs are amplified or reinforced by repetition and a lack of rebuttal (Cinelli et al. 2021). Furthermore, the spread of misinformation also furthers the development of political polarization (Spohr 2017).

¹¹² In this chapter, activists are defined as those who have participated in collective action or are members of social movements, and oftentimes these activists are represented by formal organizations (Kutlaca, van Zomeren, and Epstude 2020). However, it is more difficult to define who influencers are given the ever-changing nature of social media. I would borrow the definition used by Zhou, Lu, and Mariani (2019) and argue that influencers are “those nodes [on social media] who, once they initiate a spreading process on a network of contacts, can reach and ‘infect’ a large portion of the system.” Although these two identities might overlap in a real-world scenario, for this research, influencers and activists are mutually exclusive among my cases.

C. Research Questions

This chapter conceptualizes the framing process as one that involves collaboration and contestation among various social actors. Online spaces provide opportunities for different actors other than activists to distribute messages for issue advocacy. I focus on a comparative study between pro- and anti-gay rights activists and influencers in Taiwan and examine their discursive and topical patterns of policy messages. Most of the framing literature in social movement studies has narrowly attributed agency to only activists. Previous studies leave out the increasingly prominent role played by other active online actors like influencers. This chapter complements previous findings of social movements since it challenges traditional framing studies which assume that activists serve a dominant role in frame production and dissemination (Benford 1997). The simplified picture of frame construction neglects the complex interactive process involving competition and cooperation among various social actors to legitimate a specific policy stance.

With the increasing usage of online platforms as a channel to communicate with others and to gain knowledge of the outside world, it becomes even more important to see how online interpersonal connections may shape people's understanding of a policy issue. However, it is still unclear what political influence influencers have as an information provider and a frame producer in online activism. We need to study more carefully the choices and dilemmas influencers face when generating political messages. Influencers' capacity to frame policy issues is not without limits. Their career as influencers relies on gaining popularity from fans and bystanders and it would be risky for them to discuss sensitive and controversial political issues like gay rights (McQuarrie et al. 2012). The capacity for influencers to frame policy debates in their posts is at the same time constrained by the different rules and regulations set by either the government or

the social media companies to govern behaviors in social media platforms. Furthermore, influencers interact with not only their audience and other influencers but also with activists and these interactions would affect their choices of policy frame related to political issues. Therefore, the analysis in this chapter aims to answer the following questions. First, what are the major differences and similarities of online framing behaviors between activists and influencers? Furthermore, how do political messages disseminated by influencers differ from activists' posts in terms of their argumentative styles? For example, what are some clusterings of policy frames more commonly found in influencers' messages of gay rights while seldom mentioned in activists' discourses?

D. Literature Review - Networked Framing and Connective Action

Online spaces provide a communicative channel to break up activists' monopolistic capacity to frame policy issues. Two concepts, "connective action" and "networked framing", have been proposed to describe a more horizontal way of issue advocacy. In the information age, people are networked in platforms of web-based communications. Connective action is facilitated by personalized content sharing across networks on social media. Digital media takes the central role of organizing with little or no organizational coordination of action (Bennett and Segerberg 2013). Connective action is introduced by Bennett and Segerberg (2012) and it can be understood as situations where "taking public action or contributing to a common good becomes an act of personal expression and recognition of self-validation achieved by sharing ideas and actions in trusted relationships (758)." In the studies of communication, a relevant concept is "networked framing (Nip and Fu 2016)." Networked framing is defined as "a process through which particular problem definitions, causal interpretations, moral evaluations and/or treatment recommendations attain prominence through crowdsourcing practices (Meraz and Papacharissi 2016:

103).”¹¹³ Both concepts highlight the role of digital media and discuss how online spaces allow the distribution and generation of policy frames to happen more rapidly and extensively. In the following paragraphs, I discuss the major findings related to these two concepts and then offer critiques to the current studies of online activism and framing.

Connective action is an alternative form of activism observed in sustained protests since the beginning of the 2010s, as shown in cases of the Arab Spring and Black Lives Matter Movement (Bennett and Segerberg 2013; Lim 2013). One of the common features of these movements is the use of digital media for the large-scale exchange of information in the network society (Castells 2000). Unlike collective action which relies heavily on established social movement organizations, connective action does not require many organizational resources or clear collective identity and can be sustained by personalized content sharing in online networks (McAdam et al. 1996; Bennett and Segerberg 2013).¹¹⁴ The most prominent frame in connective action is personalized action frames which resonate with a vast loose-knit collective such as “We are the 99% (Bennett and Segerberg 2012).” In addition to the technical features of online platforms, it is the sociality that matters and facilitates online political engagement (Ellison and Boyd 2013; Vronmen et al. 2015).¹¹⁵ Connective affordances are shown in not only the relationship between technology and users but also the interdependence between different types of users who have access

¹¹³ In cases of networked framing, elite and citizen users of social media both can “revise, re-articulate, and re-disperse” frames although elites still have more influence on frame building and setting (Bashir 2012; Meraz and Papacharissi 2013).

¹¹⁴ However, collective action and connective action are not mutually exclusive and it has been found that practices of connective action can propel offline collective action (Lim 2013).

¹¹⁵ In sociology and anthropology, sociality is understood as “a dynamic relational matrix within which human subjects are constantly interacting in ways that are co-productive, continually plastic and malleable, and through which they come to know the world they live in and find their purpose and meaning within it (Long and Moore 2012).”

to the technology (Vasst et al. 2017).¹¹⁶ The roles and organizing principles of these users in connective action are not predefined but are fluid as well as changing (Vronmen et al. 2015). Different users of social media have varying levels of social influence and can affect other people's decisions to rebroadcast policy messages (Watts and Dodds 2007; Iyengar et al. 2011). The motivations for individuals to participate in connective action also differ since, for some, it is for managing their images, while for others it is for issue advocacy (Toubia and Stephen 2013).

Networked framing illustrates a new way of news-making and value production in a network and Web 2.0 society. Networked framing is a process in which various actors circulate information and collectively contribute to “simultaneously fragmented and pluralized storytelling (Meraz and Papacharissi 2013; 2016).”¹¹⁷ The degree of influence elites hold is shaped by the crowdsourced actions of non-elites. Elites no longer have the final say to decide what is news-worthy and salient in politics (Meraz and Papacharissi 2013). The factors that affect networked framing include the interrelationship between the influential and the ordinary (Nisbet 2010; Meraz and Papacharissi 2013), the algorithm of the Web 2.0 socio-technical architecture (Meraz and Papacharissi 2013; Stewart et al. 2017), the availability of contested and counter-frames (Stewart et al. 2017), and the competition between news media and social media in an era of hybrid media (Siapera et al. 2018). Unlike traditional framing in mass media, messages in networked framing

¹¹⁶ According to Vasst et al. (2017), connective affordances are defined as “collective level affordances actualized by actors in team interdependent roles.” Therefore, this idea highlights that groups of actors on social media can take on different roles such as advocates, supporters, or amplifiers, and their interdependence in the online space collectively contribute to the formation of connective action.

¹¹⁷ Unlike the traditional types of framing activities found in news production (journalists), social movements (activists), and politics (elites), networked framing occurs when a post/tweet is forwarded/retweeted. Once retweeted or forwarded, the original post/tweet will be constantly “revised, rearticulated, and redispersed” among networks of users (Meraz and Papacharissi 2013). Therefore, unlike the traditional types of framing, frame producers in networked framing have much less control over the meaning and interpretation of the content once it is spread through social media.

are more likely to be described through storytelling with affective values and people are “mobilized or connected through expressions of sentiment (Papacharissi 2015).” Furthermore, networked framing is closely related to “gatekeeping” which discusses how information is filtered before being published in any communicative platform (Lewin 1943; Stewart et al. 2017).¹¹⁸ The analyses of networked framing are often conducted via multi-method approaches, with quantitative methods finding general patterns that exist in a large corpus of posts and tweets and qualitative methods showing the framing processes in which frames are constantly “revised, rearticulated, and redispersed (Meraz and Papacharissi 2013; Stewart et al. 2017).” Although the influential’s frames are still dominant in most cases of online activism (Bashir 2012; Siapera et al. 2018), the ordinary who repost the messages may not simply republish the original content but instead revise the frames (Nip and Fu 2016). The online public sphere allows the emergence of alternative frames since the production of frames is not tightly controlled by elites (Meraz 2017). Therefore, both leaders and participants in networked framing contribute to the formation of policy frames found in online messages and under-represented viewpoints are more likely to be seen in spaces of affective publics like platforms of social media (Papacharissi 2015). In online spaces where power is aggregated in bottom-up processes, power comes out of the formation of networks instead of being permanently or structurally determined (Nisbet 2010; Chadwick 2017; Siapera et al. 2018).

Earlier findings of connective action and networked framing discuss an alternative way for contentious politics to happen, with the help of online spaces. They show how online framing

¹¹⁸ Networked gatekeeping is “a process through which actors are crowdsourced to prominence through the use of conversational, social practices that symbiotically connect elite and crowd in the determination of information relevancy (Meraz and Papacharissi 2013).”

is a process that involves negotiation and contestation between crowdsourced elites and participants. Online spaces allow not only the rapid and vast spread of political messages but also the happening of offline collective action like protests. Although the literature on the two topics makes a distinction between actors with different levels of influence such as elites, influential users, and ordinary users, there is a lack of discussion on how different types of influential actors like activists and influencers differ in their content of policy messages. The success of online connective action is determined by not only the technical structure of online spaces but also sociality. Therefore, we need to examine the relationship-building process of online framing since the effect of framing can be shown not only in the way an issue is substantively constructed but also emotionally expressed. This chapter contributes to the literature of connective action and networked framing by looking at the similarities and differences in how policy messages of gay rights are constructed by activists and influencers. By comparing the differences in their behavioral patterns and argumentative styles, the findings can help us to answer puzzles related to digital optimism.¹¹⁹ In other words, to what extent do online spaces serve as a public sphere that is open to everyone who can express diverse political viewpoints?

¹¹⁹ Proponents of digital optimism argue that the Internet and new media allow more and more users to be engaged with one another politically since they lower the costs for people to take part in politics (Veltmer 2006). Social media has been considered as one of the factors that lead to bottom-up processes of democratization in events such as the Arab Spring (Wolfsfeld, Segev, and Sheaffer 2013). Furthermore, these new channels of communication also enable users to easily express views that are not mainstream or help minor political parties to gain visibility and popularity (Gibson and Ward 2000; Loader and Mercea 2011). However, critiques of digital optimism point out that digital optimism is “utopian” because of unequal access across social groups as well as the spread of misinformation and propaganda manipulation (Lelia 2010; Benkler, Faris, and Roberts 2018). This chapter contributes to the debate of digital optimism by showing that social media is not a free marketplace for all ideas. Content producers such as activists or influencers face pressure from their audiences to selectively present certain viewpoints that are deemed “acceptable.” Certain political viewpoints are silenced once actors choose to use social media as their communication platform.

E. Hypotheses

This chapter discusses the differences in online policy framing between activists and influencers on social media. I examine whether activists and influencers exhibit different features of policy framing given their target audience, career considerations, and the interactions between these two kinds of actors.

Online spaces open up possibilities for different social actors to voice their arguments in favor of or opposition to a certain policy stance. Although these various online actors share a common goal of reaching as many people as possible, their strategies of crafting the content of their policy messages differ, given their different pools of target audiences. Activists cater to the policy demands of those who are more ideological, while influencers need to reach out to a much larger audience.¹²⁰ Those who follow activist groups' fan pages are more likely to hold polarized policy stances similar to activists' views. The audiences would be more tolerant of a wider range of policy frames as long as the frames speak to the values or policy stances they commonly share with the activists. Therefore, I would expect activists to adopt a wider range of policy frames representing fundamental values in their policy messages. However, for those who follow influencers on social media, their decisions to keep track of influencers' updates may mainly be motivated by their interests in learning about the influencers' lives or the expert knowledge he or she has. It may have little or nothing to do with whether the audiences feel sympathetic to the influencers' policy stances. Unlike activists who need to bolster their policy appeals by experimenting with a variety of policy frames, influencers could only present a much narrower set of policy frames that they feel comfortable showing to their audiences. In order not to push away some

¹²⁰ The major reason why influencers need to secure a larger pool of audiences is that their revenues by working as an influencer are mainly dependent on the number of attention they can secure from the audiences. Gaining more audiences becomes advantageous to influencers when they need to seek opportunities for affiliate marketing or display advertising from brands.

followers who might consider them politically polarized, influencers would avoid highlighting frames that might be controversial and stick to only a few frames to play it safe. Therefore, influencers are more likely to concentrate on only a few policy frames in their messages than their activist counterparts. Frame diversity is defined as the extent to which activists or influencers would be equally likely to adopt each frame in their messages, with lower values indicating a greater reliance on only a few key policy frames (unbalanced and unequal proportions across frames). By using the IQV scores to measure frame diversity, we can express the audience effect in *Hypothesis 1*.¹²¹

Hypothesis 1 (audience effect, frame diversity): *The diversity of frames (operationalized as IQV scores) for influencers will tend to be lower than those for activists.*

The primary goal of activists is to push for policies while money-making and gaining popularity are the major goals pursued by influencers. Therefore, influencers are expected to use policy frames to discuss gay rights issues far less frequently than activists, as their target audiences should tend to be less interested in political issues in comparison to entertainment and other intriguing topics in daily lives. Another difference between activists and influencers is their capacity to build a fanbase. Influencers' careers are highly dependent on creating and maintaining loyal followership by keeping followers continuously attentive to their messages. Therefore, in comparison to activists, influencers are on average more likely to receive far more reactions to their posts.

Hypothesis 2.1 (career effect, average monthly proportions of policy messages): *The average monthly proportions of posts mentioning gay rights policies are lower among messages posted by influencers than those by activists.*

¹²¹ For a detailed introduction to the IQV scores and information entropy (as a robustness check to the IQV scores), please refer to Appendix IV.

Hypothesis 2.2 (career effect, average message popularity): *The average numbers of post reactions received by influencers are higher than those received by activists.*

Regardless of the above-mentioned differences between activists and influencers, it is important to point out that the relationship between them is not competitive but cooperative. Influencers' capacity for generating policy frames does not crowd out activists' roles in framing policy issues. We would instead expect a moderate to high level of similarity in the types of frames among messages created by like-minded influencers and activists. The content of policy messages distributed by influencers largely resembled those posted by activists because influencers tend to forward activists' messages or borrow the arguments proposed by like-minded activists.

Hypothesis 3 (interaction effect, inter-group frame homogeneity): *There is a moderate to high level of similarity (more than 50%) between the types of policy frames found in messages posted by influencers and activists when comparing the top frequently-used frames across actors.*

F. Methods

This chapter expands the scope of who counts as frame producers beyond traditionally recognized activists. Specifically, it compares how policy frames of gay rights are presented differently between activists and influencers. To examine the differences in policy messages proposed by activists and influencers, I collect all messages from public Facebook fan pages of eight pro- and anti-gay rights activist groups and influencers between November 2013 and March 2020.¹²² Policy messages are defined as those posts which have at least one policy frame in them. To facilitate comparisons between policy frames produced by activists and influencers, according to the hypotheses listed in the previous section, I look into the following characteristics of posts: types of policy frames, frame diversity (*Hypothesis 1*), proportions of policy messages

¹²² The rationale for choosing this period is explained in the following section of data collection. The methods of data collection are also specified in the next section.

(*Hypothesis 2.1*), message popularity (*Hypothesis 2.2*), and inter-group frame homogeneity (*Hypothesis 3*). To identify the types of policy/master frames in posts, I adopt the thematic qualitative content analysis to code all the posts into one or more types of policy/master frames (Kuckartz 2014).¹²³ The coding process is a multi-stage one. I start with an initial codebook based on the types of policy/master frames that have been found in earlier literature that studies those countries where same-sex marriage has been legalized (Hull 2001; Brewer 2003, 2007; Miceli 2005; Andersen 2006; Mucciaroni 2009, 2011; Leachman 2013; Moscovitz 2013). The codebook contains both the types of policy frames and the keywords which represent each policy frame.¹²⁴ I, along with two other coders, apply this initial codebook to a small number of samples (fifty messages) randomly selected from the eight fan pages of activist groups and influencers. The initial codebook is changed and revised to reflect the new types of policy frames or their keywords found in the first-stage coding. Once the first-stage coding is done, the coders use the revised codebook to code all the posts at the second stage (Anderson 2007; Kuckartz 2014). The inter-coder reliability is the output of dividing the number of instances where coders have an agreement by the total number of possibilities out of the thirty pieces of messages which are randomly selected from the eight groups/individuals. The lowest inter-coder reliability between a pair of coders is around 80.4% in the second coding stage and any values above 75% are considered acceptable in previous research (Stemler 2004; Hays and Revicki 2005).¹²⁵

¹²³ A policy frame is “the schemas of interpretations that enable individuals to locate, perceive, identify, and label occurrences within their life space and the world at large” (Goffman 1974) while a master frame is an umbrella that captures the essential ideas and values of different policy frames. A master frame is defined as “a generic type of collective action frame that is wider in scope and influence than run-of-the-mill social movement frames (Snow and Benford 1992).” For example, both policy frames of “human rights” and “fundamental rights” belong to the same master frame as the “rights frame.”

¹²⁴ For the details of the codebook, please refer to Appendices I and II.

¹²⁵ The final output is decided based on a majority rule amongst the coders if any disagreement occurs throughout the coding process.

Frame diversity is computed as the IQV (index of qualitative variation) scores. Once the policy messages are coded, I count the proportions of each policy frame for each fan page of activists and influencers in a quarter. Proportions of policy frames are computed by dividing the frequency of a specific policy frame by the total number of policy frames that are identified in the text data for an activist group or influencer. I use the proportions to compute the IQV scores for each fan page. The IQV scores measure the variability in nominal variables and are computed based on the ratio of the total number of differences in the distribution to the maximum number of possible differences in the same distribution (Agresti and Agresti 1978). The score ranges between 0 and 1, with zero indicating no diversity while one showing perfect diversity.¹²⁶ The monthly proportions of policy messages are measured as the ratio of the number of policy messages which include at least one policy frame to the total number of messages in a month. Message popularity is measured as the average number of likes received by pro- or anti-gay rights activists or influencers in each quarter. I conduct a series of hypothesis testing to see if there is a statistically significant difference regarding the proportions of policy messages and average numbers of likes between activists and influencers. Frame homogeneity is observed by comparing the top five most frequently used frames and we examine the extent to which activists and influencers of the same policy stance rely on similar types of policy frames.

G. Case Selection

The chapter adopts a comparative study to examine the differences and similarities of gay-rights policy messages disseminated by activists and influencers. Online spaces and networking platforms have created opportunities for new players to not only frame policy issues but

¹²⁶ For example, in a population where there are four possible outcomes for a specific variable, if each possible outcome accounts for one-quarter of the population, the IQV score will be 0.

also spread their messages to a wider range of audiences. However, it is still not clear if both activists and influencers have the same target audience when posting policy messages and how their messages may differ if the target audiences are different between them. To answer the puzzles regarding the agency activists and influencers have for framing policy issues online, I choose to focus on the topic of same-sex marriage in Taiwan. In Taiwan, same-sex marriage has been socially controversial, and even after the constitutional interpretation which recognized same-sex spousal rights as constitutionally guaranteed, there were backlashes against gay rights. Therefore, to gain support from the mass public, the issue of same-sex marriage has been widely debated in Taiwanese society by various social actors, including both activists and influencers. I select the four most famous pro- and anti-gay rights groups and compare them with the four most popular pro- and anti-gay rights influencers. The degree of popularity is measured by the number of followers activist groups and influencers have on their public Facebook fan pages. The pro- and anti-gay rights groups are the Taiwan Alliance to Promote Civil Partnership Rights (TAPCPR, @tapcpr, 85,232 followers), the Marriage Equality Coalition in Taiwan (EqualLoveTW, @equallovetw, 94,881 followers), the Coalition for the Happiness of Our Next Generation (Hope.Family.TW, @Hope.family.tw, 85,035 followers) and the Stability of Power (SOP[Stabilizing Force Party] @StabilityOfPower, 78,669 followers).

The two selected influencer fan pages in which pro-gay rights messages are repeatedly expressed are FuFuKnows (FuFuKnows, @fufuknows, 72,518 followers) and Zhong Ming-Xuan (Zhong, @zhongmingxuan, 1,219,331 followers). FuFuKnows is managed by a gay couple who have set up the fan page in October 2016. The gay couple, A-kai and Leo, have posted a variety of content, including video clips showing their everyday lives, talk shows with guest speakers, as well as short dramas that discuss issues related to love and same-sex relationship. Zhong Ming-

Xuan is an influencer who has become famous after uploading a cover version of a Taiwanese pop song “Suffering” in 2012 when he was only thirteen years old. He is a full-time YouTuber and the themes of his videos are mainly about sharing his life and his critically satirical perspectives on politics and society in general.

The influencers who have explicitly expressed anti-gay rights messages are mostly anonymous and do not have an online identity that is associated with a specific real person. Therefore, the messages they post are not about sharing their own lives but mostly about their opinions on politics and opposition to gay-rights activism. The major reason why most online influencers who express anti-gay rights messages are anonymous may be that they are subject to harsh and intensive critiques from pro-gay rights netizens. Good and Go (Good&Go, @goooooooodog, 28,748 followers) is an anonymous influencer whose pages in YouTube and Facebook were set up in December 2015. The first video posted by Good and Go was about calling for people to participate in initiating a referendum to restrict the definition of marriage as one between a man and a woman. This video was created far earlier before the constitutional interpretation which ruled that not granting same-sex couples their spousal rights was unconstitutional. The videos and messages distributed by Good and Go contain both information about the negative impacts of gay rights policies as well as dissatisfaction with the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) government which is claimed to promote gay rights. The other selected influencer fan page which has continually posted anti-gay rights messages is “The Truth Gay Rights Activists Dare not to Face” (DLTU [Don’t Lie to Us], @dontlietoalofus, 20,193 followers). The Don’t Lie to Us page was established in June 2015 and its goal was to uncover the “underlying truth of LGBT-rights activism” that is unknown to the general public. Therefore, the fan page presents

critiques to a wide range of topics which include same-sex marriage, LGBT curriculum, transgender rights, homo-supremacy, sexual liberation, and drug abuse.

H. Data Type, Scope, and Collection

This chapter compares the framing behaviors between activists and influencers. I would argue that given their different social positions and considerations, these differences are reflected in how the two kinds of social actors construct policy frames of gay rights. To analyze the different styles of frame presentation, I collect all of the messages from the public Facebook fan pages of the eight most popular pro- and anti-gay rights activist groups and influencers. The period of data collection is between November 2013 and March 2020. The rationale for choosing November 2013 as the starting point of this research is that the activist groups of traditional family values have become more organized in late November of 2013.¹²⁷ The endpoint of data collection is March 2020 and it is about ten months after the enactment of the special law, the *Act for Implementation of J.Y. Interpretation No. 748*, which grants same-sex couples their spousal rights in Taiwan. I divide the whole dataset into four groups (pro-gay rights activists, anti-gay rights activists, pro-gay rights influencers, and anti-gay rights influencers) and pool all of the messages in a group together. The average number of messages is around 500 per fan page and the total number of messages is 3,851 for the eight fan pages.¹²⁸

¹²⁷ On November 30, 2013, the anti-gay rights protest “All People Stand up for the Happiness of the Next Generation” was organized by the Coalition for the Happiness of Our Next Generation.

¹²⁸ The total number of messages posted by the eight pro- and anti-gay rights activist groups and influencers is 3,851. There are 1,820 messages from influencers (Don’t Lie to Us: 567; Good and Go: 183; Zhong Ming-Xuan: 564; FuFuKnows: 506) and 2,031 from activist groups (SOP: 452; Hope.Family.TW: 513; EqualLoveTW: 383; TAPCPR: 683).

I. Comparing Framing Behaviors Between Activists and Influencers

The results in [Tables 4.1-4.6](#) summarize the different behavioral patterns of framing across the four types of social actors (pro-gay rights activists, anti-gay rights activists, pro-gay rights influencers, and anti-gay rights influencers).

In [Table 4.1](#), I compute the IQV scores, which capture the degrees to which actors have consistently relied on few policy frames or have drawn more widely from a variety of frames.¹²⁹ The numbers in Table 1 show that the pro-gay rights activists, anti-gay rights activists, and anti-gay rights influencers all have high IQV scores which are above 0.95. The results suggest that these three kinds of actors do not heavily rely on few policy frames. In comparison to these three types of actors, the pro-gay rights influencers have a relatively lower level of IQV scores. This gap indicates that the pro-gay rights influencers are more likely to concentrate on a small number of essential frames when formulating their policy messages on gay rights. The results of [Table 4.1](#) partially support the first hypothesis which argues that activists are more likely to adopt a much wider set of policy frames that speak to their essential ideological values. However, the result for the anti-gay rights influencers is not what we would expect since they exhibit a similar behavioral pattern of frame diversity as activists but different from the pro-gay rights influencers.

In [Table 4.2](#), we see a similar pattern that the anti-gay rights influencers behave similarly to activists rather than their pro-gay rights counterparts when it comes to the proportions of policy messages. [Table 4.2](#) compares the proportions of policy messages in all of the posts across the four types of actors. The results of hypothesis testing conclude that when the anti-gay rights activists are treated as the reference group, their likelihood of posting policy messages does not

¹²⁹ The range of the IQV scores is between zero and one, with higher values indicating higher levels of variability of frame usage across policy frames. For a more formal introduction to the formula and computation of the IQV scores, please see Appendix IV.

differ significantly from those of the pro-gay rights activists and the anti-gay rights influencers. However, the pro-gay rights influencers are found to have a much lower likelihood to use policy frames to discuss gay rights issues in their posts and the gap of proportions is statistically significant. Similarly, *Hypothesis 2.1* is only partially supported since although it is true in the case of the pro-gay rights influencers, it does not apply to the anti-gay rights influencers who have a similar likelihood to post policy messages as activists.

[Table 4.3](#) shows the results of hypothesis testing for the average number of likes each type of actor receives in their posts. By treating the pro-gay rights activists as the reference group, *Hypothesis 2.2* is also partially supported since the pro-gay rights influencers have a significantly higher average number of likes. Nevertheless, the anti-gay rights influencers have the lowest level of message popularity and the mean difference between them and the reference group is statistically significant. Therefore, combining the findings of [Tables 4.1-4.3](#), it suggests that the roles played by the pro- and anti-gay rights influencers in online activism are starkly different. The pro-gay rights influencers act as micro-influencers who have a robust number of followers and focus on the specific niche of sharing their daily life as LGBTQ individuals. However, the anti-gay rights influencers behave much similarly to activists since they do not actively seek to increase message popularity and they are not hesitant to be focal about a wider set of frames.

To gain a deeper understanding of the different framing patterns across the four types of actors, [Table 4.4](#) lists the most frequently-used policy frames by activists and influencers. Frames that discuss collective identities have commonly been an integral part of policy messages across these four types of actors. The activists and influencers use frames of identity politics to

not only refer to the LGBTQ+ community but also cultivate a sense of solidarity with the audiences by using words like “us,” “comrades,” or “partners.”

For the pro-gay rights side, we observe that the pro-gay rights activists and influencers have the same top five most frequently used frames, although the ranking and proportions are different. The pro-gay rights activists and influencers highlight the ideological value of equality and their messages focus heavily on discussing the importance of love and having same-sex couples’ relationships recognized legally. Furthermore, they also construct policy messages with a call to end discriminatorily differential treatment to mobilize their supporters to take action in pursuit of legalizing same-sex marriage.

For the anti-gay rights side, the frame similarity is also quite high since activists and influencers commonly share three policy frames out of their top five. In addition to the identity frame, both the anti-gay rights activists and influencers rely heavily on frames that express anti-elitism and well-being/public interests. Both actors emphasize that the DPP politicians have cared little about the opinions of the majority. Additionally, their messages discuss the potential negative impacts on society if same-sex marriage would be institutionalized. However, the anti-gay rights activists use frames of mobilization and democracy much more frequently to encourage their audiences to participate in the referendums. In contrast, the anti-gay rights influencers pay less attention to the mobilizing frame but stress ideas of morality and special rights. The morality frame asserts that gay rights are not compatible with the social norms of Taiwanese society while the frame of special rights argues that gay rights groups have formed close connections with political elites to affect policy outcomes. Given the high levels of similarity of top frames between like-minded activists and influencers, the results of Table 4 provide some evidence to

the hypothesis of inter-group frame homogeneity. We find that influencers' usage of policy messages largely resembles like-minded activists' since they learn the various ways to frame gay rights policies from supporting activists.

J. Content Analysis of Argumentative Styles Across Actors

The findings of the previous section allow us to understand the general patterns regarding framing behaviors across the four types of actors. However, without examining the argument structure of policy messages, it is not clear how the different actors prefer to depict gay rights issues with a certain combination of policy frames. For example, what clusters of policy frames are more likely to be adopted by the pro-gay rights activists in comparison to their like-minded influencers? This section uses the maximum likelihood factor analysis to reduce the dimensionality with an aim to figure out the underlying dimensions of policy frames across actors. I complement the results of factor analysis with the qualitative content analysis to examine how the four types of actors interpret and assign meanings to certain clusters of frames.

In the factor analysis, the twenty-three variables of policy frames are coded dichotomously, with one indicating the existence of a policy frame in a post and zero otherwise. I adopt the most commonly-used varimax rotation which maximizes the variance of the squared loadings within factors and makes the results more interpretable (Abdi 2003). The smallest number of dimensions for each type of actor is determined by the chi-square statistic provided by the function of "factanal" in the R package "stats" (Shah et al. 2019). [Table 4.5](#) shows the top four dimensions of policy frames for the four types of actors, the least number of dimensions needed for factor analysis, and the cumulative variance explained by the total number of dimensions. In [Table 4.6](#), I name the discursive dimensions based on the policy frames which constitute them as

well as the relationship between frames and dimensions. In the following paragraphs, I discuss the frame clusters with examples of the qualitative content analysis for each type of actor.

For the pro-gay rights activists, the first dimension is solely represented by the policy frame of affection whose factor loading is 0.99. The first latent discursive dimension, “love wins”, consists of concepts related to “love,” “marriage,” “companion,” and “couple.” The pro-gay rights activists associate these ideas of affection with statements such as “love brings people together” and “getting married is one of the ways for people to pursue happiness in life.”

The second dimension of the pro-gay rights groups shows a challenging tone to what the anti-gay rights groups have long argued in their political rhetoric. The second dimension is represented by the following policy frames: the counterargument frame, the functional-role frame, the slippery-slope frame, the well-being frame, and the tolerance frame. In messages of the second dimension, the pro-gay rights activists not only mention some of the common arguments raised by the anti-gay rights groups but also refute the validity of such claims. The pro-gay rights activists propose that LGBT couples, similar to their straight counterparts, can fulfill roles as parents. The passage of same-sex marriage would not lead to other undesirable outcomes such as the destruction of family structure or the legalization of polygamy. The legalization of same-sex marriage is not merely beneficial to same-sex couples but to the whole society as well since it brings positive “pink” economic impacts for businesses related to tourism and the wedding industry.

The third dimension is called “born this way,” which hinges on the policy frames of anti-discrimination and human rights. Posts of this dimension convey the message that LGBTQ+ individuals are not different from heterosexuals and there is no way to justify the existing social oppression and discrimination which treat the two groups differently. Ensuring that LGBTQ+

people are free from the threat of discrimination is a human right that the government should actively promote. The last dimension touches on discussions of “rights that we cannot live without” which is composed of the policy frame related to fundamental rights. The advocacy of gay rights is vital to the lives of sexual minorities and such rights, like the freedom to marry, are part of the constitutional protections as specified in Interpretation No. 748.

For the pro-gay rights influencers, the first dimension is “inclusive democracy,” which is a combination of the anti-discrimination frame, the equality frame, the difference frame, and the democracy frame. The frames in the first dimension depict Taiwan as a democratic country where people of different social identities can prosper together and treat one another equally. The influencers highlight the history of political oppression such as the 228 incident and stress that people in Taiwan should cherish the fruits of democratization. Furthermore, they also argue that characteristics of democracy such as openness and diversity are the major features that make Taiwan starkly different from China.

The second dimension only consists of the policy frame which highlights political tolerance. The messages of tolerance discuss the different and even conflicting perspectives people might hold regarding various policy issues like cross-Strait relations and gay rights. The influencers mention that regardless of the divergent political views, people should take an open-minded and reconciliatory attitude toward one another and live peacefully together.

The third dimension of the pro-gay rights influencers is similar to the first dimension of the pro-gay rights activists, and it emphasizes the idea of “love wins.” One of the major niches for the pro-gay rights influencers is the sharing of their own private life experience as sexual minorities. They talk about stories of coming out, dealing with discrimination and bullying, and their relationships with their loved ones. Therefore, it is highly common for the pro-gay rights

influencers to run their accounts on social media together with their partners, as shown in the case of FuFuKnows. However, one major difference between the way “love wins” is presented by the gay rights activists and influencers is the influencers’ tendency to be less radical in their messages. The negative factor loading of the critical frame for the third dimension of the pro-gay rights influencers suggests that when discussing affective relationships, the pro-gay rights influencers take an assimilationist approach. While stressing that love is what makes same-sex couples no different from opposite-sex ones, the pro-gay rights influencers are far less likely to question or criticize the oppressive nature of the marriage institution in their discourse of love.

The last dimension is composed of the professionalism frame and is named “scientific evidence.” In messages that contain such a discursive feature, the pro-gay rights influencers borrow the scientific evidence in the medical field to refute the rumors related to HIV/AIDS. They try to inform their audiences that ignorance leads to misunderstanding and stigma that would hurt the most vulnerable groups in a population. Therefore, by learning more about things and people we are not familiar with, conversations and mutual understanding would eliminate unnecessary conflicts and harms against others.

The anti-gay rights activists’ first dimension, “separate and different,” consists of the following four policy frames: the critical frame, the sexuality frame, the anti-discrimination frame, and the difference frame. The first discursive dimension points out the essential differences of sexual desire and behaviors between LGBTQ+ and heterosexual people. The anti-gay rights groups argue that we should not neglect these differences and force identical legal treatment of the two groups regarding regulations of marriage. Furthermore, the anti-gay rights groups argue that some of the existing measures which promote gender equality have destabilized the gender norms of the society and resulted in unintended consequences. For example, the anti-gay rights

groups claim that the increasing numbers of unmarried pregnancy and STD (sexually transmitted diseases) cases are associated with the inappropriate curriculum of sex education. Therefore, laws and policies of gender equality and marriage should accommodate these essential differences and can be justified if certain differential treatment is imposed by law.¹³⁰

The second dimension is referred to as the “ideal society” and it is composed of the morality frame, the functional-role frame, and the democracy frame. Although the anti-gay rights activists also acknowledge the importance of democracy and recognize it as the main difference between Taiwan and China, they have been more critical of how democracy works in Taiwan. In their messages, democratic institutions cannot sustain without paying attention to people’s voices and following social norms that properly specify individuals’ roles in society. Therefore, the “collusion” of the pro-gay rights groups and political elites who push for same-sex marriage and other measures of sexual liberation would place the future generations of the Taiwanese society at risk.

Relatedly, the third dimension highlights the idea of “LGBT hegemony” and the policy frame of tolerance can solely represent such a dimension. This dimension of the anti-gay rights activists speaks to the idea that the gay rights movement is no longer a marginalized group but one with much political influence. The anti-gay rights groups argue that opponents of gay rights have largely been silenced because of the social pressure to be politically correct. For the anti-gay rights activists, the last dimension discusses the policy frame of professionalism. Messages of this dimension question the appropriateness of gender equality education since the curriculum still covers topics of LGBT even after the 2018 referendums.¹³¹

¹³⁰ One example of such differential treatment is a special law to regulate same-sex spousal rights, without changing the definition of traditional marriage.

¹³¹ A supermajority of voters voted against the inclusion of the LGBT curriculum in elementary and junior high schools in that election.

Based on the results of the factor analysis, the anti-gay rights influencers have the following four discursive dimensions: sexual liberation, LGBT hegemony, separation not discrimination, and scientific evidence. The first dimension, “sexual liberation,” takes on the critical frame, the sexuality frame, and the frame of well-being. In comparison to the anti-gay rights activists, the anti-gay rights influencers are much more explicit about their critical and radical views against gay rights activism. Messages related to the first dimension point out how sex education has led to undesirable consequences as a byproduct of the sexual revolution. For instance, the influencers argue that the number of sexually transmitted diseases has increased over the years since the implementation of gender equality education (LGBT education) in 2005. Additionally, the introduction to concepts such as “various sexual and gender identities” confuses students in elementary or junior high schools since they are not mature enough to think independently. The anti-gay rights influencers have also paid close attention to what has happened overseas and raised the red flag that these developments of sexual liberation in Western societies would one day take place in Taiwan.¹³²

The second dimension, LGBT hegemony, consists of the tolerance frame, the identity frame, the anti-discrimination frame, and the frame of special rights. The discourse of LGBT hegemony states that the ultimate goal of gay rights activism is not merely about same-sex marriage. Under the banner of erasing any forms of discrimination, the LGBT rights movements

¹³² One example of such concerns is the inclusion of self-determination of gender identity and sex in the German Green Party platform. The influencer “Don’t Let to Us” cited the words of Alternative for Germany (AfD) politician Steffen Königer and argued that if we replaced the binary gender identity with more than sixty categories of possible gender identities recognized by Facebook, the world would be out of control and there would be no way back to the simplistic nature of humanity.

have allegedly pushed for a cultural revolution that endangered traditional norms and ethics regarding gender roles.¹³³ By having more say and influence in setting the standards and regulations of gender equality, groups of LGBT rights are claimed to silence dissenting voices by labeling them as bigotry or discrimination.

The third dimension is named “separation not discrimination” and is composed of the anti-discrimination frame, the equality frame, the tolerance frame, and the difference frame. Messages of this dimension state that the major rationale to governs same-sex relationships with a special law is the inherent differences between LGBT and heterosexual individuals. Furthermore, another example of this dimension shows that some parents have concerns and dissatisfaction about gender equality education. It argues that although LGBT individuals should be treated equally with respect, it does not mean that the state authority should deprive parents of their rights to teach “proper” ideas of gender equality to their children. Such ideas include equality between two sexes, harmonious coexistence, and mutual respect but should not cover notions like homophobia, gender fluidity, or heteronormativity.

The last discursive dimension of the anti-gay rights influencers is built on the policy frame of professionalism and is named “scientific evidence.” The anti-gay rights influencers present statistics of public health to show that certain restrictive measures against sexual minorities are necessary such as the lifetime ban on blood donation for men who have sex with men. Similar to the last dimension of the anti-gay rights activists, the anti-gay rights influencers also feel dissatisfied with the current gender equality education. They argue that more input from parents, rather than opinions of so-called “gender equality experts,” are needed to provide young students with correct sex knowledge and ideas.

¹³³ One common example raised by the anti-gay rights influencers is the public all-gender restrooms. They argue that creating unisex restrooms places women and children at the risk of being harassed or assaulted.

K. Discussion and Implications

The creation of online spaces provides new channels for people to participate in discussions of political issues with those whom they may not know personally in real life. Digital optimism argues that the low entry barrier of the Internet allows a participatory culture of online political participation so that different voices can be heard and represented (Dahlgren 2005). However, for the arguments of digital optimism to hold, three implicit conditions need to be satisfied: (1) nearly everyone can access the online public sphere; (2) a variety of participants in the online public sphere can have a say in political discussion; (3) we can observe political messages of different political ideologies, spanning from a far-right ideology to an extremely left-wing one. Most of the earlier critiques of digital optimism focus on the first condition and conclude that the entry barrier is not as low as argued by proponents of the optimistic view (Di Gennaro and Dutton 2006). The participation of online political discussion has shown a demographic bias since it favors those who are younger, more educated, and wealthier or those who live in urban areas (Sylvester and McGlynn 2010). Nevertheless, there is a lack of discussion on the validity of the second and third conditions of digital optimism. This chapter contributes to the debate by not only recognizing influencers' agency to produce policy frames but also comparing how their messages may differ from those posted by activists.

For the pro- and anti-gay rights activists, the results of both quantitative and qualitative content analyses suggest that their online framing patterns are similar to what earlier literature of social movements has found (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996; Benford and Snow 2000). In their messages, the activists of both sides are mainly concerned about issue advocacy and constituent mobilization. They are more willing to experiment with a wider set of policy frames that speak to their policy preferences and their posts are mainly about describing and justifying their

policy stances. The major differences between the pro- and anti-gay rights activists' online framing behavior lie in their argumentative styles of policy messages. On the one hand, the pro-gay rights activists emphasize that to love and to be loved are fundamental rights and same-sex couples are not different from heterosexual couples through the lens of love. On the other hand, the anti-gay rights activists use policy frames to point out the essential differences between LGBTQ+ and heterosexual individuals. They also claim that gay rights activism destabilizes the whole society by changing the status quo of gender norms and moral values of sexuality. In addition to these discursive differences, the pro-gay rights activists are more likely to raise counterarguments by claiming that some of the anti-gay rights groups' messages are misinformation. I also find that the anti-gay rights activists highlight the idea of LGBT hegemony in their policy messages. The anti-gay rights groups have argued repeatedly that online proponents of gay rights keep "bullying" those who express concerns or critiques against LGBT rights. Therefore, to decrease the impact of those bullying practices while increasing their audience reach, it is far more common to find Line group IDs in the anti-gay rights activists' messages.¹³⁴ In comparison to Facebook, Line has a user base that is wide across age groups and Line users account for about 87.5% of the Taiwanese population. Unlike public Facebook fan pages, by using the group IDs, users can add the anti-gay rights groups (Hope.Family.TW and SOP) as friends on Line. Once becoming Line friends, the anti-gay rights activists can send private messages in a mode of end-to-end communication without the threat of cyberbullying or facing disagreements from pro-gay rights netizens.¹³⁵ Additionally, users can take turns forwarding the anti-gay rights groups' posts

¹³⁴ Line is a popular VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) app of instant communications in Taiwan and it allows users to exchange various mediums of messages such as texts, calls, images, audios, and videos.

¹³⁵ It has been reported by CoFacts that the anti-gay rights groups have relied on Line to disseminate messages to question the LGBT curriculum in schools and same-sex marriage. For further information on CoFacts, please refer to the following link: <https://cofacts.g0v.tw> (accessed May 30, 2021)

to their friends in private chats without making it publicly known to others. Therefore, similar to the U.S. conservative users' migration to Parler, the Taiwanese anti-gay rights activists also find alternative platforms that prevent them from being silenced by opposing netizens.¹³⁶

To compare the differences of online framing between activists and influencers, the findings of this chapter show that the pro-gay rights influencers behave similarly to micro-influencers who treat earning publicity and getting more followers as their career goals. The pro-gay rights influencers' posts are far less likely to discuss political issues or mention policy frames. Their posts receive much higher numbers of likes on average. In comparison to the other three types of actors, the pro-gay rights influencers are more likely to adopt only few policy frames that they feel comfortable expressing to their audience. By looking at the content and discursive dimensions of their messages, the pro-gay rights influencers are softer in their tone of speech and less radical in the discourse. Therefore, the results show that the pro-gay rights influencers are subject to the influence of their target audiences and career considerations. Since trust-building is a major task for micro-influencers whose careers are dependent on viewership, followership, and sponsorship, they frequently use their own life stories to justify their pro-gay rights policy appeals. The pro-gay rights influencers also take an assimilationist approach by calling for harmony and inclusivity, without triggering conflicts or controversies. There is also a bias of respectability politics in the pro-gay rights influencers' messages (Pitcan, Marwick, and Boyd 2018). For example, unlike the pro-gay rights activists who discuss more radical options of legal arrangements such as civil partnerships and multiple-person families, the influencers focus only

¹³⁶ Regardless of the similarities, these two cases also differ in some aspects. First, although the anti-gay rights activists and influencers have mentioned that their posts have been reported by other netizens as discriminatory and inappropriate, their accounts on Facebook have never been banned for a long time. Furthermore, anti-gay rights activists do not give up Facebook as a channel of policy advocacy yet use Line as an additional way to reach out to potential audiences while facing a lower risk of content moderation.

on same-sex marriage. Furthermore, the channel FuFuKnows features a loving gay couple who keeps a faithful and monogamous relationship. To garner support and agreement from followers, the pro-gay rights influencers need to restrain themselves from being too ideological and radical in their policy messages. Therefore, the way social media works and the logic of popularity accumulation marginalize some more challenging and radical voices that exist within the LGBTQ+ community such as those dissenting views which are against the whole institution of marriage (Boellstorff 2007).

In comparison to the pro-gay rights influencers, the anti-gay rights influencers act much like activists regarding online framing. Their framing behaviors resemble those of activists given their higher level of willingness to incorporate a variety of policy frames. Furthermore, they are not shy from discussing politics and only receive a moderate level of likes for their posts. Unlike the pro-gay rights influencers, they rely less on the mobilizing frames. It indicates that the anti-gay rights influencers do not aim to build an interactive relationship with their followers. Furthermore, both accounts of the anti-gay rights influencers are anonymous without revealing their true personal identities. Therefore, the major goal of the anti-gay rights influencers is not what typical micro-influencers would pursue but they mainly serve as hubs of information. They keep a close eye on the latest development of gay rights issues taking place domestically and overseas. Their critiques of gay rights activism are in many cases even harsher than those presented by the anti-gay rights activists. However, these influencers have been accused by the pro-gay rights groups as spreaders of misinformation and become targets of user flagging since their policy appeals are considered by some netizens as discriminatory, if not hate speech.

In the above discussion, we find that social media helps to create alternative spaces for new actors like influencers to engage themselves in issue advocacy. However, there are concerns

with the overtly optimistic view which argues that online spaces serve as a public sphere. Based on the arguments of digital optimism, individuals can speak and exchange thoughts freely with others regardless of their social positions and political ideologies. The findings of this chapter conclude otherwise. In addition to the anti-gay rights activists, both the pro- and anti-gay rights influencers are found to adapt themselves to the rules of the game on social media by (1) keeping anonymous in the case of the anti-gay rights influencers; (2) taking an assimilationist tone and performing respectability politics in the case of the pro-gay rights influencers; or (3) migrating to alternative platforms of social media in the case of the anti-gay rights activists. These behavioral adaptations indicate that the problem of online spaces as a public sphere is not just limited to the issue of echo chambers. Furthermore, once individuals consent to join social media sites and follow their logic of operation (popularity accumulation and content moderation), users could hardly present “unpopular” and “undesirable” perspectives unless they adopt certain strategies such as anonymity in the case of the anti-gay rights influencers. This filtering effect on social media content makes it even less likely for people to hear from those who may hold politically dissenting opinions since these radically opposing views are made invisible in the first place.

L. Conclusions

In the digital age, people’s lives in every aspect, politics included, are affected by new technologies such as cloud computing, blockchains, and artificial intelligence, to name but a few. Although there have been academic discussions on how the Internet has changed the way social movements mobilize their supporters in events of Occupy Wall Street and the Arab Spring, these analyses still center on the roles of activists and social movement organizations. In the literature on networked framing, previous findings have pointed out the importance of crowdsourcing practices in news production. However, there is a lack of systematic discussion on how new

types of actors such as influencers may come into play in the process of policy framing. To bridge the empirical gap of earlier literature, this chapter argues that we should conceptualize online spaces as an ecosystem where different types of actors coexist, cooperate, and compete for “attention” which is the main asset in platforms of social media. Therefore, in addition to activists, influencers who have a large number of followers while not being backed up by formal organizations, also become an important player in framing policy issues. This chapter contributes to the studies of social movements and political communication by comparing the different behavioral patterns of policy framing between activists and influencers. The findings also help us to reflect on the following two puzzles: (1) to what extent online spaces place constraints on actors’ framing behavior; (2) whether online spaces serve as a public sphere in which diverse political perspectives can be observed as argued by digital optimism.

The findings examine the behavioral patterns of online framing across pro- and anti-gay rights activists and influencers in Taiwan. The results of the first three hypotheses (frame diversity, proportions of policy messages, and average numbers of post reactions) show that the anti-gay rights influencers behave similarly to the pro- and anti-gay rights activists. These three types of actors rely on a wider set of policy frames, receive lower numbers of reactions per post, and are active in posting messages related to politics. The anti-gay rights influencers are anonymous and do not reveal their real personal identities. Furthermore, they are also much fewer in number in comparison to the pro-gay rights influencers. Unlike the other three kinds of actors, the pro-gay rights influencers act in a way that is similar to what we would expect as micro-influencers. They prefer not to discuss politics, accumulate a larger base of followers, and adopt only few core policy frames. By comparing the top five frequently-used frames among the four types of actors, it concludes that there is a moderate to a high level of frame homogeneity between like-

minded activists and influencers (100% for the pro-gay rights side, and 60% for the anti-gay rights side). Therefore, the influencers complement activists' role as frame producers since they either forward activists' messages or imitate the policy frames of like-minded activists. I also use both factor analysis and qualitative content analysis to take a closer look at the argumentative styles across the four types of actors. The results suggest that the anti-gay rights influencers highlight ideas of sexual liberation, LGBT hegemony, separation not discrimination, and scientific evidence. Unlike the critical views expressed by the anti-gay rights influencers who serve as anonymous hubs of information, the pro-gay rights influencers are softer in their tone and less radical in their policy appeals by following the logic of respectability politics. The anonymity of the anti-gay rights influencers and the assimilationist tone of the pro-gay rights influencers imply that online spaces are not a perfect public sphere without problems since certain political perspectives are made invisible as a result of silencing or censorship. In addition to the echo chamber effect, this filtering effect of social media also contributes to the reinforcement of existing ideological beliefs and political polarization.

Given the findings of this chapter, future work can try to answer the following puzzles regarding the impact of digitalization on our political lives. First, this chapter shows that online spaces provide opportunities for new actors like influencers to gain the agency of distributing policy messages. However, most current studies of political communication and policy framing pay attention mainly to text data, without seriously examining how meanings of policy issues and collective identities can also be expressed in non-text content. Therefore, it would be important for scholars to use machine learning methods to detect and figure out the symbols embedded in images and videos and complement the findings with qualitative multi-media analysis.

Second, although this chapter finds that influencers and activists differ in their behavioral patterns of framing and argumentative styles, still unclear are the underlying factors that contribute to such differences. Although several factors are potentially important explanatory variables (recommendation algorithm, rules of content moderation, governmental regulations on social media, target audiences, and sponsors), further research is needed to understand what shapes actors' online framing behaviors. Lastly, given the growing importance of new online actors such as influencers, in addition to online framing, influencers also have gotten involved in politics by interacting with politicians, activists, parties, and bureaucrats. It would be interesting to explore how partnering with influencers may change the attitudes people have toward politicians and other kinds of political elites.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

This research project challenges our traditional understanding of the framing process which is perceived to be mainly controlled by activists in the studies of social movements. By treating framing as an interactive process, this research situates activists in a web of relations with not only the structural conditions like political opportunities but also other social actors such as political elites, targeted audiences, countermovements, and influencers. The uniqueness of Taiwan as both the first Asian country to legalize same-sex spousal rights and a contested regime makes it necessary for us to examine how perceptions and framing of gay rights have varied since the battle over same-sex marriage has intensified in Taiwan at the end of 2013.

A. Significance and Contributions

The literature on gay rights movements has developed tremendously since the 2000s with major policy achievements of LGBT rights happening in the Global North.¹³⁷ Based on the historical experience of LGBT movements in Europe and North America, earlier literature on gay rights movements discusses how the emergence of the new social movements in the 1970s and 1980s paved the way for subsequent policy change. In the 2010s, with the increasing number of countries in Latin America starting to legally recognize same-sex relationships, more findings have begun to analyze how gay-friendly policy outputs were made possible in the Global South within the Latin American context. However, the literature on gay rights has not paid sufficient attention to cases in Asia.¹³⁸ Most existing studies of gay rights movements in Asia discuss how

¹³⁷ The development of literature on this topic is responsive to the real-world changes of policy outputs regarding gay rights in different parts of the world.

¹³⁸ For instance, even though the LGBT movements in Taiwan have started in the mid-1990s and have achieved policy outcomes like nationwide anti-discrimination laws in the 2000s, there is little discussion about it in the literature on gay rights movements.

gay rights movements emerge and sustain themselves. They fail to explain how gay rights policies could be institutionalized in the context of an Asian country that differs greatly from Western and Latin American countries in terms of culture and social values. It requires more rigorous studies to tease out the relationship between social movements and policies in the context of Asian countries. Therefore, this project makes its contribution by presenting a historical analysis of pro- and anti-gay rights movements in Taiwan, with a focus on two salient policy issues between 2013 and 2020: same-sex marriage and the LGBT curriculum in elementary and junior high schools. It seeks to explore the changing meanings of gay rights in policy messages ever since the contention of same-sex marriage has gradually intensified at the end of the year 2013. The findings show how the prevalence of policy frames regarding gay rights changes in response to political culture, elite support, policy outcomes, and interactions between competing activists. Furthermore, Taiwan is one of the few countries where the historical trajectory of gay rights development consists of both policy successes and backlash.¹³⁹ This project also describes how social movements highlighting traditional family and religious values have emerged and become mobilized in reaction to the mobilization of the LGBT community.

This dissertation provides a more systematic and detailed discussion on how the idea of framing can be conceptualized and analyzed dynamically in the literature on social movements. In the political process theory, framing is treated as a static independent variable to explain how activists portray certain policy issues to change the way politicians or ordinary people perceive such issues. The variation of frame prevalence is not adequately addressed in earlier findings.

¹³⁹ One of the most important examples of backlash is the successful mobilization of voters in the 2018 Taiwanese local elections in which three anti-gay rights ballot measures passed with voluminous “yes” votes while the other two pro-gay measures failed to pass with “no” votes surpassing those “yes” ones greatly in number.

Building on past literature, my research emphasizes that the meanings of gay rights are constantly changing in response to the four dimensions: opportunity structure (Chapter II), interactions with countermovements (Chapter II), audience responses (Chapter III), and social roles of actors (Chapter IV). It considers policy frames as a dependent variable whose variation of prevalence over time could be explained by political events, actors' social positions, elite support, audience reactions, and policy outcomes. This approach of treating policy frames as the dependent variable shows how their variation is associated with the transformation of political circumstances and the interactions between different social actors.

With the increasing usage of the Internet and social media in our daily lives, it becomes problematic to assume that the framing process is a uni-directional and hierarchical one mainly controlled by activists. Therefore, we need to broaden the scope of framing analysis to include other social actors who can shape rhetorical descriptions of a policy issue. The conceptualization of framing as an interactive process requires researchers to be attentive to the underlying strategic and non-strategic considerations held by different frame producers. In this research, I examine the role of influencers and compare how the styles of their policy messages may differ from those proposed by activists.

B. Findings and Implications

The research has examined the impacts of digitalization and local political contexts on the dynamics of policy framing and issue advocacy. By exploring the patterns of online framing across different types of social actors (pro- and anti-gay rights activists and influencers), the findings of this project speak to three major themes related to LGBT politics, social movements, and political communication. The first theme highlights a need for scholars of LGBT politics to unpack the contextual dynamics of local communities, especially in countries of the Global

South. Previous literature on gay rights politics focuses mainly on the cases of Western societies while these findings may not be generalizable to other parts of the world. Unlike the Western industrialized democracies or Latin American countries where we see the legalization of same-sex marriage, Taiwan is not only an Asian country of the Global South but also one that has its unique political development. Therefore, this project provides a detailed analysis of how meanings of gay rights issues have changed throughout the legal battle over same-sex marriage in Taiwan between the end of 2013 and early 2020. The findings help us to better understand how local actors communicate concepts of gay rights to their target audiences and what framing strategies have been adopted in the communication process. The second theme is featured with an attempt to answer the big question, “why do policy frames change?” Unlike most earlier literature on social movements, this project treats policy frames as a dependent variable and offers a synthesized perspective to examine the factors that contribute to frame variation. The findings of the second theme show that policy framing is a dynamic process where the activists’ choices of frames are constrained by both structural and agential factors at the macro- and micro-levels. The third theme relates to the broader discussion on how online spaces have changed our political life. This dissertation focuses on the posts delivered by various social actors on their publicly accessible Facebook fan pages. Social media and the Internet have tremendously made an impact on our behavioral patterns of getting political information and interacting with others politically. It is still debated regarding whether digital technologies create favorable conditions for democracy to thrive or not. Proponents of digital optimism argue that online platforms allow activists to reach out to a larger pool of audiences and this development is beneficial for issue advocacy and social

change. Furthermore, they also state that online spaces serve as a public sphere whose participatory culture encourages people to voice out different opinions. However, the analyses of this project show some results that are contrary to the theoretical expectations of digital optimism.

The findings of the second chapter conclude that – similar to Western societies where same-sex marriage has been legalized – the pro- and anti-gay rights groups in Taiwan rely on certain types of policy frames respectively (anti-discrimination, equality, and liberty vs. morality, well-being, and democracy). However, some localized features are uniquely found in the case of Taiwan when discussing gay rights issues. For example, frames of civil rights and religion are far less salient in policy messages of gay rights. Furthermore, there are some localized framing elements such as those discussing social order (appellations, ancestor veneration, and blood ties), national identity (Taiwan-China comparison), and minority protection (rainbow crosser, indigenous people, and memory politics). The framing patterns of pro- and anti-gay rights groups have changed in response to policy outcomes and elite behavior. The third chapter adopts both Bayesian negative binomial count models and lowess curve fitting to demonstrate that audience responses play an important role in shaping activists' frame choices. With the response metrics available for posts on social media, frame resonance becomes a reflection of the target audiences' preferences. It implies that the audiences are no longer merely a passive receiver of policy frames but has agency to affect framing outcomes. The fourth chapter broadens the existing definition of frame producers by compares the framing patterns and styles between the pro- and anti-gay rights activists and influencers. The results conclude that the pro-gay rights influencers convey their policy appeals by performing their LGBTQ+ identities and have a softer and assimilationist tone in their messages. In contrast, the anti-gay rights influencers act similarly to activists for their online framing behaviors and serve as anonymous hubs of information. The findings of

this dissertation project help us to understand the contestation of gay rights in the unique case of Taiwan which is the first Asian country to legalize same-sex spousal rights. It also shows how the creation of online spaces has changed the way activism works.

The broad implication of the present research is that although online spaces make it more accessible for a larger number of people to be politically engaged and informed, such benefits come at the cost of increasing levels of polarization. Social media allows audiences to directly and instantly express their feelings toward policy messages, and these responses have been found in this research to affect the framing patterns of both activists and influencers. As a metaphor, if we treat social media platforms as a stage while content creators as performers, content creators' performance can be under constant watch by the audiences even without the former's knowledge. Similar to what the English philosopher Jeremy Bentham calls a "panopticon," content creators on social media would then internalize the authority of the audiences whose attention is one of the scarce resources in the digital age.¹⁴⁰ Given the perception that they are consistently monitored by their target audiences, activists of conflicting views have little incentive to reach a compromise or find a middle ground since doing so would mean concession and failure to stick with one's own policy stance. Therefore, as the results of this research suggest, competing activists would deny the validity of opponents' views by using the following two approaches. First, they provide alternative interpretations of their opponents' policy frames. For example, when discussing the idea of "diversity," the anti-gay rights activists changed what it meant by "sexual or gender diversity" and amplified the sexualized aspect of this concept. The other ap-

¹⁴⁰ According to Bentham, he argues that as long as inmates know security guards can watch them while not knowing whether they are actually being watched, inmates would regulate their behavior even without a guard in sight. Michel Foucault later articulates how this idea can be applied to other social settings in his 1975 book "Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison."

proach is appealing to stigmatization. Taking the pro-gay rights activists as an instance, they denied the anti-gay rights activists' claims by labeling the latter as "spreaders of misinformation" or "obstacles to social progress." In addition to the contestation among competing activists, another source of political polarization comes from the filtering effect of social media on the "appropriate" content to be presented. As shown in the findings of Chapter IV, the pro-gay rights influencers took an assimilationist tone and adhered to normative notions of respectability when performing their LGBT identity. Similarly, for the anti-gay rights influencers that voiced out more ideological and radical perspectives against gay rights, they had to hide their true personal identity and stayed anonymous. This filtering effect on social media content makes it even harder for people to be exposed to dissenting views since the mechanisms of audience responses make ideologically radical views invisible in the first place. In light of the above-mentioned polarizing effects of social media, we need to rethink the extent to which online spaces can help or hinder the deepening of democratic development. Regardless of the positive impacts the Internet and social media have on democracy as argued by proponents of digital optimism, we have to be cautious of how online political communication may marginalize unpopular views and further political polarization.

C. Future Work

The results of the three chapters shed light on the interactive process of policy framing among various social actors regarding the issue of gay rights in Taiwan. Based on the findings of this project, there are some ideas for future research that can be extended from this dissertation project and they can be categorized into the following three domains: (1) Taiwan as a case for comparative studies of gay rights in Asia; (2) policy framing as an outcome of interactions among social actors; (3) the impact of new technologies on political attitudes and behavior.

Taiwan is the first Asian country to legally recognize the spousal rights of same-sex couples. This research focuses on systematically describing and analyzing how ideas of gay rights are debated and framed in Taiwan. Building on what we have learned, we can further compare Taiwan with other East Asian countries where Confucianism is an essential feature of the political culture such as China, Japan, and South Korea. Regardless of their differences in political systems and modes of economic development, the legal protections for LGBT people are quite similar among China, Japan, and South Korea. Unlike Taiwan, all of the three countries currently do not have national laws that legally recognize same-sex relationships or regulate anti-discrimination concerning sexual orientation. Therefore, further research might compare Taiwan with these three neighboring countries to explore what factors can significantly explain the different developments of gay rights movements as well as the legal statuses of LGBT individuals across the four countries. Some potential explanatory variables include political institutions, social norms of gender roles, and alliance building across social movement organizations. It would be important to tease out how the Confucian culture interacts with these other explanatory variables in each society. Furthermore, from the theoretical perspective of policy diffusion, researchers need to study how the experience of legalizing same-sex marriage in Taiwan informs pro- and anti-gay rights activists in the three countries and shapes their strategies of issue advocacy. In addition to comparing Taiwan with other East Asian countries, it would also be interesting to figure out how Taiwan differs from the Western and Latin American countries in the post-marriage era. For example, future investigations might consider comparing how the passage of same-sex marriage may have varying effects on the well-being of LGBT individuals across societies. Furthermore, how do pro- and anti-gay rights groups evolve and sustain themselves in these countries once same-sex marriage is no longer an undecided issue?

Based on the analytical results of the three chapters, we find that the process of framing is shaped by structural political opportunities (policy outcomes and political events), agents (activists, audiences, rival groups, politicians, and influencers) as well as the interactions between the two kinds of factors. Looking forward, further studies of framing studies could include non-text data such as videos and photographs to show how meanings of policy issues can be conveyed in other forms of communication besides texts. In addition, given the COVID-19 pandemic, I did not manage to conduct fieldwork in Taiwan to obtain interview data which is necessary to understand the psychological factors that would affect framing outcomes. For example, further studies would use focus groups or ethnography to tease out the motivations and emotions activists bear in mind when making choices of policy frames in the fields. Another potential future work regarding framing studies is to look more carefully at the role of social media platforms. By examining the technical aspects of how social media platforms function (content moderation, recommendation algorithm, mechanisms of user interaction, metrics for content creators, and governmental regulations), we can better understand how these rules may provide an unlevel playing field for actors of different political ideologies.

The third main topic of future work brings forth a continuing discussion on the relationship between technology and political life. The advancements in technology such as 5G, artificial intelligence (AI), and automation bring not only prospects of easier ways to be engaged in politics but also new challenges for democratic development. By examining the framing strategies of activists and influencers, this research shows that different social actors have taken advantage of the online spaces to generate policy frames for political persuasion. Their abilities of frame construction are constrained by the roles they occupy in these online spaces (the audience effect, the career effect, and the interaction effect). Future studies could proceed to examine other aspects of

the interplay between politics and technology. First, besides frame construction, influencers may cooperate with other political actors such as politicians, activists, parties, and bureaucrats to shape public opinion on policy issues. Second, with the increasing use of smart home devices such as smart speakers and intelligent virtual assistants (IVA; Amazon Echo and Alexa for instance), it would be important to explore to what extent respondents trust and accept the information we obtain from the IVAs in comparison to other human beings. Researchers can conduct experiments to compare the framing effects of messages delivered by humans and IVAs to examine if people are more likely to consider IVAs as neutral and reliable sources of information than human actors. Last, some research suggests that there are gender and racial biases in AI systems and further studies can investigate to what extent such biases place LGBT people's lives at risk.

Table 2.1 Proportions of Policy Frames in the Whole Corpus ([return to text](#))

#	Policy Frame	TAPCPR	Hope.Family.TW	Z Score
F1.1	Fundamental Rights	15.52%	10.72%	2.411
F1.2	Human Rights	17.72%	7.80%	4.983
F1.3	Affection	38.95%	32.36%	2.352
F1.4	Sexuality	2.05%	13.45%	-7.693
F2.1	Functional Roles	12.59%	41.91%	-11.586
F2.2	Slippery Slope	2.05%	7.60%	-4.625
F2.3	Well-Being	11.13%	33.14%	-9.338
F2.4	Difference	25.77%	25.54%	0.090
F2.5	Professionalism	10.98%	8.97%	1.143
F3.1	Religion	7.03%	5.26%	1.252
F3.2	Morality	10.54%	39.18%	-11.702
F3.3	Tolerance	2.64%	14.04%	-7.409
F4.1	Antidiscrimination	29.72%	11.11%	7.737
F4.2	Equality	43.92%	12.67%	11.638
F4.3	Liberty	13.03%	6.82%	3.493
F4.4	Civil Rights	3.51%	3.70%	-0.175
F5.1	Mobilizing	27.67%	42.11%	-5.232
F5.2	Identity	57.83%	39.96%	6.129
F5.3	Counterarguments	3.66%	11.31%	-5.162
F6.1	Democracy	22.55%	54.97%	-11.551
F6.2	Special Rights	2.20%	5.85%	-3.288
F6.3	Anti-Elitism	8.49%	29.24%	-9.388
F7	Critical Voices	19.33%	18.52%	0.354
NA	No Observation of Frames	2.78%	2.14%	0.702
N	Number of Observations	683	513	

Table 2.2 Proportions of Master Frames in the Whole Corpus

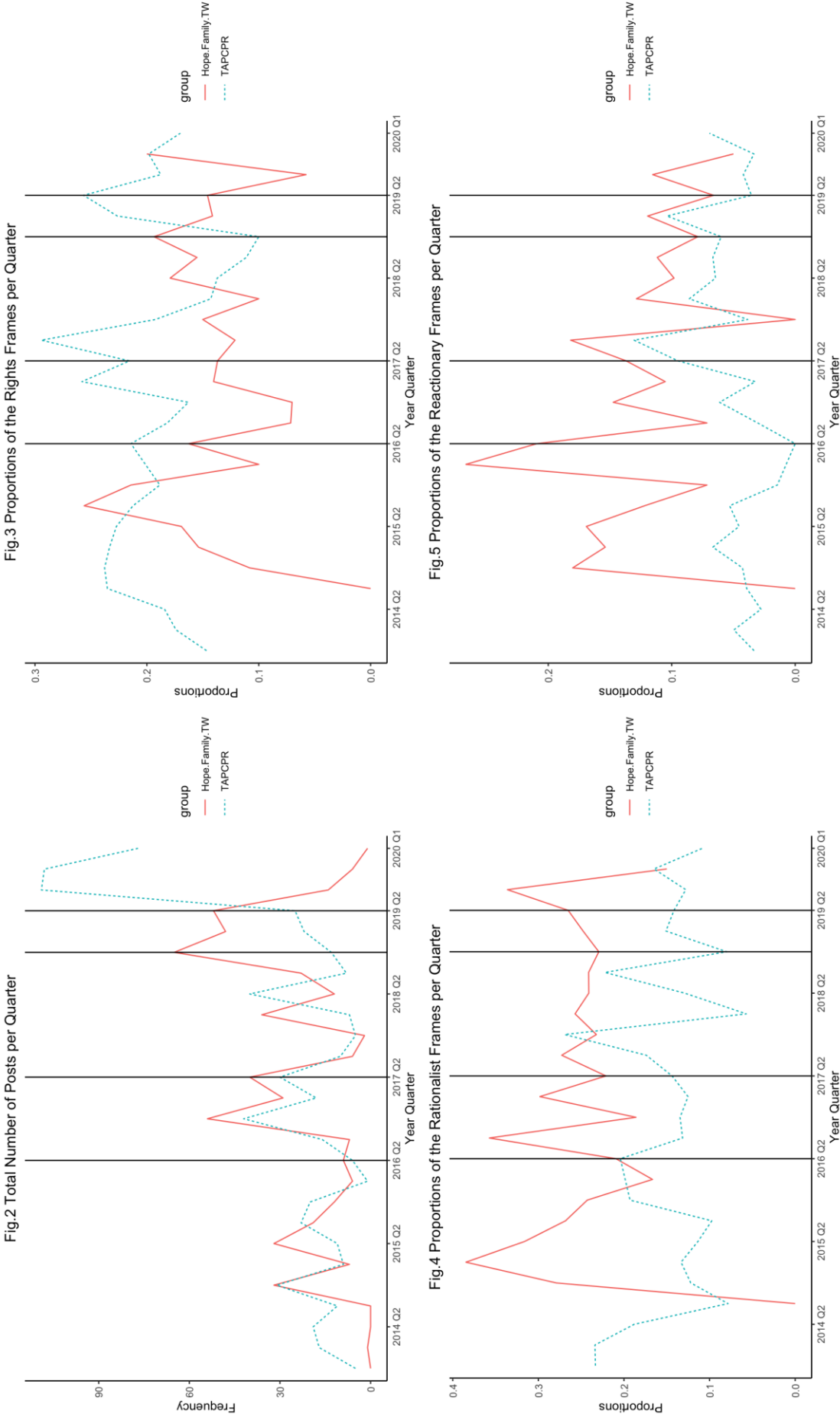
#	Master Frames	TAPCPR	Hope.Family.TW	Z Score
1	Rights Frames	55.93%	51.07%	1.671
2	Rationalist Frames	44.07%	66.28%	-7.637
3	Reactionary Frames	17.86%	50.88%	-12.137
4	Constitutional Frames	60.47%	26.32%	11.754
5	Mobilizing Frames	67.20%	68.81%	-0.591
6	Populist Frames	28.09%	63.18%	-12.150
7	Critical Frames	19.33%	18.52%	0.354
NA	No Observation of Frames	2.78%	2.14%	0.702
N	Number of Observations	683	513	

Note: 1. Let the numbers of words for a specific frame type/master frame (fi) for TAPCPR (T) and Hope.Family.TW (H) be $n_{T,fi}$ and $n_{H,fi}$, and let the total number of words for TAPCPR and Hope.Family.TW be $N_{T,fi}$ and $N_{H,fi}$. The formula of the normalized frequency ($p_{T,fi}$ and $p_{H,fi}$) is computed as $n_{T,fi}/N_{T,fi}$ and $n_{H,fi}/N_{H,fi}$ respectively. The proportional difference of a keyword equals $d_{fi} = p_{T,fi} - p_{H,fi}$. The pooled proportion of a frame is $p_{p,fi} = (p_{T,fi} * n_{T,fi} + p_{H,fi} * n_{H,fi}) / (n_{T,fi} + n_{H,fi})$. The standard deviation of the pooled data is $SD_{p,fi} = \sqrt{p_{p,fi} * (1 - p_{p,fi}) * [(1/n_{T,fi}) + (1/n_{H,fi})]}$. The test statistics is $z_{fi} = d_{fi} / SD_{p,fi}$; 2. I adopt the alpha value of 0.005 and the one-tailed rejection region of the null hypothesis is denoted by 2.576.

[\(return to text\)](#)

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Figures 2.2-2.5 Frequencies of Messages and Proportions of Master Frames



Figures 2.6-2.9 Proportions of Master Frames

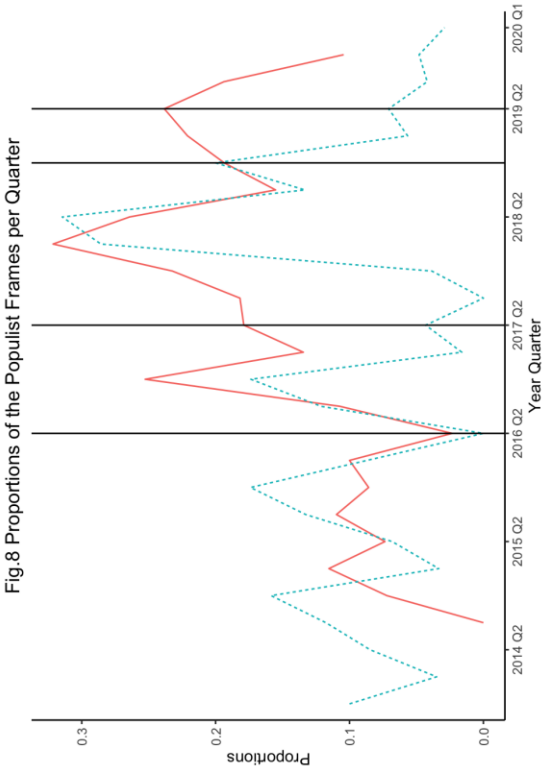
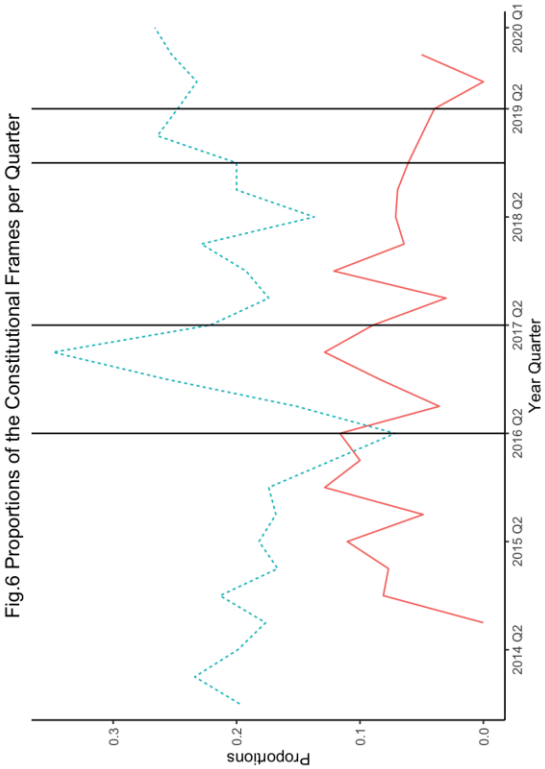
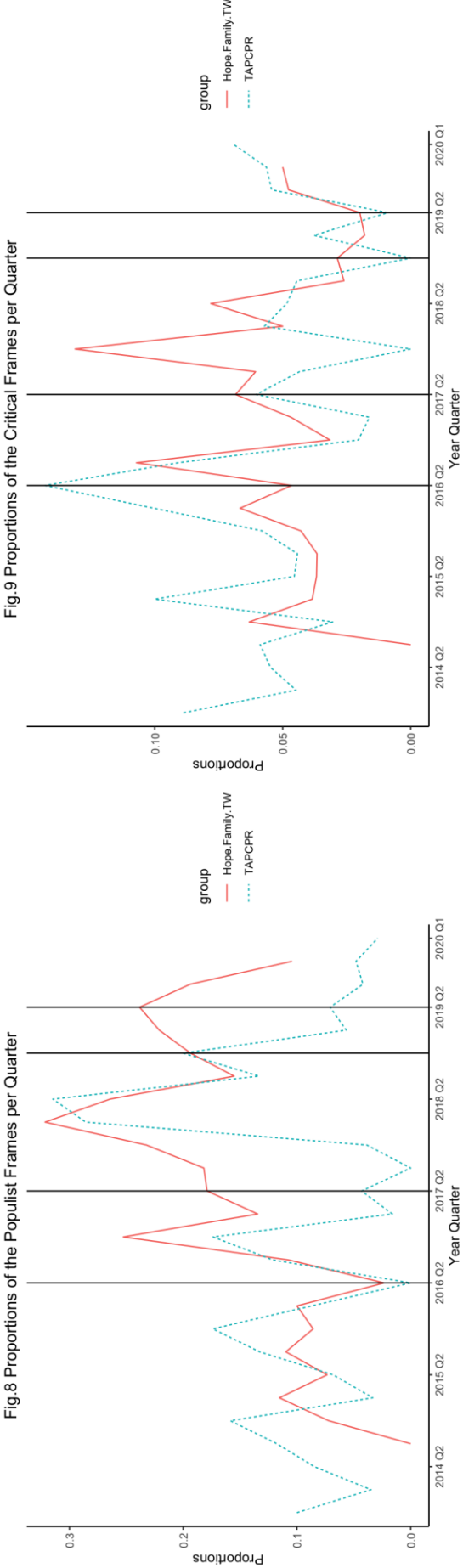
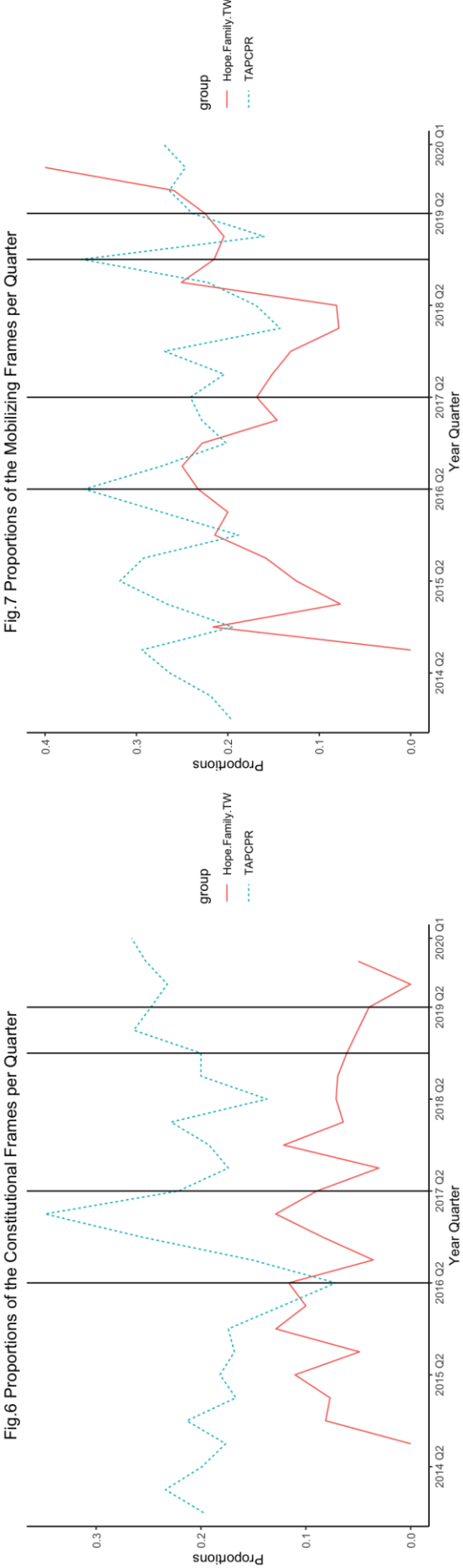


Table 3.1 Effects of Audience Responses on Message Popularity (Pro-Gay Rights, Phase 1)

	Estimate/ <i>beta</i>	l-95% CI	u-95% CI	<i>Exp(beta)</i>
Rights Frames	0.26	0.02	0.50	1.29
Rationalist Frames	-0.37	-0.62	-0.11	0.69
Reactionary Frames	0.36	0.06	0.68	1.43
Constitutional Frames	0.49	0.22	0.75	1.63
Populist Frames	-0.05	-0.32	0.23	0.95
Mobilizing Frames	0.29	0.04	0.55	1.34
Critical Frame	-0.60	-0.94	-0.23	0.54
Videos	-0.46	-0.86	-0.01	0.63
URLs	0.32	-0.09	0.77	1.38
Hashtags	0.05	-0.43	0.56	1.04
Intercept	5.98	5.70	6.26	395.38
N	280			

[\(return to text, p.96\)](#)

Table 3.2 Effects of Audience Responses on Message Popularity (Pro-Gay Rights, Phase 2)

	Estimate/ <i>beta</i>	l-95% CI	u-95% CI	<i>Exp(beta)</i>
Rights Frames	0.24	-0.13	0.60	1.26
Rationalist Frames	-0.13	-0.48	0.22	0.88
Reactionary Frames	-0.09	-0.56	0.38	0.90
Constitutional Frames	0.24	-0.14	0.61	1.26
Populist Frames	-0.04	-0.42	0.35	0.96
Mobilizing Frames	0.17	-0.18	0.51	1.18
Critical Frame	-1.45	-2.07	-0.77	0.23
Videos	-0.64	-1.05	-0.19	0.52
URLs	0.24	-0.16	0.66	1.27
Hashtags	0.24	-0.19	0.68	1.26
Intercept	6.21	5.89	6.54	498.53
N	219			

Table 3.3 Effects of Audience Responses on Message Popularity (Pro-Gay Rights, Phase 3)

	Estimate/ <i>beta</i>	l-95% CI	u-95% CI	<i>Exp(beta)</i>
Rights Frames	0.07	-0.09	0.24	1.07
Rationalist Frames	-0.23	-0.41	-0.05	0.79
Reactionary Frames	0.38	0.16	0.61	1.46
Constitutional Frames	-0.26	-0.45	-0.08	0.76
Populist Frames	0.37	0.16	0.60	1.45
Mobilizing Frames	0.25	0.02	0.47	1.28
Critical Frame	-0.30	-0.54	-0.05	0.74
Videos	-0.24	-0.55	0.10	0.78
URLs	-0.60	-0.78	-0.43	0.54
Hashtags	-0.45	-0.63	-0.26	0.63
Intercept	6.40	6.15	6.65	600.52
N	567			

[\(return to text, p.98\)](#)

Table 3.4 Effects of Audience Responses on Message Popularity (Anti-Gay Rights, Phase 1)

	Estimate/ <i>beta</i>	l-95% CI	u-95% CI	<i>Exp(beta)</i>
Rights Frames	0.04	-0.27	0.36	1.04
Rationalist Frames	-0.23	-0.55	0.10	0.79
Reactionary Frames	0.22	-0.08	0.53	1.24
Constitutional Frames	-0.06	-0.38	0.26	0.93
Populist Frames	0.94	0.64	1.25	2.56
Mobilizing Frames	0.44	0.14	0.75	1.55
Critical Frame	-0.12	-0.47	0.24	0.88
Videos	0.01	-0.31	0.36	1.01
URLs	0.31	0.02	0.61	1.36
Hashtags	0.06	-0.28	0.43	1.05
Intercept	5.46	5.13	5.80	234.60
N	266			

Table 3.5 Effects of Audience Responses on Message Popularity (Anti-Gay Rights, Phase 2)

	Estimate/ <i>beta</i>	l-95% CI	u-95% CI	<i>Exp(beta)</i>
Rights Frames	0.29	0.02	0.58	1.33
Rationalist Frames	0.31	0.03	0.59	1.36
Reactionary Frames	-0.81	-1.06	-0.54	0.45
Constitutional Frames	0.02	-0.30	0.36	1.01
Populist Frames	0.64	0.35	0.92	1.90
Mobilizing Frames	0.91	0.64	1.19	2.48
Critical Frame	-0.13	-0.57	0.33	0.87
Videos	0.25	-0.17	0.70	1.28
URLs	-0.12	-0.42	0.18	0.89
Hashtags	0.12	-0.13	0.39	1.12
Intercept	5.71	5.45	5.99	300.40
N	385			

[\(return to text, p.105\)](#)

Table 3.6 Effects of Audience Responses on Message Popularity (Anti-Gay Rights, Phase 3)

	Estimate/ <i>beta</i>	l-95% CI	u-95% CI	<i>Exp(beta)</i>
Rights Frames	-0.12	-0.34	0.10	0.88
Rationalist Frames	-0.04	-0.25	0.18	0.96
Reactionary Frames	0.24	0.01	0.48	1.26
Constitutional Frames	0.69	0.36	1.05	1.99
Populist Frames	0.39	0.21	0.59	1.48
Mobilizing Frames	0.24	0.04	0.45	1.27
Critical Frame	0.15	-0.31	0.65	1.16
Videos	-0.15	-0.41	0.12	0.86
URLs	0.00	-0.20	0.21	0.99
Hashtags	-0.11	-0.31	0.08	0.89
Intercept	5.24	5.02	5.47	188.54
N	314			

Figures 3.2-3.5 Frequency of Messages and Proportions of Master Frames

Fig.2 Total Number of Posts per Quarter

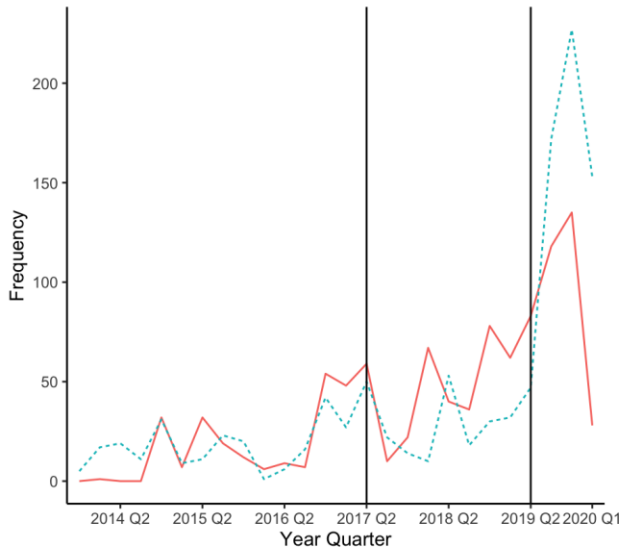


Fig.3 Proportions of the Rights Frames per Quarter

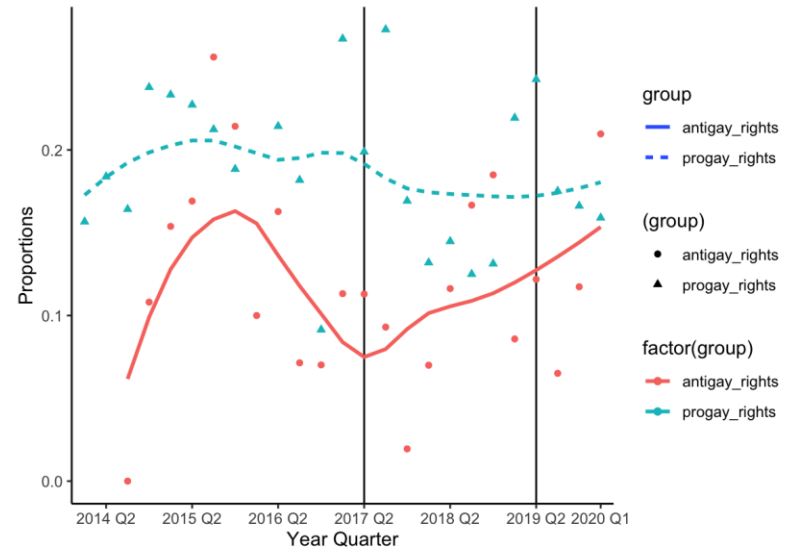
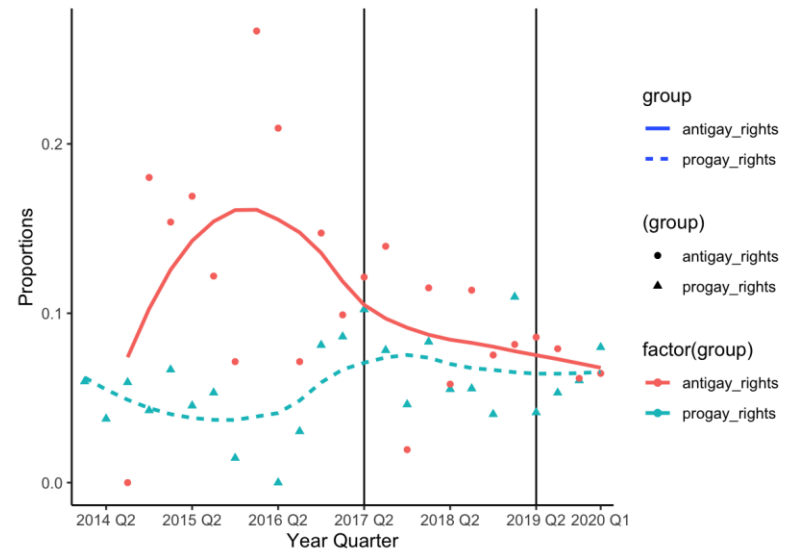


Fig.4 Proportions of the Rationalist Frames per Quarter



Fig.5 Proportions of the Reactionary Frames per Quarter



[\(return to text\)](#)

Figures 3.6-3.9 Proportions of Master Frames

Fig.6 Proportions of the Constitutional Frames per Quarter

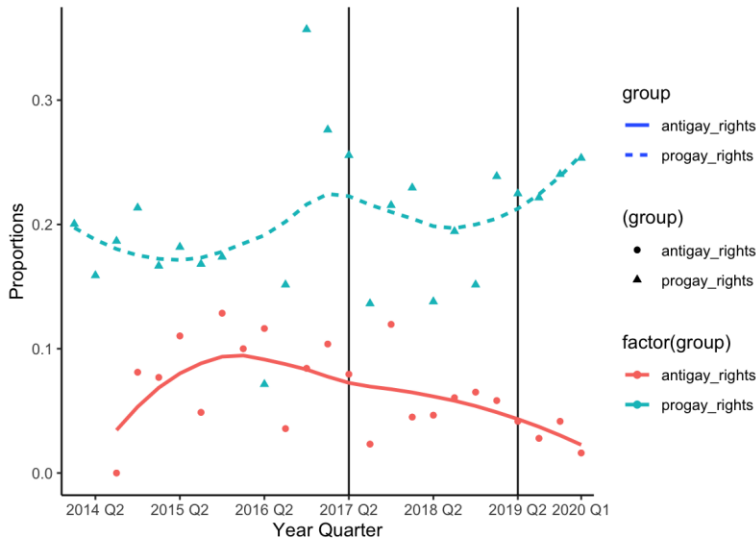


Fig.7 Proportions of the Mobilizing Frames per Quarter

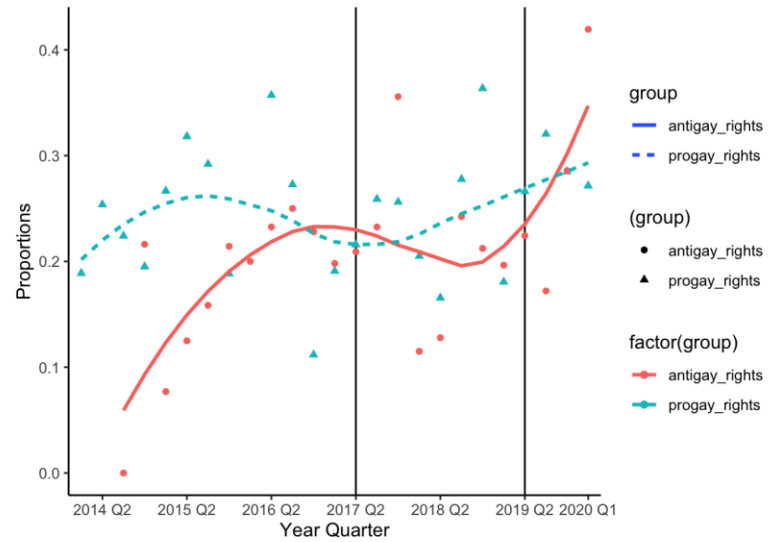


Fig.8 Proportions of the Populist Frames per Quarter

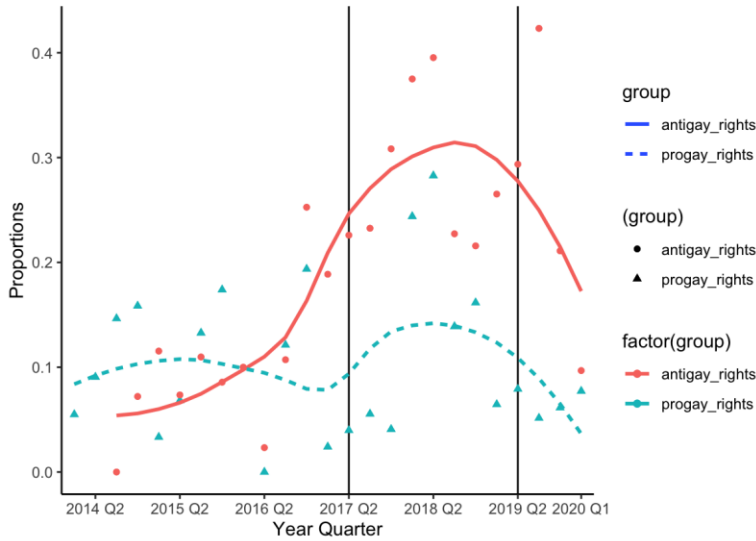
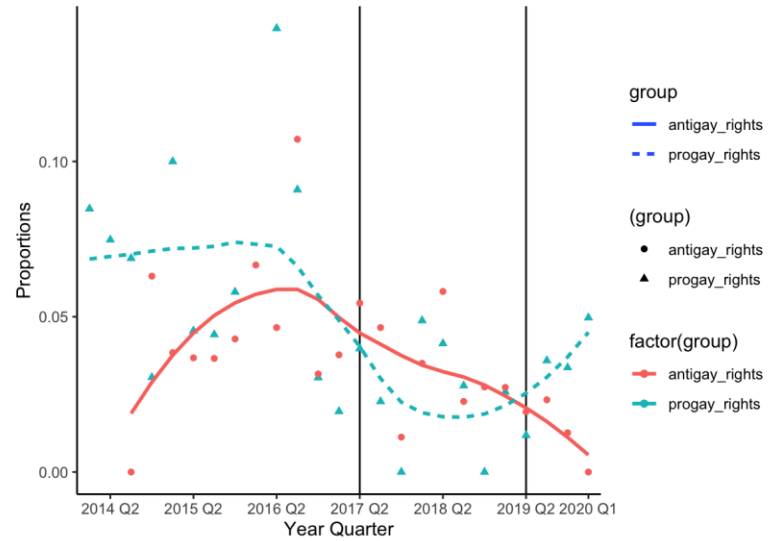


Fig.9 Proportions of the Critical Frames per Quarter



[\(return to text\)](#)

Table 4.1 Comparing Frame Diversity Across Actors ([return to text](#))

	Pro-gay rights activists	Anti-gay rights activists	Pro-gay rights influencers	Anti-gay rights influencers
IQVs	0.9652677	0.9707326	0.8551136	0.9855265
n	1066	965	1071	752

Table 4.2 Comparing Monthly Proportions of Policy Messages Across Actors

	Pro-gay rights activists	Anti-gay rights activists	Pro-gay rights influencers	Anti-gay rights influencers
Proportions	0.968	0.951	0.334	0.896
n of months	116	116	115	111
Z-test statistics	0.654	NA(reference)	13.489	1.54

Note: With 95% as the confidence level, if the absolute value of the z-test statistic is larger than 1.96, we would reject the null hypothesis that the two proportions are equal to each other.

Table 4.3 Comparing Message Popularity Across Actors ([return to text](#))

	Pro-gay rights activists	Anti-gay rights activists	Pro-gay rights influencers	Anti-gay rights influencers
Avg. # of likes	530.964	670.475	1855.342	236.784
S.D. of likes	943.946	1808.580	4448.876	395.475
n	1066	965	1071	752
P-value	NA(reference)	0.032	<0.00001	<0.00001

Note: With 95% as the confidence level, if the p value is smaller than 0.05, we would reject the null hypothesis that the two mean scores are equal to each other.

Table 4.4 Most Frequently-Used Policy Frames by Actors ([return to text](#))

	Pro-gay rights activists	Anti-gay rights activists	Pro-gay rights influencers	Anti-gay rights influencers
#1	Identity(0.48)	Anti-elitism(0.31)	Affection(0.15)	Anti-elitism(0.33)
#2	Affection(0.39)	Identity(0.30)	Identity(0.14)	Well-being(0.31)
#3	Equality(0.34)	Mobilizing(0.28)	Mobilizing(0.11)	Morality(0.22)
#4	Mobilizing(0.33)	Democracy(0.27)	Antidiscrimination(0.05)	Special Rights(0.21)
#5	Antidiscrimination(0.22)	Well-being(0.24)	Equality(0.04)	Identity(0.21)

Table 4.5 Dimensional Reduction of Frame Clustering Across Actors¹⁴¹

	Pro-gay rights activists	Anti-gay rights activists	Pro-gay rights influencers	Anti-gay rights influencers
Dim. 1	Affection(0.99)	Critical Voices(0.56) Sexuality(0.53) Antidiscrimination(0.39) Difference(0.35)	Antidiscrimination(0.59) Equality(0.55) Difference(0.51) Democracy(0.32)	Critical Voices(0.54) Sexuality(0.57) Well-being(0.41)
Dim. 2	Counterarguments(0.38) Functional Roles(0.32) Slippery Slope(0.33) Well-being(0.40) Tolerance(0.35)	Morality(0.56) Functional Roles(0.65) Democracy(0.43)	Tolerance(0.99)	Special Rights(0.64) Tolerance(0.61) Identity(0.30) Antidiscrimination(0.35)
Dim. 3	Antidiscrimination(0.55) Human Rights(0.34)	Tolerance(0.98)	Affection(0.93) Critical Voices(-0.32)	Antidiscrimination(0.53) Equality(0.47) Tolerance(0.32) Difference(0.40)
Dim. 4	Fundamental Rights(0.76)	Professionalism(0.95)	Professionalism(0.97)	Professionalism(0.76)
No. of Dim.	8	11	7	8
Cumulative Variance	0.26	0.42	0.34	0.29

Table 4.6 Names of the Latent Dimensions of Policy Frames Across Actors ([return to text](#))

	Pro-gay rights activists	Anti-gay rights activists	Pro-gay rights influencers	Anti-gay rights influencers
Dimension 1	Love Wins	Separate and Different	Inclusive Democracy	Sexual Liberation
Dimension 2	Challenging Tones	The Ideal Society	Harmony of Coexistence	LGBT Hegemony
Dimension 3	Born This Way	LGBT Hegemony	Love Wins (Assimilationist)	Separation not Discrimination
Dimension 4	Fundamental Rights	Professionalism and Scientific Evidence	Scientific Evidence	Scientific Evidence

¹⁴¹ For the names and numbering of policy frames, please refer to Appendix I.

APPENDIX A

CODEBOOK OF POLICY FRAMES AND MASTER FRAMES

Policy Frames:

F1.1	fundamental rights
Keywords	basic rights 基本權利, fundamental 基本, constitutional 憲法
Examples	Even the ECHR has ruled three times that same-sex marriage is not a <u>fundamental</u> human right. (就算是歐洲人權法庭，也已三度判決同性婚姻不是基本人權) [Hope.Family.TW/04.09.2017]
F1.2	human rights
Keywords	human rights 人權, human beings 人[類], humane 人道, natural 天生
Examples	Public opinion should not be a precondition to exercising <u>human rights</u> (不應用公眾意見作為人權的履行條件) [TAPCPR/01.17.2017]
F1.3	affection
Keywords	love 愛, partner 伴侶, home 家, intimacy 親密, cohabitation 共同生活
Examples	“ <u>Love</u> for Traditional Family” wins in 2020 (2020 愛家才會贏) [Hope.Family.TW/01.07.2020]
F1.4	sexuality
Keywords	sexual desire 性慾望, sexual behavior 性行為, sex 性
Examples	remove the content of <u>sexual</u> diversity and LGBT education from the curriculum (廢除多元性別、多元情慾及同志教育) [Hope.Family.TW/12.26.2018]
F2.1	functional roles
Keywords	parents 父母, family 家庭, procreation 繁衍, role 角色, bear a child 生育
Examples	The recent growing cases of domestic violence and child abuse result from a lack of understanding of strengthening family relationships and <u>proper family roles</u> . (最近家暴、虐兒的社會事件層出不窮，根本問題是不懂得經營婚姻家庭關係，家庭角色的分工) [Hope.Family.TW/01.17.2019]
F2.2	slippery slope

Keywords	polygamy 重婚, threat 威脅, disproportionate 不符比例
Examples	[She] associated same-sex marriage with HIV/AIDS and claimed same-sex marriage <u>would lead to not only the destruction of traditions but also incest.</u> ([她]指同婚與愛滋病有關，更稱這是毀滅傳統，亂倫) [TAPCPR/11.17.2019]
F2.3	well-being
Keywords	economy 經濟, interests 利益, HIV/AIDS 愛滋, consequence 結果, public health 公衛
Examples	[Minority groups'] equal status ... as well as <u>material interests</u> would consequently be deprived. ([少數族群的]平等身份 ... , 乃至物質上的利益，都將因此受到剝奪) [TAPCPR/01.22.2019]
F2.4	difference
Keywords	difference 差異, diversity 多元, of the right age 適齡, special law 專法
Examples	<u>diverse</u> family formation and the road to equality (多元成家，平權之路) [TAPCPR/09.24.2015]
F2.5	professionalism
Keywords	science 科學, expert 專家, disease 疾病, education 教育, training 訓練
Examples	The IOC asked organizations hosting or sponsoring the Games to prevent LGBT discrimination so they are required to hold <u>training</u> programs on this topic. (奧運會要求參與奧運籌辦的單位都不可以發生 LGBT 歧視事件，因此各企業被要求舉辦反歧視的教育訓練) [TAPCPR/04.26.2019]
F3.1	religion
Keywords	religion 宗教, God 神[明], Bible 聖經, Christ 基督, Mazu 媽祖, truth 真理
Examples	<u>Taoism</u> is a <u>religion</u> that emphasizes the importance of family ethics. (道教是個重視家庭倫理的宗教) [Hope.Family.TW/11.16.2016]
F3.2	morality
Keywords	moral 道德, norm 規範, tradition 傳統, value 價值
Examples	By <u>traditional ideas</u> of family, sons and daughters have to produce offspring to carry on the family name. (在傳統家庭的觀念上，子女必須傳宗接代) [TAPCPR/09.16.2019]
F3.3	tolerance

Keywords	homosexual hegemony 同性戀霸權, political correctness 政治正確, harmony 和諧
Examples	When some legislators bravely express their will to implement the referendum results, they become <u>targets of severe political criticism</u> so let's back them up. (當立委勇敢表達落實愛家公投，會遭受許多攻擊，邀請大家成為他們的後盾) [Hope.Family.TW/04.20.2019]
F4.1	anti-discrimination
Keywords	discrimination 歧視, fair 公平, tolerance 包容, stigma 污名, respect 尊重
Examples	Current law which does not protect same-sex marriage or common-law partners is <u>discriminatory</u> . (現行法律不保障同性婚姻或同居關係是帶有歧視性的) [TAPCPR/01.17.2017]
F4.2	equality
Keywords	equal 平等, same 一樣, equal rights 平權
Examples	The main purpose of enacting the Gender <u>Equity</u> Education Act is to prevent sexual bullying at schools (性別平等教育法之制定，出發點是反校園霸凌) [Hope.Family.TW/03.31.2019]
F4.3	liberty
Keywords	liberty 自由, freedom 自由, autonomy 自主, choice 選擇, privacy 隱私權,
Examples	Can those who have same-sex sexual desire have a <u>choice</u> not to be gay? (擁有同性情慾的人，能否擁有不一樣的選擇呢) [Hope.Family.TW/11.06.2018]
F4.4	civil rights
Keywords	civil rights 公民權利, citizens 公民, right to education 教育權, political rights 參政權
Examples	Transgender people ... are severely impacted regarding <u>their right to use public space, education, and work</u> . (跨性別者...嚴重影響ta們的空間使用權、教育權及工作權) [TAPCPR/12.10.2019]
F5.1	mobilizing
Keywords	participate 參與, join 參加, together 一起
Examples	<u>Donate to support</u> the Coalition for the Happiness of our Next Generation (小額捐款支持幸福盟) [Hope.Family.TW/05.21.2019]
F5.2	identity

Keywords	rainbow 彩虹, Taiwan 台灣, sexual orientation 性傾向, partner 夥伴
Examples	use <u>rainbow</u> power to surround the Legislative Yuan (用彩虹的力量包圍立院) [TAPCPR/08.31.2014]
F5.3	counterarguments
Keywords	false 不實, smear 抹黑, deceive 欺騙, cyber army 網軍
Examples	We inevitably face lots of critiques and <u>smear</u> yet keep the same faith to eventually get the good outcome. (不免面對許多攻擊及抹黑，但大家都本於相同的信念，最終得到美好的結果) [Hope.Family.TW/11.24.2018]
F6.1	democracy
Keywords	democracy 民主, referenda 公投, people 人民, consensus 共識, majority 主流
Examples	The <u>three ballot measures</u> support traditional family values so please get the votes and vote “yes” on them. (愛家公投有三案，要領公投票並蓋同意) [Hope.Family.TW/09.05.2018]
F6.2	special rights
Keywords	privilege 特權, special rights 特殊權利, second-class 次等
Examples	Major parties <u>lean towards big corporates</u> and unfairly sacrifice the human rights of minority groups. (主流政黨向財團靠攏，犧牲弱勢人權等不公不義狀況) [TAPCPR/10.27.2015]
F6.3	anti-elitism
Keywords	against people’s will 違背民意, elite 菁英, government 政府
Examples	We will keep <u>fighting against CEC’s decision</u> which allows unconstitutional ballot measures (中選會放任這次違法違憲的公投通過，我們將奮戰到底) [TAPCPR/11.24.2018]
F7	critical voices
Keywords	liberation 解放, heterosexism 異性戀主義, non-binary 非二元, women’s rights 女權
Examples	grasp your power as parents to resist <u>sexual liberation</u> (拿起家長的權力抵擋性解放) [Hope.Family.TW/04.04.2017]

Master Frames:

1. rights frames (F1.1, F1.2, F1.3, F1.4)
2. rationalist frames (F2.1, F2.2, F2.3, F2.4, F2.5)
3. reactionary frames (F3.1, F3.2, F3.3)
4. constitutional frames (F4.1, F4.2, F4.3, F4.4)
5. mobilizing frames (F5.1, F5.2, F5.3)
6. populist frames (F6.1, F6.2, F6.3)
7. critical frame (F7)

APPENDIX B

KEYWORDS AND PHRASES OF POLICY FRAMES¹⁴²

F1.1	fundamental rights
Keywords	basic rights 基本權利, fundamental 基本, constitution 憲法, constitutional interpretation 釋憲, essential 必須, 根本, constitutional 憲政, protection of rights 權利保障, general 普遍, universal 普世, constitutional amendment 修憲, inviolable rights 不容侵犯的權利, judicial review 憲法審查, fundamental value 基本價值, limits on state power 國家權力限制, constitutional order 憲法秩序, necessary 必要的, absolute 絕對的, violation of basic rights 基本權利侵犯
F1.2	human rights
Keywords	human rights 人權, human beings 人[類], humane 人道, natural 天生, natural rights 自然權利, being a human 生而為人, needs 需求, living 生活, life 生命, personal character 人格, personal 人身, instinct 本能, individual 個人, survival 生存, born-with 與生俱來, individualism 個人主義, self 自我, subject of rights 權利主體, self-actualization 自我實現, human-oriented 以人為導向, states exist for serving the needs of people 國家為個人存在
F1.3	affection
Keywords	love 愛(情), partner 伴侶, home 家, intimacy 親密, cohabitation 共同生活, feeling 感情, relationship 關係, sentiment 情感, emotional attachment 依戀, love affair 外遇, be in love 戀愛, couple 伴侶, husband 丈夫, wife 妻子, open relationship 開放式關係, affection 相愛, be together 在一起, monogamy 單一伴侶, polygamy 多重伴侶, same-sex marriage 同性婚姻, civil partnership 伴侶制度, the other man/woman 第三者, spouse 配偶
F1.4	sexuality

¹⁴² This appendix lists the common keywords and phrases the coders found in the coding process for each type of policy frame. The purpose of this list is to show that each policy frame is a multi-faceted concept that encompasses a variety of keywords and expressions with similar underlying ideas. This is not a comprehensive list of keywords and phrases because (1) the amount of text data is extremely large, and (2) the existence of a keyword or phrase may not necessarily indicate the existence of a corresponding policy frame since context matters. For example, regarding the keyword “mission” in F6, when expressed in the sentence “the mission of our activist group is to ...”, since the word “mission” does not convey the meaning of social/functional roles such as “parents in a family”, the coders would not assign F6 to this sentence.

Keywords	sexual desire 性慾望, sexual behavior 性行為, sex 性, lust 情慾, sexual practice 性實踐, same-sex 同性, opposite-sex 異性, fetishism 戀物癖, pedophile 戀童癖, BDSM 性虐戀, sexual fantasy 性幻想, sexual attraction 性吸引, sex organ 性器官, anal sex 肛交, condom 保險套, lubricate 潤滑液, body contact 肢體接觸, premarital pregnancy 未婚懷孕, sex education 性教育
F2.1	functional roles
Keywords	parents 雙親, family 家庭, procreation 繁衍, role 角色, bear a child 生育, father 父親, mother 母親, parenting, 教養, adoption 領養, responsibility 責任, duty 職責, mission 任務, division of labor 分工, status 地位, position 身份, function 功能, sound 功能健全, capacity 能力
F2.2	slippery slope
Keywords	polygamy 重婚, threat 威脅, disproportionate 不符比例, zoophilia 人獸戀, incest 亂倫, ramification 衍生的後果, negative side effect 不良副作用, unforeseeable results 無法預見的結果, chilling effect 寒蟬效應, neither male nor female (used in a defamatory manner) 不男不女, gender confusion 性別混淆, slippery slope 滑坡, decriminalization of adultery 通姦除罪化, legalization of polygamy 多 p 合法化, increasing rates of HIV/AIDS infection 愛滋感染劇增
F2.3	well-being
Keywords	economy 經濟, interests 利益, HIV/AIDS 愛滋, consequence 結果, calculation 計算, rationale 理據, rational 理性的, well-being 福利, public goods 公共財, public interest 公共利益, development 發展, brighter future 更美好的未來, government budget 政府預算, negative/positive impact 負/正面衝擊, cost 成本, benefit 利益
F2.4	difference
Keywords	difference 差異, diversity 多元, of the right age 適齡, special law 專法, single case 個案, unit 個體, individual 個別, dissimilar 不同, distinguish 分別, segregate 區隔, unlike 不像, separate 分開, variety 多樣性, distinct 歧異, gender diversity

	多元性別, diversity of sexual desire 多元情慾, respect diversity 尊重多元, differential treatment 差別對待, preferential policy 優惠政策
F2.5	professionalism
Keywords	science 科學, expert 專家, disease 疾病, HIV/AIDS 愛滋, education 教育, training 訓練, public health 公衛, medical 醫學, scientist 科學家, profession 專業, competence 能力, knowledge 知識, job 職業, law 法學, teacher 教師, lawyer 律師, journalist 新聞從業人員, epidemiology 流行病學, skill 技能, standard of operation 標準程序
F3.1	religion
Keywords	religion 宗教, deities 神明, Bible 聖經, Jesus Christ 耶穌基督, Mazu 媽祖, truth 真理, God 上帝, Christianity 基督教, 基督徒 Christian, Catholics 天主教, Taoism 道教, Buddhism 佛教, Yiguandao 一貫道, dogma 教義, piety 虔誠, ancestral worship 祖先崇拜, folklore religion 民間信仰, Guanyin 觀音, Lord 主, Abba Father 天父, Islam 伊斯蘭教, Quran 可蘭經, church service 禮拜, church 教會, temple 寺廟, atheism 無神論者, non-religious 無信仰者, ablution 受洗, convert 皈依, sanctity 聖潔, holy 神聖, Presbyterian church 長老教會, Bread of Life Christian Church 靈糧堂, Jade Emperor 玉皇大帝, Buddha 佛陀, asceticism 禁慾, Tudigong 土地公, vegetarian 吃素, monk 佛僧, Tzu Chi 慈濟, Ven. Shih Chao-hwei 釋昭慧法師
F3.2	morality
Keywords	moral 道德, norm 規範, tradition 傳統, value 價值, cultural heritage 文化資產, customs 民俗, ethics 倫理, 固有文化, renlun 人倫, conscience 良心, goodwill 善念, natural law 自然法, distinguish right from wrong 是非, virtue 德性, character 品格, Confucian philosophy 儒家思想, traditional Chinese culture 中華傳統文化, social order 社會秩序, code of conduct 行事原則, know how to behave appropriately 做人處事
F3.3	tolerance

Keywords	homosexual hegemony 同性戀霸權, political correctness 政治正確, harmony 和諧, tolerance 容忍, co-exist 共存, conflict 衝突, confrontation 對抗, opposition 反對, magnanimity 肚量, bully 霸凌, embrace 容納, inclusive 包容的, understanding 理解, co-prosperity 共榮, compromise 妥協, respect 尊重
F4.1	anti-discrimination
Keywords	discrimination 歧視, fair 公平, stigma 污名, respect 尊重, prejudice, protected group 應受保護的族群, employment discrimination 就業歧視, housing discrimination 租住房屋歧視, discrimination based on sexual orientation 性傾向歧視, discrimination based on gender identity 性別認同歧視, discrimination based on sex 生理性別歧視, education discrimination 受教權歧視, hate crime 仇恨犯罪, hate speech 仇恨言論, anti-discrimination 反歧視, anti-discrimination law 反歧視法, bias 偏見, stereotype 刻板印象, reverse discrimination 逆向歧視
F4.2	equality
Keywords	equal 平等, same 一樣, equal rights 平權, identical 相同, no distinction between us and them 不分你我, equal treatment of the law 法律上一律平等, equal protection 平等保障, substantive equality 實質平等, differential treatment 差別待遇, equal status 平等地位, equal pay for equal work 同工同酬, gender equality 性別平等, standards of scrutiny for equality 平等權審查標準, violation of equality 平等權侵害, consistent 一致
F4.3	liberty
Keywords	liberty 自由, freedom 自由, autonomy 自主, choice 選擇, privacy 隱私權, free will 自由意志, freedom of speech 言論自由, personal liberty 人身自由, limitation 限制, slavery 奴役, self 自我, subjective will 主觀意願, negative liberty 消極自由, positive liberty 積極自由, self-resolution 自決, freedom of religion 宗教自由, freedom of the press 新聞自由, willing 自發, volunteer 自願
F4.4	civil rights

Keywords	civil rights 公民權利, citizens 公民, right to education 教育權, political rights 參政權, civic activity 公民活動, citizen movement 公民運動, political participation 政治參與, citizenship 公民資格, suffrage 選舉權, right of recall 罷免權, right of initiative 創制權, right of referendum 複決權, right to take civil service examinations 應考試權, right of equal access to public service 服公職權, disfranchisement 褫奪公權, nationality 國籍, civil duty 公民義務, civil culture 公民文化, public affairs 公共事務
F5.1	mobilizing
Keywords	participate 參與, join 加入, together 一起, activity 活動, petition 連署, share 分享, forward 轉發, 告訴別人, mobilize 動員, assemble 集結, gather 集合, collaborate 協同, cooperate 合作, participate 參加, recruit 招募, donate 捐款, provide certain goods 提供物資, help 幫忙, call your legislator 聯絡立委, write to political figures 寫信給政治人物, demonstration 遊行, protest 抗議, rally 集會
F5.2	identity
Keywords	rainbow 彩虹, Taiwan 台灣, Taiwanese 台灣人, sexual orientation 性傾向, partner 夥伴, China 中國, Chinese 中國人, LGBT 多元性別者, sexual minority 性少數, homosexual 同性戀, lesbian 女同性戀, gay man 男同性戀, bisexual 雙性戀, transgender 跨性別, queer 酷兒, intersect 陰陽人, Christian 基督徒, indigenous people 原住民, Minnan 閩南人, Hakka 客家人, Hong Kong 香港, Mainlander 外省人, Han Chinese 漢人
F5.3	counterarguments
Keywords	false 不實的, smear 抹黑, deceive 欺騙, cyber army 網軍, rumor 謠言, wrong 錯誤的, fact 事實, refute 駁斥, argue against 反駁, object 反對, misleading 誤導, clarify 澄清, defamation 誹謗, libel 醜化, misinformation 錯誤訊息, disinformation 虛假資訊, fact check 事實查核, distort 扭曲, smear 抹黑, exaggeration 誇張, fake news 假新聞, lie 謊言, slap in the face 打臉, fake (verb) 造假, untrustworthy 不可信賴的
F6.1	democracy

Keywords	democracy 民主, referendum 公投, people 人民, consensus 共識, majority 主流, masses 民眾, public opinion 民意, majority 多數, election 選舉, rule by the people 民治, people's will 人民意志, popular sovereignty 人民主權, voting 投票, policy decisions made based on people's opinions 人民作主, direct demagoguery 直接民主, majority rule 多數決, rule of law 法治
F6.2	special rights
Keywords	privilege 特權, special rights 特殊權利, second-class 次等, preferential 優惠的, superiority 優越, collude 勾結, social injustice 社會不公, minority 弱者, marginalize 邊緣, social hierarchy 社會階級, undeserving 不應得到的, special care 特別照顧, immunity 豁免, advantage 優勢, special treatment 特別待遇
F6.3	anti-elitism
Keywords	against people's will 違背民意, elite 菁英, government 政府, (opposing) DPP (反對)民進黨, (opposing) KMT (反對)國民黨, (opposing) New Power Party (反對)時代力量, opposing a specific politician 反對政治人物, publicity stunt 作秀, politician 政客, corruption 貪腐, step down as president, Tsai Ing-wen 蔡英文下台, the dominance of the two major parties 兩黨獨大, common folks 庶民, elite arrogance 菁英傲慢, elites are unresponsive to the people 遠離群眾, grass-root 草根, being down to earth 接地氣
F7	critical voices
Keywords	critical theory 批判理論, critical 批判, liberation 開放, heterosexism 異性戀主義, non-binary 非二元, women's rights 女權, emancipation 解放, revolution 革命, structural factor 結構因素, domination 宰制, queer, 異性戀霸權, feminism 女性主義, deconstruct 解構, fight against the system 對抗體制, revolt 反抗, cisgender 順性別

APPENDIX C

REFLECTIONS ON THE CODING PROCESS

The text data consists of documents that are both unstructured in their format as well as noisy in nature since it is free-flowing. To systematically compare certain characteristics of the text data, we need to transform it into numerical values. Such a transformation allows commensurability by imposing a commonly-shared standard of measurement. Instead of using computational methods that generate scores or coding results automatically by either a dictionary-based approach or machine learning, I adopt a thematic content analysis. The thematic content analysis requires rigorous human coding and collaboration among coders. Although there are some inherent issues of using the thematic content analysis, I would argue that the benefits outweigh the downsides given the characteristics of this research project (specified in the last two sections of this appendix). Since there are only a few studies that use this method in political science, it is important for me to record the steps I have taken throughout the research process and to reflect on how these decisions would impact the final coding results (Hatakka, Niemi, and Välimäki 2017; Lanterman 2018; Günther 2018).

This appendix describes the coding process of the thematic content analysis and presents the benefits and challenges of using such an approach to generate coding outcomes for text data. The major steps can be specified as follows: data preparation, coder recruitment, generating the initial codebook, the first stage of coding, revision of the codebook, the second stage of coding, generating the final coding outcomes.

Data Preparation

The text data comes from the publicly accessible Facebook fan pages of pro- and anti-gay rights activists (Chapter 2, Chapter 3, and Chapter 4) and influencers (Chapter 4) in Taiwan. The

author is responsible for collecting and formatting the text data and the data collection has been done in two phases to ensure that the coding can be completed on time. In November 2019, I have completed collecting the text data from these public fan pages between November 2013 and November 2019. At the end of March 2020, I have collected the rest of the text data between December 2019 and March 2020. The coders received the two sets of text data once the collection was finished.

The raw text data consists of the following columns in a CSV (Comma Separated Values) file: *Page Name*, *Time Stamp* (YYYY-MM-DD HH:MM:SS), *Post Content*, *Number of Likes*, *Number of Ahah*, *Number of Love*, *Number of Wow*, *Number of Sigh*, *Number of Grrr*, *Number of Comments*, *Shared From*, *Post_ID*, and *Post URL*. Although it is a common practice for computational text analysis to pre-process the text data to remove the random noises and make it digestible and analyzable, I choose to keep the original text data intact. The major reason for not preprocessing the text data is that the coders need to read through the content of posts carefully to determine if she or he can observe a specific policy frame. Any changes to the text data might alter the original meaning of the post or remove certain important symbols or keywords that signal the existence of a specific policy frame. Therefore, since the thematic content analysis requires the coders to pay close attention to the content of the posts, keeping the wholeness of the text data is essential for a more accurate interpretation of the meanings. The only change I make to the original CSV file is to add a column called “*Policy Frames*” where the coders would input their responses about what frames they have found in the messages.

Coder Recruitment

To ensure the validity and reliability of the coding results, in addition to the author, two other coders voluntarily participated in the coding process. The two coding assistants are friends

of the author and we have met regularly to check and compare the coding results biweekly during the process. The other two coders are Taiwanese graduate students who study in the United States and their majors are physical science and communication respectively. The three coders have grown up and spent most of their lives in Taiwan. Their native language is Mandarin Chinese and both of them are fluent native speakers who can understand the meanings of the posts without difficulty. They also have the cultural competence to understand the debate of same-sex marriage in the context of Taiwan. The two coders differ in their biological sexes while both of them are about thirty years old.

The major reasons why I work with the two coders are as follows. First, since this dissertation project is not funded directly by outside sources, I can only rely on voluntary work from those who are interested in participating in the coding process. Although there might be a self-selection bias by using this non-probabilistic manner to select coders, I would argue that since the academic backgrounds of the three coders differ, it shows that the understanding and application of the codebook do not require specialized expert knowledge in political science. Furthermore, I did not ask the two coders their policy stances of same-sex marriage and the LGBT curriculum since it would violate personal privacy. It would also be problematic to filter out coders who hold a specific policy stance on these issues. Although I gradually learned that both of them are favorable of gay rights in general in our conversation, the two coders have never participated in pro- or anti-gay rights organizations or activities and did not keep track of the development of gay rights in Taiwan closely. They also did not follow any of the fan pages included in our text data. Therefore, although the coders have their inherent subjective views on same-sex marriage, I would argue that the effect of such subjective views on coding outcomes is not strong since the two coders are not extremely ideological on this policy issue. Additionally, the coding is largely

based on a set of clearly defined keywords and phrases, with subjective interpretation playing only a minor role.

Concerning the power structure among the three coders, the two coding assistants are not hired or compensated with monetary benefits by the author, the relationship among the coders is more horizontal rather than hierarchical. Since the author and the coders know one another in real life, it encourages open dialogue among them if any confusion of the coding scheme or inconsistent interpretation of the text data comes up. By recruiting the other two coders, it allows me to examine the extent to which the coding outcome is both valid and reliable. Given the nature of the qualitative content analysis, since it involves the human reading of the text, subjectivity would always affect the coding outcomes. However, I try to maximize the validity by finding coders who are linguistically and culturally competent to understand both the codebook and the text data. To ensure a decent level of reliability for the coding results, I compute and make sure that the agreement of coding outcomes among coders is at least above the threshold suggested by previous studies.

Generating the Initial Codebook

The thematic content analysis combines deductive and inductive ways to figure out the underlying themes and topics in the text data. Deductively, the researcher needs to review the previous literature and list the possible categories of a research topic (different types of policy frames and master frames in this case) in the initial codebook. Inductively, the researcher would then work with the coders to apply the initial codebook on a small sample (about fifty pieces of text data) in the first stage of coding. The coders would see if the initial codebook needs further revision or expansion based on some new categories found in the local context of the text data. Since the research aims to examine the types of policy frames used to justify certain stances on

the issues of gay rights, it requires expert academic knowledge to identify the prominent policy frames found in earlier literature. I have been working on the research topic of gay rights in not only Taiwan but also the United States during my doctoral research. Given the requirement of expert knowledge, I did not work with the other two coders for the creation of the initial codebook since they know little about this subject.

When generating the initial codebook, I refer to the important works in the field of gay-rights policy frames. I have relied heavily on the following literature to help me create the initial codebook: Hull (2001); Brewer (2003; 2007); Miceli (2005); Andersen (2006); Mucciaroni (2009; 2011); Leachman (2013); Moscovitz (2013). Previous literature on this topic mainly studies the development of gay rights in western societies, the United States in particular. Some might argue that what we have learned in western countries cannot adequately account for the unique context of Taiwan as an Asian country in the Global South. However, I would argue that the insights we gain from these earlier studies still serve as a good starting point to compare the similarities and contrast the differences between the construction of gay-rights policy frames in Taiwan and western countries. Furthermore, this issue of potential incompatibility can not only justify the purpose of my research but also be remedied by thematic content analysis that has a two-stage coding scheme. Based on the previous literature, the initial codebook consists of the following policy frames: fundamental rights (F1.1), anti-discrimination (F4.1), human rights (F1.2), religion (F3.1), morality (F3.2), functional roles (F2.1), equality (F4.2), liberty (F4.3), civil rights (F4.4), critical voices (F7), democracy (F6.1), special rights (F6.2), mobilizing (F5.1), affection (F1.3), and identity (F5.2).

The First Stage of Coding

Before the three coders started the coding process, I had a meeting with the other two coding assistants to discuss how the coding process should go. I explained to them the purpose of the research and the details of the initial codebook. We went through each type of policy frames and thought of any other potential keywords or phrases that might be associated with a specific policy frame. We agreed that for each post, the number of policy frames could be more than more. All of us had the consensus that we would record the existence of a policy frame as long as its keywords or phrases appeared in a post, regardless of the tone of the messages (affirmation or negation). I have also assured them that they did not have to overthink what frames were in a post but relied on their first impression after finishing reading a post.

At the first stage of coding, I numbered the posts of each fan page in chronological order and used a random number generator to select fifty posts from each fan page. The total number of fan pages is eight (two from each of the following groups: pro-gay rights activist groups, pro-gay rights influencers, anti-gay rights activist groups, and anti-gay rights influencers). Since the average number of all posts across the eight fan pages was around 350, the number of fifty posts per fan page (about one-seventh) was manageable to finish for coders while sufficient to ensure a decent level of frame variation for us to observe. After I sent out the file that contained the text data for the first-stage coding, the three coders used the initial codebook to code the data. During the coding process, we also noted down the following items that would be the topics of discussion in our meeting once the first-stage coding was completed: (1) new keywords or phrases that expressed the idea of a policy frame already included in the initial codebook; (2) new types of policy frames that were not listed in the initial codebook and their corresponding keywords and

phrases; (3) any issues, puzzles, or concerns the coders encountered when applying the initial codebook to the text data.

Revision of the Codebook

It took the three coders about two and a half weeks to finish the first stage of coding since additional time was needed for us to become familiarized with the codebook. We tried to limit the time spent on coding per day to be no more than one and a half hours (three minutes at most for each post). Based on the three coders' results, the lowest score of inter-coder reliability between a pair of coders was 86% (rounded to two decimal places). The reliability score was computed by dividing the number of cases showing agreement between a pair of two coders and the maximum number of possible coding differences (as the number of total possible frame types in the initial codebook multiple by the total number of posts).

We had a meeting to discuss the coding process and to check with one another about the new policy frames and keywords as well as the issues we faced during the first-stage coding. There were several issues with which the coders came up during the first-stage coding. In addition to a series of discussions on decisions to incorporate new keywords or policy frames, we had a few questions regarding how to draw the boundaries among some of the existing frames. For example, one coder argued that the difference between the first frame (fundamental rights) and the third one (human rights) could sometimes be ambiguous. In the literature of human rights, the idea of "human rights" was on many occasions conflated with "fundamental rights." Human beings are born with these fundamental rights and based on this reasoning, "human rights" were considered as the equivalent to "fundamental rights." This ambiguity also emerged when it came to a comparison between the second frame (anti-discrimination) and the seventh one (equality). One coder argued that when a post mentioned the idea of "discrimination", it seemed to imply

the lack of “equality” at the same time. In this case, even though keywords of “equality” were not explicitly observable in the text, should we still assign the equality frame to that post since it was implicitly signaled? Therefore, after our discussion, the coders decided that we had to carefully make a clear distinction between these policy frames since they touched upon certain unique meanings. To minimize the chances of future confusion, we brainstormed the possible keywords that could be associated with each policy frame and used it as the basis for our subsequent coding. Furthermore, to avoid over-interpretation, we also agreed that the assignment of policy frames to a post should depend on whether explicit keywords or sentences were suggesting the ideas of a policy frame.

Based on the results of the first-stage coding, we found that the initial codebook performed decently to record the various types of policy frames in messages distributed by Taiwanese pro- and anti-gay rights political actors. However, the three coders have noted down some new frame types that were not included in the initial codebook. It would be undesirable to make the codebook a catchall one since having too many categories of policy frames in the codebook would not only overburden the coders but also capture too many noises which would hinder the subsequent analysis. Therefore, we left out those trivial new frame types and only incorporated those that appeared at least thirty times in the first-stage coding. These newly incorporated policy frames were as follows: slippery slope (F2.2), well-being (F2.3), tolerance (F3.3), difference (F2.4), anti-elitism (F6.3), sexuality (F1.4), professionalism (F2.5), and counterarguments (F5.3).

The Second Stage of Coding

The second-stage coding took place at two different time points: mid-December 2019 and early April 2020 since the data was collected in two phases because of data availability (November 2019 and March 2020). The first phase of the second-stage coding lasted about one and a half

months while the second phase lasted about two weeks. During the coding process, the three coders had meetings to discuss their progress and checked in with one another on a bi-weekly basis. In mid-April when the second-stage coding was completed, I have collected the whole coding results from the other two coders.

After each bi-weekly meeting, I recorded the number of inconsistent coding results between a pair of the two coders. Similar to the first-stage coding, the computation of the inter-coder reliability is dividing the number of instances where coders have an agreement by the total number of possibilities in the whole corpus. The lowest inter-coder reliability between a pair of coders is 81% (rounded to two decimal places) in the second coding stage and any values above 75% are considered as acceptable in previous research (Stemler 2004; Hays and Revicki 2005).

The revised codebook did a decent job to capture the policy frames in the text data in the second-stage coding since it was already quite comprehensive with twenty-three kinds of policy frames. However, the coders still encountered a few policy frames that were not observed in the first stage of coding. One example of these policy frames was the discourse of state rights. In June 2015, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled in *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015, 576 U.S. 644) that same-sex couples should enjoy the fundamental right to marry based on both due process and equal protection. When mentioning this major policy shift in the United States, one of the Taiwanese anti-gay rights influencers discussed the idea of “state rights” raised in the dissenting opinion of *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015). The argument of state rights stated that the definition of marriage should be determined by political processes taking place at the state level to better account for people’s voices in this debate. The coders eventually decided not to include these few policy frames such as “state rights” in the codebook since they were extremely low in number and were not originated from the context of Taiwan.

Generating the Final Coding Outcomes

The last step of thematic content analysis was to generate the final coding outcomes once the coders have finished their second-stage coding. Although it was quite intuitive to copy the results when all of the three coders agreed that a certain frame type existed or was absent in a post, one of the major issues was how to reconcile and deal with the disagreements among coders. There were several different ways to deal with disagreements to generate a final coding output. The first approach was to ask the three coders to have a detailed discussion in each instance of disagreement and try to seek a consensus after the discussion (case-by-case deliberation). Another approach was to keep only instances where the three coders reach an agreement and discard those policy frames where at least one coder disagreed with others in a message (rule of unanimity). The other approach was to impose the majority rule to decide whether a policy frame should be incorporated in the final coding outcomes when there was disagreement among the coders (majority rule).

To better understand the tradeoffs of each approach, please refer to the following illustration. For example, if two coders observed the existence of a “human rights” frame in a message while that frame was absent in the other coder’s coding results; by applying the first approach, the three coders had to gather together and discuss the rationales based on which they decided whether a frame was observable in a message or not. In addition to being impractically time-consuming, the major problem with this approach was that it became a gridlock if the disagreement persisted without compromise from the coders. If we chose to use the second approach which called for unanimous consent among the three coders, although this rule was simpler to implement, it might lead to a great loss of information since it set a high bar to require all of the three coders to be on the same page when deciding the existence of a policy frame. Since each coder

would be a single veto player in the second approach, the systematic bias would be more likely to occur if any one of the three coders happened to have a distinctive interpretation of a specific policy frame. Alternatively, if we adopted the last approach of majority rule, the human-rights frame would be recorded in this message since there were two coders, who constituted the majority, observed the existence of such a frame.

Based on a discussion among the coders, we all agreed that the third approach would be the best strategy to deal with disagreements in coding results. The third approach could be considered as a middle ground between the other two approaches since it set a reasonable while not overtly challenging threshold for the inclusion or exclusion of a policy frame in a message. Furthermore, the majority rule was easy to implement in an efficient and time-saving way. However, we did not forsake the first approach and had a brief discussion during our bi-weekly meeting when any one of the coders had confusion about coding. In these talks, we discussed if a new type of policy frame should be included (such as state rights) or if a specific way to code a policy frame was also adopted by other coders.

Construction of Policy Frames and Master Frames

One last task was to decide what similarities could be found among the twenty-three identified policy frames, with an effort to figure out the master frames that underlie the various policy frames. The coders discussed if there was a way to group certain kinds of policy frames as master groups that represented some common core values or ideas. Instead of using factor analysis to treat master frames as the clusters of the policy frames, the coders decided to generate the types of master frames based on our re-examination and discussion of the twenty-three policy frames once the coding process had been completed. Some might argue that it made more sense to use methods of dimensional reduction to identify master frames without the intervention of

subjective interpretation. However, the major problem with using factor analysis to generate types of master frames was that the grouping/clustering of policy frames only suggested the higher or lower likelihood for certain policy frames to coexist while the naming of the groups still required human interpretation. Additionally, another drawback of using factor analysis in this scenario was that policy frames with the same underlying core values or ideas were very unlikely to coexist in a single message since they might carry similar meanings such as the case of “fundamental rights” and “human rights.” However, this lack of coexistence did not mean that these two policy frames did not have shared meanings or ideas. Therefore, based on our discussion, we inductively concluded that seven master frames could adequately capture the latent values among the various policy frames. These master frames were the rights frames (different kinds of “rights” or “nature” individuals are equipped with), rationalist frames (calculation and evaluation of costs or benefits as suggested by the rational choice theory), reactionary frames (political appeals to resist change or keep the status quo), constitutional frames (basic principles commonly found in the constitution to prevent a tyrannical government), mobilizing frames (discourse that encourage the audience’s engagement), populist frames (statements that prioritize the political influence of the “ordinary people”), and the critical frames (critiques against the power structures of society as suggested by critical theory such as feminism, post-modernism or queer theory).

The construction of policy frames and master frames takes a rigorous and in-depth reading of the text data and it is not random or arbitrary. After coding 3,851 posts from eight fan pages, with a total number of word count being around 600,000, although not all of the three coders are trained in using qualitative content analysis, a large amount of time they spent on coding allows them to be familiarized with some big themes that have appeared repeatedly in the

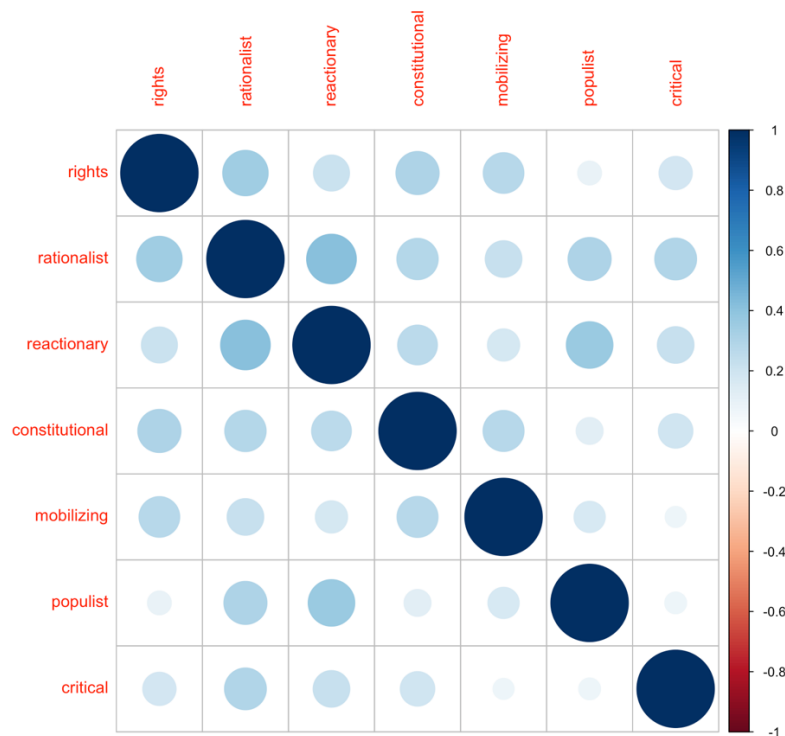
policy messages of gay rights. Therefore, although I would agree that things can seem subjective when deciding the types of policy frames and master frames, these decisions are informed based on the coders' experience and knowledge gained throughout the coding process. Furthermore, a large portion of the policy frames and master frames are generated deductively based on previous studies of framing gay rights in Western societies rather than arbitrarily named by the coders.

I would also like to acknowledge that the categorization of policy frames and master frames does not mean that these frames are mutually exclusive and independent from one another. The goal of the categorization scheme in the codebook is to facilitate our understanding of the underlying themes regarding policy frames that are found in the political discussion of gay rights in Taiwan. Therefore, it is reasonable that the policy frames and master frames are correlated and frame producers may deploy more than one master frame in their messages in order to justify their policy arguments. As the table below shows, it is quite common to see multiple frames are used in one message since a majority of the messages fall within such cases. The proportions of messages that have two, three, and four frames account for nearly half of the cases (47.7%). However, it is not that frequent for us to observe cases when more than five master frames are used at the same time (the relatively low proportions of messages containing five, six, or seven master frames; 9%, 4%, and 2%).

The Proportions of Messages Containing One or More Master Frames								
Number of Master Frames in a Post	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
%	20.4	16.9	17	16	14.7	9	4	2

The interdependence of the policy and master frames can also be observed by looking at the Pearson correlation coefficients among the seven master frames (coded as the number of

times a master frame is observed in a message). The correlation matrix plot shows that each master frame is weakly or moderately correlated with one another (from 0.07 to 0.41). Therefore, it suggests that our coding scheme works well since we identify master frames that are mutually correlated with one another while none of these master frames are highly correlated (>0.75) so they speak to distinct themes of gay rights framing in the context of Taiwan.



Limitations and Challenges of Using Thematic Content Analysis

It would be important for researchers to be reflexive and explicit about the limitations of the research methods they decide to adopt. Based on my experience of engaging myself in this research project, I would first argue that one of the major challenges of thematic content analysis is the costs associated with such a method. In addition to the costs of recruiting coders, since the coding process involves multiple steps (reviewing previous literature; generating the initial codebook based on earlier findings; the first-stage coding by using the initial codebook; revision of

the codebook; the second-stage coding with the revised codebook; generating the final coding results). Between these steps, there are meetings among coders so that coders can familiarize themselves with the codebook as well as solve issues that they encounter in their coding tasks. Therefore, in addition to the amount of time individual coders spend reading the text data and assigning values to each message, coders also need to participate in teamwork and group discussion to obtain the final results. An associated cost is a difficulty of finding qualified coders who would be willing to sacrifice their time to take part in this project. In addition to the time costs mentioned previously, there are certain qualifications required for potential coders. The coders need to be both linguistically and culturally competent to complete the coding task. In this research, since the target audiences of the activists and influencers are ordinary people, no additional expert knowledge is required to fulfill the coding tasks. However, it would still be necessary for the coders to at least have a decent level of local life experience and language capacity to better understand the localized context where the text data is generated.

The thematic content analysis might be challenged and questioned regarding the generalizability of the results. Although this method requires more than one coder to ensure the results have reached a certain level of inter-coder reliability, the results are inevitably subject to subjective interpretation among the coders. Unlike the computational approach which uses either supervised or unsupervised machine learning, the coding results of the thematic content analysis are highly dependent on how the coders subjectively understand the meanings of the text data regardless of the number of coders who are involved. Therefore, it is likely that the coding results might be different if it were not exactly these three coders who took part in this project. Although I would acknowledge that replicability of the coding results is an inherent issue when human coders are involved, thematic content analysis is my best choice out of the existing alternatives.

One of the major problems with computational context analysis is that these techniques cannot adequately take into consideration the contextual meanings of the messages. Such approaches transform words into numbers as shown in the document term matrix (DTM) in a bag-of-words model, without carefully understand if the same words in different places might have different meanings. Furthermore, there is currently no good and encompassing dictionary to capture the complex idea of “policy frames.”

One additional challenge of using the thematic content analysis occurs where there is disagreement among coders. Given the prior literature, there is no rule set in stone when coders have different views on how to code a specific piece of text data. Therefore, researchers need to weigh the various possible options and decide which decision rule to follow. There are benefits and costs associated with each approach as specified earlier in the section of “Generating the Final Coding Outcomes” (case-by-case deliberation, rule of unanimity, majority rule). Therefore, researchers have to be explicit about the rationale for their choice and recognize how such a rule might bias the results while fulfilling certain benefits.

Benefits of Using Thematic Content Analysis

Regardless of the limitations and challenges of thematic content analysis, there are several advantages of using such a method to generate coding results of text data. First and foremost, given the paucity of existing literature to tease out the various policy frames of gay rights in the context of Asian countries, thematic content analysis is suitable for exploratory research, with this project as an example. The thematic content analysis combines both deductive and inductive approaches to create different categories which fall under the research topic of interest (for example, policy frames in this research). Therefore, it allows researchers to establish a coding scheme that starts with the findings of existing literature while discovering newer themes in a

different context during the first stage of coding and adapt the coding scheme accordingly. The strength of the thematic content analysis is particularly strong when the research is still in the theory-generating process.

Another benefit of the thematic content analysis is that it requires teamwork among coders. The coders collaboratively set up standards they would commonly follow when implementing the coding tasks. Thematic content analysis is also advantageous when it comes to its flexibility during the coding process. Since thematic content analysis only outlines the basic steps for researchers to follow, it allows researchers to brainstorm contingency plans whenever a new issue occurs during the coding process. Furthermore, reflexivity is also evaluated when researchers acknowledge and are aware of how subjective understandings would shape the coding outcomes.

Based on the above-mentioned benefits, I would argue that thematic content analysis serves as a middle ground between fully automated/computational and fully interpretive approaches to study text data. It serves as a suitable tool to figure out new themes in exploratory studies. Furthermore, thematic content analysis requires not only rigorous cooperation among coders to ensure the reliability of the results but also a detailed reflection on the decisions made throughout the coding process.

APPENDIX D

THE IQV AND ENTROPY SCORES AS MEASURES OF FRAME DIVERSITY

One of the research questions in the fourth chapter is to understand the behavioral patterns of policy framing among four groups of political actors (pro-gay rights activists, anti-gay rights activists, pro-gay rights influencers, and anti-gay rights influencers). To examine the similarities and differences of their framing behaviors, I have adopted some indices to systematically measure such patterns (frame diversity, relative frequency of policy messages, message popularity, and frame homogeneity). For frame diversity, it is defined as the extent to which actors would be equally likely to adopt each frame in their messages. To measure variation across different possible outcomes of a specific variable (each frame type belonging to the variable *Policy Frames*), there are two different ways to compute the variability of a nominal variable and they are the index of qualitative variation (IQV) and information entropy. This appendix provides a detailed explanation of the two kinds of measures: definitions, formulas, and the ways to compute these measures in the R language. Furthermore, I compare the two types of variability measures and discuss the robustness of my findings on frame diversity.

Index of Qualitative Variation (IQV)

Variability means the degree to which observations of a variable are different from other observations of the same variable. Given the scale and nature of a variable, we can express variability in different forms. The most common measure of variability for continuous variables (ratio or interval) is the standard deviation or variance. The variance is defined as the average of the squared differences between the mean and the observations of a variable while standard deviation is the square root of the variance. The larger the standard deviation, the more spread out the

distribution of a variable is. Therefore, if a variable has a large value of standard deviation, it indicates that the values of observations are distant from the central point of the distribution. In cases when categorical or nominal variables are involved, since the mean is not computable and cannot be interpreted in a meaningful way, we would use the index of qualitative variation (IQV) to capture the degree of statistical dispersion. Since the main variable of interest in this research is the types of policy frames (a nominal variable), I adopt the IQV to describe how much variation and diversity there is in the distribution of values for policy frames.

The IQV measures the variability of nominal variables by comparing the total number of differences in the distribution to the maximum number of possible differences of the same distribution. As a ratio, the value of the IQV is between zero and one, with zero showing no variation/diversity while one indicates that the cases are evenly distributed across all of the possible categories of the nominal variable. There are many different indexes available to estimate the degree of dispersion in nominal distributions (Wilcox 1973; Gibbs and Poston 1975; Gadrich, Bashkansky, and Zitikis 2015). In the following section, I provide a brief review of these different indices and explain the reasons why I use a specific type of IQV rather than others.

Different Indices of the IQV: A Brief Review

In his discussion of political measurement, Wilcox (1973) presents the six different ways to measure qualitative variation with nominal-scale data (DM, ADA, MDA, VA, HREL, and B). These indices commonly satisfy formal conditions. Firstly, the maximum and minimum values of an index are not dependent on the magnitude of the following two parameters of a qualitative distribution: the number of observations and the number of categories. Secondly, these indices have a standard range of values, ideally from zero to one. Lastly, the maximum and minimum

values of these indices indicate the extreme cases for the distribution of a variable (such as un-competitive vs. competitive; concentrated vs. dispersed; homogenous vs. heterogeneous). The

$$DM = 1 - \frac{\sum_{i=1}^k (f_m - f_i)}{N(K-1)}$$

$$ADA = 1 - \frac{\sum_{i=1}^k |f_i - \frac{N}{K}|}{2(\frac{N}{K})(K-1)}$$

$$MDA = 1 - \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{k-1} \sum_{j=i+1}^k |f_i - f_j|}{N(K-1)}$$

$$VA = 1 - \frac{\sum_{i=1}^k (f_i - \frac{N}{K})^2}{\frac{N^2(K-1)}{K}}$$

$$HREL = - \frac{\sum_{i=1}^k (\frac{f_i}{N}) \log_2 \frac{f_i}{N}}{\log_2 K}$$

$$B = 1 - \sqrt{1 - (\sqrt[k]{\prod_{i=1}^k \frac{f_i K}{N}})^2} = 1 - \sqrt{1 - (G)^2}$$

formulas of the six indices reviewed by Wilcox are listed as follows:

where f_i = is the frequency of the i th category;

f_m = the frequency of the modal category;

N = the number of cases;

K = the number of categories;

$\log_2 K$ = maximum possible uncertainty when the alternatives are equally likely;

G = the geometric mean (the quality of apportionment)

The DM index measures the sum of the differences between the modal frequency and the non-modal frequencies. The divisor adjusts the values of this statistic to be between zero and one. Subtraction from one makes the lower values of this statistic indicate low variation (high concentration). The ADA index describes the arithmetic mean of the absolute differences of each

value from the mean. The MDA is a measure of the average absolute differences of all the possible pairs of values. The value of the MDA is determined by the spread of the variate-values but not by the deviations from the central value which can be difficult to define in nominal variables. The VA index is computed as the arithmetic mean of the squared differences of each value from the mean. Similar to the ADA, the mean is defined as the total number of cases divided by the total number of possible categories. The HREL index is derived from the information theory and it aims to measure uncertainty or the quality/poorness of a guess. It is defined as the average number of questions required to specify the correct alternative. The numerator is an index of the actual uncertainty and is also known as the information entropy, which will be discussed in detail in the next part of this appendix as a robustness check to the IQV score. The denominator is the maximum possible uncertainty when all categories' frequencies are the same. By dividing with the maximum possible uncertainty, this statistic can be standardized and compared across distributions. The last index in Wilcox's review is the B index and relies on the concept of the geometric mean as a measure of dispersion when the sum of the numbers under consideration is a constant. The remaining parts of the formula for B are a correction to just for some undesirable features of the geometric mean.

Based on Wilcox's evaluation and application, he shows that although there are minor differences between the outcomes of these six measures. These measures demonstrate similar results. However, he argues that we also need to take into consideration the following seven criteria when deciding which measure to adopt: formula simplicity, computational ease, and information utilization. I will refer to his criteria listed here to discuss why I end up choosing the M2 index proposed by Gibbs and Poston at the end of this section.

Gibbs and Poston (1975) are economists who explore the different measures that could capture the idea of the division of labor in economic activities. A division of labor means that individuals of a population become specialized in their sustenance activities to increase the overall efficiency and functional interdependence among members of society. Gibbs and Poston argue that to account for both the degree (the differences among members in their sustenance activities) and the bases (characteristics that affect the occupational differences among members such as sex or age) of the division of labor, he proposes six possible measures to compare the degree of

$$\begin{aligned}
 M1 &= 1 - \left[\frac{\sum_{i=1}^k (X^2)}{(\sum_{i=1}^k X)^2} \right] \\
 M2 &= \frac{1 - \left[\frac{\sum_{i=1}^k (X^2)}{(\sum_{i=1}^k X)^2} \right]}{1 - (1/K)} \\
 M3 &= \frac{(1 - \left[\frac{\sum_{i=1}^k (X^2)}{(\sum_{i=1}^k X)^2} \right]) - Min}{[1 - (1/K)] - Min} \\
 M4 &= 1 - \frac{(\sum_{i=1}^k |X - \bar{X}|)/2}{\sum_{i=1}^k X} \\
 M5 &= 1 - \frac{(\sum_{i=1}^k |X - \bar{X}|)/2}{\sum_{i=1}^k X - K + 1 - \bar{X}} \\
 M6 &= K \left[1 - \frac{(\sum_{i=1}^k |X - \bar{X}|)/2}{\sum_{i=1}^k X} \right]
 \end{aligned}$$

the division of labor across different populations.

where X_i is the number of observations in a given category;

K = the number of categories;

Min = the minimum $M1$ value;

\bar{X} = mean or the total number of cases divided by the total number of categories

The M1 index shows the likelihood for a random pair of samples to be in different categories. The second part of the M1 formula computes the probability for a random pair to be drawn from the same category. Since the sampling is a random process, the probability for a random pair to belong to the same category equals summing up the square of the proportions of all categories. By subtracting that probability from 1, the resulting probability is the M1 index which is the likelihood for a random pair to come from different categories. Larger values of M1 indicate a higher likelihood for the samples to be from different categories and suggest a higher level of dispersion (a more uniform distribution). However, given the different number of possible categories, M1 has different maximums. Therefore, we can adjust the index by expressing it relative to the maximum and from there we have M2. The M2 index has values between zero and one, with higher values indicating a higher level of statistical dispersion and variance. The M3 index takes into account that the absolute minimum value of M1 may be greater than zero when there is more than one category. To ensure that the index starts from zero, the M3 index is a modification of M2 by subtracting the minimum value of M1 from both the denominator and the numerator. However, this adjustment has been suggested by other scholars as unnecessary since that issue is nonexistent (Smith and Snow 1976). The M4 index provides a measure of differentiation without taking into account the number of categories. The M4 index is based on the average of the absolute deviation of the categorical frequencies from the mean. Since the minimum value of M4 changes in response to the number of categories, the M5 index considers the minimum value and makes adjustments in the denominator accordingly. The M6 index is a product by multiplying M4 with the number of categories and it reflects not only the rate of the proportional distribution but also the dispersion of the frequencies. However, since there is no upper limit on the number of categories, M6 may not be readily interpretable (Gibbs and Poston 1975).

Lastly, we have the index of variability proposed by Gadrich, Bashkansky, and Zitikis (2015). They aim to provide a general framework to measure variability in populations across

$$V_T = \sum_{i=1}^K \sum_{j=1}^K L(c_i, c_j) p_i p_j$$

different scales of variables (nominal, ordinal, interval, and ratio). Their formula of the index of population variation is defined as follows:

where c_k = category codes, with $1 \leq k \leq K$;

p_k = the probability of being in a specific category;

$L(c_i, c_j)$ = a loss-of-similarity function (non-negative, symmetric, $L(c_k, c_k) = 0$ for all $1 \leq k \leq K$)

The loss-of-similarity function measures the total differences that exist across all samples. The function is defined differently based on the scale of the target variable. Since the main variable of this project is the categories of different policy frames (a nominal variable), the loss-

$$L(c_i, c_j) = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{when } i = j, \\ 1 & \text{when } i \neq j. \end{cases}$$

of-similarity function is defined as follows:

The above loss-of-similarity function equals zero if a random pair of samples belong to the same category while equals one otherwise. Therefore, by summing up the total instances of differences multiplied by their respective probabilities, we can rewrite this generalized form of

$$V_T = 1 - \sum_{k=1}^K p_k^2 = \sum_{k=1}^K p_k(1 - p_k).$$

population variance (V_T) into the following formula:

Based on the Lagrange multipliers, we can find that the right-hand side of the above equation reaches its maximum $(K-1/K)$ when $p_k = 1/K$ for all $1 \leq k \leq K$. To normalize the value of V_T , we divide it with its maximum to ensure that its value is between zero and one. We then

$$IQV = \frac{V_T}{V_T^{\max}} = \frac{K}{K-1} \left(1 - \sum_{k=1}^K p_k^2 \right)$$

have this formula which is identical to the M2 index proposed by Gibbs and Poston (1975):

Among all of the different indices which measure the variation of nominal and categorical variables, I adopt Gibbs and Poston's M2 index as the formula to compute the IQV scores in my research. There are several reasons to justify my choice of the M2 index. First, this formula of the IQV has been commonly chosen and presented in previous literature across a wide variety of disciplines such as statistics and sociology (Agresti and Agresti 1978; Kvålseth 1995; Lewis et al. 2008; Nguyen et al. 2014; Botero and Pachón 2018). Furthermore, in comparison to other formulas, the M2 index is simple and straightforward when it comes to the interpretation of the results. The M2 index is a normalized measure of the likelihood for a random pair of samples to belong to different categories. Since its value is between zero and one, if the M2 index is zero, it means that the variable has a maximal variation (equal proportions across all categories) while one showing no variation (highly concentrated in one single category). Therefore, when compared with other formulas, the M2 index is not only simple in its formula but also easy to interpret (larger values of M2 indicating higher levels of dispersion). Regarding computational ease, the M2 index is relatively simple to compute since the most complex part of the formula only involves the summation of squared proportions for all categories of the target variable. Lastly, this formula also efficiently utilizes the information in the dataset. Each data point is considered in

the computation of the M2 index. Based on these above-mentioned reasons, I decide to use the M2 index to measure the level of dispersion for the main variable of policy frames.

The Formula of Calculating the IQV

To calculate the M2 index, we first need to generate a percentage distribution of the nominal/categorical variable. This distribution shows the relative frequency of each category and is computed by dividing the number of cases that belong to a specific category by the total number

$$IQV = \frac{V_T}{V_T^{\max}} = \frac{K}{K-1} \left(1 - \sum_{k=1}^K p_k^2 \right)$$

of cases.

In the above formula, K indicates the total number of possible categories of the nominal variable. $\sum p_k^2$ is the sum of all squared percentages in the distribution. We assume that the probability for a sample to be in a specific category is independent of the probability for another sample to be in either the same or a different category. With this assumption, the probability for a pair of samples to belong to the same category is the probability/proportion of that category times the probability/proportion of that category, and it becomes $\sum p_k^2$. By subtracting that probability from one, the part in the parentheses is the probability for a randomly chosen pair of samples to come from different categories. It is a good measure to describe distributional dispersion for nominal and categorical variables since the higher the probability for a randomly chosen pair of samples to come from different categories, the more diverse the distribution of that variable is.

Computing the IQV in the R Language

Given the formula I have chosen, I use the following code in R to carry out the calculation of the IQV scores.

R code for Computing the IQV:

```
IQV<- function(IQV_data){  
  myFreq <- table(IQV_data)  
  K <- length(myFreq)  
  myPropFreq <- prop.table(myFreq)  
  sqProp <- apply(X= myPropFreq, MARGIN = 1, FUN = function(x){return(x^2)})  
  sumSqProp <- sum(sqProp)  
  IQV <- (K/(K-1))*(1-sumSqProp)  
  return(IQV)  
}
```

I use the *function()* directive to create a function that computes the IQV scores given the input of our data. The function is named “IQV” and it takes the data we pass to it within the parentheses. The original data contains the individual instances of policy frames found in the text data. By applying the *table()* function to the data and save the output as “myFreq”, it transforms the data into a contingency table. The contingency table has two rows and twenty-four columns: the first row showing the names of the policy frames (from F1.1 to F7 plus NA) while the second row describing the number of total counts for each frame. The *length()* function returns the length of the table column and this result is the total number of categories for the target variable. I then use the *prop.table()* function which divides the values in each cell by the sum of all cells in the second row. The *prop.table()* function gives us the proportions of each category in the whole corpus and we save the results as “myPropFreq.” The *apply()* function takes either a matrix or an array as an input and outputs a vector after performing the function on certain parts of the data (rows, columns, or both). The *apply()* function takes three arguments, with X indicating an array or matrix, MARGIN showing the place where the manipulation is performed (1=rows, 2=columns), and FUN describing the function to apply. In this case, we input the “myPropFreq” matrix that contains the proportions across all categories and apply the function to get the square of the proportions. The *sum()* function returns the sum of all the values present in its arguments and we use it to compute $\sum p_k^2$ which is named as “sumSqProp” in the IQV function. The IQV score

is computed by multiplying one minus the sum of squared proportions across categories with $(K/K-1)$. Lastly, the *return()* function returns and prints the result once an input is provided.

Information Entropy

The following part introduces the idea of information entropy which is another measure commonly used to depict the level of dispersion for a random variable, discrete or continuous. I use information entropy as a robustness check to make sure that our findings of the IQV scores can also be observed when adopting another measure of variation.

The information entropy is derived from the field of information theory in computer science. Information theory discusses the transmission, storage, and measurement of information. One major topic in information theory is how to quantify the abstract concept of information and express them in concrete numbers. To gauge the informational value of gaining a new piece of knowledge, we need to quantify the degree of usefulness when we learn something new. The more surprising the content of a new piece of knowledge, the more valuable that message is to help us know better the underlying variable/phenomenon. For example, suppose that a person who lives in a desert, when looking at the window outside, learns that it is a sunny and dry day, the information value of this new piece of knowledge is low since the event is very likely to happen. However, if she sees that it is snowing outside, the transmission of that new message carries more information because this unexpected event greatly alters her prior belief of what weather should be like in a desert. Therefore, the informational value of an event/a case is negatively correlated with its probability.

To quantify the amount of uncertainty of a probability distribution of a variable, Shannon (1948) introduced the idea of “information entropy” and this concept was designed to measure

the amount of information contained in a variable. The entropy describes the average unpredictability of the outcomes. Therefore, its value is dependent on the sample size, the number of possible categories, and the unit in which entropy is measured (natural units, dits, or bits). The entropy is non-negative and reaches its maximum when the probability distribution across categories of a variable follows a uniform distribution.

The Formula of Calculating Information Entropy

To measure the average amount of information about a random variable X , we need to express such a measure in terms of the expected value of the total amount of information across all possible events of X . For nominal or categorical data, an event is referred to as a possible category that that variable can take on. We use $1/p(x)$ to represent the amount of information/uncertainty each category carries. The reason why we use the reciprocal of an event's probability to define the uncertainty of an event is as follows. First, the reciprocal of an event's probability can approximate the number of possible states that could have that probability. Furthermore, the reciprocal, as a measure of uncertainty, shows a negative correlation between the probability of an event and the degree of surprise for us to see it happen. If two events are statistically independent of each other, the surprise of seeing one event take place after another should be the sum of individual surprises rather than their product. Therefore, according to the fourth axiom of Shannon entropy, to account for the additive nature of surprises, we transform the reciprocal of an event's probability into a logarithm. Depending on the base of the log, the unit of a surprise can differ (base 2: bits; base e : nats; base 10: dits). To compute the average amount of surprise for a variable, we get its expected value by multiplying the amount of surprise of an event $\log(1/p(x))$ by

the probability of an event $p(x)$. Accordingly, we have the following formula as Shannon entropy:

$$H(X) = \sum_x p(x) \log \frac{1}{p(x)}.$$

Given $\log(1/P(x)) = -\log P(x)$, we can rewrite the above formula as follows:

$$H(X) = - \sum_x p(x) \log p(x)$$

This is the formula of Shannon entropy and I will specify how I compute the scores of entropy in R in the next section.

Computing Entropy in R Language

To calculate Shannon entropy in R, I use the R package “entropy” developed by Hausser and Strimmer (2009) and its latest version 1.3.0 updated in April 2021. I use the following R code to compute the entropy scores.

R code for Computing the entropy:

```
normalized_entropy<- function(IQV_data){  
  myFreq <- table(IQV_data)  
  entropy_score <- entropy(myFreq)  
  K <- length(myFreq)  
  uniform<- seq(1,1,length.out=K)  
  uniform_probability <- uniform/K  
  max_entropy_score <- entropy(uniform_probability)  
  normalized_score <- entropy_score/max_entropy_score  
  return(normalized_score)  
}
```

I create a function to compute the entropy scores for the probabilistic distribution of policy frames across different populations. To facilitate a comparison between the IQV and entropy scores as a robustness check on the former, I normalize the entropy scores so that their values are between zero and one, with the same range of the IQV scores. Similar to the code I use for the

IQV scores, the “normalized_entropy” function takes the original data as input. The original data consists of individual instances of policy frames (from F1.1 to F7 and NA) found in the corpus. The *table()* function changes the original data into a contingency table and I save the output as “myFreq.” The contingency table specifies the names of the policy frames as well as their corresponding total counts in the corpus.

I use the *entropy(y, method, unit)* function developed by Hausser and Strimmer (2009) and save the outputs as “entropy_score.” The *entropy()* function has three basic arguments. The *y* argument is a vector of counts across all possible categories of a random variable and it is “myFreq” in my case. The *method* argument allows users to choose from a variety of different estimation methods such as maximum likelihood, bias-corrected maximum likelihood, Laplace, ChaoShen, NSK, or SG. I use the default method which is maximum likelihood since there are no serious concerns of correction needed for the data such as too many zero counts or an extremely small sample size. Users can also change the base of the log by putting a specific value in the *unit* argument and the default is nats. I use the default setting of the *unit* argument since it makes no difference after we normalize the entropy scores.

The *length()* function returns the length of the table column and this result is the total number of categories for the variable of policy frames. To normalize the entropy scores, I need to calculate the maximum value the entropy score can take across populations. The entropy score reaches its maximum when the probabilistic distribution across categories follows a uniform distribution. To generate a uniform distribution, I use the *seq()* function to create a sequence of ones, with the length as the number of possible categories. This sequence of ones is then divided by the number of categories and the result becomes a uniform probabilistic distribution across possible categories. By inputting the uniform probabilistic distribution into the entropy function,

I get the maximum of the entropy score for a specific population. Lastly, I divide the entropy score of a population by its maximum to obtain the normalized entropy score.

Comparing the IQV and the Information Entropy

The table below shows the values of the IQV and normalized entropy scores across the four different groups in our analysis.

Comparing IQV and Normalized Entropy Scores Across Actors

	Pro-gay rights activists	Anti-gay rights activists	Pro-gay rights influencers	Anti-gay rights influencers
IQV	0.9652677	0.9707326	0.8551136	0.9855265
Entropy	0.8889449	0.901857	0.7138743	0.9400351
n	1066	965	1071	752

The results of the IQV and normalized entropy scores show a similar pattern regarding the variation of policy frames across the four populations. On the one hand, the IQV scores measure the likelihood for a pair of randomly chosen samples to come from different categories. Higher values of the IQV scores indicate a lower probability for the chosen samples to come from the same group. Therefore, higher values of the IQV scores show that the variable has a greater level of variation regarding its probabilistic distribution across categories. In other words, higher values of the OQV scores indicate a probabilistic distribution that is closer to the shape of a uniform distribution. On the other hand, entropy measures the average amount of information an event of a random variable carries. It is the expected value of the “surprises/uncertainty” of a random variable. Higher values of the entropy score indicate a higher level of uncertainty of what to expect in a variable. Therefore, higher values of the entropy also suggest a probabilistic distribution that is closer to a uniform distribution. Since both the IQV and normalized entropy

scores measure the level of dispersion for a random variable, we would expect them to be positively correlated. In the above table, we can observe that the two measures have similar findings. Among the four populations, pro-gay rights influencers are found to have the lowest level of distributional variation regarding the variable of policy frames. The results show that in comparison to the other three populations, pro-gay rights influencers are less likely to experiment with a variety of policy frames but rather focusing on a few frames that they feel comfortable presenting to the audience. Therefore, based on the numbers, it shows that our findings of the IQV scores in this chapter are robustly supported by the entropy scores.

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