

PRE-ANALYSIS PLAN

Public Response to China's Economic Inducements: Evidence from the Philippines

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1. Research Question

Economic statecraft – the use of economic tools to pursue political goals – has been an important part of China's foreign policy. However, both large-N analyses and case studies have produced conflicting conclusions on whether economic statecraft is effective. China has often used economic inducements in an effort to influence the policies of target countries, but this has had varying degrees of success.

What characteristics of economic statecraft strategies allow or impede political effectiveness? Specifically, what kind of effects do economic inducements have on public opinion in the target country? My case study research points to the mechanism of public backlash in reducing the effectiveness of certain types of economic inducements, in particular those that are seen to subvert political processes and institutions in the target country, such as corruption and bribery. This then constrains political leaders' policy decisions regarding the sender state. In contrast, inducements that cultivate relationships with key stakeholders through established political processes and institutions (rather than outside of them) will create more positive public opinion toward the sender state.

2. Hypotheses

(H1a) Inducements that subvert established political processes and institutions worsen public attitudes toward China.

(H1b) Inducements that subvert established political processes and institutions reduce public support for cooperative foreign policy toward China.

(H2ba) Inducements that adhere to established political processes and institutions improve public attitudes toward China.

(H2b) Inducements that adhere to established political processes and institutions increase public support for cooperative foreign policy toward China.

3. Data Collection

I test my hypotheses in the Philippines, which is an important case study. The Philippines is an active dispute claimant against China in the South China Sea. Beijing's use of economic inducements has also been a salient debate for the public as well as political leaders. While the online population in the Philippines will tend to be disproportionately urban, educated, and middle-class, this represents an important and vocal constituency in Philippine electoral politics.

The sample of N=900 will be drawn using a Qualtrics online panel. Qualtrics panel providers email respondents with a link to take the survey. Aside from age restrictions (over 18), consent to participate, Filipino citizenship, and a gender quota, no other eligibility based on demographic factors is considered.

Data quality will be ensured through several steps. First Qualtrics automatically blocks repeat IP addresses, ensuring that each respondent is unique. Additionally, the survey includes an “attention filter”: all respondents who do not pass the filter will automatically be dropped from the survey. Finally, at the data cleaning stage, before analysis, all respondents who answer the survey in less than 3.5 minutes or longer than 25 minutes will be dropped. These last two steps are designed to ensure respondent quality and will be performed before analysis; all reported results will include the above data cleaning steps.

4. Experimental Design

Some demographic and outcome variables are identical to question wordings from the Asian Barometer Survey, a regular series of cross-national surveys of the public in various Asian countries, including the Philippines. Questions cover topics such as political and economic governance, social trust and interactions, and international relations. In particular, some questions ask respondents about their views on China and its influence. Another outcome variable, asking respondents about levels of trust in China, is taken from the Social Weather Station survey, a prominent domestic public opinion polling organization in the Philippines. Aligning with selected variables and replication of the relevant outcome questions allows comparison of my survey results and sample with broader observational surveys.

4a. Treatment Population

The survey has a total of 3 treatment populations. T0, the control population, receives a neutral, factual description of China’s investment projects in the Philippines. T1 receives a subversive prime in addition to the control vignette, discussing how China’s inducements undermine established political processes and institutions in the Philippines. T2 receives a stakeholder prime in addition to the control vignette, discussing how China’s inducements adhere to established political processes and institutions in the Philippines.

The three treatments, T0-T2, are presented in the table below. The total number of respondents N=900 are randomly assigned across the three treatment populations.

<i>T0: Control</i>	<p>Please read the following information carefully, which discusses some recent developments in the Philippines. In order to complete the survey, you will be asked questions based on the information provided below.</p> <p>The Chinese government and the Philippine government have agreed to start work on several new infrastructure projects that will be financed by Chinese banks and constructed by Chinese state-owned enterprises. These projects include new bridges to reduce traffic congestion in Metro Manila, national railway projects, and agricultural irrigation projects.</p>
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<p><i>T1: Subversive</i></p>	<p>Please read the following information carefully, which discusses some recent developments in the Philippines. In order to complete the survey, you will be asked questions based on the information provided below.</p> <p>The Chinese government and the Philippine government have agreed to start work on several new infrastructure projects that will be financed by Chinese banks and constructed by Chinese state-owned enterprises. These projects include new bridges to reduce traffic congestion in Metro Manila, national railway projects, and agricultural irrigation projects.</p> <p>According to media reports, these projects did not follow the proper processes and rules of approval from government agencies. Instead, a group of top Philippine politicians directly signed the deals with the Chinese government and a few Chinese companies, skipping over the required regulatory procedures. Media reports suggest that the Chinese government and Chinese companies offered bribes and kickbacks to the Philippine politicians involved in the deal. Several politicians and journalists have criticized these agreements as being non-transparent and not following established political procedures and rules.</p>
<p><i>T2: Stakeholder</i></p>	<p>Please read the following information carefully, which discusses some recent developments in the Philippines. In order to complete the survey, you will be asked questions based on the information provided below.</p> <p>The Chinese government and the Philippine government have agreed to start work on several new infrastructure projects that will be financed by Chinese banks and constructed by Chinese state-owned enterprises. These projects include new bridges to reduce traffic congestion in Metro Manila, national railway projects, and agricultural irrigation projects.</p> <p>According to media reports, these projects followed the proper processes and rules of approval from government agencies. The Chinese government and a few Chinese companies submitted competitive project proposals to the Philippine government, in accordance with required regulatory procedures. Media reports suggest that no bribes or kickbacks were offered to Philippine politicians as part of the deal. Several politicians and journalists have praised these agreements for being transparent and following established political procedures and rules.</p>

4b. Open-ended questions

Additionally, at the end of the survey, respondents are asked to answer two open-ended questions about their evaluations of Chinese investment projects in the Philippines, and about the Philippine government’s handling of foreign policy toward China. This helps to elucidate the causal mechanisms linking the treatments to changes in public attitudes toward China and on Philippine policy toward China. That is, which attributes of economic inducements are important determinants of public attitudes toward China and hence important constraints on policy decisions? This will then

determine the political effectiveness of economic inducements. The exact wording of the two open-ended questions is presented below:

- In your opinion, what are the advantages and/or disadvantages of Chinese investment and financing of infrastructure projects in the Philippines?
- How would you evaluate the Philippine government's foreign policy toward China?

5. Empirical Analysis

5a. Dependent Variables

The main manuscript will report the results for two primary outcomes, based on four questions in the survey instrument (questions P1-P4 in Section 6):

(i) Attitudes toward China: respondents will be asked to evaluate how positive or negative Chinese influence in their country is (question P1), and how much the Philippine should trust China (question P2).

(ii) Attitudes on foreign policy toward and cooperation with China: respondents will be asked their level of support for a joint resource exploration agreement with China in the South China Sea (question P3), their level of support for local politicians in favor of investment projects with China (question P4), and their preferred foreign country investor for an upcoming national railway project (question P5).

I also present a balance table of the demographic covariates across the three populations. Additionally, I compare these demographics and dependent variable results with those from other large-scale public opinion surveys in the Philippines, which serve as a baseline of comparison.

5b. Treatment Effects

The treatment effect for T1 is estimated using an OLS model with the following equation, calculated over the subsample T0 and T1 populations only:

$$DV = \alpha_i + \beta_i T1 + X_i + \varepsilon_i$$

Where T1 is a binary indicator of getting treatment T1, and X_i , the demographic covariates will include the following: age, gender, income, education, employment status.

Similarly for T2:

$$DV = \alpha_i + \beta_i T2 + X_i + \varepsilon_i$$

5c. Structural Topic Models

In addition, structural topic models are run on the responses to the two open-ended questions.

5d. Pre-specification of Subgroup Analysis

I do not pre-specify any subgroup analysis. Any heterogeneous treatment effects presented in the paper will mention that this was not pre-registered.

6. Appendix: Full Text of Survey Instrument

Consent to Participate in Survey

This survey is about your attitudes towards different contemporary issues. It is part of an academic research project. Academic researchers are conducting the survey and they will be the only people who see your anonymous results.

Your participation is completely voluntary. If you agree to participate, you will answer some questions about yourself and your attitudes towards different policies. The questions should take about 10 minutes to answer. If you complete the survey, you will receive a small payment.

Your participation in this study will be confidential. Your personal identity will never be linked to your survey responses, so please answer as honestly as you can.

By clicking on the arrow below, you are agreeing to participate.

_____ I consent to participate.

_____ I do not consent to participate.

[If consent is given]

Thank you for participating in this survey. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your participation you may contact: aywresearch@yahoo.com

A. Demographics

First, please answer some questions about your personal background.

What year were you born in?
_____ (open-ended variable)

Where do you currently live?

National Capital Region

- 1 City of Manila
- 2 City of Mandaluyong
- 3 City of Marikina
- 4 City of Pasig
- 5 Quezon City
- 6 City of San Juan
- 7 Caloocan City
- 8 City of Malabon
- 9 City of Navotas
- 10 City of Valenzuela
- 11 City of Las Pinas
- 12 City of Makati
- 13 City of Muntinlupa
- 14 City of Paranaque
- 15 Pasay City
- 16 Taguig City
- 17 Municipality of Pateros

Cordillera Administrative Region

- 18 Abra
- 19 Apayao
- 20 Benguet
- 21 Baguio City
- 22 Ifugao
- 23 Kalinga
- 24 Mountain Province

Ilocos Region

- 25 Ilocos Norte
- 26 Ilocos Sur
- 27 La Union
- 28 Pangasinan

Cagayan Valley

- 29 Batanes
- 30 Cagayan
- 31 Isabela
- 32 Nueva Vizcaya
- 33 Quirino

Central Luzon

- 34 Aurora
- 35 Bataan

36 Bulacan
37 Nueva Ecija
38 Pampanga
39 Angeles City
40 Tarlac
41 Zambales
42 Olongapo City
Calabarzon
43 Batangas
44 Cavite
45 Laguna
46 Quezon
47 Lucena City
48 Rizal
Mimaropa
49 Marinduque
50 Occidental Mindoro
51 Oriental Mindoro
52 Palawan
53 Puerto Princesa City
54 Romblon
Bicol Region
55 Albay
56 Camarines Norte
57 Camarines Sur
58 Catanduanes
59 Masbate
60 Sorsogon
Western Visayas
61 Aklan
62 Antique
63 Capiz
64 Guimaras
65 Iloilo
66 Iloilo City (Capital)
67 Negros Occidental
68 Bacolod City (Capital)
Central Visayas
69 Bohol
70 Cebu
71 Cebu City (Capital)
72 Lapu-Lapu City (Opon)
73 Mandaue City
74 Siquijor
75 Negros Oriental
Eastern Visayas
76 Biliran
77 Eastern Samar

- 78 Leyte
- 79 Tacloban City
- 80 Northern Samar
- 81 Samar (Western)
- 82 Southern Leyte
- Zamboanga Peninsula*
- 83 Zamboanga del Norte
- 84 Zamboanga del Sur
- 85 Zamboanga City
- 86 Zamboanga Sibugay
- 87 City of Isabela
- Northern Mindanao*
- 88 Bukidnon
- 89 Camiguin
- 90 Lanao del Norte
- 91 Iligan City
- 92 Misamis Occidental
- 93 Misamis Oriental
- 94 Cagayan de Oro City
- Davao Region*
- 95 Compostela Valley
- 96 Davao del Norte (Davao)
- 97 Davao del Sur
- 98 Davao City
- 99 Davao Oriental
- SOCCSKSARGEN*
- 100 Cotabato
- 101 Sarangani
- 102 South Cotabato
- 103 General Santos City (Dadiangas)
- 104 Sultan Kudarat
- 105 Cotabato City
- Caraga*
- 106 Agusan del Norte
- 107 Butuan City
- 108 Agusan del Sur
- 109 Dinagat Islands
- 110 Surigao del Norte
- 111 Surigao del Sur
- Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM)*
- 112 Basilan
- 113 Lanao del Sur
- 114 Maguindanao
- 115 Sulu
- 116 Tawi-tawi

What gender do you identify with?

- 1 Male

- 2 Female
- 3 Other

What is your marital status?

- 1 Single/Never married
- 2 Married
- 3 Living-in as married
- 4 Widowed
- 5 Separated / Married but separated /not living with legal spouse
- 6 Divorced

Do you have children?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

Are you a Filipino citizen?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

Which ethnic group do you identify with?

- 1 Filipino (Pinoy)
- 2 Chinese Filipino (Tsinoy)
- 3 Other

What is your highest level of education?

- 1 No formal education
- 2 Incomplete primary/elementary
- 3 Complete primary/elementary
- 4 Incomplete secondary/high school: technical/vocational type
- 5 Complete secondary/high school: technical/vocational type
- 6 Incomplete secondary/high school
- 7 Complete secondary/high school
- 8 Some university education
- 9 University education completed
- 10 Masters degree
- 11 Doctoral or professional degree

What is your current employment status? Choose one:

- 1 Employed
- 2 Self-employed
- 3 Currently unemployed
- 4 Student
- 5 Retired
- 6 Homemaker

What industry sector do/did you work in?

Agriculture

- 1 Agriculture, hunting, and forestry

2 Fishing

Industry

3 Mining and quarrying

4 Manufacturing

5 Electricity, gas, steam and air-conditioning supply

6 Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities

7 Construction

Services

8 Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles

9 Transportation and storage

10 Accommodation and food service activities

11 Information and communication

12 Financial and insurance activities

13 Real estate activities

14 Professional, scientific and technical activities

15 Administrative and support service activities

16 Public administration and defense; compulsory social security

17 Education

18 Human health and social work activities

19 Arts, entertainment and recreation

20 Other service activities

21 Homemaker

22 Activities of extraterritorial organizations and bodies

23 Unemployed / student / retired

How much, in pesos, (approximately) was your household income last month?

___ pesos

(Attention filter)

In which month of the year are you taking this survey?

1 March

2 April

3 May

4 June

5 July

Randomized Vignettes

[All respondents randomly receive one of the following three vignettes.]

T0 [control]: Please read the following information carefully, which discusses some recent developments in the Philippines. In order to complete the survey, you will be asked questions based on the information provided below.

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T1 [subversive]: Please read the following information carefully, which discusses some recent developments in the Philippines. In order to complete the survey, you will be asked questions based on the information provided below.

The Chinese government and the Philippine government have agreed to start work on several new infrastructure projects that will be financed by Chinese banks and constructed by Chinese state-owned enterprises. These projects include new bridges to reduce traffic congestion in Metro Manila, national railway projects, and agricultural irrigation projects.

According to media reports, these projects did not follow the proper processes and rules of approval from government agencies. Instead, a group of top Philippine politicians directly signed the deals with the Chinese government and a few Chinese companies, skipping over the required regulatory procedures. Media reports suggest that the Chinese government and Chinese companies offered bribes and kickbacks to the Philippine politicians involved in the deal. Several politicians and journalists have criticized these agreements as being non-transparent and not following established political procedures and rules.

T2 [stakeholder]: Please read the following information carefully, which discusses some recent developments in the Philippines. In order to complete the survey, you will be asked questions based on the information provided below.

The Chinese government and the Philippine government have agreed to start work on several new infrastructure projects that will be financed by Chinese banks and constructed by Chinese state-owned enterprises. These projects include new bridges to reduce traffic congestion in Metro Manila, national railway projects, and agricultural irrigation projects.

According to media reports, these projects followed the proper processes and rules of approval from government agencies. The Chinese government and a few Chinese companies submitted competitive project proposals to the Philippine government, in accordance with required regulatory procedures. Media reports suggest that no bribes or kickbacks were offered to Philippine politicians as part of the deal. Several politicians and journalists have praised these agreements for being transparent and following established political procedures and rules.

Uptake Check

[for T0]

Based on the information above, is the Chinese government involved in infrastructure projects in the Philippines?

1 Yes

2 No

[for T1 and T2]

Based on the information above, did the Chinese-financed infrastructure projects follow the proper processes and rules of approval from government agencies?

1 Yes

2 No

Based on the information above, did the Chinese-financed infrastructure projects involve bribes and kickbacks to Philippine politicians?

1 Yes

2 No

Outcome variables

[For each question, a random 50% of respondents view the answer choices in order of increasing negativity, and the remaining 50% of respondents view the answer choices in order of increasing positivity.]

P1 Generally speaking, the influence China has on the Philippines is?

1 Very positive

2 Positive

3 Somewhat positive

4 Somewhat Negative

5 Negative

6 Very negative

9 Decline to answer

P2 Generally speaking, how much do you think the Philippines can trust China?

1 A great deal of trust

2 A fair amount of trust

3 Not too much trust

4 No trust at all

P3 The Philippine government is conducting talks with the Chinese government about signing a joint resource exploration agreement, which would allow Philippine and Chinese companies to explore for oil and gas in the South China Sea. This would include areas off the coast of Palawan where the Philippines has economic rights and where China has also disputed Philippine claims. The agreement would likely lead to future joint development of natural resources in those areas involving China and the Philippines.

How much do you support or oppose this agreement?

1 Strongly support

2 Somewhat support

3 Somewhat oppose

4 Strongly oppose

P4 How much would you support or oppose your congressional district representative if he or she is involved in promoting the Chinese-financed infrastructure projects discussed earlier?

1 Strongly support

2 Somewhat support

3 Somewhat oppose

4 Strongly oppose

P5 The Philippine government has recently proposed a national railway project in the Philippines, and is looking to partner with an outside investor. This investor will help to build and finance the

project. Which of the following countries would you prefer to be the project investor? [randomize country order in answer]

- 1 China
- 2 Japan
- 3 United States
- 4 South Korea

In your opinion, what are the advantages and/or disadvantages of Chinese investment and financing of infrastructure projects in the Philippines?

How would you evaluate the Philippine government's foreign policy toward China?

Baseline question [for T0 only]

Based on your knowledge, do Chinese-financed infrastructure projects, like those discussed earlier, follow the proper processes and rules of approval from government agencies?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

Based on your knowledge, do Chinese-financed infrastructure projects, like those discussed earlier, involve bribes and kickbacks to Philippine politicians?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

Concluding note for survey

Thank you for your participation.

The information, events, and people described in the survey are fictional and not meant to represent any specific case of Chinese aid or investment project in the Philippines. Any resemblance to events or people in real life is purely coincidental.