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WRITING SAMPLE

The following document is my master thesis at Georgetown. This thesis uses survey data and quantitative methodologies to explore the relationship between political trust and voter turnout in rural China. The thesis is my own work. Please do not distribute it without my permission.

DOES VOTING MATTER?:
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND POLITICAL TRUST IN RURAL CHINA

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Zhaocheng Gu

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AND POLITICAL TRUST IN RURAL CHINA

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ABSTRACT

Many studies have considered the effect of political trust on voting behavior. However, few consider the possibility that voting behavior might affect political trust. Using data from the 2010 wave of the Chinese General Social Survey (CGSS), I study the relationship between political participation and political trust in local government in rural China, treating voting behavior as the explanatory variable and political trust as the dependent variable. Village elections in rural China are used to hold local cadres accountable and to legitimize policy implementation, which may improve villagers' attitudes about the local government. My results suggest that engaging in village elections has a positive and statistically significant relationship with villagers' expressed level of trust in the local government. Further, the results of subgroup analyses suggest that this relationship is stronger among men than among women and that it exists among non-CCP members, but not among party members. However, I am not able to fully determine the causal direction of the relationship between voting behavior and political trust. Future research should address this issue.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Political trust is an important type of social capital. The level of political trust is directly related to effective governance (OECD, 2013), and to public compliance with various public policies (Mishler and Rose, 1997; Murphy, 2004). Trust can also provide leeway for authorities as they seek to resolve conflicts between short-term political concerns and long-term collective interests (Mishler and Rose, 1997). A high level of trust is also associated with economic growth and public support for certain economic policies (Nunkoo and Smith, 2013), and with the encouragement of business investment (OECD, 2013). Conversely, a lack of political trust is associated with political instability (Wang, 2005). In other words, governments and societies function better when they maintain societal trust in political and public institutions.

Evidence suggests that trust in governments has declined (Dalton, 2005) within developed democracies, while the level of political trust in China has remained relatively high over the last several decades (Chen and Zhong, 1997; Chen, 2004; Wang, 2006; Yang and Tang, 2010). However, the broader trend of declining political trust may now be affecting China as well (Zhao and Hu, 2017; Zhong and Zhan, 2021).

After the dismantlement of the commune and production brigade system in rural China in 1980s, several challenges emerged, including the decay of the party-state apparatus, increased tension between cadres and peasants, and declining state legitimacy (Wang, 1997).[1] In response to

[1] The commune and production brigade system was the mechanism by which the Communist Party ruled rural China before the 1980s. A people's commune is made up of several production brigades. This system's core feature, according to Mao Zedong, is the "integration of government administration with commune management", which means communes have governmental, political, and economic functions simultaneously (Wang, 1997). In the party-state system of China, "cadres" (ganbu) generally refer to staff or personnel working in the government or party organizations (Chan and Li, 2007).

those challenges, Beijing relied on the establishment of more democratic and self-governing bodies in rural areas to improve the accountability of leaders in those villages and to rebuild public trust there (Wang, 1997; O'Brien, 1994; Manion, 2006). These bodies, called "village committees," are so-called "grassroots democracy" institutions, offering arenas for local residents to exert their influence on public issues (O'Brien, 1994; Manion, 2006). After the establishment of these institutions, local leaders were perceived as being more trustworthy (Manion, 2006).

However, local governments can also take advantage of village party organizations to curb the functioning of democratic village committees (Shen and Yao, 2008). On one hand, according to the law, the local party branch at the grassroots level takes the leading role and should "lead and supports the village committees" (Ministry of Civil Affairs, 2018). On the other hand, Guo and Bernstein (2004) find that there have been mergers of the roles and responsibilities of village party secretaries (the heads of village party organizations) and village committee chairmen, given the fact that the party has begun to order village party secretaries to run for village committee chairman posts (candidates backed up by the party are more likely to win), or to let elected village committee chairmen serve as party secretaries. As a result, through exercising a degree of control over the slate of candidates who will run for office and over the elected committees, local government can interfere in village elections and village affairs. Further, some villagers tend to not trust local village committees and avoid engaging in village elections (Zhong and Chen, 2004).

Ulbig (2008) finds that political trust is higher when citizens believe that their voices and their influence matter to the government's decision-making process. Moreover, leaders and policies may lack public support without political participation (Pateman, 1970). Therefore, people's willingness to participate in the "democratic" process in rural China may directly relate to their attitudes about local authorities.

This thesis uses data from 2010 wave of the Chinese General Social Survey (CGSS) to examine the relationship between political participation and political trust in local government in rural China. It contributes to the relevant literature by examining whether voting behavior may influence political trust.

The thesis proceeds as follows. In the next chapter, I provide background information on the "grassroots democracy" institution (i.e., village committees) in rural China and its relationship with local government. Next, I review the relevant literature and describe my conceptual framework, data, and analytic methods. Last, I present my empirical results and discuss their implications.

CHAPTER 2. BACKGROUND

In the wake of the economic reforms of the late 1970s and early 1980s, the old commune and production brigade system in rural China began to collapse (Wang, 1997). The people's communes were replaced by township branches of government, while the village brigades were replaced by village committees (Wang, 1997).[2] In 1982, the Constitution was amended to define a village committee as a self-governing organization of villagers, but at that time, committee members were still appointed in most areas (Shen and Yao, 2008). In 1987, a provisional version of *The Organic Law of Village Committees of the People's Republic of China* required village committees to be elected (National People's Congress, 1987). By 1994, elections had taken place in about half of China's villages, and this share had increased to about 80% by 1997 (Shen and Yao, 2008). In 1998, the formal version of the organic law finalized village committees at the grassroot level (National People's Congress, 1998).

A village committee is comprised of between three and seven members, and each committee has one chairman and one vice chairman.[3] The village committee is directly elected by villagers and is accountable to the villagers' conference.[4] Candidates are nominated by villagers, and at least ten villagers must submit a candidate's name for nomination in order for him or her to appear on the ballot (Shen and Yao, 2008). For each position, there must be more than one

[2] In China, the Jurisdiction of a township government can cover several villages (Ministry of Civil Affairs, 2019). According to the relevant law (National People's Congress, 1987; National People's Congress, 1998; Ministry of Civil Affairs, 2018), the village is an autonomous unit and the village committee is not a branch of the national government.
[3] Unless otherwise noted, all information in this paragraph is taken from the websites of the Ministry of Civil Affairs and the National People's Congress (National People's Congress, 1998; Ministry of Civil Affairs, 2018).
[4] The villagers' conference is comprised of adult villagers, and more than half of adult villagers or more than two thirds of family representatives should attend the conference each time that it is held (National People's Congress, 1987; National People's Congress, 1998; Ministry of Civil Affairs, 2018). By law, only villagers whose household status is registered locally are eligible to vote (National People's Congress, 1998).

candidate.[5] although there is no upper limit for the number of candidates, in most cases, villagers will first narrow down the number into only two through informal elections (Shen and Yao, 2008), and then the two candidates will compete for that position in the formal election. The candidate is elected if he or she receives half of villagers' votes for a position. The term of a village committee position is five years (Before 2018, terms lasted for only three years).

While the law states that the village committee is self-governing and states that no third party should interfere in its election and operations, it also emphasizes the leading role of the village party committee (National People's Congress, 1987; National People's Congress, 1998; Ministry of Civil Affairs, 2018).[6] In the party-state system, the village party committee is appointed by its superiors from the township-level or the county-level communist party committees. This feature links the seemingly self-governing village to the local government and tends to cause conflict between the agendas of the village party committee and the village committee (Shen and Yao, 2008). Further the party's agenda always outweighs the agenda of the village committee, because Chinese law ensures that the party ultimately controls national resources, messaging, political decisions, and so forth (National People's Congress, 1987; National People's Congress, 1998; Ministry of Civil Affairs, 2018).

The local government often seeks to use its influence to ensure that the same person serve as the village party secretary and the village committee chairman simultaneously, which has effectively caused mergers of these two positions (Guo and Bernstein, 2004), as a result of which

[5] There can be different rules governing the number of candidates for each position on the committee. In Guangdong Province for example, the local policy requires that there should be two candidates for the positions of chairman and the vice chairman of the village committee respectively, and two to four candidates for other members of the committee (People's Government of Guangdong Province, 2021).

[6] To be clear, the village committee (cunmin weiyuanhui) is elected by villagers, and the village party committee (cundangwei) is a branch of the local party organization. These two bodies are not the same.

the local government can easily influence the village election and other affairs (Shen and Yao, 2008). It is therefore conceivable that villagers may not trust the election process. Zhong and Chen's (2004) analysis of data from a survey conducted in Jiangsu Province found that peasants were more likely to vote in village elections if they had lower levels of so-called "internal efficacy" and more limited commitment to democratic values, while those with higher levels of "internal efficacy" and democratic orientation tended not to vote.[7]

In sum, while village elections do provide villagers with "democratic" arenas, institutional constraints hinder villagers' ability to make their voices heard and to exert influence on village affairs, and their feelings about whether the local government respects their democratic rights could affect their willingness to participate in elections. Further, when the level of engagement in the political process is low, the legitimacy of a village's leadership and policies may be impaired, which may thus influence villagers' trust in local governments.

[7] In Zhong and Chen's (2004) survey, respondents were asked whether they agreed that the well-being of the country should be determined by state leaders instead of the masses. They defined a respondent's level of internal efficacy as "high" if he or she disagreed with this statement, and as low if he or she agreed

CHAPTER 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

A rich body of literature examines the relationship between political participation and political trust. But evidence is mixed regarding the relationship's existence and causal direction. Moreover, only one study focuses on the direct relationship between voting behavior and political trust in rural China.

Many studies of the relationship between political participation and political trust use political participation measures such as voter turnout as the dependent variable, while political trust acts as the independent variable (Cox, 2003; Grönlund and Setälä, 2007; Hooghe and Marien, 2013; Citrin, 1974; Miller, 1980; Muller et al, 1982; Hetherington, 1999; Martin, 2010; Wang, 2016). Scholars in the US have failed to find a direct connection between political trust and voting behavior (Citrin, 1974; Miller, 1980; Hetherington, 1999; Levi and Stocker, 2000). For example, Citrin (1974) using data from US elections in 1964, 1968, 1970, and 1972, finds no connection between people's mistrust of government and their level of voting participation. Similarly, based on studies of the US national electorate conducted between 1952 and 1978, Miller (1980) concludes that declining voter turnout is not related to declining trust in government, even though these two trends have occurred simultaneously. Relatedly, Muller et al. (1982) find no evidence of a statistically significant relationship between electoral participation and political trust in their analysis of data on voting in Mexico's 1976 presidential election. Hetherington (1999) also concludes that there is no link between declining political trust and declining turnout in the US, though he suggests a possible relationship between political trust and voters' decisions about which

candidate to vote for.[8]

However, other scholars, especially in Europe (Cox, 2003; Grönlund and Setälä, 2007; Hooghe and Marien, 2013), find evidence of a positive relationship between political trust and citizens' propensity to vote. For example, Cox (2003) finds a strong and significant correlation between voter turnout in the 1999 European Parliament election and trust in the European Parliament. Differentiating between trust in institutions and trust in politicians, Grönlund and Setälä's (2007) analysis of data from the European Social Survey also suggests that trust in parliament is positively associated with turnout.[9] In addition, using data from the 2006 European Social Survey, Hooghe and Marien (2013) find evidence of a positive relationship between political trust and voting, while Martin's (2010) analysis of data from the 2007 Australian Election Study suggests that, when elections are not compulsory, there is a positive relationship between the likelihood of voting and political trust in Australia.

Other evidence indicates that voters with political distrust are more likely to vote when the incumbent is competing with challengers (Levi and Stocker, 2000). On the other hand, Wang (2016) finds little to no evidence of a direct relationship between political trust and voter turnout. The author does, however, conclude that the two may be indirectly related through civic duty.

While the many of the studies described above have provided evidence of some degree of relationship between political trust as an independent variable and voting behavior as a dependent variable, it is possible that the direction of causality between these two variables runs not in the direction of trust to voting, but of voting to trust. Political participation can be viewed as an "instrumental" act aimed at holding leaders accountable, promoting individual interests and

[8] The author finds that voters with lower levels of political trust often turn to nonincumbent parties.
[9] However, the authors also find that, compared to the correlation between trust in parliament and turnout, the association between trust in individual politicians and turnout is weaker and less precisely estimated in some specifications, and that the association is insignificant in other models.

preferences, or achieving desired policy outcomes (Finkel, 1987). Further, according to the so-called "participatory theory", leaders' decision making can be legitimized by a high level of members' participation within an organization (Pateman, 1970). In other words, political participation may have a causal effect on one's satisfaction with decision making and its outputs (Finkel, 1987), and therefore on one's level of political trust (Li, 2008). Using measures of several different types of political participation as explanatory variables, Finkel (1987) finds that in West Germany, voter turnout is positively related to regime support.

Only one study explores the relationship between voting behavior and political trust in rural China, but this study focuses on the influence of political trust on voting. Tao et al. (2011) find that villagers with more trust in township officials and the township government are more likely to vote in village elections. However, given the limited evidence on the possible existence of, and the causal direction of, the relationship between political participation and political trust in rural China, further investigation is required.

The present study contributes to the literature on this topic by providing new empirical evidence on the relationship between political participation as an explanatory variable and political trust as a dependent variable in rural China.

CHAPTER 4. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Based on my literature review, I hypothesize that villagers' engagement in elections in rural China is positively related to their trust in the local government. To reduce bias in my key estimates, my model includes a series of control variables related to demography, economics, and politics. Figure 1 displays these factors, which are described further below.

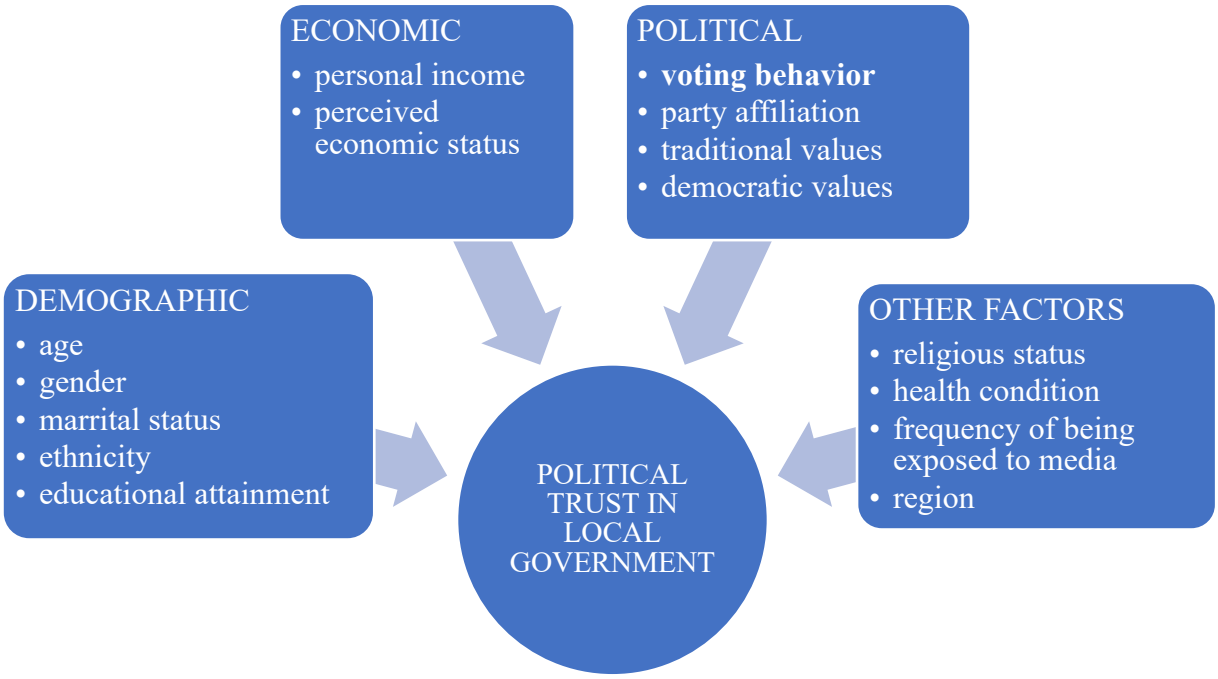

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework: Factors included in my model

1. Demographic factors

Demographic characteristics such as age, gender, marital status, and ethnicity are plausibly related to individuals' voting behaviors and political attitudes, since they have the potential to shape one's

personality, values, and habits. Other researchers have included these factors as control variables in similar studies (Lu et al, 2020; Zhou et al, 2020; Kennedy et al, 2018; Dong and Kübler, 2018). In addition, in China, educational attainment has been found to be related both to voting behavior (Kennedy et al, 2018) and to political trust (Zhao and Hu, 2017). Thus, my model also controls for these variables.

2. Economic factors

Personal income has been found to be related to individuals' attitudes about government (Zhao and Hu, 2017). Furthermore, the way that people believe that their income levels compare to others' may be related to their attitudes about local government, since those who believe that they have not "gotten what they deserve" may feel unfairly treated and dissatisfied with government's redistributive policies. Indeed, research suggests that people's perceptions of income inequality are negatively associated with political trust (Zmerli and Castillo, 2015). Therefore, my model accounts for self-perceived economic status.

3. Political factors

In addition to voting behavior, my key independent variable, other political factors may also be related to my dependent and key independent variables. First, it seems likely that members of the Communist Party would be more likely to trust the government, since in a party state such as China, it is impossible to disentangle the government from the ruling party (Edin, 2017). Second, traditional values such as the Confucian emphasis on social order and collectivism persist in China and have been found to be related to political trust (Li, 2004). Third, given that elections are democratic processes, an individual's self-professed democratic values may also be related to his

or her voting behaviors. Perhaps surprisingly, researchers have tested this relationship in rural China and have found that peasants who value democracy less are more willing to vote (Zhong and Chen, 2002).

4. Other factors

One could argue that, under the rule of the Communist Party, the official "religion" in China is Marxism. Nonetheless, religious beliefs may be correlated with an individual's perception of politics, and of society as a whole. Thus, an individual's religious status may be related to his or her political trust. At least one study finds evidence of such a relationship in China (Zhai, 2021).

The frequency of media exposure may also be associated with political trust. The Communist Party uses traditional media such as newspapers and television to influence regime support (Kennedy, 2009). However, with the development of internet technology and new media in China, it is more difficult for the party to control public opinion and influence public support (Zhou et al, 2020). My model therefore accounts for the frequency of exposure to different forms of media.

In addition, an individual's health status may also be connected to his or her societal engagement. For example, if a villager is sick, he or she may be less likely to participate in an election. As such, my model also controls for an individual's health status.

Finally, regional differences can be important. People's perceptions of government performance may be associated with their attitudes about local government (Dong and Kübler, 2018), and the quality of public services may vary across regions due to differing levels of economic development. Thus, I also account for the regions in which respondents live.

CHAPTER 5. DATA AND METHODS

My empirical analyses use data from the 2010 wave of the Chinese General Social Survey (CGSS). The CGSS, which was first conducted in 2003, is a recurring nationally representative survey administered by Renmin University of China (National Survey Research Center at Renmin University of China, 2021). The survey includes a series of questions about the economy, politics, culture, and society (National Survey Research Center at Renmin University of China, 2021). I chose the 2010 wave because the term "local government" in that wave's survey clearly refers to township government, while other surveys are written such that it is arguably unclear to the respondent what level of government is being referred to. More importantly, the questions in the survey change each year, and the 2010 wave provides a richer set of control variables for my analysis compared to other waves.

The CGSS is an individual-level survey targeting civilian adults aged eighteen and above.[10] To ensure that the sample is reflective of the characteristics of the population in different regions of China, the survey's administrators divided the country into different regions based on a series of indicators such as GDP, education resources, and foreign direct investment. In keeping with the PPS (Probability Proportional to Size) methodology, the samples for each region were created by drawing respondents from subregions (subunits) whose size was based on these subregions' population sizes. Overall, the data include slightly more observations from urban areas than rural areas (the ratio is about 6:4). The survey's administrators oversampled respondents from urban areas because there is greater socioeconomic diversity across urban areas than across rural areas

[10] Unless otherwise noted, all information in this paragraph is taken from the website of CGSS (National Survey Research Center at Renmin University of China, 2021).

in China. In total, the original dataset includes 17664 observations.

To analyze the relationship between voting behavior and political trust in rural China, I limit the sample to rural residents who live in the place where their household status is registered.[11] My final sample size is 4657 observations. Using this sample, I estimate a probit model to predict the probability that villagers trust their local governments. I estimate a model of this sort model because my dependent variable is dichotomous. My model is specified as follows:

$$Trust_i = f\left(Voting_i, \alpha_i, \beta_i, \gamma_{i,}, \delta_i, \pi_i\right) + \varepsilon_i,$$

where i is a respondent index, f represents the specific functional form of the model, $Trust_i$ is the dependent variable, $Voting_i$ is the independent variable of interest, α_i is a vector of demographic variables, β_i is a vector of economic variables, γ_i is a vector of political variables, δ_i is a vector of other variables, π_i represents a vector of region fixed effects, and ε_i is the error term. Table 1 provides detailed information on all variables included in the model.

Table 1. Definitions of variables[a]

Variables	**Definitions**
Dependent variable	
Trust in local government	A dichotomous variable indicating whether the interviewee reports trusting in the local government.[b c]
Key Independent variable	
Voting	A dichotomous variable indicating whether the interviewee has voted in a village election during the past three years.
Demographic controls	

[11] As previously explained, the law states that only villagers whose household status is registered locally are eligible to vote (National People's Congress, 1998). So, I limit my analysis to rural residents whose household status is registered locally.

Table 1 continued

Male	A dichotomous variable indicating the interviewee's gender.
Age	A continuous variable indicating the interviewee's age.
Han	A dichotomous variable indicating whether the interviewee is of Han ethnicity.[d]
Junior high	A dichotomous variable indicating whether the interviewee has at least junior high level of educational attainment.
Economic controls	
Ln_income[e]	A continuous variable measuring the natural logarithm of the interviewee's total personal income in 2009.[f]
Low perceived economic status	A dichotomous variable indicating whether the interviewee believes that the economic status of his or her family is below the local average level.
Political controls	
CCP member	A dichotomous variable indicating whether the interviewee is a Communist Party member.
Submissive to authority	A dichotomous variable indicating whether the interviewee agrees with the statement that "ordinary people should be submissive to the government." This variable is intended to capture the "traditional values" factor described in the conceptual framework.
Competent to engage in politics	A dichotomous variable indicating whether the interviewee believes that "he or she is competent to engage in politics." This variable corresponds to the democratic values component in the conceptual framework.
Believe politics is complicated	A dichotomous variable indicating whether the interviewee believes that "politics is too complicated for ordinary people to understand." This variable corresponds to the democratic values component in the conceptual framework.
Believe ordinary people have no influence on politics	A dichotomous variable indicating whether the interviewee thinks "ordinary people have little influence on decision-making by government." This variable corresponds to the democratic values component in the conceptual framework.

Table 1 continued

Other controls	
Religious	A dichotomous variable indicating whether the interviewee reports having any kind of religious beliefs.
Healthy	A dichotomous variable indicating whether the interviewee thinks of himself or herself as healthy.
Respondent seldom reads	A dichotomous variable indicating whether the interviewee reports that he or she "seldom" read newspapers, magazines, or books about current events in 2009.
Internet	A dichotomous variable indicating whether the interviewee ever used the Internet in 2009.
TV	A dichotomous variable indicating whether the interviewee often watched television in 2009.
Region fixed effects[g]	
Northeast	A dichotomous variable indicating whether the interviewee lives in the northeastern part of China.
Central	A dichotomous variable indicating whether the interviewee lives in the central part of China.
West	A dichotomous variable indicating whether the interviewee lives in the western part of China.

a. All variables are drawn from the 2010 wave of the CGSS.
b. The variable related to levels of trust in the local government from the original survey question is ordinal, measured on a scale from 1 to 5. In order to estimate a Probit regression, I dichotomized this variable such that respondents are coded as "Trusting the local government" (1) and "Not trusting in the local government" (0).
c. The township is the lowest level of government in China. Within a township, there may be several villages where elections take place (Ministry of Civil Affairs, 2019).
d. Han people are the dominant ethnic group in China. Over 90% of the total population in China were Han in 2000 (State Ethnic Affairs Commission, 2013).
e. Zhou et al (2020) controlled for the natural logarithm of income rather, than the untransformed version of this variable, in their analysis. I follow their practice here.
f. Given several observations' total personal income in 2009 is 0, I first add 1 to original income values and then create a new variable that reflects natural logarithm of income after having made this adjustment.
g. These dummies correspond to the "economic regions" created by the Chinese government (National Bureau of Statistics, 2011).

CHAPTER 6. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Table 2 reports descriptive statistics for my dependent variable, key independent variable, and control variables.[12] All of my results are weighted using a probability weight created by the survey's administrators. The weighted averages and standard deviations of my dependent and key independent variables are quite similar: about sixty-six percent of the respondents in my analytic sample believe that local government is trustworthy, while about sixty-five percent have voted in village elections in the past three years. The weighted averages of some political controls suggest a lack of democratic values and limited motivation to engage in politics among most villagers. In addition, most respondents chose watching TV as their major leisure activity.

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[12] The initial sample size for this wave of the CGSS was 4919. However, most of the variables in my model contain missing values. More specifically, there are 25 missing values for the political trust variable, 125 missing values for the voting variable, one missing value for the education variable, 553 missing values for the income variable, seven missing values for the ethnicity variable, one missing value for the marriage variable, three missing values for the health variable, four missing values for the economic status variable, five missing values for the internet usage variable, 21 missing values for the reading variable, 22 missing values for the variable indicating submissiveness to authority, 38 missing values for the variable indicating whether the interviewee thinks politics is complicated, 53 missing values for the variable measuring opinions about ordinary people's influence on politics, 43 missing values for the political competence variable, and 3 missing values for the television control. In total, there are 904 missing values in the data as a whole, or approximately 0.8 percent of the total data points in the dataset. I used single imputation to fill missing values for the income variable, since it is continuous (I did not use imputation to fill in missing values for dichotomous variables). These values are obtained by regressing the income variable on all other control variables and using this regression's results to predict income values when they are missing. After this step, I was left with 351 missing values, which corresponded to 0.3 percent of total data points in the sample. The size of the final analytic sample is 4657. A series of t-tests suggest that there were no significant differences in terms of age, educational attainment, ethnicity, health, perceived economic status, reading habits, or location of residence between observations for whom income values were and were not imputed. However, observations with imputed incomes are less likely to be men, are less likely to be married, are less likely to be Communist Party members, are less likely to agree that ordinary people should be submissive to the authorities, are less likely to agree that politics is complicated, are less likely to agree that ordinary people have no influence on politics, are less likely to think they are competent to engage in politics, and are less likely to watch television often. Further, observations with imputed values are more likely to live in the northeastern China, are more likely to have used the internet in 2009, and are more likely to have religious beliefs. I have estimated my regressions without and with imputed income values and found that my coefficient of interest is not sensitive to the exclusion of observations with imputed incomes.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for dependent, key independent, and control variables

Variables	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Dependent variable				
Trust in local government	0.662	0.015	0	1
Independent variable				
Voted in the past three years	0.653	0.011	0	1
Control variables				
Demographic controls				
Male	0.524	0.004	0	1
Age	47.678	0.304	17	90
Han people	0.878	0.042	0	1
Married	0.868	0.012	0	1
Junior high	0.440	0.018	0	1
Economic controls				
Total personal income[a]	8006.781	306.804	0	200000
Low perceived economic status[b]	0.427	0.005	0	1
Political controls				
CCP member	0.054	0.002	0	1
Submissive to authority	0.822	0.016	0	1
Competent to engage in politics	0.227	0.001	0	1
Believe politics is complicated	0.708	0.005	0	1
Believe ordinary people have no influence on politics	0.648	0.012	0	1
Other controls				
Religious	0.144	0.001	0	1
Healthy	0.562	0.014	0	1
Respondent seldom reads	0.176	0.017	0	1
Internet	0.136	0.025	0	1
TV	0.780	0.005	0	1
Regional controls				
East	0.200	0.071	0	1
Northeast	0.099	0.007	0	1
Center	0.336	0.047	0	1
West	0.365	0.017	0	1
N=4657				

a. Income here is measured in terms of RMB (Chinese yuan). While I use the natural logarithm of income in my regressions, unlogged income is reported here for ease of interpretation.

b. For the economic status control, respondents who reported perceiving that their families were below the local

average wealth level were coded as 1.

In Table 3, I compare the characteristics of the voters and nonvoters in my sample. This comparison shows that the weighted average of trust in government among those who have voted is significantly higher than among those who have not, which matches my expectation about the relationship between voting behavior and political trust. Notably, nonvoters are more likely to perceive their families to be below the local average wealth level than voters do. Further, men, elders, minority ethnical populations, and married individuals are disproportionately represented among voters. In addition, there are wealthier people among voters, while people who subjectively perceive themselves as low economic status are less likely to vote. Moreover, there are more party members in the voter group than in the nonvoter group, indicating that villagers' voting behavior may be related to their political status. Also, people who think themselves competent to engage in politics are more likely to vote, while nonvoters are more likely to possess high political efficacy (not being submissive to authority and believing that ordinary people can influence politics). Religious status differs between voters and nonvoters as well, with nonvoters being more likely to hold religious belief. Finally, voters are more likely to watch TV and less likely to use the Internet than nonvoters, which means they may be influenced more by the state-owned media and are thus more likely to engage in elections.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics for dependent and control variables for voters and nonvoters

Variables	Nonvoters	Voters	Differences	SD
Dependent variable				
Trust in local government	0.594	0.699	0.105**	0.016
Control variables				
Demographic controls				
Male	0.446	0.566	0.120***	0.009
Age	44.914	49.146	4.231***	0.360
Han people	0.894	0.869	-0.025***	0.002
Married	0.814	0.896	0.081***	0.005
Junior high	0.445	0.438	-0.007	0.008
Economic controls				
Total personal income in 2009	7667.504	8186.892	519.388***	42.632
Low perceived economic status	0.475	0.402	-0.073**	0.011
Political controls				
CCP member	0.024	0.069	0.045**	0.006
Submissive to authority	0.791	0.838	0.047***	0.004
Competent to engage in politics	0.213	0.234	0.021**	0.003
Believe politics is complicated	0.717	0.703	-0.014	0.006
Believe ordinary people have no influence on politics	0.631	0.658	0.026**	0.004
Other controls				
Religious	0.153	0.139	-0.014***	0.000
Healthy	0.564	0.561	-0.003	0.019
Respondent seldom reads	0.167	0.180	0.014	0.006
Internet	0.191	0.107	-0.084***	0.002
TV	0.746	0.797	0.051***	0.003
Regional controls				
East	0.201	0.200	-0.001	0.004
Northeast	0.062	0.118	0.057*	0.015
Center	0.406	0.298	-0.108**	0.017
West	0.331	0.384	0.053***	0.001
N=4657				

Robust standard errors are reported
**** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1*

CHAPTER 7. REGRESSION RESULTS

Tables 4 reports my weighted regression results. Robust standard errors clustered by sampling strata are reported for all coefficients. I present result for seven different specifications. Model (1) is a simple bivariate Probit regression that estimates the relationship between villagers' voting behavior and whether they believe that local government is trustworthy. To reduce the extent of bias in my key coefficient of interest, I then add different sets of control variables to my model step by step. Model (2) adds demographic controls, including gender, age, ethnicity, marriage status, and educational attainment. Model (3) adds economic controls, including total personal income and perceived economic status. Model (4) adds political controls, including party affiliation, whether respondents think ordinary people should be submissive to authority, whether respondents believe themselves competent to engage in politics, whether respondents think that politics is too complicated to understand, and whether respondents think ordinary people have no influence on politics. Model (5) adds region fixed effects to account for unobserved characteristics that vary across China's different regions. Model (6) then adds a variety of other controls, including religious status, perceived health status, and exposure to different kinds of media. In Models (7) and (8), given the significant differences documented in the previous chapter between voters and non-voters depending on gender and party status, I perform two subgroup analyses by interacting my key independent variable with the male dummy and the communist party member dummy, respectively. In general, I find that voting in village elections and trust in local government are significantly and positively related except among communist party members. However, the

magnitudes of the coefficients in Table 4 cannot be directly interpreted. In Table 5, I therefore report average marginal effects estimates for each variable.

Table 4. Probit regressions results

Dependent variable	**Trust**							
	(1) Bivariate	(2) Demographical controls	(3) Economic controls	(4) Political controls	(5) Regional fixed effects	(6) Other controls	(7) Gender interaction	(8) Party interaction
Key independent variable								
Vote	.284***	.293***	.287***	.274***	.226***	.223***	.180***	.227***
	(.047)	(.053)	(.055)	(.054)	(.058)	(.053)	(.069)	(.049)
Vote*Male							.087***	
							(.031)	
Vote*Party								-.127
								(.127)
Demographical controls								
Male		-.108***	-.086***	-.082***	-.073***	-.082***	-.137***	-.082***
		(.016)	(.014)	(.011)	(.004)	(.005)	(.014)	(.005)
Age		.002*	.002	.000	.002**	.002	.002	.002
		(.001)	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)
Han		-.439***	-.434***	-.436***	-.360***	-.393***	-.393***	-.392***
		(.039)	(.036)	(.028)	(.049)	(.026)	(.026)	(.025)
Married		-.131***	-.122***	-.123***	-.106***	-.113***	-.114***	-.114***
		(.018)	(.022)	(.030)	(.021)	(.014)	(.014)	(.015)
Junior school		-.144***	-.154***	-.129***	-.121***	-.115***	-.114***	-.115***
		(.039)	(.032)	(.027)	(.020)	(.024)	(.024)	(.024)
Economic controls								
Log income			-.011***	-.014***	-.020***	-.020***	-.020***	-.020***
			(.002)	(.003)	(.004)	(.004)	(.004)	(.004)
Status below average			-.107***	-.117***	-.143***	-.14***	-.139***	-.140***
			(.043)	(.042)	(.041)	(.041)	(.040)	(.028)
Political controls								
CCP members				.046	.060	.060	.054	.165
				(.056)	(.051)	(.063)	(.061)	(.169)
Submissive				.502***	.490***	.487***	.488***	.487***
				(.019)	(.019)	(.017)	(.017)	(.018)
Competent				.031	.025	.024	.024	.025
				(.035)	(.035)	(.041)	(.040)	(.042)
Complicated				.070	.058	.057	.058	.058
				(.043)	(.040)	(.043)	(.042)	(.042)
No influence				-.076***	-.062***	-.065***	-.065***	-.065***
				(.004)	(.006)	(.006)	(.007)	(.007)
Other controls								
Religious						-.120*	-.121*	-.119*
						(.064)	(.064)	(.064)
Healthy						.066	.066	.065
						(.063)	(.063)	(.063)
"Seldom" reader						.024	.024	.025
						(.063)	(.065)	(.063)
Internet usage						-.096**	-.093*	-.096**
						(.048)	(.049)	(.047)
Often watched TV						-.070	-.069	-.070
						(.047)	(.046)	(.046)
Region FE	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	.237***	.766***	.894***	.568***	.431**	.536***	.560***	.533***
	(0.009)	(0.010)	(0.017)	(0.051)	(0.177)	(0.103)	(0.112)	(.100)
F-statistics and p-values								
H_0: vote + vote*male = 0 or							50.88***	.33
H_0: vote + vote*party= 0							(.000)	(.569)
Sensitivity	100%	99.36%	98.36%	93.58%	93.09%	93.22%	92.80%	93.19%
Specificity	0%	1.62%	3.76%	16.39%	19.17%	19.17%	19.69%	19.30%
Observations	4657	4657	4657	4657	4657	4657	4657	4657

*Notes: Robust standard errors are in parentheses. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1. Given that my dependent variable is dichotomized, I use sensitivity and specificity to describe the goodness of fit for my Probit models. Sensitivity (True Positive Rate) refers to the probability of a positive prediction, conditioned on truly being positive, while specificity (True Negative Rate) refers to the probability of a negative prediction, provided one truly being negative. If the predicted value is greater than 0.5, it is regarded as positive (1) and vice versa.*

In Table 5, the results for Models (1) through (6) suggest that the relationship between villagers' voting behavior and their trust in local government is positive and statistically significant at the one percent level, which matches my hypothesis. The magnitude of my coefficient of primary interest in Model (1) indicates that having voted in village elections is associated with an increase of about ten (0.103*100) percentage points in the probability of trusting local government. While the magnitudes of the average marginal effects estimates for the voting variable in Model (2) and Model (3) are quite similar to the estimate in Model (1) (0.104 and 0.102), the magnitude of this positive relationship decreases modestly as more control variables are added. Specifically, with the addition of political controls, the coefficient on the voting variable suggests that having engaged in village elections is related to a 9.6 (0.096*100) percentage point increase in the possibility of trusting local government. In Model (5), which additionally controls for region fixed effects, my results show that having voted is associated with an increase of 7.8 (0.078*100) percentage points in the probability of perceiving local government as trustworthy, controlling for demographic, economic, and political factors as well as unmeasured regional characteristics. Finally, my results for Model (6) suggest that having voted in village elections is correlated with a 7.7 (0.077*100) percentage point increase in the probability of trusting local government, holding constant all other independent variables included in the regression. In sum, from the simplest bivariate specification to the most comprehensive one, the magnitudes of average marginal effects estimated for the voting variable drop by about three percentage points, but remain statistically significant.

In model (7), I introduce an interaction term between the voting and the male dummies. Indicated by the statistical significance of the coefficient for the voting variable, there is a positive relationship between voting behavior and trust in local government (at the one percent level), and

this relationship is also significant among men as shown by the F-test at the end of Table 4 (at the one percent level). The p-value of the coefficient for the interaction term in this specification provides evidence of significant variation in the magnitude of this relationship between the two groups (at the five percent level). In detail, my results for Model (7) suggest that, compared to non-voters, having voted in village elections is correlated with a 9.2 (0.062*100+0.030*100) percentage point increase in the probability of trusting local government among males, while female voters are only 6.2 (0.062*100) percentage points more likely to trust the local government than female non-voters, holding constant all other independent variables included in the regression.

In model (8), I introduce an interaction term between the voting and communist party member dummies. Here, although the t-test for the voting variable suggests a positive and statistically significant relationship between voting behavior and trust in local government among non-CCP members (at the one percent level), the results of F-test reported at the bottom of Table 4 provide no evidence of such a relationship among the communist party members. On the other hand, the p-value of the coefficient for the interaction term in this specification provides no evidence of significant variation in the magnitude of this relationship for the two groups. Those results thus provide mixed evidence as to whether the relationship between voting and political trust varies according to different party membership. Among non-CCP members, the average marginal effect of the coefficient for the voting variable suggests that, having voted in village elections is associated with an increase of 7.8 (0.078*100) percentage points in the probability of trusting local government, holding constant all other independent variables included in the regression.

Table 5. Probit average marginal effects regression estimates

Dependent variable	Trust							
	(1) Bivariate	(2) Demographical controls	(3) Economic controls	(4) Political controls	(5) Regional fixed effects	(6) Other controls	(7) Gender interaction	(8) Party interaction
Key independent variable								
Vote	.103***	.104***	.102***	.096***	.078***	.077***	.062***	.078***
	(.015)	(.018)	(.018)	(.018)	(.019)	(.018)	(.023)	(.016)
Vote*Male							.030***	
							(.011)	
Vote*Party								-.044
								(.044)
Demographical controls								
Male		-0.038**	-.031***	-0.029***	-0.025***	-.028***	-.047***	-.028***
		(.005)	(.005)	(.004)	(.001)	(.002)	(.005)	(.002)
Age		.001	.001	.000	.001**	.001	.001	.001
		(.000)	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)
Han		-.157***	-.154***	-.152***	-.124***	-.135***	-.135***	-.135***
		(.015)	(.015)	(.011)	(.018)	(.010)	(.010)	(.010)
Married		-.047***	-.043***	-.043***	-.037***	-.039***	-.039***	-.039***
		(.007)	(.008)	(.011)	(.008)	(.005)	(.005)	(.005)
Junior school		-.051***	-.055***	-.045***	-.042***	-.040***	-.039***	-.040***
		(.013)	(.011)	(.009)	(.006)	(.008)	(.008)	(008)
Economic controls								
Log income			-.004***	-.005***	-.007***	-.007***	-.007***	-.007***
			(.001)	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)
Status below average			-.038***	-.041***	-.049***	-.048***	-.048***	-.048***
			(.011)	(.011)	(.011)	(.010)	(.010)	(.010)
Political controls								
CCP members				.016	.021	.021	.019	.057
				(.020)	(.018)	(.022)	(.021)	(.058)
Submissive				.175***	.169***	.167***	.168***	.167***
				(.005)	(.005)	(.005)	(.005)	(.005)
Competent				.011	.009	.008	.008	.009
				(.012)	(.012)	(.014)	(.014)	(.014)
Complicated				.024	.020	.020	.020	.020
				(.015)	(.014)	(.014)	(.014)	(.014)
No influence				-.027***	-.021***	-.022***	-.0.022***	-.022***
				(.001)	(.002)	(.002)	(.003)	(.002)
Other controls								
Religious						-.041*	-.042*	-.041*
						(.022)	(.022)	(.022)
Healthy						.023	.023	.022
						(.022)	(.022)	(.022)
"Seldom" reader						.008	.008	.008
						(.022)	(.022)	(.022)
Internet usage						-.032**	-.032*	-.033**
						(.016)	(.017)	(.016)
Often watched TV						-.024	-.024	-.024
						(.016)	(.016)	(.016)
F-statistics and p-values								
H_0: vote + vote*male = 0 or								
H_0: vote + vote*party= 0							50.88***	.33
							(.000)	(.569)
Observations	4657	4657	4657	4657	4657	4657	4657	4657

*Notes: Robust standard errors are in parentheses. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1.*

In sum, my analyses accord with my initial hypothesis by providing evidence of a positive and statistically significant relationship between voting behavior and political trust in rural China, and (as discussed in the next section) the estimated magnitude of this relationship is relatively large across specifications. When taking into account region fixed effects, the estimate does decrease somewhat. However, regardless of the controls added to the regression, the magnitude of the relationship remains in the eight-to-ten-percentage-point range. I also find that this relationship is stronger among men than among women and that it only exists among non-CCP members but not among party members. In the next chapter, I offer conclusions, address the policy and political implications of my results for political trust in rural China, discuss the study's limitations, and propose ideas for future research.

CHAPTER 8. CONCLUSIONS

Overall, my results provide evidence of a positive relationship between voting behavior and trust in local government in rural China. Treating voting as my independent variable and political trust as my dependent variable, I find that villagers who engage in village elections are about eight to ten percentage points more likely to trust the local government than those who do not. This relationship is relatively large in magnitude, given that about 66% of my sample members report trusting the government. My subgroup analyses show that there is a significant difference in the magnitude of this relationship between gender groups, and that the relationship only exists among non-CCP members.

My finding of a positive association between voting behavior and political trust in rural China is consistent with what Cox (2003), Grönlund and Setälä (2007), Hooghe and Marien (2013), Martin (2010), and Finkel (1987) have found in other countries. More importantly, the positive relationship between these variables, when I treat voter turnout as an explanatory variable and political trust as a dependent variable, conforms to Finkle (1987)'s finding that voters are more likely than non-voters to support the regime, and also to the "participatory theory" suggesting that decision making can be legitimized by a high level of participation within an organization's governance (Pateman, 1970).

My regression results also suggest that the relationship between voting and political trust is stronger among males than among females, and that this relationship exist only among non-party members. The gender difference in my estimated relationship of interest may be attributable to the traditional values that many rural Chinese women hold. This system of values includes the

belief that women are responsible for their families' "internal" affairs, while men are responsible for affairs outside the family. Howell (2006), for example, argues that the low level of women's political participation in rural China can be explained by their lack of self-confidence and by "the enduring drag of 'feudal' attitudes" that advocate females' inferiority to males." Consistent with this view, one might expect some women to believe that politics "belongs" to men, in which case their attitudes about the government may not be sensitive to their political participation. Future studies should explore this topic further. In terms of party membership, it makes sense that Communist party members' feelings about the local government may not be related to their voting behavior. In a party state like China, the government and the party organization are closely intertwined, and party members are subject to party discipline and feel the need to be loyal to the party (Guo, 2001). As a result, whether the village committee is legitimized by elections or not may have no impact on their perceptions of the local government.

Since the 1980s, the Chinese Communist Party has relied on its economic performance to establish its legitimacy and win popular support (Yang and Zhao, 2015). More recently, as China's economic growth has slowed and the income gap between rich and poor has widened, declining political trust has posed new challenges to the regime (Zhong and Zhan, 2021). In this context, my results suggest an avenue for the government to establish its legitimacy by encouraging and incentivizing villagers' engagement in village elections. By making elections fair and transparent, local governments can demonstrate their respect for villagers' rights, and policy implementation at the ground level can be further legitimized. Villagers may in turn become more satisfied with decision-making processes and their outcomes.

My finding of a positive relationship between voting behavior and political trust is robust to the addition of various control variables to my regression. Nonetheless, my study suffers from

two key methodological limitations. First, my estimates may suffer from omitted variable bias. In other words, some variables omitted from my model may be related both to my dependent and key independent variables. For instance, I do not control for respondents' sense of civic duty. Wang (2016) theorizes that "civic duty" is related to both political trust and voter turnout.[13] Related studies provide partial support for this hypothesis, finding that a sense of civic duty is positively related either to political trust (Mishler and Rose, 2005) or to voter turnout (Blais and Achen, 2010). Therefore, the omission of this variable from my regressions may exert upward bias on my coefficient of interest.

Another potential source of omitted variable bias relates to institutional practices. Scholars have pointed out that local governments can use different mechanisms, such as the appointment of candidates for office, to interfere in village elections (Guo and Bernstein, 2004; Shen and Yao, 2008). This type of interference may discourage villagers from engaging in elections because they may not perceive those elections to be truly democratic. This hypothesis is partially supported by findings that villagers with stronger democratic values (Zhong and Chen, 2002) and higher levels of educational attainment (Kennedy et al., 2018) tend not to vote in elections. Further, it is conceivable that villagers may not trust the local government if it interferes in local affairs. In sum, villagers' perceptions of how democratic their elections are may be positively related to both their willingness to vote and their political trust, in which case the omission of this variable is also biasing my coefficient of interest upward.

Given these sources of bias, I am unable in my specifications to disentangle the effect of voting behavior on political trust from the effect of political trust on voting behavior. Future studies may be able to address these concerns. One strategy would be to identify changes in voting that

[13] Wang (2016) defines "civic duty" as the sense of obligation among citizens to contribute to societal well-being by participating in public affairs.

are clearly exogenous. Specifically, in order to "peel off" exogenous variation in my independent variable, researchers should seek out instrumental variables that are related to political trust only through its association with voting behavior. For instance, variables that measure the "internal cost" of voting might serve as valid instruments. As an example, the distance between a villager's house and the nearest voting location might be a useful instrumental variable here, since it is theoretically related to the villager's ability to vote, but may not have other linkages to political trust. The election date may also be unrelated to political trust except through its correlation with voting behavior, since villagers might be busy with agricultural production if elections take place during certain seasons (summer and fall, in the Chinese case), and they may therefore have little or no time to participate. If the appropriate data are available, such variables can help to distinguish the casual direction of the relationship between voting behavior and political trust.

Another limitation in my analysis involves the potential for measurement error. There are two key considerations here. First, it is important to note that my political trust variable corresponds to respondents' feelings about the township government, while my voting variable asks respondents whether they voted in the last village election. Thus, these two variables do not provide information about the same level of government. Although I have discussed the close connection between these two variables in my previous chapters, it is worth pointing out that there is at least some mismatch between them. Second, given that the CGSS is a survey, my dependent variable could suffer from so-called "social desirability bias," which Latkin et al. (2017, p. 133) define as the tendency of survey respondents to "underreport socially undesirable attitudes and overreport socially desirable ones." In my case, given that they live in an authoritarian regime, respondents may be inclined to report that the local government is trustworthy. Future research may be able to use different data that would allow researchers to address these potential sources

of error.

Given the trend of decreasing political trust in China, there will be a continued need to study the determinants of this form of trust. Further research into the casual relationship between voting behavior and political trust could help provide the Chinese government with a possible means of improving or maintaining support for the development and implementation of its policies.

APPENDIX. A

As previously discussed, while I dichotomized my trust variable for my main regressions, the original survey question allowed respondents to choose from among five ordinal categories reflecting their feelings about the local government. To check the robustness of my main regression results, I estimated an ordered Probit by using the ordinal version of this trust variable.

The results in Table 6 predict the difference between voters and non-voters in terms of the probability of falling into each category of the ordinal trust-in-government variable. These specifications control for all the variables included in my main regressions. However, I only report average marginal effects estimates for the voting variable here. As an example of how to interpret these results, the sixth regression specification suggests that, compared to non-voters, voters are about 2.2 percentage points less likely to rate their trust level as "1", are about 2.9 percentage points less likely to rate their trust level as "2", are about 1.9 percentage points less likely to rate their trust level as "3", are about .8 percentage points more likely to rate their trust level as "4", and are about 6.2 percentage point more likely to rate their trust level as "5".

The results in Table 6 suggest that there is a negative relationship between voting behavior and mistrust in the local government ("Not trustworthy at all", "Tend to not trust", and "Neural") and a positive association exists between voting behavior and trust in the local government ("Tend to trust" and "Very Trustworthy"). These differences are statistically significant across all specifications.

Table 6. Ordered Probit average marginal effects regression estimates

Regression Specifications	(1) Bivariate	(2) Demographical controls	(3) Economic controls	(4) Political controls	(5) Regional fixed effects	(6) Other controls
Average marginal effects of voting behavior on different trust levels[a]						
Not trustworthy at all	-.028***	-.028***	-.027***	-.026***	-.022***	-.022***
	(.002)	(.005)	(.004)	(.003)	(.001)	(.004)
Tend to not trust	-.038***	-.038***	-.037***	-.034***	-.030***	-.029***
	(.004)	(.002)	(.003)	(.004)	(.005)	(.004)
Neural	-.024***	-.024***	-.023***	-.022***	-.019***	-.019***
	(.002)	(.002)	(.001)	(.000)	(.002)	(.000)
Tend to trust	.011***	.011***	.011***	.010***	.008***	.008***
	(.004)	(.004)	(.001)	(.001)	(.008)	(.001)
Very trustworthy	.080***	.078***	.077***	.072***	.063***	.062***
	(.011)	(.002)	(.001)	(.000)	(.004)	(.001)
Regional fixed effects	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Observations	4657	4657	4657	4657	4657	4657

*Notes: Robust standard errors are in parentheses. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1. These specifications control for all the variables included in my main regressions.*

APPENDIX. B

Table 7. Unweighted and unclustered Probit regression results

Dependent variable	**Trust**							
	(1) Bivariate	(2) Demographical controls	(3) Economic controls	(4) Political controls	(5) Regional fixed effects	(6) Other controls	(7) Gender interaction	(8) Party interaction
Key independent variable								
Vote	.287***	.289***	.283***	.268***	.214***	.215***	.184***	.215***
	(.04)	(.041)	(.041)	(.042)	(.042)	(.042)	(.057)	(.043)
Vote*Male							.066	
							(.082)	
Vote*Party								-.010
								(.236)
Demographical controls								
Male		-.106***	-.09**	-.087**	-.074*	-.083*	-.125*	-.083*
		(.039)	(.041)	(.042)	(.042)	(.043)	(.068)	(.043)
Age		.004**	.003**	.002	.003**	.003*	.003*	.003*
		(.001)	(.002)	(.002)	(.002)	(.002)	(.002)	(.002)
Han		-.417***	-.412***	-.414***	-.348***	-.377***	-.377***	-.377***
		(.065)	(.065)	(.066)	(.068)	(.07)	(.07)	(.070)
Married		-.106*	-.105*	-.112**	-.103*	-.102*	-.102*	-.102*
		(.054)	(.055)	(.055)	(.056)	(.057)	(.057)	(.057)
Junior school		-.137***	-.145***	-.122***	-.114**	-.106**	-.105**	-.106**
		(.044)	(.044)	(.045)	(.046)	(.047)	(.047)	(.047)
Economic controls								
Log income			-.008	-.011	-.017**	-.016**	-.016**	-.016**
			(.008)	(.008)	(.008)	(.008)	(.008)	(.008)
Status below average			-.089**	-.098**	-.124***	-.12***	-.119***	-.120***
			(.04)	(.04)	(.041)	(.042)	(.042)	(.042)
Political controls								
CCP members				.092	.111	.11	.107	.118
				(.092)	(.093)	(.094)	(.094)	(.215)
Submissive				.486***	.48***	.478***	.478***	.478***
				(.05)	(.05)	(.051)	(.051)	(.051)
Competent				-.003	-.004	-.004	-.005	-.004
				(.049)	(.05)	(.05)	(.05)	(.050)
Complicated				.053	.047	.045	.045	.045
				(.045)	(.045)	(.045)	(.045)	(.045)
No influence				-.089**	-.074*	-.074*	-.075*	-.074*
				(.042)	(.043)	(.043)	(.043)	(.043)
Other controls								
Religious						-.103*	-.104*	-.103*
						(.059)	(.059)	(.059)
Healthy						.072*	.072*	.072*
						(.043)	(.043)	(.043)
"Seldom" reader						.018	.018	.019
						(.057)	(.057)	(.057)
Internet usage						-.075	-.073	-.075
						(.07)	(.07)	(.070)
Often watched TV						-.105**	-.104**	-.105**
						(.049)	(.049)	(.049)
Regional FE	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	.251***	.655***	.756***	.481***	.334**	.428***	.445***	.428***
	(.032)	(.11)	(.128)	(.137)	(.145)	(.164)	(.166)	(.164)
F-statistics and p-values								
H_0: vote + vote*male = 0 or							17.04***	.78
H_0: vote + vote*party= 0							(.000)	(.377)
Sensitivity	100%	99.26%	98.81%	94.25%	93.48%	93.19%	93.09%	93.19%
Specificity	0%	1.68%	2.14%	14.96%	18.65%	18.46%	18.85%	18.46%
Observations	4657	4657	4657	4657	4657	4657	4657	4657

*Notes: Robust standard errors are in parentheses. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1.*

APPENDIX. C

Table 8. Weighted and clustered Probit regression results without imputed values

Dependent variable	Trust							
	(1) Bivariate	(2) Demographical controls	(3) Economic controls	(4) Political controls	(5) Regional fixed effects	(6) Other controls	(7) Gender interaction	(8) Party interaction
Key independent variable								
Vote	.262***	.269***	.262***	.250***	.207***	.204***	.170**	.207***
	(.054)	(.063)	(.068)	(.070)	(.077)	(.073)	(.084)	(.068)
Vote*Male							.067***	
							(.022)	
Vote*Party								-.105
								(.161)
Demographical controls								
Male		-.075*	-.052	-.052	-.047*	-.057**	-.100***	-.057**
		(.041)	(.039)	(.034)	(.027)	(.027)	(.014)	(.027)
Age		.002	.001	0	.001	.001	.001	.001
		(.001)	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)	(.002)	(.002)	(.002)
Han		-.394***	-.390***	-.399***	-.329***	-.374***	-.374***	-.373***
		(.058)	(.055)	(.045)	(.060)	(.034)	(.033)	(.032)
Married		-.151***	-.141***	-.130***	-.117***	-.121***	-.122***	-.121***
		(.035)	(.041)	(.045)	(.034)	(.031)	(.032)	(.032)
Junior school		-.166***	-.175***	-.149***	-.135***	-.127***	-.126***	-.127***
		(.010)	(.043)	(.044)	(.037)	(.037)	(.037)	(.037)
Economic controls								
Log income			-.012***	-.016***	-.02***	-.02***	-.020***	-.020***
			(.003)	(.003)	(.004)	(.004)	(.004)	(.004)
Status below average			-.107**	-.118**	-.144***	-.146***	-.145***	-.146***
			(.052)	(.051)	(.055)	(.050)	(.049)	(.051)
Political controls								
CCP members				.053*	.068**	.064*	.058*	.152
				(.032)	(.028)	(.037)	(.035)	(.172)
Submissive				.508***	.500***	.497***	.498***	.497***
				(.020)	(.019)	(.019)	(.018)	(.019)
Competent				.029	.022	.019	.019	.020
				(.032)	(.032)	(.042)	(.041)	(.043)
Complicated				.042	.030	.030	.030	.030
				(.059)	(.057)	(.057)	(.056)	(.056)
No influence				-.060**	-.046*	-.048*	-.049*	-.048*
				(.030)	(.026)	(.027)	(.026)	(.026)
Other controls								
Religious						-.149**	-.150**	-.150**
						(.068)	(.068)	(.068)
Healthy						.047	.047	.046
						(.065)	(.065)	(.065)
"Seldom" reader						.048	.048	.048
						(.052)	(.054)	(.052)
Internet usage						-.119***	-.117***	-.119***
						(.041)	(.042)	(.040)
Often watched TV						-.090***	-.090***	-.089***
						(.017)	(.017)	(.016)
Regional FE	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Constant	.240***	.764***	.904***	.580***	.411**	.571***	.589***	.569***
	(.014)	(.010)	(.012)	(.046)	(.176)	(.079)	(.085)	(.075)
F-statistics and p-values								
H_0: vote + vote*male = 0 or							14.70***	.20
H_0: vote + vote*party= 0							(.000)	(.654)
Sensitivity	100%	100%	98.30%	93.69%	93.25%	93.43%	93.29%	93.40%
Specificity	0%	0%	3.46%	16.23%	18.40%	18.98%	18.98%	19.05%
Observations	4143	4143	4143	4143	4143	4143	4143	4143

*Notes: Robust standard errors are in parentheses. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1.*

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