Dual-Identity Incompatibility as a Cause of Radicalization: A Case Study of Hong Kong

VITRIERAT SOPHIA NG

This study focuses on increasing support for radical means among the Hong Kong youth. Previous studies have suggested the incompatibility between two components of a dual identity as a cause of radicalization, yet few have explored the mechanics of this process in detail. This study employs qualitative methods to investigate how the growing incompatibility between the identity of Hong Kong citizens as Hongkongers and as Chinese may contribute to radicalization among tertiary students. This study first conducted quantitative analyses to confirm the positive relationship between identity incompatibility and support for radical means. Past research has argued that nested identities should not be perceived as mutually exclusive. However, qualitative interviews revealed that some respondents did perceive the two identities in zero-sum terms and saw mainland China as a "cultural other." Our study distinguished these two types of identity incompatibilities as either an "ambiguous incompatibility" or a "manifest incompatibility." We propose that a "manifest incompatibility" has contributed to radicalization through three pathways: (1) pathways defined by the need for an identity, (2) emotional pathways, and (3) ideological pathways. Support for radical means is likely driven by a variety of factors that include perceived threats to a local identity, the negative emotions that accompany identity incompatibility, and the adoption of a new ideology that involves the rejection of previously accepted moral principles. By illuminating the possible mechanisms that explain how identity incompatibility may lead to a rise in support for the use of radical means, this study not only contributes to the theoretical discussion on radicalization but also sheds light on the widespread participation in recent protests in Hong Kong.

KEYWORDS: Social movements; Hong Kong studies; youth studies.

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During the 2019 anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill (anti-ELAB) protests, a significant proportion of students displayed a high tolerance and support for radical means (Lee, 2020). In fact, many have expressed concerns about youth radicalization in recent years, citing events like the 2014 Umbrella Movement[1] and the 2016 Mong Kok clashes[2] as evidence. Wong, Khiatani, and Chui (2019) have even pointed out a fiftyfold increase in the use of the term "radical" by traditional local newspapers from 1998 to 2014, and the percentage of articles using the term "radical" together with "youth" tripled from 5% in 1998 to 15% in 2015. Furthermore, there has been a shift from organized and restrained movements that emphasize being "peaceful, rational and non-violent (*helifei* 和理非)" to those that are more decentralized and contentious (Cheng, 2016). Using the social identity approach, this study intends to explore how a dual-identity incompatibility between Hongkonger and Chinese identities has contributed to radicalization among the Hong Kong youth. The term "dual identity" refers to identification with both an aggrieved in-group and a superordinate political entity. In the case of Hong Kong, dual identity refers to a local Hong Kong-based identity and national Chinese identity. The discussion draws support from both quantitative analyses and qualitative interviews.

Literature Review

Student activists are often the vanguards of revolutionary movements. Particularly in East Asian societies such as Korea (Ibrahim, 2010), there have been countless cases in which students have acted either as the initiators or major participants in social movements. Students have also played an important role in social movements in Hong Kong in recent years, and the anti-ELAB protests in which young people organized action through online platforms such as LIHKG and Telegram have been the most recent example. One other such example is the Umbrella Movement, which can essentially be viewed as a student movement (C. P. Chan, 2014) in which students were not merely major participants but central leaders. While the Occupy Central movement was originally planned for October 1st, the student activist-led "Reclaim Civic Square" action and the government's reaction to it drew huge public attention, prompting its founders to advance the date of the movement and transforming it into a large-scale

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[1]The 2014 Umbrella Movement was a political movement for universal suffrage that involved the illegal occupation of streets and roads in Admiralty and Mong Kok.

[2]The 2016 Mong Kok Clashes occurred on the first day of the Lunar New Year. Several contentious scenes that involved physical clashes occurred.

In HK nowadays, taking radical actions is the only way of making the gov't respond to public demands
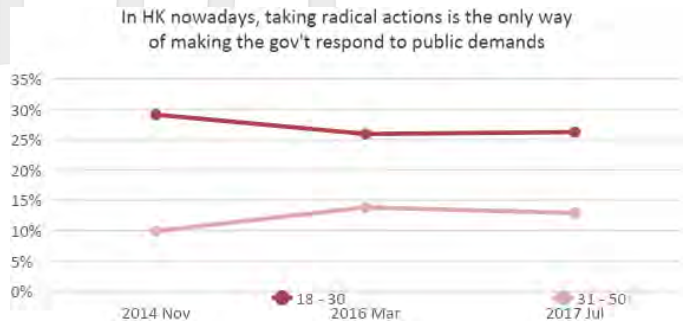
Figure 1. Views on taking radical action according to age group.

street occupation. As a result, the Hong Kong Federation of Students and Scholarism were the two student organizations that became the movement's key leaders. As such, it is evident that focusing on student radicalization can provide significant insight into social movements in Hong Kong.

Tertiary students were also more likely to support radical means. First, young people between 18 years and 30 years in age were more supportive of radical action. The Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies (HKIAPS) asked respondents whether they agreed that "in Hong Kong nowadays, taking radical action is the only way of making the government respond to public demands" (Kwok & Cheng, 2017). Figure 1 shows that in 2014, the proportion of youth who agreed with the statement (29.1%) was nearly three times higher than the respondents aged 31–50 (9.9%). Although the proportion slightly decreased in 2017 (26.2%), it was still more than double the other age group (12.9%). Second, students are more likely to support radical action when compared to other occupational status groups. According to a survey conducted by HKIAPS in 2013 (Figure 2), acceptance for radical action during
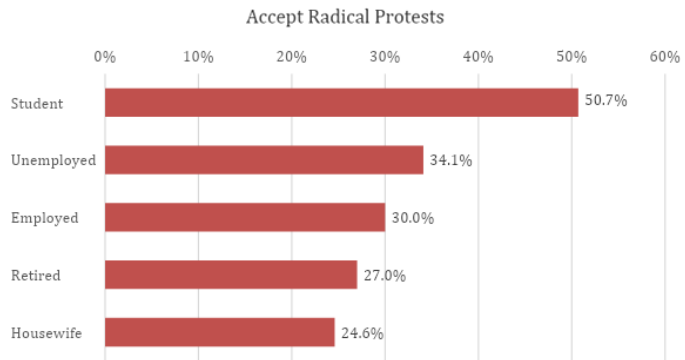

Accept Radical Protests

Figure 2. Attitudes toward radical protests according to occupational status.

a protest was the highest among students (V. Ng, 2014). Therefore, tertiary students are more likely to hold favorable attitudes toward radical means than the general public.

Radicalism and Radicalization

With the rapid growth of studies on radicalism and radicalization, the diverse usage of these terms has caused confusion and misunderstanding (Maskaliūnaitė, 2015; Sedgwick, 2010). It is there important to first clarify the meaning of these terms in the context of this study.

When seen as a mode of action, political radicalism refers to "the attempt to exercise social power with respect to fundamental socio-political relations and insti-tutions" (McLaughlin, 2017, p. 32). In terms of means and ends, radical ends refer to visions of a transformation such that "society would be fundamentally different in a political sense" (McLaughlin, 2017, p. 32) while the term "radical means" concerns the question of how to bring about such a fundamental change in society.

Radicalism should be distinguished from activism. According to Moskalenko and McCauley (2009), activism refers to engagement in legal and non-violent political action (i.e., normative political action) while radicalism refers to engagement in action that is illegal and violent (i.e., non-normative action). Separate models have also been introduced to explain the engagement of the two (Sweetman, Maio, Spears, Manstead, & Livingstone, 2019; Tausch et al., 2011). In Hong Kong, Wong et al. (2019) have also found that past participation in non-normative political action (radicalism) does not predict future intentions to participate in normative action (activism). This suggests different conceptions between activists and radicals about the types of action that can be used to bring about desired changes.

Radicalism should also be distinguished from violent extremism. The definition of what is "radical" is highly situational and contextual, frequently depending upon the norms and permissiveness of state and institutional actors (Cross, 2013). It is therefore true not only that radical means can include violent political actions but that certain non-violent means can also be viewed as non-normative. One example is direct action, a form of political activism which often involves confrontational and illegal action even though physical violence is rarely employed (Olcese, Saunders, & Tzavidis, 2014). Examples of this include the 2014 Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong and the more recent Extinction Rebellion. While both civil disobedience movements stressed the use of non-violent resistance, they were nevertheless considered by some to be

unacceptable radical actions (Roe & McKay, 2019; "With Brexit," 2019). Radicalism in this sense is more inclusive than violent extremism.

Radicalization, in contrast, is a process. As pointed out by previous studies, the endpoint of "radicalization" is not limited to terrorism or the use of violence (Maskaliūnaitė, 2015). This study therefore adopts a more general definition of radicalization as the process leading a person to support the use of non-normative means for political purposes. By non-normative means, this study not only refers to violent political actions (e.g., throwing bricks and Molotov cocktails) but also includes non-violent political action that is illegal or confrontational (e.g., the Umbrella Movement and the blockage of roads).

While radicalization is a process, stage-theory interpretations of radicalization theories like Moghaddam's (2008) staircase metaphor should be rejected. Stage-theory interpretations regard radicalization as a stage-by-stage process in which the first level consists of inert sympathizers who believe in the cause but do not take political action that is followed by activists engaging in acceptable forms of political action and concludes with a final stage of radicals who justify the use of radical action by its ends (Moskalenko & McCauley, 2009). Yet, the adoption of an ideology in which the ends justify the means has not necessarily been preceded by the experience of being an activist (Wong, Khiatani, & Chui, 2019). Rejecting stage theories means that radicals might never have participated in any form of political action. In other words, it is possible for someone to jump directly from the stage of an inert sympathizer to one of a radical.

The Social Identity Approach

Looking at how people think and act as members of a social group, the social identity approach is useful for understanding how collective behaviors result from a shared social reality (David & Bar-Tal, 2009). This approach conceptualizes radicalization as a collective intergroup process because actors usually become radicalized in their capacity as a part of a group rather than on their own (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2011). This contradicts with the traditional rational choice approach which has been criticized for its overly individualistic conceptualization of actors (Simon, 2011). Applying insights from social identity theory and self-categorization theory, the social identity approach adopts a more inclusive form of self-definition that takes group membership into account.

The social identity approach views social movement participation as a group-serving behavior (Simon, 2011). Collective identity is necessary for group members to

support or participate in political actions aimed at improving the situation for the in-group. Past empirical studies have also demonstrated the mobilizing power of collective identification (Klandermans, 2002; Stürmer & Simon, 2004). In addition, collective identification can also be a product of political participation (Klandermans, 2002; Reicher & Drury, 2011).

Other conditions are required for mobilization in addition to a collective identity. In fact, many have pointed out that the politicization of collective identity has played an important role both in developing sympathy among group members and encouraging them to participate in political action (Klandermans, 2002; Simon & Klandermans, 2001; Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008). Politicization consists of three elements: (1) a shared grievance, (2) the attribution of blame to an external adversary, and (3) triangulation, in which collective actors try to influence society (Simon, 2011). Therefore, politicization is predicted to be a necessary condition for the radicalization of a group.

Incompatibility of Component Identities

Studies on dual identification have provided important insight into the role of a collective identity in affecting one's choice of action. Dual identification refers to identification with both an aggrieved in-group and a superordinate political entity (e.g., country of residence). The formation of identification can result from both self-identification that generates within a group as well as identifications imposed by external forces, with the latter being common in the cases involving race and ethnicity (Arthur, Takougang, & Owusu, 2012; Sim, 2019). Dual identification is positively related to the engagement in normative political action among migrants (Simon & Ruhs, 2008). It also helps constrain the choice of political actions and causes people to prioritize normatively acceptable forms (Simon, Reichert, & Grabow, 2013).

Existing studies have provided evidence supporting a causal link between the perceived incompatibility of component identities and radicalization. In a study on students of migrant descent, Simon, Reichert, and Grabow (2013) found that a high perceived identity incompatibility increased sympathy for radical action. Reverse causation was unlikely since sympathy for radical action failed to predict future changes in dual identification. In addition, it was only when the perceived identity incompatibility was high that other forms of collective identification (e.g., religious and ethno-cultural identification) predicted changes in sympathy for radical action. These findings suggested that the perceived incompatibility of component identities is
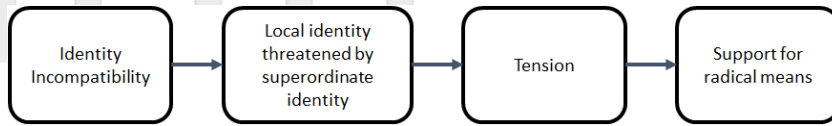
Figure 3. A proposed mechanism of how identity incompatibility leads to radical support.

a necessary condition and a likely cause of radicalization among groups with dual identities.

Yet, why does identity incompatibility lead to radicalization? Social psychological research on intergroup conflict management has suggested that superordinate identification has pacifying effects (Bizman & Yinon, 2004). Identity incompatibility means the absence of such pacifying effects and a contribution to support for radical means. While it may be part of the answer, this explanation seems insufficient as it assumes that aggrieved in-group members will naturally opt for radical means. The precise mechanism of how and why perceived identity incompatibility enhances sympathy for radical action remains unclear. This study aims to fill this research gap by examining the role of identity incompatibility in radicalization in the case of Hong Kong.

Based on previous findings, this study has proposed a hypothesis regarding how identity incompatibility leads to radicalization. Arguing that identity needs are universal human ones, Moghaddam (2008) supposed that the perception of threats to such needs may lead to "irrational defensive reactions, including violent ones." He coined the concept of "fractured globalization" to capture "the tendency for sociocultural disintegration to pull in a local direction at the same time that macro-economic and political systems are set up to accelerate globalization." Applying Moghaddam's theory to the case of Europeanization, Stekelenburg and Klandermans (2011) proposed that rapid European integration may enhance feelings of perceived threats to local identities. As local identification is still important to many citizens, identification with a united Europe requires more time. Still, changes in the legal, political, and economic systems of the new European Union occurred relatively quickly. As a result, rapid changes at the macro-level and slow changes at the micro-one tend to lead to feelings of tension. According to Moghaddam, such tension was found to be the core of many violent movements and was a likely cause of radicalization.

Hong Kong Identity and Chinese Identity

After examining the concepts of radicalization and the theoretical foundations of this study, we now discuss the case of Hong Kong. Previous studies have pointed out

that an incompatibility between local Hong Kong and national Chinese identities has been growing in recent years and may have contributed to an increase in support for radical means among youth (Steinhardt, Li, & Jiang, 2018; Veg, 2017).

The existence of Hong Kong and Chinese identities is an example of nested identities that are not always mutually incompatible. In fact, nested identities are often compatible and may even reinforce each other. They are not always a zero-sum game where identification among the two is perceived as exclusive (Steinhardt et al., 2018). In fact, the compatibility of local Hong Kong and national Chinese identities has changed over time as their content has evolved. As Veg (2017) pointed out, while local and national identification was compatible in the past, civic-based identification with a local democratic community is becoming increasingly incompatible with the ethno-cultural-based national identification advocated by the Beijing government in recent years. Recent studies have also confirmed these findings, showing that young people tend to differentiate between a national identity as a People's Republic of China (PRC) citizen and an ethnic Chinese one (C. K. Chan & Tang, 2019).

Apart from changes in their content, there have also been changes in identification with the two identities. Steinhardt, Li, and Jiang (2018) have argued that the key shift has occurred in one's identification with a national rather than local identity. Though Hongkongers did not feel a significant sense of belonging to a larger nation, most of them held both a "historical Chinese identity" that was past-oriented and a "cultural identity" that consisted of both Chinese and non-Chinese elements (Matthews, Ma, & Lui, 2007). In particular, the younger generation of those born in Hong Kong has been more resistant to a sense of national belonging and embraced a Hong Kong identity instead of a Chinese one (Matthews et al., 2007). In the early 2000s, there had been a rise in national identification in which the two identities had become more hybridized and more respondents had opted for mixed identities such as "Chinese from Hong Kong" or "Hongkongers from China" (E. K. Ma & Fung, 2007; HKUPOP, 2019; Steinhardt et al., 2018). In the late-2000s, however, the trend reversed and there was a rebound in the proportion of respondents who chose a Hong Kong identity exclusively (HKUPOP, 2019; Steinhardt et al., 2018). Increased resistance toward both "political China" and "cultural-economic China" had also been observed from 2006 to 2010 (C. K. Chan, 2014).

In fact, "Chineseness" appears to have been essential for the formation of the Hong Kong identity. Even before the Handover in 1997, the Hong Kong identity had already embodied "both cultural affiliation with and resistance to Chinese identity" (Fung & Chan, 2017). On the one hand, China was seen as a cultural "other." The socio-economic contrast between a modernizing Hong Kong and a less-developed

mainland caused mainland China to be constructed as an alien, "backward, and inferior other" before the Handover (C. K. Chan, 2014; E. Chan, 2000; E. K. Ma & Fung, 1999; E. Ma, 2006; Fung & Chan, 2017). As a result, an identity as a Hongkonger was seen in opposition to the Chinese one. On the other hand, there was still an identity that was "Chinese" in a broader ethnic and cultural sense. Examples that demonstrated such identification included a political commitment to "pan-Chinese" issues such as fighting for Chinese to be recognized as an official language and protesting against Japan's "invasion" of the Diaoyu Islands (known as the Senkaku Islands in Japan).

One can see that there is a complicated and sometimes conflicting relationship between the identification with a national Chinese identity and a local Hong Kong one. In fact, some have even regarded the strong identification with a local identity as a resistance toward the domination imposed through labels such as "Chineseness" or a "Chinese identity." This suggests that the sources of dual identification in Hong Kong can involve both self-identification and identification which is externally imposed.

While people used to uphold a Chinese identity which was ethnically and culturally based while rejecting a political identification with the Communist regime, this kind of identity politics appears to have faded in recent years (C. K. Chan, 2014). Several reasons have been proposed to explain the increasing resistance to a national identity.

First, an unpleasant intergroup interaction between Hongkongers and mainlanders has underscored a cultural distance between the two identities. Unlike the earlier perception of mainland China as backward, polls have revealed that Hongkongers recognize the modernization, growth, and competitiveness of mainland China (C. K. Chan, 2014). In recent years, the process of "cultural othering" has largely been driven by criticisms about the negative civil qualities of mainlanders and the lack of civil liberties in mainland China (Fung & Chan, 2017).

Moreover, increased exposure to intergroup conflicts between "Hongkongers" and "mainlanders" may have exacerbated in-group and out-group biases. Studies on the radicalization of Muslim migrants found that Muslims living in the West as minorities were more likely to experience intergroup tensions compared to those living in a Muslim country. Their higher exposure to intergroup tensions made in-group versus out-group biases more salient (Victoroff, Adelman, & Matthews, 2012). This may lead to growing incompatibility between the two identities and contribute to radicalization.

In addition, the closer socio-economic integration of Hong Kong and mainland China has brought negative effects. For instance, the massive number of tourists has inconvenienced local residents, causing some to advocate that locals have priority over

mainland tourists and "new-immigrant Chinese" in the allocation of resources (C. K. Chan, 2014; Kennedy, 2015). Parallel trading is another prominent issue, as it often involves the outflow of daily commodities from Hong Kong to the mainland. One such example is the shortage of infant milk formula that sparked huge uproars in 2013 and eventually caused the HKSAR government to impose export controls. These examples not only demonstrated dissatisfaction of Hongkongers with mainland visitors but also showcased a politicization of the Hong Kong identity. There was a shared grievance (i.e., the shortage of daily necessities), an attribution of blame to an external group (i.e., mainland visitors and parallel traders), and triangulation (i.e., local demands for the authorities to act). This provided the conditions for the rise of localist groups like Hong Kong Indigenous, which launched several "Reclaim Sheung Shui Campaigns"[3] in the New Territories to drive away mainland visitors and parallel traders during 2015 (Kennedy, 2015).

From the political aspect, trust in the central government has also been found to be a significant predictor of the strength of national identity (Steinhardt et al., 2018). An increasingly interventionist approach from the central government in recent years has led to a decline of political trust that has translated into a weaker national identity (N. Ma, 2015; Steinhardt et al., 2018; Yew & Kwong, 2014).

Therefore, the incompatibility between local Hong Kong and national Chinese identities is an emerging phenomenon that is becoming increasingly important. It provides the conditions to study the role of identity incompatibility in promoting radicalization in the context of Hong Kong.

Objectives

In light of the widespread youth participation in anti-ELAB protests and the rapid escalation of tensions, this study has aimed to investigate the role of identity incompatibility in promoting support for radical means among the youth. Previous studies have established a causal link between identity incompatibility and radicalization (Simon & Ruhs, 2008). However, the process behind this remains unclear. Through qualitative interviews with tertiary students in Hong Kong, this study has sought to open the black box of how identity incompatibility contributes to support for radical means.

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[3]The "Reclaim Sheung Shui Campaigns" refers to a series of anti-parallel trader and mainland tourist protests that have occurred since 2012. Examples include the Sheung Shui protests in 2012 (J. Ng & Nip, 2012) and the Yuen Long protests in 2015 (S. Chan & Tsang, 2015). Contentious scenes occurred during some of the protests, including verbal confrontations and clashes.

Methodology

Mixed methods were employed. Quantitative questionnaires were used to test the hypothesis that a positive relationship exists between identity incompatibility and the acceptance of radical means among the Hong Kong students. Qualitative interviews were conducted to illustrate the process of how incompatibilities between nested identities lead to support for radical means.

Quantitative Analysis

Self-administered questionnaires were distributed to students of two tertiary institutions from September to December 2018. A total of 854 cases have been collected. Listwise deletion of missing values was used for all variables except for family income, leaving behind 816 cases. As 297 respondents declined to indicate their family income, the listwise deletion of missing values would lead to an exclusion of over one-third of our sample. Therefore, dummy variable adjustment was used for family income in order to reduce the risk of bias and to better preserve the sample size.

To better understand tertiary students in Hong Kong, respondents were recruited from two higher education institutions with different characteristics. The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) is a high-ranking public research university that provides government-funded degree programs for around 17,000 undergraduates (CUHK, 2019). The Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong (THEi) is a vocationally oriented, self-funded tertiary institution with around 3,000 undergraduate students ("VTC Alumni Making a Difference," 2017). Drawing respondents from these two distinct tertiary institutions enabled this study to cover tertiary students with different family backgrounds, academic abilities, and career goals. To ensure the diversity of students, surveys were distributed during general education classes required for graduation as they consisted of students from all study years and academic disciplines. Among the 816 valid cases, 521 came from CUHK and 303 came from THEi. No significant difference has been found between the two institutions regarding their support for radical means (Table 1).

Measurement

Dummy variables were used to control for the effects of gender (1 = male, 0 = female), school (1 = CUHK, 0 = THEi), major of study (1 = social science, 0 = other majors), and previous participation in political action (1 = Have experience

Table 1.

Comparison of Radical Support between the Two Institutions
(n = 816)

	N (%)	Mean score (±SD)	F	p-Value
THEi	303 (37.1%)	2.60 (±1.12)	0.477	0.490
CUHK	513 (62.9%)	2.66 (±1.02)		

of participation, $0 =$ No experience). Monthly household income was divided into three groups (Low $=$ below \$20,000, Middle $= \$20,001$-50,000, High $=$ above \$50,000).

In order to better capture the perceived incompatibility between local and national identities, this study devised a new way of measuring identity and distinguished the respondents who identified themselves as Hongkongers from those who identified themselves as Chinese. Early research before the mid-2000s assessed Hongkonger and Chinese identities using a single-item categorical question since the two identities were seen as opposite poles of one dimension (Lau, 1997). After the Handover in 1997, later studies argued that identification with Hong Kong and China should be seen as two distinct attitudes (Lee & Chan, 2005). Results released by the University of Hong Kong's Public Opinion Programme (HKUPOP) provided support for this argument. While a positive correlation between the two identities was observed from 2000 to 2007, the correlation has been unstable since 2008 (HKUPOP, 2019). It was therefore proposed that the two identities should be treated as distinct attitudes and separate questions should be asked (Steinhardt et al., 2018). However, this contradicts the popular conception of tension between local and national identities in recent years. Steinhardt et al. (2018) showed that while the two identities were perceived to be compatible in the 2000s, they have become increasingly exclusive since 2008. Therefore, this study offered the respondents the option of identifying themselves as Hongkongers but not Chinese.

To investigate the effects of identity incompatibility, respondents were asked to choose the statement that best described their identity. Five options were provided, including "Chinese," "Both Hongkonger and Chinese," "Hongkonger," "Hongkonger but not Chinese," and "None of the above." Respondents who selected "Hongkonger and Chinese" were expected to experience the lowest level of perceived identity incompatibility. The option "Hongkonger" demonstrated some level of perceived identity incompatibility. While these respondents did not include the other identity in their identity descriptions, they also did not reject it explicitly. They rather held a more ambiguous attitude toward their national identity. In contrast, the option "Hongkonger

but not Chinese" emphasized the exclusiveness between the two identities. These respondents not only felt detached from a Chinese identity but also explicitly refused to be identified as "Chinese," exhibiting the highest level of identity incompatibility.

Hypothesis

Based on previous findings on the positive relationship between identity incompatibility and support for radical means, the following hypothesis has been conjectured.

H1: A positive relationship exists between the rejection of Chinese identity and support for radical means.

Findings

Multiple regression analysis was used to analyze the importance of identity in predicting the support for radical means among the Hong Kong students (Table 2).

Table 2.
Multiple Regression Analysis of Support for Radical Means (n = 816)

	Model 1	Model 2
Constant	2.318***	2.043***
Identity [Ref: Hongkonger and Chinese (*n* = 309)]		
Chinese (*n* = 11)		0.422
Hongkonger (*n* = 426)		0.514***
Hongkonger but not Chinese (*n* = 48)		1.235***
None of the Above (*n* = 22)		0.220
Control Variables		
Male	0.388***	0.359***
Household Income (Ref: Middle)		
Low (Below $20,000)	0.132	0.133
High (Above $50,000)	−0.330**	−0.368**
Refuse to Answer	−0.096	−0.114
CUHK	−0.038	−0.049
Social Science	0.225*	0.187
Activism/Radicalism Experience	0.580***	0.432***
R-squared	0.113	0.204
Adjusted *R*-squared	0.105	0.193

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses; The numbers in the table are unstandardized coefficients unless otherwise specified. *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, and ***$p < 0.001$.

Model 1 examined the effects of control variables. Consistent with previous studies, the findings showed that male students and those with experience in activism or radicalism were more likely to support radical means ($p < 0.001$) and students from more affluent families (with a monthly household income above \$50,000) were less likely to support radical means than those with an average income ($p = 0.007$). Compared to other majors, social science majors were also more likely to support radical means ($p = 0.037$). Model 1 accounts for 11.3% of the variations.

Model 2 included the self-categorized identity of respondents. Confirming our hypothesis (H1) and previous findings, those who identified themselves as "Hongkonger" and "Hongkonger but not Chinese" were more likely to support radical means than those who opted for the mixed identity of "Hongkonger and Chinese" ($p < 0.001$). Compared to those identifying with "Hongkonger," the effect size was larger for those identifying with "Hongkonger but not Chinese." These results provided support for the positive relationship between identity incompatibility and support for radical means. The explanatory power of model 2 was greatly improved to explain 20.4% of the variations. The improvement demonstrated the importance of identity incompatibility in explaining the support of young people for radical means.

Quantitative findings confirmed the existence of identity incompatibility and its positive relationship with the support for radical means (H1), suggesting previous findings of a causal link are also likely to apply in the context of Hong Kong. We have further explored the mechanism of how identity incompatibility may contribute to support for radical means through qualitative interviews.

Qualitative Interviews

This study targeted tertiary students with experience in political participation. Interviewees came from various tertiary institutions, being either undergraduate students or graduates of the past year at the time of interview. A snowball sampling method was adopted in order to reach students with a high level of political participation. Thirty interviews were conducted.

Our interviewees held diverse political stances that included pro-democracy supporters, localists, self-determination supporters, and pro-independence supporters. All interviewees have participated in legal and non-violent political actions such as the June Fourth Vigil. The majority have also participated in acts of civil disobedience like the Umbrella Movement. Several interviewees have participated in more confrontational protests such as the "Reclaim Sheung Shui Campaigns" of 2015.

Exploring the factors that drive youth to support the use of radical means to express political demands, we noticed how their narratives were closely linked with their identities. This subsection aimed to illustrate how identity incompatibility leads to support for radical means in Hong Kong.

All interviewees expressed a strong identification with their Hong Kong identities, and the majority held negative views of the Chinese one. All interviewees were ethnically Chinese and Cantonese-speaking. In this context, a Chinese identity should be understood as a sense of belonging to PRC rather than an ethnic Chinese identity.

Two Types of Incompatibility: Manifest Versus Ambiguous

Among those who did not identify with the Chinese identity, two different types of identity incompatibilities were observed. These were the "manifest incompatibility" and "ambiguous incompatibility." Those with "manifest incompatibility" explicitly rejected a Chinese identity and perceived the two identities in zero-sum terms. Those with "ambiguous incompatibility" were more ambiguous with regard to a Chinese identity. Although they did not possess a strong identification for a Chinese identity, they also did not explicitly reject it. Consistent with quantitative findings, interviewees with "manifest incompatibility" tended to accept and even support radical means while interviewees with "ambiguous incompatibility" tended to opt for more moderate and gentle strategies in action.

Over half of our interviewees displayed a "manifest incompatibility" by explicitly stating their rejection of a Chinese identity. When asked about their identities, they often began their answers by rejecting a Chinese identity even though the option "Hongkonger but not Chinese" was never mentioned in the question. These interviewees felt a high level of incompatibility between local Hong Kong and national Chinese identities. They adopted a zero-sum point of view toward the two, believing that identification with a Chinese national identity would harm their identity as a Hongkonger. Seeing Hongkongers and mainlanders as two distinct groups, they repeatedly expressed strong dissatisfaction with how the interests of Hongkongers were harmed by mainlanders. As a result, they displayed strong resistance to a Chinese identity while embracing a Hong Kong one. We classified these interviewees as having a "manifest incompatibility."

One such example is Interviewee 012, who described himself as "definitely a Hongkonger" and not Chinese. He explained that while he used to feel confused about his identity before the Umbrella Movement, he gradually became more and more

reluctant to identify with a Chinese identity as he read negative news and promotional materials about China and the Chinese government. For him,

> "The word 'China' is just too negative, so I don't want myself to be classified as a Chinese, or anything related to China."

In contrast, those with "ambiguous incompatibility" displayed a more ambiguous and confused attitude toward a Chinese identity. They identified themselves as pure "Hongkongers." Although they did not endorse or explicitly identify with a Chinese identity, they neither rejected it nor expressed their dislike for it explicitly. Instead, they appeared to feel detached and distanced from it. Although they described themselves as Hongkongers, they perceived neither a strong incompatibility nor a positive link between the two. They simply found "Hongkonger" to be a more accurate and representative description of themselves.

One such example is Interviewee 013. When asked about her identity, she answered that she "tends to choose Hongkonger." At the same time, she did not reject a Chinese identity throughout the interview. When asked about her views on a Chinese identity, she explained:

> "I haven't spent much time in China, so there is no reason for describing myself as Chinese. Although some people say, 'Hong Kong is part of China,' I can also say that I am 'Shanghainese people' if I am from Shanghai for example. So, I don't find this to be a problem."

Her answer demonstrated a sense of detachment from a Chinese identity. While she did not reject a Chinese identity explicitly, she did not identify with it either. Even though both groups viewed Chinese as a cultural other that they had low identification with, those with "manifest incompatibility" perceived the two identities in zero-sum terms while those with "ambiguous incompatibility" did not.

Zero-Sum Perceptions

Zero-sum perceptions are an important distinction between the two groups. The social identity approach suggests that people radicalize as part of a group and through the socially constructed reality of their group (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2011). Surprisingly, the perceived realities of those with manifest and ambiguous incompatibilities were similar. Both groups perceived differences and conflicts of interest between mainland China and Hong Kong. Their major difference lies in whether these conflicts were seen as fundamental or resolvable.

Those who identified themselves as Hongkongers but not Chinese frequently emphasized how the interests of the two groups are fundamentally and essentially

incompatible. One example is Interviewee 003. This individual has participated in both peaceful and confrontational protests such as the "Reclaim Sheung Shui Campaigns" and sit- in demonstrations that surrounded the Legislative Council. During the interview, Interviewee 003 repeatedly stressed how Hong Kong is being colonized and exploited. When asked about why he continued to participate actively in these relatively radical political actions, Interviewee 003 cited the following perception as the reason behind his participation:

> "Because here is my home, the place that I was born and grew up in. I can't stand the right of people in this place being exploited. I can't stand Hong Kong being colonized by CCP."

His answer confirmed the threat hypothesis. Consistent with the findings of Moghaddam (2008), the tension resulting from a perceived threat to a local identity motivates participation in radical political actions. Interviewee 003 possessed such a strong perception of Hong Kong being colonized that he even corrected the interviewer for using the word "exploited" instead of "colonized" at one point. The use of the word "colonizer" is very telling of his perception that a fundamental tension exists between the two social groups.

While Interviewee 003 stood out in his choice of words, such words bore a resemblance to the narratives of several localists. Certain prominent localists like Chin Wan have described Hong Kong as being subjected to "recolonization" by mainland China after the Handover and portrayed the tensions as a coercive "colonial force" impeding the freedom of Hong Kong (C. K. Chan, 2017; Veg, 2017).

When asked about the reason for holding such a strong aversion and viewing the CCP as a colonizer, Interviewee 003 answered:

> "Because they treat us as inferiors. They treat our language as inferior. They treat Cantonese as inferior. They think that Cantonese should not appear in school lessons, they oppress our mother tongue, so we think that we have the mentality of people being colonized. They are robbing our resources and sucking our blood. Dongjiang Water is under a compatriot system. They are sucking our blood. The water is very expensive when it shouldn't be. And they are sending colonizers of the CCP. They send 150 people, attempting to dilute our population and rob our social resources. That's why I think they are colonizers."

Here, "colonizers" appears to mean more than the CCP. While some studies have separated the negative feelings directed toward the Central government from those directed toward mainland tourists and new immigrants in their analyses (Kennedy, 2015), this study has found that interviewees with "manifest incompatibility" often lump all these groups together and view them as "mainland Chinese" as a whole. For example, the answer given by Interviewee 003 reflected the perception that new immigrants were used by the CCP as a means to colonize and exploit Hong Kong.

His anger was directed toward the "mainland" in general rather than any particular aspects or phenomena. In such a perception, "Hongkongers" as a group is being oppressed and threatened by "Chinese mainlanders."

Such a perception of the relationship between Hong Kong and the mainland hugely contradicted the concept of "a community of shared interest" advocated by the Central government. In fact, for Interviewee 003, mainland China had little or no contribution to make to Hong Kong. He further elaborated his views:

> "I really don't think the mainland has helped us Hong Kong at all. They are always snatching our resources and sucking our blood. Because of the Individual Visit Scheme, small shops are simply unable to survive, and our rent was pushed up. Many residents living in the North District are affected by the nuisance too. I see no benefits at all. Dongjiang Water, the drinking water for us, has really bad quality. Because of the 'compatriot system,' it's very expensive. And they don't care about your water consumption. Even when you don't use up all the water they provided, you have to pay the same large amount of money for it. That's the 'compatriot system.' The price that Guangzhou government charges for the Dongjiang Water selling to Hong Kong is much higher than that selling to Shenzhen and Zhuhai. I'm dissatisfied with that. And they send people to Hong Kong on One-way Permit. Nominally, it is to increase our labor force, but many of them are actually CSSA recipients and old people. Some of them even engage in bogus marriage. And I think they rob our social resources, public housing and medical resources. I don't see any benefits at all."

The answer echoed with previous findings about dissatisfaction with a range of socio-economic issues brought by closer integration with the mainland as well as the increasingly interventionist approach of the Central government (C. K. Chan, 2014; Kennedy, 2015). Such dissatisfaction was multi-faceted. Not only did he perceive conflicts of interest in economic and social resources, but he also perceived conflicts in political, cultural, and symbolic areas.

An Existential Threat

In fact, Interviewee 003 is not alone. Other interviewees with "manifest in-compatibility" also reported similar feelings of anger and frustration and even a sense of being harmed. One example is Interviewee 001, who believed that radical means should not be viewed as something out of bounds. He used the Lunar New Year TV Show as an example to illustrate his anger:

> "I don't know whether you are aware that there is a Spring Festival Gala in mainland China? And this year, I don't know if they just retransmitted the programme or Hong Kong produced one on our own. It was a really big one. But in the past, Hong Kong didn't broadcast this sort of things. New Year is the time when the movies by Stephen Chow are played, three in a row. So, this was really 'mainland.' And the firework, wishes to our motherland . . . there was something like that yesterday. I really couldn't stand it. It was like I was back in the mainland, and I felt like I wanted to beat something up. I felt that I was harmed. [Interviewee: Why did

you feel that?] It's eroding our freedom. And I think it's also harming our Hong Kong identity, making you feel that this place isn't worthy of our pride. I think it is harming our freedom and my ideal of Hong Kong, making me feel that the ideal Hong Kong is out of my reach."

For some people, such grievances might seem rather trivial. The fact that it generated such strong feelings suggests that the episode should be understood in cultural, symbolic, and even existential terms. Not only did these interviewees care about specific negative economic and social effects of closer integration with mainland China, but their dissatisfaction also involved feelings of being subjected to a cultural invasion and even symbolic annihilation.

To better understand why a replacement of television programs might have been perceived as a cultural invasion, one must first comprehend the background. Stephen Chow is a well-known Hong Kong film director and a cultural icon of Hong Kong comedy. His movies have been hugely popular in Hong Kong and are regarded as an integral part of its popular culture (Feng, 2007). Not only are the heroes of his movies embedded within Hong Kong localism, but his movies also encode and reflect local cultural values (Poon, 2019). Stephen Chow films have therefore been widely seen as a symbol of Hong Kong culture, especially for Hongkongers born in the 80s and 90s. With this in mind, one can understand why the replacement of movies that portray local culture with TV shows imported from mainland China would be seen as an attempt to make people feel that "this place isn't worthy of our pride."

In addition, such a replacement may be viewed in terms of symbolic violence (Bourdieu, 2001). Gerbner (1972, p. 44) first suggested that "representation in the fictional world signifies social existence absence means symbolic annihilation." The concept of "symbolic annihilation" has then been widely applied to study how certain social groups have been ignored, trivialized, or condemned by the media (Coleman & Yochim, 2008).

Using the zero-sum identity framework, one can better understand why the mere act of replacing Stephen Chow films with the Spring Festival Gala shows can generate such strong feelings. For these interviewees, the two identities are fundamentally a zero-sum game and the interests of the two groups are essentially incompatible. The expansion of one means the retreat of the other, and any attempt to enhance their Chinese identification is also seen as an attempt to eradicate their Hong Kong identity. Believing that Hongkongers as a group were facing an existential threat, they were more prone to believe that radical measures should be used to bring about immediate changes.

Is Incompatibility Resolvable Despite Conflict?

In contrast, those who identified themselves as purely "Hongkongers" did not perceive the two identities in zero-sum terms during the time of interview. Nevertheless, they also perceived differences and even conflicts between Hongkongers and mainlanders. One example is Interviewee 004, who listed the different conflicts between Hongkongers and mainlanders (e.g., parallel traders, new immigrants, housing, and uncivilized behavior) during the interview. However, these conflicts for him were not unresolvable. He accepted in a matter-of-fact manner that Hong Kong and China need to integrate, describing it as a "necessary task" for the HKSAR government. His dissatisfaction was rather a matter of the extent and timing of closer integration than a fundamental disagreement about its direction. As a result, he stressed the importance of considering the capacity of Hong Kong society to adapt.

While he accepted the direction of closer integration, he also saw mainlanders as a "cultural other" and displayed a sense of contempt and derision. He even described the situation as "civilization shock." Yet, compared to those who reject a Chinese identity, he was much more understanding. He believed that the "uncivilized behaviors" of mainlanders are changeable as long as their civic education improves. Even though he used the word "hate," such negative feelings were mainly directed toward these uncivilized behaviors rather than mainlanders themselves:

> "Actually, I somehow think that it is not a culture shock, but a civilization shock. We always say that the mainlanders pee and poo everywhere. I don't think it is a cultural issue. Indeed, it is a problem of uncivilized behavior. Although many people think it is due to the deep-rooted vices of the mainlanders' race, I think it may not be the case. A few decades ago, Hongkongers had the same problem, because our economy and civic education were underdeveloped. So, it's the same. Why are there so many deep-rooted conflicts in the course of integration between Hong Kong and the mainland? Because civic education in China is not good enough. China's economy is taking off, but they haven't started working on civic education. So, as all Hongkongers are well aware of our civic responsibility, such as not spitting or littering, once you integrate Hong Kong with the mainland, we will hate the mainlanders when we see their uncivilized behavior."

From the above, it can be observed that both the respondents who identified themselves as "Hongkongers and not Chinese" and purely "Hongkongers" shared similar grievances over closer integration with the mainland. Commonly cited socio-economic issues included speculation, the housing supply, parallel traders, and new immigrants. These grievances provided the conditions for their strong identification with their politicized collective identity as "Hongkongers."

Although both groups displayed anger and contempt toward mainlanders, those who identified themselves as purely "Hongkongers" were much more understanding.

While interviewees with "manifest incompatibility" perceived the interests of the two groups to be fundamentally incompatible, interviewees with "ambiguous incompatibility" were more willing to think that the conflicts were not unresolvable. Using a zero-sum framework, those with "manifest incompatibility" were also more likely to feel that their Hong Kong identity was facing an existential threat. Feeling threatened, their perception of reality tended to be more dire. This difference may provide the foundation for the difference between the two groups with respect to radical means.

Identity and Accompanying Emotions

Apart from differences in their perception of reality, the types and intensity of emotions were also different. Those with "manifest incompatibility" distinguished themselves by a strong sense of being threatened and betrayed. These emotions reinforced "manifest incompatibility" and contributed to acceptance for radical means.

While both groups mentioned feelings of anger during the interview, those with "manifest incompatibility" distinguished themselves by a strong sense of feeling threatened. The perception that Hongkongers as a social group are being exploited and threatened by mainland Chinese generated tension that eventually translated to acceptance for participation in radical actions.

In addition to feeling threatened, we also observed a strong sense of being betrayed among the interviewees with "manifest incompatibility" but not among those with "ambiguous incompatibility." Such feelings appeared to have reinforced their identity incompatibilities, generating an intense feeling of anger. As pointed out by previous studies, a commonly cited source of feeling betrayed was the perception that the Beijing government has broken its promises on universal suffrage and "one country, two systems." Interviewee 024 is one such example, as feelings of betrayal reinforced his rejection of a Chinese identity:

> "The Handover happened around 30 years ago. I didn't participate in it, but when I read the history of Hong Kong, I felt that after the Handover, the Hong Kong-China relationship has been forced to become too close. Where has the promised 'one country, two systems' gone? Where has the promised 'high level of autonomy' gone? We're not even talking about these kinds of political issues. Let me ask a simple question, why does the Court of Final Appeal have to involve the CCP's interpretation? I think that from that moment on, I became really opposed to the Chinese identity."

Another source of feeling betrayed appears to be love that has turned into hate. Some interviewees with "manifest incompatibility" used to identify strongly with a Chinese identity. This probably explained the strong emotional reaction when they discovered discrepancies between their beliefs and observed reality. One example is

Interviewee 021, who grew up in mainland China and felt betrayed after learning about the June Fourth Incident:

> "If you asked me whether I more or less identified with China, I would say yes, at that time, I did. But after knowing the truth, I hate this place even more. [Interviewer: The truth?] The June Fourth Incident. And I knew, to put it bluntly, we were just a group of pigs and sheep that were bred in captivity in this country."

As a result, he manifestly rejected his Chinese identity, saying: "If I have to identify with China to be Chinese, I would rather not be Chinese." Such feelings of anger, contempt, threatening, and betrayal continued to be brought up during the interviews among those with manifest incompatibility.

Criticisms on the Hong Kong Government's Priority

Although the above narratives appear to suggest that the use of radical means has been a venting behavior that is emotional in nature, this is far from the whole picture. Many interviewees actually viewed the use of radical means in strategic terms. For them, the HKSAR government prioritized the CCP over the people of Hong Kong. Given the perceived incompatibility of interests between Hong Kong and mainland China among those with "manifest incompatibility," they therefore believed that gentle methods would not work on the HKSAR government and that radical means would be more effective in protecting the interests of Hongkongers from the threat of mainland Chinese.

Among all the respondents with "manifest incompatibility," Interviewee 017 was one of the most reserved on the use of radical means, expressing reservations about injuring others. She was also among the few respondents who did not strongly criticize the HKSAR government. Yet, her views were still negative, and she believed that it did not prioritize the interests of Hongkongers:

> "The interest and stance of [the HKSAR government], I won't say it's bootlicking the CCP, but it's facilitating the CCP to control Hong Kong. This is its interests and stance. If you ask me whether it's good for us, I think the government doesn't really care about things like democracy or freedom, because these may conflict with its governance. And if we think big, it may involve people living in mainland China, so these movements of thoughts must not be allowed. So, I think that most of the time [the HKSAR government] may not put the interests of Hong Kong people first."

As they saw the HKSAR government as serving the CCP and not Hong Kong, these interviewees believed that only radical measures could force the HKSAR government to respond to demands that contradict CCP's interests. Interviewee 024, for example, believed that gentle methods were useless and only methods that could

"shake the regime" would work. His answer reflected a sense of powerlessness and skepticism in bringing changes with moderate measures:

> "I think we should [use radical means], because gentle methods are useless. They can't shake the regime, so we have to escalate further to shake the regime. To be honest, I think it's better to be more radical because the CCP won't let go of Hong Kong. The CCP is now actively trying to convert Hong Kong into part of the Greater Bay area. I think there's no way to change this and it's difficult to make the government change its decision. Unless there is a movement that has a greater scale and more participants than the Umbrella Movement. Then, maybe it will be possible. But to be frank, just like in the Umbrella Movement, the government has probably known our trump card. It's like, oh, this is already the best that you can do? It's only an assembly at most."

It should be noted that the Greater Bay Area project has been perceived as a project that will jeopardize Hong Kong identity. As Interviewee 030 commented,

> "The whole development plan is basically eliminating the border between Hong Kong and mainland China. Originally, Hong Kong is Hong Kong, mainland China is mainland China. And now, it will be the 'Greater Bay Area.' There will be no more 'Hongkongers,' only 'Greater Bayers.'"

For these interviewees with "manifest incompatibility," the interests of Hongkongers were at risk, and their identity as a Hongkonger was under an existential threat. Yet, moderate measures like gathering together seemed to be useless in bringing about change. As the saying goes, desperate times call for desperate measures. For the interviewees with "manifest incompatibility," the rational answer was to adopt other measures that are more effective than previous ones and can bring about immediate changes. This inevitably leads to the questioning of what constitutes acceptable means.

What is Rational?

While those with "ambiguous incompatibility" still followed previously accepted moral principles, those with "manifest incompatibility" adopted a new ideology.

Interviewee 003 elaborated on his beliefs of what constitutes a rational strategic approach, justifying the use of radical means using the principle of proportionality:

> "We just want to use the same level of force to protect [ourselves]. A rational approach should mean using the same level of force, rather than to wait for being removed and beaten by the police. We should use self-made shields and even Molotov cocktails against the police when necessary."

When asked about situations where he found the use of force necessary, he mentioned the need to protect oneself during confrontations between police and

protesters. Although this interview was conducted before the anti-ELAB protests, his answer already showed a deep distrust and strong criticism of the police:

> "For example, in the 2016 Mong Kok Clashes, some protesters burnt objects to make a roadblock to protect themselves and delay the police action. These are the moments when it's necessary to do so. Perhaps we can make some shields to protect ourselves, because the police are really going to hit you on the head. It's not the same as before."

Interviewee 003 also believed in the effectiveness of radical measures. He cited the cancellation of the "multiple-entry" Individual Visit Endorsements in 2016 as an example proving that combative measures worked and that the cancellation alleviated the negative effects of visitation from the mainland. When asked if this was an exception, his answer demonstrated a strong belief that only combative means are effective in democratizing Hong Kong:

> "No, it worked more than once. You can see in other places like Taiwan, Korea and Ukraine. They used force to resist, they charged and even used Molotov cocktails. For example, Molotov cocktails were used in Korea. These examples are inspiring. Only by doing so can Hong Kong be democratized."

For these interviewees, insisting on following the previous norms of peaceful protest is strategically irrational. Not only did previous peaceful methods fail to bring about change, they also failed to protect protesters.

In addition, those who rejected a Chinese identity explicitly were also more likely to question and challenge the accepted norms and value judgments about what constitutes acceptable forms of protest. They frequently criticized the low level of tolerance toward different protest methods in Hong Kong, citing examples of contentious protests in other countries. One such example is the response of Interviewee 012:

> "I think [throwing bricks] is normal, unlike people who said it's violent. If you compare it to those in foreign countries, it is quite mild. So, I think that Hong Kong's acceptance of protests is really too low. Other foreign countries have high acceptance from the beginning, so many methods are acceptable to them. Yet, Hong Kong is a Chinese society that thinks stability and peace are very important. That's why throwing bricks is a serious problem to them."

His answer clearly demonstrated his dissatisfaction with the norms and values of a "Chinese society" which gives high priority to stability and peace. This echoes with his refusal of Chinese identity, suggesting that he and others believed in a different standard of what forms of protest are acceptable. However, the causal direction remained unclear here. It is uncertain whether the rejection of a Chinese identity leads to disagreement with accepted norms or vice versa. Still, there is an observable link between "manifest incompatibility" and an objection to existing norms for acceptable means.

Discussion

The findings of this study underscore the importance of identity incompatibility in understanding youth radicalization in Hong Kong.

Previous studies on identity have focused on comparing the differences between mixed and exclusive identities in which respondents were asked to choose between "Chinese," "Chinese in Hong Kong," "Hongkonger in China," or "Hongkonger" (Steinhardt et al., 2018). However, we observed two types of identity incompatibilities among the respondents who described themselves as "Hongkongers." Our findings confirmed the insights of past research, showing that nested identities are not necessarily viewed in zero-sum terms. Those with "ambiguous incompatibility" displayed an ambiguous attitude toward their Chinese identity, neither identifying nor rejecting it explicitly. Ambiguity should be viewed as a deliberate personal choice. The renowned author Chan Koon Chung once commented that the boundary of Hong Kong identity has been flexible in the past and that Hongkongers have neither opted for complete assimilation into a Chinese identity nor supported the complete separation from it ("Chen Guanzhong: Quanmian Guanzhi Lailin," 2019). This suggests that the respondents with "ambiguous incompatibility" might deliberately adopt a flexible and ambiguous approach toward their Chinese identity.

Manifest Incompatibility

On the other hand, those with "manifest incompatibility" viewed the two identities in zero-sum terms. They rejected the national Chinese identity explicitly, displaying a negative attitude toward mainland Chinese.

First, they perceived "mainland Chinese" or "mainlanders" as a cultural other, an out-group, believing that Hongkongers are fundamentally and essentially different from mainland Chinese. Their dissatisfaction was directed toward mainland China in general rather than particular groups. The notion of "mainland Chinese" may therefore consist of the CCP, the Chinese government, mainland visitors, and new immigrants from the mainland.

Second, they perceived the two identities in zero-sum terms and saw them as incompatible. As a result, any attempt to enhance their identification with a Chinese identity was viewed as undermining their identification with the Hong Kong identity. Their frequent explicit rejection of the Chinese identity showed that they were well aware of this incompatibility. Consequently, they often expressed feelings of distress, anger, and being threatened.

Third, they perceived incompatible interests between Hongkongers and mainland Chinese, viewing the conflicts of interest as inevitable and unresolvable. Examples include the depiction of Hongkongers as the victims of exploitation by mainland Chinese. Their perception completely contradicted the vision of a community with a "shared future" or "shared interest" advocated by officials ("Editorial: Truths," 2019; Wang, 2016). Their grievances should therefore be understood as the ones of fraternalistic relative deprivation rather than mere egoism. In other words, they adopted a collective framework and perceived that their group had been subjected to injustice. For example, while many interviewees mentioned the negative social impact of parallel traders, not all of them had experienced these grievances personally. Three pathways of how "manifest incompatibility" led to radicalization have been observed, including the identity needs pathway, the negative affect pathway, and the ideological pathway. The hypothetical model is shown in Figure 4.

(1) *The Identity Needs Pathway*

The first path branches off from a threatened identity. Using the zero-sum framework, interviewees perceived numerous conflicts between the two social groups. Apart from socio-economic and political dimensions, there were also conflicts in cultural and symbolic ones. Policies like the Greater Bay Area development plan were perceived as attempts to undermine and even eradicate the Hong Kong identity. As Moghaddam (2008) had observed, perceived threats to identity needs can cause violent defensive reactions, leading to radicalization.
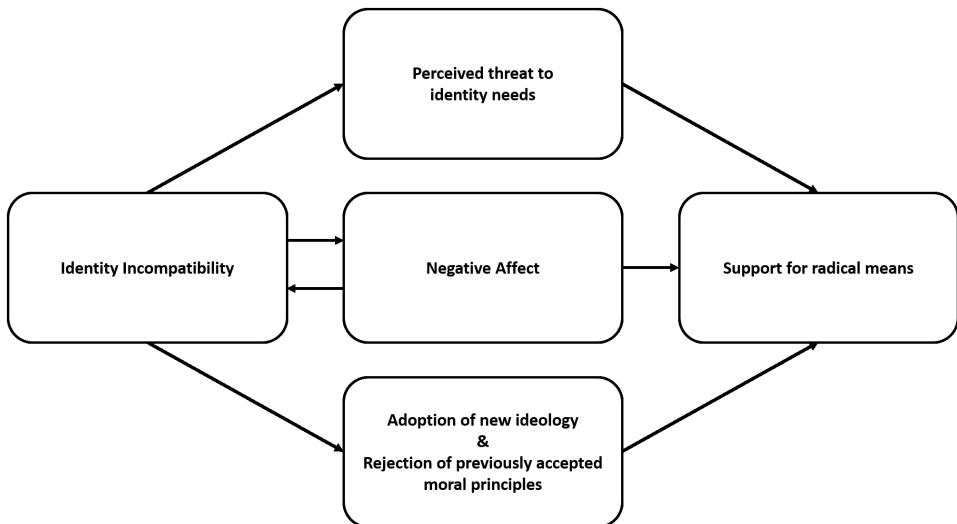

Figure 4. Hypothetical model showing the three pathways of radicalization.

(2) *The Negative Affect Pathway*

The second path to radicalization stems from a negative effect accompanying "manifest incompatibility." According to the frustration-aggression hypothesis (Berkowitz, 1989), this negative affect contributes to aggressive inclinations. Interviewees with manifest incompatibility felt humiliated, threatened, and distressed. In addition, feelings of betrayal have also helped generate anger, contempt, and antagonism toward the Chinese government. Contrary to the popular belief that students always have little or no national identification, some interviewees with manifest incompatibility used to identify with a national Chinese identity. However, events like the Umbrella Movement caused them to realize the discrepancies between their expectations and reality. Consequently, they felt disappointed and betrayed. This strong negative affect not only contributed to aggressive inclinations, but also reinforced the perception of manifest incompatibility among interviewees.

(3) *The Ideological Pathway*

While the above two paths appeared to suggest that support for radical means is an irrational venting behavior, the third path suggested that those with manifest incompatibility adopted an ideology that justifies the use of radical means. Many cited strategic considerations to justify their support for radical means, believing that the CCP and Hongkongers are playing a zero-sum game. Since the HKSAR government is perceived to be prioritizing the interests of the CCP and to have a low regard for the interests and demands of Hongkongers, some believed that the only way to achieve their political goals would be to adopt certain radical means that would "shake the regime."

In addition to a strong belief in the efficacy of radical means, there is also a rejection of the previously accepted *helifei* moral principles regarding political protests. Several factors appeared to contribute to this ideology. First, protracted democratization has led to doubts about the efficacy of legal and peaceful protest methods (N. Ma, 2015). Second, citing distrust in police and the HKSAR government, some believed in the necessity of using force to protect themselves during clashes. Third, taking reference from foreign examples, some have found the current standard of acceptable forms of protest to be too narrow. These manifest incompatibilities have also tended to challenge the moral principles promoted by the regime, such as the primacy of maintaining stability and harmony in society and the importance of abiding by the law.

Previous studies have pointed out that an important characteristic of a radical group is to embrace an ideology that legitimizes the use of violence to address their

concerns (Doosje et al., 2016). The third path to radicalization is an ideological one in which some adopt an ideology that justifies the use of previously unacceptable means.

Relevancy for the Current Situation

By demonstrating the three pathways of how manifest incompatibility leads to support for radical means in the case of Hong Kong, this study contributes to the relevant theoretical discussion about radicalization. Moreover, the above findings are highly relevant for understanding the high acceptance for radical means during the recent anti-ELAB protests.

The recent protests have probably led to a rise in manifest incompatibility. For example, a group of Hong Kong students who staged a sit-in in Australia to support the anti-ELAB protests were allegedly attacked by a group of mainland Chinese singing the Chinese national anthem (Power, 2019). Such unpleasant intergroup interactions might lead to a shift toward manifest incompatibility.

All three pathways have probably played a role in the rise of acceptance and support for radical means. It appears that the ideological pathway, for instance, has been reinforced. As the government refused to withdraw the extradition bill after the protest on June 9th that was reported to have 1.3 million participants, this has led to the questioning of the efficacy of peaceful protest methods and the *helifei* ideology. This has been demonstrated by the popular saying among protesters that "it was you who taught me peaceful marches did not work" ("Hong Kong Protests," 2019). In addition, from the description of Hong Kong police as dogs to the protest slogans criticizing police brutality and misbehavior, the strong sense of distrust and anger toward the police force has probably reinforced a belief in the necessity of using force to protect oneself. Future studies are recommended to further investigate the roles of these three pathways in the anti-ELAB movement.

Although qualitative interviews were conducted to alleviate the limitations of the cross-sectional quantitative survey, this study was still conducted about half a year before the anti-ELAB protests. The level of political participation had reached a record low at the time, and the general atmosphere was helpless and pessimistic. While the observations that were made provided useful insights into understanding the recent protests, they should be interpreted with caution.

Additionally, this study is not representative of Hong Kong youth in general. The use of the snowball sampling method may have resulted in bias. While tertiary students have played an important role in social movements, the major participants of the

anti-ELAB protests included secondary school students as well. Future studies are recommended to investigate whether the findings are applicable to younger students.

Furthermore, the causes of manifest incompatibility are beyond the scope of investigation. Quantitative analyses can be conducted to investigate the source and the conditions favoring this identity incompatibility. As this study focused on the subjective perception of identity incompatibility, we did not distinguish between the incompatibility levels of different dimensions of Chinese identities. Another limitation was a lack of respondents who identify as only "Chinese," so it is unclear whether this group would experience manifest incompatibility with the pacifying effect brought by a superordinate identity, and future studies may explore these aspects.

Acknowledgments

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